

Hidden issue of gender discrimination must be addressed, says IFUT

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Gender discrimination is a ‘hidden’ problem which is forcing many women to ‘give-up’ on academic progression in the workplace, and must be addressed by employers and trade unions alike, according to Joan Donegan, Deputy General Secretary of the Irish Federation of University teachers (IFUT).

She was speaking in advance of a meeting in UCC (Wed. Feb 18th, 2015) *'Gender and Equality Issues in Higher Education'* as part of a national series of discussions on how women’s role in third-level education can be promoted and encouraged.

Joan Donegan said that recent CSO figures reveal an official complaint or legal action has been taken by just 10% of those who experienced discrimination in Ireland.

“Statistics show that women are being neither encouraged nor facilitated to progress to professorship or senior academic level in our universities. IFUT believes that there are many hidden cases of discrimination and that many women are simply ‘give-up’ on academic progression.

Other CSO stats show that almost 60% of people who experienced discrimination took no action at all – verbal, written, official or legal, she said

The UCC meeting, hosted by the local branch of IFUT, will be addressed by Joan Donegan; Dr Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington, who recently won a landmark equality case against NUIG and Dr Caitriona Ní Laoire of the School of Applied Social Studies will speak to this theme, drawing on current international research in the area and will speak about the international GENOVATE project.

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