

IRISH COUNCIL *for* CIVIL
LIBERTIES
An Chomhairle um Chearta Daonna

**STRATEGIC
PLAN
2004-2009**

September 2003
As adopted by the Executive Committee of the ICCL

Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTION	3
Mission Statement.....	3
Vision.....	3
Strategic Plan	4
Chapter 2 – Current Environment	4
ICCL to date.....	4
Challenges.....	5
Chapter 3 – The Future.....	6
Goals.....	6
Campaign Plans	6
Strengthening the Human Rights Culture and	
Democratic Structures	6
Reform of the Criminal Justice System including	
policing and judicial accountability.....	8
Deepening the Culture of Equality	8
Organisational Activity	9
Research and Policy Development.....	9
Human Rights Networking.....	10
Education and Awareness Raising	11
Communications and Campaign development....	11
Litigation strategy	11
Chapter 4 – Resources and Capacity	12
Capacity- Organisational Development.....	12
Chapter 5 – Conclusions	14
External.....	14
Internal.....	14

Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties/An Comhairle um Chearta Daonna (ICCL) is an independent, voluntary membership organisation that works to defend and promote human rights and civil liberties in Ireland. It was founded in 1976 by, among others, Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Kader Asmal, Professor of Law and member of the South African government, and Justice Donal Barrington former high court judge, judge of the European Court of Justice and the first president of the Irish Human Rights Commission.

Mission Statement

The ICCL aims are to:

- defend and promote civil liberties and human rights of both individuals and groups;
- defend and promote women's rights as human rights;
- defend and promote international standards for human rights and civil liberties in Ireland;
- inform public opinion on matters impacting on civil liberties and human rights;
- monitor the situation of human rights and civil liberties in Ireland;
- carry out research on issues impacting on human rights and civil liberties;
- influence decision-making in areas relating to civil liberties and human rights;
- develop links with other national and international organisations working in the sphere of human rights and civil liberties;
- take any steps incidental to the achievement of these aims.

Vision

The ICCL shall be independent of all political and religious organisations and shall work actively to promote a tolerant, inclusive, pluralist, just and secular society in Ireland. Such a society benefits from the full participation in it of all its citizens and access by those citizens to sufficient resources to realise their rights.

The organisation shall carry out its work in an egalitarian, pluralist and inclusive manner. All of the ICCL's activities are to be carried out in accordance with the above aims. These aims apply to the internal structures, processes, activities and decision-making procedures.

Strategic Plan

The overarching goal of developing a Strategic Plan for the ICCL was to commit the ICCL to a set of strategic aims that go beyond immediate or reactive imperatives. The plan will provide a vision for ICCL which combines both the aspirations the ICCL has for real societal change that reflects a deeper understanding and practice of human rights, equality and participative democracy. It will provide a realistic template against which the work of the membership, Executive and staff of the organisation can be measured and a solid basis for further development beyond 2008. The ICCL accepts that planning is the key to managing change leading to sustainable development. That principle informs most of what is to follow in this document.

The journey to producing this Strategic Plan began with a consultation process conducted in 2002 that involved dialogue with the Executive Committee of the ICCL, its members, staff and with other Irish human rights organisations. That process was facilitated by Richard Reoch, an experienced facilitator who previously worked in a management position with Amnesty International. That process was followed up by a series of strategic planning meetings during the course of the current Director's tenure, facilitated by Chris O'Malley, Strategic Planning Officer, from Dublin City University. The meetings focused on the development of the ICCL as an organisation, and determining the key objectives and activities of the ICCL over the coming five years. What follows is the outcome of that long but worthwhile path.

Chapter 2 – Current Environment

ICCL to date

In 2001 ICCL celebrated its 25th Birthday. For most of those 25 years, the ICCL existed as a purely voluntary organisation, with the Executive Board operating as the driving engine of the organisation. The ICCL later hired an Executive Secretary to administer the office of the ICCL. In 1999 the ICCL appointed its first full time Director and in 2001 a Research and Parliamentary Officer both posts which greatly increased the ICCL capacity to continue its work.

