



# First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls

Website Summary

December 2018 Spotlight: Gender and participation

NOW IS THE TIME TO  
**CHANGE**  
FOR GOOD

**#GENERATION  
EQUAL**



## YOU SAID – WE LISTENED

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In December 2018, we invited public feedback on the Spotlight topic of gender equality and participation. We'd like to give a huge thank you to everyone who shared their experiences and ideas.

A full report has been given to the NACWG, and a summary version is shared below.

**Please note: these reports summarise the responses received to this open call for submissions. They do not represent the views of the National Advisory Council on Women and Girls (we are seeking feedback to gain more insight) nor do they represent a majority view or the view of the Scottish population. They represent the views of those organisations or individuals who have chosen, proactively, to respond.**

### Who did we hear from?

We had a great response and heard from both individuals and 'Wee Circle' discussions.

We heard from a range of genders, ethnicities, religions, ages, as well as from people with a disability.

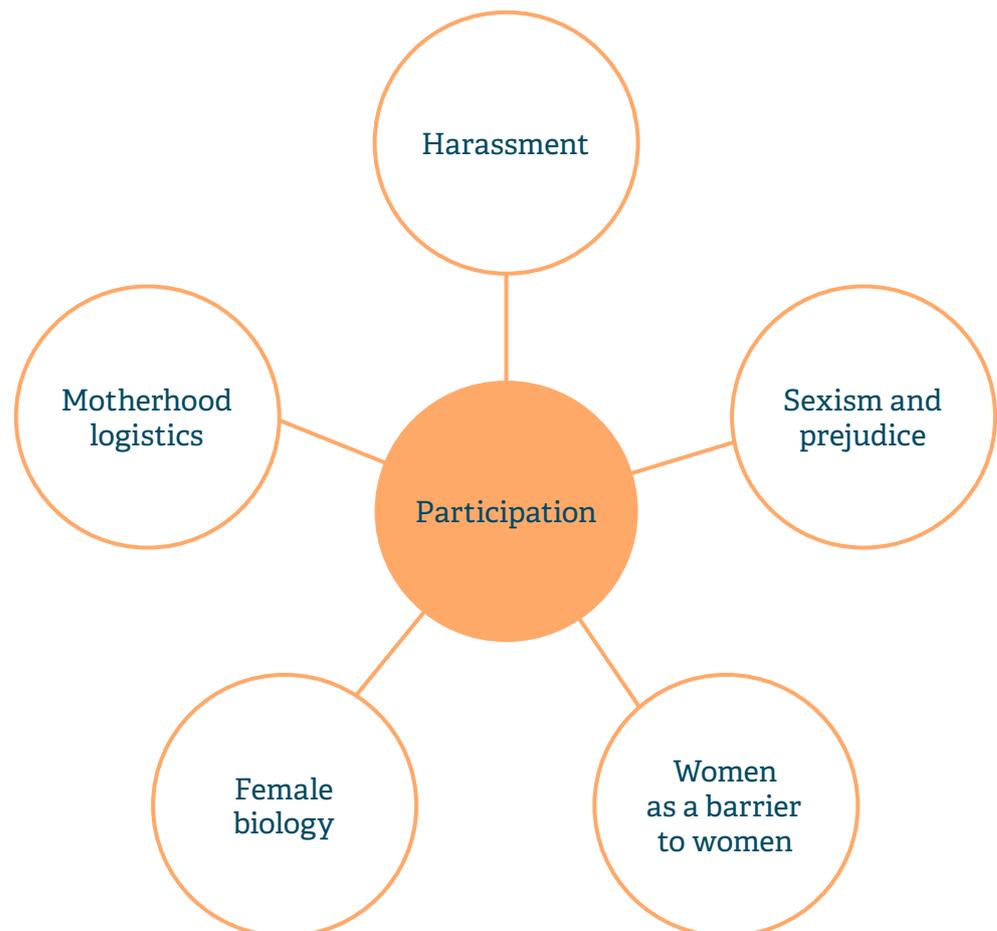
### WE ASKED THREE QUESTIONS:

- Q1. WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES AROUND WOMEN AND GIRLS PARTICIPATING IN WORK, CULTURE, POLITICS AND DECISIONS ABOUT OUR SOCIETY?**
- Q2. WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE FOR MORE WOMEN AND GIRLS TO PARTICIPATE IN WORK, CULTURE, POLITICS AND DECISIONS ABOUT SOCIETY?**
- Q3. WHAT ACTIONS SHOULD NACWG RECOMMEND SO THAT MORE WOMEN AND GIRLS PARTICIPATE IN WORK, CULTURE, POLITICS AND DECISIONS ABOUT SOCIETY?**



## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Feedback addressed various factors that can limit women and girl's participation. These included harassment, sexist attitudes and patriarchal prejudice, as elements of women's lives in general and also in the workplace. Other themes that emerged were women as a barrier to each other, biological factors that can impact participation and the logistics of motherhood. Feedback also covered the intersection of gender self-identification and participation.





# MAIN ISSUES



1.

## HARASSMENT

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Respondents highlighted how harassment, whether verbal or physical, at school, in the street or in the workplace, can also have a significant impact on participation.



## 2. SEXIST ATTITUDES

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Several responses suggested that sexist attitudes and patriarchal prejudice is still commonly found in all different environments in Scotland, from home, to school, sports and the workplace. Feedback suggested that many women believe a glass ceiling exists in numerous places of employment and that women's abilities are often diminished by senior managers.



## 3. WOMEN AS BARRIERS TO EACH OTHER

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There were several mentions of experiences whereby women have felt held back by a sense of competition among other women, and the idea that women sometimes see each other as threats to their won progress. There was also a suggestion of women silencing themselves for fear of their opinion somehow being wrong or not valued.



## 4.

# BIOLOGICAL FACTORS

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Feedback suggested that biological factors such as periods, pregnancy and menopause can limit participation at school, work and career progression into leadership and decision-making roles. There were mentions of missing school due to periods and the adverse professional effects of being pregnant.



## 5. LOGISTICS OF MOTHERHOOD

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The feedback recognised that becoming a mother can impact women's ability to participate. References were made to childcare and school holidays, which can disproportionately affect mothers over fathers. The high cost of childcare and moving into part-time work can compound the effects of motherhood.



## 6. TRANSGENDER ISSUES

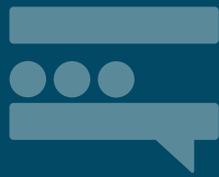
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Feedback highlighted concerns around women and girls' participation potentially being adversely affected by enhanced transgender rights.

### OTHER SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Specific areas of recommended action included: initiatives to encourage female professional development and progression, initiatives at school to promote respectful behaviour of boys and men, and promote female solidarity. Suggested actions also included developing greater understanding of the impact of female biology at school and work, policies to deliver equal parental leave, increased childcare provision, and crack down on harassment.

This is a summary of the response and can't highlight every individual point raised. However full feedback has been shared with the NACWG.



# THANK YOU

**Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their feedback – it is valuable.**

**We'd love as many people as possible to share their ideas on our next Spotlight topic. We have a new one every month.**