

Minutes of the third meeting of the Equality Budgeting Expert Advisory Group

8th February 2019

Present

Ronnie Downes (Chair, DPER), Carol Baxter (DJE), Helen Johnston (NESC), Helen Russell (ESRI), Kieran Culhane (CSO), Laurence Bond (IHREC), Scline Scott (DoF), Deirdre Ní Néill (DJE) and Ciaran Lawler (DEASP), John Kinnane (DPER), John Burke (DPER), Caroline O'Loughlin DPER, Struan Charters (DPER) and Mary Dunne DPER.

Dr Fiachra Kennedy (DPER), Garrett Byrne (DJE), and Siobhan Barron (NDA) were presenting to the Group.

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 21st November

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed including a minor clarification from EASP.

2. Update from Expenditure Reform Section, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

DPER proposed including a page regarding Equality Budgeting on the DPER website; this was agreed to.

It was also agreed that the Group would operate under the Transparency Code. This would entail publication of the Group's terms of reference, agendas and minutes, which would facilitate awareness and interest in the Group's work, while also streamlining any issues of compliance linked to the Ethics in Public Office Act, for the benefit of non-civil-servant members of the Group.

The joint application by the Departments of PER and JE for funding from the EU Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) for a project titled 'Gender, Equality and Inclusion: Policy Mainstreaming, Implementation and Budgeting' was unfortunately not successful. DJE and IHREC noted their support in assisting with future relevant applications.

Also noted is the third Public Service Performance Report which is due for publication at end-April 2019 and will provide an update on Equality Budgeting.

- **Action: DPER to progress Equality Budgeting page on their website.**
- **Action: DPER to progress the Group's operation under the Transparency Code**

3. Update from Department of Justice and Equality

As part of the 63rd UN Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) in New York, Ireland will have representation at a side event on Wednesday 13th March 2019 regarding Gender Budgeting. Minister of State Stanton, as well as representatives from DJE, DPER and the NWCI are to participate, as are Government and Civil Society representatives from Uganda.

The preliminary work of COSC and the CSO regarding the Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland (SAVI) Report was also highlighted. A potentially useful study from Focus Ireland led by Paula Mayock from Trinity College Dublin regarding the linkage between domestic violence and homelessness was highlighted in discussion.

4. Equality Budgeting Appendix in the Revised Estimates Volume

DPER gave an overview on the Equality Budgeting Appendix that is included in REV 2019. The Appendix includes all indicators from the pilot, new indicators for 2019, as well as existing performance indicators that have an equality dimension. The thematic framework of the Appendix was considered useful in drawing together a range of equality goals.

- **Action: Group members to be asked for advice and suggestions regarding the thematic structure used in the REV, prior to its inclusion in annual Performance Report.**

5. Equality Budgeting Circular – Draft Heads

- **Action: It was agreed to move this agenda item to the next meeting to allow more time for discussion.**

6. Prevention and Early Intervention Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Dr Fiachra Kennedy from the Prevention and Early Intervention Unit, DPER gave a presentation on the Unit's work and its relevance to Equality Budgeting.

In discussion, the balance between universal schemes and individual outcomes was considered, along with the importance of the wider picture and the need for a data driven approach; as well as the potential impact of under-investment in certain spending areas. A final Report of the work of the Prevention and Early Intervention Unit is scheduled for publication by the end of year.

7. National Disability Inclusion Strategy

DJE and NDA gave presentations on the equality dimensions of disability, with a focus upon the National Disability Inclusion Strategy, the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities and the related work of DJE and the NDA. It was noted that the eight themes of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy had strongly influenced the thematic structure of the Equality Budgeting Appendix in the REV. In discussion, it was agreed that the previous work on identifying "budget relevant" recommendations in the National Strategy for Women and Girls could usefully be carried across to the disability sphere. On data, the potential for improved information exchange was discussed. The ongoing work of the DEASP in capturing data regarding disability was also noted.

- **Action – "Budget mapping" of disability recommendations to be pursued by DJE and DPER**
- **Action – Follow-up between CSO and DJE regarding data exchange potential.**

8. AOB

Next meeting to be held in late March/early April, date to be confirmed.