In accordance with its aims and principles, the ICCL first became very active in campaigning about such traditional civil liberties as freedom of expression and association, freedom from arbitrary arrest, the right to silence and to a fair trial. As the ICCL developed, its work grew to include other areas of activity in particular the ICCL was one of the first organisations to focus on the right to equality, incorporating the right to freedom from discrimination on grounds such as socio-economic status, political opinion, gender, race, membership of the Traveller Community, family status, marital status, age, religion, sexual orientation, and disability. The ICCL is now also active in areas such as e-rights, mental health and disability, refugee rights and immigration issues.

The ICCL works by forming partnerships with other civil liberties and human rights groups in Ireland, Europe and the rest of the world. It is affiliated to the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), and works closely with the Committee on the Administration of Justice (Northern Ireland), British Irish Rights Watch, the Scottish Human Rights Centre and Liberty (England and Wales). Within Ireland, the ICCL works closely with Amnesty International, the Children's Rights Alliance, the Forum for Persons with Disabilities, the Irish Penal Reform Trust, the Irish Refugee Council and the Refugee Project of the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace amongst others.

Over the 27 years since ICCL was founded, the change to political landscape has changed immensely and the ICCL is evolving to meet those challenges.

Challenges

There have been huge changes in the demography of Ireland. The growth and expansion of the EU, conflict within and external to Europe, economic migration has all impacted on Ireland. There has been greater migration to Ireland which has brought greater diversity, new communities and cultures.

Developments in Northern Ireland, in particular the developments post the Good Friday Agreement have had significant impact on the Republic of Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement enshrines obligations and commitments to improve and enhance the system of rights protection on both sides of the border and significantly obliges the Irish government to provide at least equivalent human rights protection. The establishment of the Human Rights Commission is a direct result of the Good Friday Agreement as is

the move to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights.

At an international level, the realisation and actualisation of the holistic nature of civil and political rights with economic and social rights and the link between human rights, poverty and social inclusion also poses new challenges for Irish society. It is now widely accepted, although not universally, that economic and social rights can only truly be delivered if placed on an equivalent legal footing as civil and political rights. Ireland has chosen not to incorporate any of its international obligations and the Minister for Justice at the time of writing has repeatedly taken the opportunity in public to reiterate his opposition to economic and social rights.

An over arching challenge to the ICCL remains the need to gain the support of the majority view – to mainstream the debate on human rights. The establishment of the Human Rights Commission, for which the ICCL campaigned, will hopefully contribute to meeting this challenge. It also means for the ICCL that it will need to address the balance of operating in a small jurisdiction with the Human Rights Commission.

Chapter 3 – The Future

Goals

The overarching goal of this Strategic Plan is to commit the ICCL to a set of strategic aims that go beyond immediate or reactive imperatives. The plan will provide a vision for ICCL which combines both the aspirations the ICCL has for real societal change that reflects a deeper understanding and practice of human rights, equality and participative democracy. It will provide a realistic template against which the work of the membership, Executive and staff of the organisation can be measured and a solid basis for further development beyond 2008. The ICCL accepts that planning is the key to managing change leading to sustainable development. That principle informs most of what is to follow in this document.

In the five-year period covered by this plan the overarching objectives of the ICCL will be:

- To stimulate public consciousness, national institutions and human rights groups throughout Ireland on the need to create and defend the values of a human rights culture;
- To sustain the unique leadership role played by the organisation in the protection of core civil liberties in Ireland by focusing on lead issues that are thought to be the necessary cutting edge for the defence of civil liberties and promotion of human rights in the coming years;
- To work with other human rights organisations, as well as human rights agencies established by the Irish Government, on a range of other human rights issues to which the ICCL can bring its unique expertise;
- To carry out specialised research and policy development work necessary for the ICCL to achieve the foregoing aims;

- To increase the capacity of the organisation to meet the challenges of the next five years, by securing increased and diversified funding for its activities

In pursuit of all of the foregoing objectives the ICCL will endeavour to ensure maximum diversity and pluralism in participation at every level of the organisation throughout the period of this plan.

