

**FÓRSA**

# **PAST COVID: Building a fair and resilient society**

**Tuesday 9th November 2021**



# Timetable

**14.00 - 15.15**

## Quality public services

Paul Reid (HSE)  
Mary Murphy (Maynooth University)  
Daria Cibrario (PSI)

**Moderator:** Ruth Crowley

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**15.15 - 16.30**

## State priorities and resources

Rob Sweeney (TASC)  
Kevin Callinan (Fórsa)  
Catherine Mathieu (French Economic Observatory)

**Moderator:** Linda Kelly

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**16.30 - 17.45**

## The changing world of work

Shana Cohen (TASC)  
Beckie Wright (Unions21)  
Laura Bambrick (ICTU)

**Moderator:** Lisa Connell

The policy response to Covid-19 – here and abroad – involved a rapid and significant shift away from market-centred economic orthodoxy, with strong support for State-led responses to the pandemic’s massive public health and economic challenges.

We saw what can be achieved when the State mobilises financial, organisational and human resources for the common good, when people work together collectively, when citizens have equal access to essential goods and services, and when unions are engaged to help deliver solutions.

Fórsa and other unions in Ireland and Europe want to embed these principles into our future economic, social and business models as, at last, we emerge from the emergency.

There’s lots of talk of ‘building back better.’ But what does that mean in practice? And how can we build public and political support for a fair and strong economy, excellent public services available to all, secure and decent work, and concerted action on global heating and other huge challenges facing our planet and its people?

These three panel sessions will build on Fórsa’s work over the last 18 months to help turn our commitment to a better post-Covid society into practical policies capable of winning the argument, winning popular support, and winning a better future.

They will also inform a project commissioned by the union from TASC – Ireland’s think tank for action on social change – about how the State can and must address current and long-term challenges like high levels of inequality, planet-threatening carbon emissions, unequal and limited access to healthcare and other public services, and expensive childcare.

# Panel one: Quality public services

*Our public services stepped up to the mark during the pandemic, and now face huge pent-up non-Covid demand. Looking forward, how do we resource and organise the public sector to take on the pre-coronavirus shortcomings in health, housing, childcare and other public services and move to a future of high-quality public provision with services free at the point of use?*



**Paul Reid**

Paul is the Chief Executive Officer of the Health Service Executive. Paul has led large organisations in the private, not for profit, central and local Government sectors. Paul has the privilege of leading over 130,000 dedicated staff who deliver a wide

range of health services across Ireland. Paul is a passionate public servant whose vision for the health service is to focus on long term planning by implementing Sláintecare and delivering effective and safe services within available resources.

Paul holds a Masters in Business Administration from Trinity College, a BA in Human Resources and Industrial Relations from the National College of Ireland and is also an honorary fellow of the National College of Ireland. Paul is committed to building confidence and trust in our health service by supporting staff to deliver quality patient care through a new model of integrated services.



**Mary Murphy**

Mary is Professor and Head of Department in the Department of Sociology, Maynooth University, with research interests in eco social policy, participation income, gender and social security, globalisation and welfare states, and power and civil society. She co-

edited *The Irish Welfare state in the 21st Century Challenges and Changes* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2016) and *Policy Analysis in Ireland* (Policy Press, 2021).

An elected member of Dublin City Council (2003-2008), she is an active advocate for social justice, eco social welfare and gender equality. Previously a member of the National Expert Advisory Group and Tax and Social Welfare (2011-2014) and Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (2013-2017), in 2019 she was appointed to the Council of State.



**Daria Cibrario**

Daria is Local and Regional Government Officer at Public Services International (PSI). Prior to this role, Daria served as elected Political Secretary for the Food and Drink Sector at the European Federation of Food, Tourism and Agriculture

Trade Unions (EFFAT) in Brussels and as International Officer for the Food and Drink sector at the International Union of Food Workers (IUF) in Geneva. Daria holds a Masters in Politics of the World Economy from the London School of Economics.

# Panel two: State priorities and resources

*This session will address national spending priorities and how they can be resourced. The discussion will explore how national and European economic decisions can be shaped to support a high-productivity, high-skills economy with a strong social wage. One where all workers can expect security and an income capable of supporting a decent living standard, plus a strong safety net to support those unable to work.*



**Kevin Callinan**

Kevin is Fórsa's general secretary, and is currently president-elect of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). He had been chair of ICTU's influential Public Services Committee since 2019 and led the trade union side in the negotiations that resulted in the Building Momentum agreement.

