

Annual Conference 2023: Public and political participation of disabled people

Conference Programme

**Thursday, 26 October 2023, Aviva Stadium and online.**

# Welcome and registration

**9.30** Tea and Coffee

# Introduction to Annual Conference 2023

**10:00** Dr Aideen Hartney, Director, National Disability Authority.

**10.05 Welcome Address**  
Kathryn O’Donoghue,Chairperson, National Disability Authority.

**10.10** **Ministerial Address**  
Anne Rabbitte T.D., Minister of State with responsibility for Disability, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

# Session 1: International innovations for accessible voting

**10.20** **Chair:** Annette Costello, Member, Disability Stakeholder Group (DSG).

* Armin Rabitsch, Election Watch EU,
* Nellika Valder, Deputy Head of the State Electoral Office of Estonia,
* Cahir Hughes, Head of Electoral Commission Northern Ireland.

**10.55 Q&A**

**11:05 Break**

# Session 2: Accessibility of voting in Ireland

**11.20** **Chair:** Christabelle Feeney, Director of Employers for Change, at the Open Doors Initiative

* Dr Robert Sinnott, Coordinator of Voice of Vision Impairment,
* Dr Vivian Rath, Disability Equality & Human Rights Advocate,
* Art O’Leary, Chief Executive, An Coimisiún Toghcháin (The Electoral Commission).

**12.05 Q&A**

# Session 3: Participation in public life

**12.15** **Chair:** Siobhán McKenna, Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion at the Public Appointments Service (publicjobs.ie).

* Suzy Byrne, Regional Manager, National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities,
* Majella O’Keefe, County Kildare Access Network,
* Sinéad Friel, Chairperson, National Advisory Council of Down Syndrome Ireland.

**12:50 Q&A**

**13:00 Lunch**

# Session 4: Political participation of disabled people in Ireland

**13.40** **Chair:** Senator Dr Tom Clonan, Independent

* John Dolan, CEO, Disability Federation Ireland (DFI),
* Dr James Casey, Policy Officer, Independent Living Movement Ireland (ILMI),
* Brian Sheehan, CEO, Women for Election
* Lorraine Lally, Barrister at Law

**14:25**  Q&A

**14.35 Break**

# Session 5: Political representation of disabled people: International context and initiatives

**14.40** **Chair:** Noelle O’Connell, CEO, European Movement Ireland.

* Alejandro Moledo, Deputy Director & Head of Policy, European Disability Forum (EDF),
* Ethan Young, Access to Elected Office Fund, Inclusion Scotland,
* Florian Sanden, Policy Coordinator, European Network on Independent Living.

**15:25 Q&A**

# Wrap-up: Reflections from elected representatives

**15.35** **Chair:** Dr James Casey, Policy Officer, Independent Living Movement Ireland (ILMI)

* Ivana Bacik, TD, Labour Party,
* Pauline Tully, TD, Sinn Féin,
* Senator Martin Conway, Fine Gael.

**16:05 Conference Close and video message from Roderic O’Gorman, TD, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth**

Dr Aideen Hartney, Director, National Disability Authority.