Campaign Plans

The ICCL proposes to extend and deepen its core activities over the next 5 years. The three broad areas which the ICCL intends to advance have been identified as follows:

1. Strengthening the Human Rights Culture and Democratic Structures
2. Reform of the Criminal Justice System including policing and judicial accountability
3. Deepening the culture of Equality

The ICCL intends to achieve these goals by carrying out the following activities:

4. Research and Policy Development
5. Human Rights Networking
6. Education and Awareness Raising
7. Communications and Campaign development
8. Organisational Development

Strengthening the Human Rights Culture and Democratic Structures

The ICCL sees itself as a key catalyst in the strengthening of the human rights culture and democratic structures within Ireland. As this

is the overarching goal of ICCL there are a number of core activities that we intend to engage in to continue to profile the importance of human rights in Ireland and there are also a number of specific campaigns that we will launch over the next five years:

1. In raising awareness of human rights we believe it is important to maintain a high profile of human rights issues on the public agenda. We will therefore continue to hold a number of policy seminars on timely issues that arise for example in the context of legislative proposals or are identified by working groups. We will also continue to host the ICCL Annual Lecture involving a prominent, internationally-recognised speaker;
2. The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Act 2003 is pending implementation. This will give effect to the rights in the ECHR in Irish law for the first time. However there is little widespread awareness of the rights and how the Convention can be used in a positive way. For the ECHR to be effective everyone must know of the rights they are entitled to under the Convention and the obligations placed on public bodies. We therefore intend to raise public awareness of the ECHR among the general public and among public authorities and governmental bodies. We will do this through widespread provision of information of the rights in the Convention in a brochure format that is accessible to all. We will campaign via the Human Rights Commission for a public education programme learning from what happened in the United Kingdom when the ECHR was made part of law there in 1998 – 2000. The ICCL already uses the Convention standards in making submissions to government, and has been raising awareness of it within the human rights network e.g with disability rights activists, community activists and health workers. The ICCL will also provide training on the Convention and its application. We will develop “human rights proofing” tools that we will seek to encourage bodies, statutory and non-statutory, to use in their work. We will also look to support cases being brought under the Act

which challenges flaws and gaps in Irish law. Finally, the ICCL will also monitor the operation of the Act and lobby for improvements to the legislation, unilaterally and with others such as the Human Rights Commission who have criticised the many flaws in the Bill.

3. Beyond the Convention it is essential that Ireland’s other international human rights obligations have greater influence in the domestic context. The ICCL will perform human rights audits corresponding to the periodic examinations of the Irish Government’s reports under international conventions and encouraging other groups to engage with these processes through awareness-raising about their potential. The ICCL has demonstrated how successful such audits can be as a tool for holding government accountable in their use by international committees, but also their use as a tool domestically for lobbying for improved human rights legislation. The ICCL is currently using the recommendations of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to lobby in the areas of disability, and with community groups in a joint project (ICCL, ICTU, CAJ, CPA and NIVT) on economic, social and cultural rights “Rights in Action”. The ICCL is also upgrading its website to provide people with access to all the international human rights treaties to which Ireland is a party, the government and UN reports relating to Ireland’s performance under the treaties, and NGO submissions on Ireland’s performance.
4. Human rights standards are most relevant and understandable to people when they are examined in the context of the democratic framework within which they operate. The ICCL, together with *tasc*, will be conducting a democracy assessment looking at the quality of democracy in Ireland. Such assessments, with a strong rights based focus, have been conducted in many countries around the world; most close to Ireland is in the UK. The inter-relationship between rights and the quality of democracy is a mainstream issue at the international level of human rights and since, the shift in

global and local politics since the tragedy of September 11 2001, is becoming an all the more important focus point. Individual's rights, their access to democratic processes and their ownership of the decision making processes which effect their lives are a key element to a human rights based society. The ICCL role will be, as the expert organisation in the area of rights, to lead the rights based approach in this project. The assessment will help to pin point the areas where lack of access and enjoyments of rights impacts on the quality of democracy and we will use the assessment to lobby for change in these areas. The funding for this project will be sought, through *tasc*, from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Foundation.

