**Gender pay gap information Bill, 2019**

The Government has published the much-anticipated Gender Pay Gap Information Bill 2019. The Bill has been presented to Dáil Éireann where it now awaits Fourth Stage.

A recent EU survey found that only 26% of Europeans were aware of the legal guarantee of equal pay for equal work in their country. Nonetheless, the survey indicated that a clear majority were aware of the gender pay gap, with 69% of Europeans thinking that women are paid less than men.

According to figures collected by the Central Statistics Office, in 2008 Ireland’s gender pay gap stood at 17%. In 2016, Ireland’s gender pay gap had reduced to 13.9%. However, a gender pay gap of nearly 14% remains high, by any objective measure.

**Gender Pay Gap Information Bill 2019 – Measures that must be contained in the Regulations**

* Employers to publish information relating to the pay of their employees for the purpose of showing whether there are differences in such pay referable to gender and, if so, the size of such differences.
* The information which must be published by employers under the regulations includes the following:

1. the difference between both the mean and the median (1) hourly pay of male and female employees;
2. the difference between both the mean and the median bonus pay of male and female employees;
3. the difference between both the mean and the median hourly pay of part-time male and female employees;
4. Percentage of male and female employees who received bonuses and benefits in kind.

In addition, employers will be required to publish, concurrently with the above gender pay gap information, the reasons for such differences and the measures (if any) taken or proposed to be taken by the employer to eliminate or reduce such differences.

* The regulations will only apply to employers with 250 or more employees in the first two years after introduction.
* In the third year, the requirements will also apply to employers with 150 or more employees.
* Thereafter, the requirements will apply to employers with 50 or more employees.
* The regulations will not apply to employers with fewer than 50 employees.

It is likely that a central website onto which employers will be required to upload their information will be established.

The Government has indicated that this legislation may come into effect later this year. Given this relatively short lead in time, we recommend that employers take steps now to establish whether gender pay gaps exist in their organisations and consider the steps that they can take to reduce/eliminate a gender pay gap ahead of time.