



The Law Reform Commission  
AN COIMISIÚN UM ATHCHÓIRIÚ AN DLÍ

#### ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

*Cohabitation: Models for Legal Reform* is the third Annual Conference of the Law Reform Commission. The Commission's Annual Conference in 2005 was entitled *Guardianship: A New Structure for Vulnerable Adults*, and its inaugural Annual Conference in 2004 was entitled *Modernising Irish Land Law and Conveyancing Law*.

The theme of this year's Conference was chosen to reflect the Commission's work in the area of cohabitation and to launch its Report on the topic. As part of its Second Programme for Law Reform (2000-2007), the Commission published a Consultation Paper in April 2004 on the *Rights and Duties of Cohabitees* (LRC CP 32-2004) which made provisional recommendations regarding cohabitants in areas such as property law, succession and health. Since 2004, the Commission has been engaged in a consultation process, which has included analysis of the many submissions received on the Consultation Paper and reflection on developments since its publication. In January 2006, the Commission hosted a seminar on the topic. This will culminate in the Report *Rights and Duties of Cohabitants* being launched at this Conference, which will include the Commission's final recommendations and draft legislative scheme.

*Cohabitation: Models for Legal Reform* is to be held on Friday 1 December 2006 at the O'Reilly Hall in UCD. It will address emerging themes concerning cohabitation against a background both nationally and internationally of social and legal change. It is open to all those with an interest in law, policy and family life.

#### SUBSTITUTE ATTENDANCE

If you are unable to attend, a substitute can attend in your place. Notification of any substitution should be made in advance of the Conference.

#### CANCELLATION

A cancellation received in writing before 17 November 2006 will be subject to a cancellation fee of €50 (€30 senior citizens and students). There will be no refund of fee for any cancellation received after 17 November 2006.

#### UNAVOIDABLE CHANGES

It may be necessary to make changes to the content and timing of the Conference Programme or to substitute speakers.

#### VENUE

The O'Reilly Hall is on the UCD campus at Belfield. Please use main University entrance from the Stillorgan Road. Note signage (right turn, then a left turn).

#### CAR PARKING

Please use Car Park Number 2. A map of Belfield campus indicating location of Car Park 2 is available on the Commission's website at [www.lawreform.ie](http://www.lawreform.ie)



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# Annual Conference 2006

## Cohabitation: Models for Legal Reform

Friday 1 December 2006

O'Reilly Hall, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4

## PROGRAMME

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 8:30 – 9:30   | Registration  |
| 9:30 – 9:40   | Chairperson's Address<br>The Hon Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness<br>President of the Law Reform Commission   |
| 9:40 – 9:55   | Launch of Commission Report<br><i>Rights and Duties of Cohabitants</i><br>An Tánaiste Michael McDowell TD<br>Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform          |
| 9:55 – 10:30  | Family Life and Cohabitation: a social science perspective<br>Professor Kathleen Kiernan<br>University of York, England   |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | Changing Patterns of Family Life in Ireland<br>Professor Tony Fahey<br>Economic and Social Research Institute, Ireland  |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Coffee  |
| 11:30 – 12:15 | Law Reform Commission's Recommendations<br>Patricia T Rickard-Clarke<br>Commissioner, Law Reform Commission   |
| 12:15 – 12:50 | Views of the Working Group on Domestic Partnership<br>Anne Colley<br>Chair, Working Group on Domestic Partnership<br>Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform |
| 12:50 – 1:00  | Questions and Answers   |
| 1:00 – 2:15   | Lunch   |
| 2:15 – 3:00   | Reform Proposals: a legal practitioner's perspective<br>Muriel Walls<br>Partner, McCann FitzGerald Solicitors   |
| 3:00 – 3:40   | Models of Reform in the European Context<br>Dr Jens Scherpe<br>Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, England   |
| 3:40 – 4:10   | Cohabitation: the UK Experience<br>The Rt Hon The Baroness Hale of Richmond<br>House of Lords, United Kingdom   |
| 4:10 – 4:25   | Panel Discussion and Questions  |
| 4:25 – 4:30   | Concluding Remarks by Chairperson   |

## BIOGRAPHIES

### The Hon Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness

Mrs. Justice McGuinness is the President of the Law Reform Commission and has been a judge of the High Court (1996 – 2000) and of the Supreme Court (2000 – 2006). Mrs. Justice McGuinness was called to the Irish Bar in 1977 and to the Inner Bar in 1989. Her main practice as a barrister was in the family law area. In addition to her legal and judicial career, Mrs. Justice McGuinness has served on An Bord Uchtála (the Adoption Board), the Voluntary Health Insurance Board, the National Economic and Social Council, the Second Commission on the Status of Women, and has chaired the National Social Services Board, the Board of the National College of Art and Design, the Employment Equality Agency, the Kilkenny Incest Investigation and the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation.