Reform of the Criminal Justice System including policing and judicial accountability

The ICCL sees improvements in the criminal justice system as a central element to a human rights based society. The ICCL has identified three stages to the criminal justice system – the pre-trial stage, including police conduct and accountability; the trial stage; and the post-trial stage including sentencing and penal policy - which we will focus on over the next five years. The issue of judicial accountability is also crucial in Ireland, where no system as such exists. The issues which the ICCL will focus on are:

1. On the basis of its position paper published in March 2003, the ICCL will campaign for the establishment of an effective independent Gardaí Ombudsman, in line with the office of the Police Ombudsman in Northern Ireland. The ICCL will also campaign for further reform in the democratic accountability of the police in restructuring of local policing and parliamentary scrutiny. We will also be conducted a review of police and public order powers for compatibility with human rights standards and best practice. There are a number of issues, including the video

- recording of police interviews, the right to have a lawyer present during interviews, which we will be focusing on to exact changes.
2. The ICCL also believes that there are many aspects of the criminal trial process that require scrutiny and reform. In 2000 a Review of the Criminal Justice system in Northern Ireland was published with recommendations for improving the impact of human rights principles on the system. We believe that a similar review should take place in the Republic of Ireland, and that recommendations from the Northern Ireland review can be implemented here.
3. Juvenile Justice and Sentencing Issues. Although always on the fringes of ICCL's work, ICCL has not had the capacity to carry out in-depth policy work in this area. We have begun to form alliances with other organisation to establish a juvenile justice alliance to look at ways of addressing juvenile justice. We also believe that the acceptance of alternative forms of justice in the area of juvenile justice will set the way for consideration of use of restorative justice principles in other areas, that international practice shows can be more effective than resort only to custodial sentencing.
4. The lack of judicial training and accountability in Ireland is a major gap in our system and directly impacts on the quality of justice delivered. In 2003 two judges made pronouncements from the bench relating to race and there are constant examples of inconsistencies among the application of the law by judges. There is in Ireland however, no effective means of holding them to account. There are few bodies that are willing to grapple with the thorny issue of judicial training and accountability but the ICCL believes that it has to. We intend to campaign over the coming years for the establishment of judicial accountability systems and judicial training.

Deepening the Culture of Equality

To achieve a deepening of the equality culture the ICCL has set itself three goals in this area:

1. To improve and enhance the existing equality legislation. The ICCL will work to forge an effective coalition that will lobby to protect the existing equality legislation and the resources dedicated to its enforcement. The ICCL wants to see a widening of the grounds that are protected from discrimination. We will campaign for equality proofing to be a statutory obligation in legislation and in delivery of public services.
2. Equality cannot be achieved by those marginalized, who cannot access and avail of their rights themselves. This can only be done where there is an effective advocacy system in place that works for those communities who are otherwise excluded from fighting for their own rights. The ICCL intends to work with stakeholders in the sector for the establishment of an effective advocacy system in Ireland.
3. One specific area of equality that the ICCL has historically worked in is that of equal rights for gay and lesbians, in particular in 1990 ICCL published “Equality Now” setting out the case not only for de-criminalisation of homosexual acts, but for full equal rights for gays and lesbians. In light of the Equality Authority Report on Partnership rights and the National Economic Social Forum’s endorsing of the report, the ICCL will campaign with gay rights organisations for full recognition of partnership rights outside of marriage.

