

## **Press Release – National Youth Action Group**

**6<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

### **Young First Time Voters Call for the Removal of Sexism, along with an Inclusion for the Protection of Carers and the Recognition of all Families Within our Constitution.**

On March 8th, we are being asked to vote in two referendums on family and care which aim to change the Constitution to provide greater recognition for carers, for a wider concept of family and for women's roles in society.

The National Youth Action Group of Youth Work Ireland have expressed their support for a Yes-Yes outcome in these referendums, and strongly encourage other young people to vote in favour of the amendments. A Constitution which reflects the evolving nature of society demonstrates a commitment to progress and adaptation to societal needs. Through emphasising the importance of carers, diverse family structures and women's roles in society, we can enhance social cohesion by fostering a sense of belonging and respect in society. Amending our constitution will help to create a more just, equitable, and inclusive society where all individuals, regardless of their caregiving responsibilities, family arrangements, or gender, have equal opportunities to thrive and contribute fully to their communities. Recognising their contributions in the constitution validates the importance of their work and ensures that they receive the support and recognition they deserve.

"This referendum is about real people, real families, real lives and real struggles," said Aisling Maloney, a 21-year old UCD student. "As someone whose mother has acted as a care provider within our home since before I was born, these referendums are particularly personal to me. However, there is a lot of misinformation and disinterest on the referendums being spread across various social media platforms, with a recent poll from the Irish Times telling us that 53% of voters know 'hardly anything' about them. I would encourage all young people who are registered to vote to take their time in researching the referendums and decide on their own stance, as there are a lot of varying opinions and it's important to know your own stance on such important issues."

I am excited to vote for the first time but as the day gets closer I am becoming more stressed as I have not received my polling card yet," said Anna McWey, a 20-year old St. Patrick's, Carlow College student. "Many of my friends are also first-time voters and they are asking me what they need to bring. People are asking me what the referendum is on, what date it's on and what the proposed changes mean. This information should be more accessible if people have to do a certain amount of research just to figure out there is a referendum coming up and something is wrong."

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