Following a period as a branch activist and leader, Kevin worked as an official representing members in the health, local government, civil service, education and voluntary sectors. As national secretary for health he spearheaded many successful negotiations and disputes.

From 2010 Kevin led a change programme aimed at developing union strategic organising, training and campaigning capacity. In addition, until his appointment as General Secretary, he had responsibility for the union's growing education membership overseeing the creation of an education division in 2012.

Kevin is a trade union nominee to the National Economic and Social Council and to the National Competitiveness and Productivity Council. He has served as the Irish Executive Committee member of the

European Federation of Public Service Unions and is the current Irish member of the executive board of the global trade union federation Public Services International. He is also a member of the governing body of Justice for Colombia.



**Rob Sweeney**

Rob is the FEPS TASC Senior Economic and Policy Analyst. His work focuses on issues surrounding inequality. This includes income distribution, low pay, and working conditions. He has recently been, or is currently working on projects on international taxation, housing, and public sector reform.



**Catherine Mathieu**

Catherine is a Senior Economist at OFCE (Observatoire Français des Conjonctures économiques), Paris. She is President of the AIECE (Association d'instituts européens de conjoncture économique/Association of European Conjunction Institutes). Member of

EUROFRAME (European Forecasting Research Association for the Macro-Economy), a network of ten independent research institutes. Member of the TUREC network (Trade Unions Related Economists), ETUI. FMM Fellow (Forum for Macroeconomics and Macroeconomic Policies at IMK - Hans Boeckler Foundation, Düsseldorf).

Her main research interests are: Macroeconomic forecasting, European economic policies, UK economy.

Selected recent publications:

Álvarez N., G. Feigl, N. Koratzanis, M. Marterbauer, C. Mathieu, T. McDonnell, L. Pennacchi, C. Pierros, H. Sterdyniak, A. Truger and J. Uxó: "Towards a progressive EMU fiscal governance", Working paper 2019.13, ETUI, December 2019.

Mathieu C. and H. Sterdyniak: "Euro Area Macroeconomics, Where Do We Stand 20 Years Later?", Revue de l'OFCE, May 2019. Mathieu C.: "Brexit: What economic impacts does the literature anticipate?", Revue de l'OFCE, 167, September 2020.

# Panel three: The changing world of work

*The pandemic demonstrated that remote work and other innovations have the potential to refashion the organisation of work and its relationship with family and community time. How should trade unions respond to this - and the challenges and opportunities of digitisation, ageing populations, lack of access to high quality services like childcare, and a changing employment landscape - in ways that protect workers across the economy?*



**Shana Cohen**

Shana is the Director of TASC. She studied at Princeton University and at the University of California, Berkeley, where she received a PhD in Sociology. Her PhD analyzed the political and social consequences of market reform policies in Morocco

for young, educated men and women. Since then, she has continued to conduct research on how economic policies have influenced political and social identity, particularly in relation to collective action and social activism.

She has taught at George Washington University, the University of Sheffield, and most recently, University of Cambridge, where she is still an Affiliated Lecturer and Associate Researcher. Her areas of teaching have included global social policy, globalization, and human services.

Before coming to TASC, she was Deputy Director of the Woolf Institute in Cambridge. In her role at the Institute, she became engaged with interfaith and intercultural relations in Europe, India, and the Middle East.

Beyond academic research, Shana has extensive experience working with NGOs and community-based organizations in a number of countries, including Morocco, the US, the UK, and India. This work has involved project design, management, and evaluation as well as advocacy. She has consulted for the World Bank, the Grameen Bank Foundation, and other private foundations and trusts.



**Beckie Wright**

Becky is the executive director at Unions 21. Before this she was the Director of the TUC's Organising Academy and was responsible for the development and delivery of the Academy's training programme. She is an experienced organiser, having graduated from the Academy herself with the TSSA and went on to work on national and regional organising projects for private and public sector unions. Becky holds a BA (Hons) in Politics, an MRes as well as a Diploma in Education as well as having studied Contemporary European Labour Studies at Masters Level. She also acts as trainer/consultant for a variety of international union confederations.



**Dr Laura Bambrick**

Laura is the Head of Social Policy in the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Laura is a policy analyst and government specialist with an extensive knowledge of all the main public policy areas.

Prior to joining the Irish Congress of Trade Unions,

Laura worked as a policy advisor in the Office of the Assistant Secretary General at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, in the Social Justice and Policy Unit of the Society of Vincent de Paul National Office, and in the Office of the Tánaiste and Department of Social Protection.

She holds a PhD and Masters in social policy from Oxford University and a BA in social policy from Trinity College.