Organisational Activity

In order to secure real impact in the goals we have set ourselves the ICCL will need to expand its capacity to carry out research and campaign work. Further recruitment of staff and greater expenditure on networking, communications, policy development and office infrastructure will be required. The ICCL also considers that it will be necessary to hire a practicing solicitor in the later stages of its strategic

plan, to enable it to develop a litigation strategy to achieve some of its goals.

Research and Policy Development

In order for it to be able to carry out its campaigns above, the ICCL will be conducting and commissioning research in several identified policy areas in 2004 through to 2006. This research would then be used to support major campaigns by the ICCL. The areas of research include:

- The gaps in privacy protection in Ireland
- A democracy assessment from the perspective of the level of protection and enjoyment of rights in Ireland
- Research into the criminal justice system and comparative standards to Northern Ireland
- Research into penal policy including juvenile justice
- Research into effective systems of advocacy

In order to conduct this research the ICCL recognises the need to complement its research and policy capacity. This will be done in two ways. The first is an increase in in-house capacity.

The existence of a Research and Parliamentary Officer was the first step in moving to a professional organisation that could conduct, commission and manage its policy development. That work however cannot continue without greater research capacity. The ICCL considers that to achieve this it will recruit in 2004 two research officers – one who will concentrate on the area of criminal justice and one in the area of broader democracy and equality. The first role would need to be filled by a lawyer; the second post could be filled by a person with a broader background. The role of Research and Parliamentary Officer would be replaced with a Senior Research and Policy Officer who would lead and develop the research, conduct some research and

develop the research base into policy for lobbying and campaigning to achieve our objectives.

The second way of developing our policy capacity is to ensure that the ICCL develops links with experts in their field who will advise, oversee and assess the research work of the ICCL. The ICCL intends to develop a panel of advisory boards in its areas of research. The panel would guide the researcher where necessary and provide expert insight and evaluation of the research. The panels will exist only for the length of the research project.

ICCL will also seek to establish a panel of “Lawyers for Liberty” – made up of solicitors and barristers with whom ICCL can forge closer links, call on for advice in areas of expertise and also, where necessary, refer cases to. The risk in changing from a voluntary organisation to a professional organisation is that the expertise, which was once contributed on a voluntary scale, may be lost in the face of a professional office. This need not however be the case and the ICCL considers it essential, in order to maintain its authority in the area, to continue to involve the legal profession in assisting the work of the ICCL. We believe that a panel of “Lawyers for Liberty” will help to achieve this.

Human Rights Networking

The ICCL has, and will continue to network with other campaigning organisations and NGOs so that the legal expertise and authority on human rights issues which we typically bring to campaigns will continue to be resources that can be used by others.

The ICCL therefore has set out an objective to further forge and deepen links with other NGOs, statutory bodies, academic institutions and the media in order to ensure that the ICCL’s resources are best

used and available to others and that there is a coherency in the campaigns which affect a large number of stakeholders.

One aspect of this will be to improve and upgrade the ICCL’s methods of publishing and disseminating information. This is also a crucial element to the development of ICCL’s communications strategy discussed below. Elements of this work have already commenced, but there are still many areas that need improvement:

- The ICCL has already commenced in upgrading the ICCL’s web-site and internet communications, through the purchase of software and hiring expert assistance. We are moving to the establishment of an on-line library of ICCL publications, the provision of a comprehensive set of links to other organisations and relevant research and the establishment of e-mail lists which can be used to rapidly disseminate news and updates.
- The ICCL has begun to revamp the Newsletter and to increase its frequency to 5 – 6 times a year. It is intended that it will become an invaluable source of information on human rights activities and campaigns.
- The ICCL library is currently under-used as a lack of space prohibits it being opened up to more general access. The ICCL proposes that access to the library be opened up to members, other campaigning organisations, researchers and members of the public. An administrative assistant has been hired to help with this project.

Part of the changing human rights landscape within Ireland is the establishment of various statutory bodies such as the Equality Authority and the Human Rights Commission. The ICCL proposes to work with other NGOs to monitor and track these agencies while at the same time working with these agencies.