### Professor Kathleen Kiernan

Kathleen Kiernan has been Professor of Social Policy and Demography at the University of York since October 2004. Previously she was Professor of Social Policy and Demography at the London School of Economics and continues as Co-Director of the ESRC Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion located in the LSE. She was Research Director at the Family Policy Studies Centre in London; Deputy Director of the Social Statistics Research Unit at City University; a Senior Research Fellow at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and she began her career with the MRC on the National Survey of Health and Development. In 2006, she was awarded an OBE. Much of her research on family demography uses longitudinal data from the British Birth Cohort Studies including the 1946, 1958, 1970 and the Millennium Cohort Study, and more recently comparative data from a range of European countries and the USA.

### Professor Tony Fahey

Tony Fahey is a Research Professor in the Social Policy Research Division of the Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin. He holds a PhD in sociology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA (1982). He has published extensively on the family, religion, demography, the elderly, housing, and various aspects of social policy in Ireland and in Europe. He co-authored *Fertility and Family Issues in an Enlarged Europe* (2004) and *Consensus and Conflict: a study of values and attitudes in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland* (2005).

### Patricia T Rickard-Clarke

Patricia Rickard-Clarke is the full-time Commissioner with the Law Reform Commission having been a part-time Commissioner since 1997. Until 2002, she was a partner in the Private Client Department of McCann FitzGerald Solicitors where she was in private practice for over 20 years specialising in taxation and trusts. She is a member of STEP (Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners) and a consultant to the Probate Administration and Taxation Committee of the Law Society of Ireland. She has contributed to a number of publications on trust and succession law and has recently contributed to *Older People in Modern Ireland: Essays on Law and Policy* (2006).

### Anne Colley

Anne Colley is Chair of the Working Group on Domestic Partnership, established in 2006 by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. She is a practicing solicitor experienced in family law with Dillon Solicitors. She is also the current Chairperson of the Legal Aid Board and a member of the Private Residential Tenancies Board. She is a Council Member of the Law Society of Ireland and a former Chair of its Committee on Law Reform (2000-2002).

### Muriel Walls

Muriel Walls qualified as a solicitor in 1977 and became a partner in McCann FitzGerald Solicitors in 1992. She practices in their Private Client Department, specialising in family law. She has lectured and written extensively on the subject and is co-author of *The Law of Divorce in Ireland* and *The Irish Family Legislation Handbook*. She is a Fellow of the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, a member and former Chair of the Family Lawyers Association, and former Chair of the Law Society Committee on Family Law and Civil Legal Aid. She is a Board member of the Family Support Agency and an Associate of the Solicitors Family Law Association of England and Wales.

### Dr Jens M Scherpe

Jens Scherpe is a fellow and College Lecturer at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. He has studied law in Berlin, Copenhagen, Hamburg and Oxford. He began his academic career at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law in Hamburg, where he became a Research Fellow and was in charge of the department for the law of the Nordic countries. He was visiting fellow at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Temporary Lecturer at Trinity College, Cambridge, and Parsons Visitor at the University of Sydney. He is a member of the Legal Advisory Group of the Law Commission of England and Wales Cohabitation Project, *Cohabitation: The Financial Consequences of Relationship Breakdown*. He has published a wide range of articles and books, most recently an edited collection and comparative study of *The Legal Status of Cohabitants*.

### The Rt Hon The Baroness Hale of Richmond

Baroness Hale was the first woman to be appointed a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary in 2004, having previously served as a judge in the Family Division of the High Court and of the Court of Appeal. She was previously a member of the Law Commission of England and Wales after 18 years as an academic specialising in family law and social welfare law at Manchester University. As a member of the Law Commission, Baroness Hale was involved in the work leading to the Family Law Reform Act 1987, the Children Act 1989, the Family Law Act 1996 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. She is the author of *Mental Health Law* (1st ed 1975, now in its 4th edition), *The Family, Law and Society* (with David Pearl, 1st ed 1982, now in its 5th edition) and *Women and the Law* (with Susan Atkins, 1984).

## REGISTRATION

Please complete in full and in BLOCK CAPITALS only. Please use for one person only. For additional people please photocopy or book online at [www.lawreform.ie](http://www.lawreform.ie)

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## CONFERENCE FEE

€200 per delegate to include lunch  
€100 per delegate to include lunch (senior citizens & students)

To facilitate the organisation of the Conference and to ensure allocation of a place, bookings should be made by Friday 17 November 2006.

Please forward cheque or draft payable to the Law Reform Commission with completed registration form to:

Annual Conference  
Law Reform Commission  
35-39 Shelbourne Road  
Ballsbridge  
Dublin 4

Or register and pay online by credit card  
[www.lawreform.ie](http://www.lawreform.ie)

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