Education and Awareness Raising

To create widespread support for a greater human rights approach, the ICCL is aware that there is a significant need for greater awareness raising and education amongst the general public and governmental bodies of human rights standards, principles, law and obligations. The ICCL believes that its objectives for change cannot be achieved without developing the level of awareness in Ireland of human rights standards and educating people about their rights. Although it is hoped that the Human Rights Commission will lead the way in this field, the ICCL itself must also build up its capacity to change opinions and gather support for its campaigns by raising awareness. The introduction of the ECHR provides an ideal opportunity to commence a strategy of education and training. The development of education and training programmes will also be a source of generating income for the ICCL's campaigns.

Communications and Campaign development

In order to achieve the level of impact desired with its campaigns the ICCL will need to develop a coherent communications and campaign strategy. This will be achieved in the first instance through working with an independent expert communications company, such as Montague Communications. The company will help ICCL to strategise and build up a communications policy that will be suited to the different campaigns that we will be seeking to engage in over the five years.

In 2005 as the strategic plan moves into a more intense lobbying and campaigning phase, the ICCL will seek to recruit a campaigns and communication officer who will work with the Director and Senior Policy and Research Officer to implement the campaigns built on the back of ICCL research and policy development. The ICCL will still need to avail of the services of a communications company to assist in the effective delivery of our campaigns.

Litigation strategy

Public interest litigation, test cases and taking cases to the European Court of Human Rights are tried and proven methods of enforcing human rights that are not otherwise being respected. Litigation can lead to significant changes and improvements in the law and in public policy, if pursued on a rights-based agenda.

In Ireland there has been limited use of litigation as a general tool of seeking reform. The Free Legal Advice Centres are one of the leading organisations to use strategic litigation as a means of seeking improvements particularly in the field of access to court and legal assistance. The Human Rights Commission also has a specific remit to intervene in cases and instigate cases in its own name.

The introduction of the European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003 will present a new opportunity to use the tool of the ECHR in a litigation strategy to achieve improvements in the implementation and respect for human rights standards. In addition to the Convention, the Constitution, the Equality laws and similar legislation offers the opportunity to pursue a litigation strategy with the aim of securing and enforcing human rights, and seeking redress for violations. The ICCL believes that this is an important and underused strategy. In light of the role of FLAC and the Human Rights Commission, the ICCL has decided to keep this strategy under review with the aim of developing a litigation strategy that complements the work of the other organisations. The ICCL would then look at recruiting a full-time in house solicitor to assist in this strategy.

Chapter 4 – Resources and Capacity

Capacity- Organisational Development

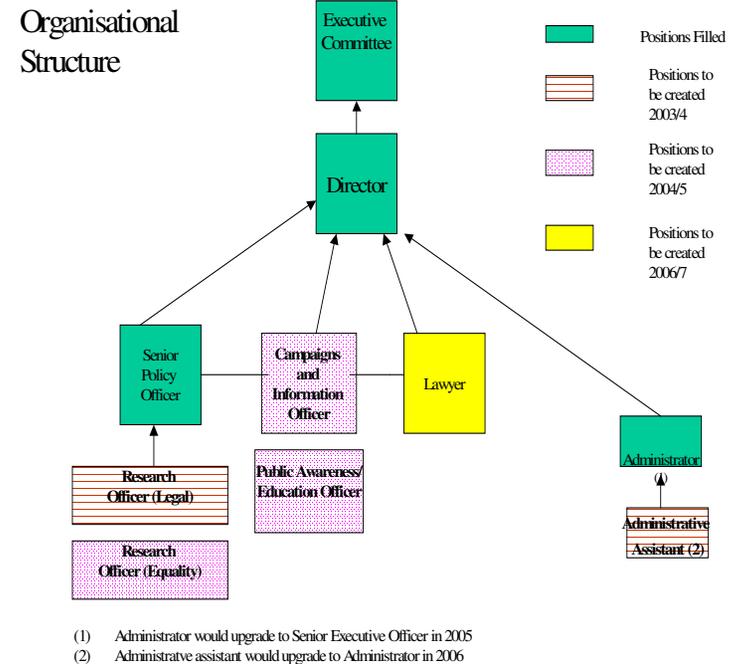
The ICCL currently has a staff of 3.5 persons. The ICCL envisages growing to 9 persons over the coming years.

The first posts will be to increase its capacity in policy development, backed up by solid research. To do this the ICCL wishes to replace the post of research and parliamentary officer with a senior research and policy post and to recruit two more junior research and policy officers. One policy officer would be recruited for the area of criminal law reform, the other to facilitate and manage the area of our equality and democracy work. The senior research officer would be responsible for managing the research and the overall development of policy in our human rights and legislative work.

The ICCL also intends to hire an education officer who can develop and manage our training and education programme, and a campaigns and communications officer to implement and manage the ICCL campaigns.

The ICCL also intends to recruit an in-house solicitor in 2006/7 to facilitate the development of a litigation strategy, the provision of information on legal rights and to assist in legislative drafting. This post would also be the direct link between the panel of “Lawyers for Liberty” and the office.

As the number of staff within the ICCL increases over the five year period, the ICCL will also need to increase its administrative support. It is therefore proposed that the Administrators post will be upgraded to a senior post in 2006 and the part-time administrative assistant would be a full-time post.



Income

The strategic plan outlined will only be realised if greater funding is secured by the ICCL. As the vast majority of funding for the community and voluntary sector in Ireland comes from the government, the ICCL recognises the real challenge in meeting its funding needs, as it does not seek, nor would it accept, government money for its work. The ICCL continues to see this policy of key importance to its independence and allows it to speak out, uncompromised, on issues of human rights that do not enjoy government support or popularity.

Its funding policy means that the ICCL is dependent on its income from membership fees, donations, grants from trust funds and income generating activities. This policy has led the ICCL to be heavily dependent on its two key funders, Atlantic Philanthropies, and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Foundation for the salaries of staff and fulfilment of its core activities.

The ICCL is aware of the need to diversify its funding sources and to rebalance the proportions of funding it obtains from different sources. The ICCL will develop a fundraising strategy during the period of the strategic plan not only to

The ICCL aims to develop its funding base along the following lines:

Source	Income		
	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Charitable Foundations	90%	80%	70%
Membership/Donations	3%	5%	12%
Research Grants	3%	10%	10%
Conferences/Training	2%	3%	5%
Publication	2%	2%	3%

Chapter 5 – Conclusions

The ICCL aims that if it were to be successful in realising its ambitious strategic plan that at the end of the period covered by the plan, the following would have changed:

External

In the area of Criminal Justice Reform (including Police and Judicial Accountability)

- There will be greater accountability structures for the Gardaí and reformed police and public order powers
- There will be identifiable improvements in rights of representation for accused persons and safeguards during the trial process will be strengthened
- There will be pilot and permanent schemes of alternative forms of justice in operation
- There will be effective training for the judiciary, specifically in the area of equality, racism and human rights and a mechanism in place for holding the judiciary accountable

In the area of Human Rights And Democracy

- There will be legislation in place, or proposed, for a broad based Human Rights Act incorporating civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights
- There will be a comprehensive Democracy Assessment conducted that will be used to identify the weakness in the quality of democracy and rights protection in Ireland

- The right to privacy in Irish law will be further protected and strengthened

In the area of Equality

- There will be a statutory obligation to carry out equality proofing of legislation and policy
- There will be a system of advocacy in place that effectively represents excluded groups
- There will be legislation recognising partnerships outside of marriage in particular for same sex couples and full rights of family outside of marriage will be recognized

Internal

The ICCL will increase its human resources capacity to a potential 9 staff members.

The ICCL will incorporate as an organisation, so that the office of the ICCL is a company limited by guarantee and will seek charitable status.

The ICCL will also devise, develop and implement a fundraising strategy that will lead to securing funding from diversified sources.