

PRESS RELEASE

3rd March 2010

Nearly 60% of all births to unmarried parents are to parents living at the same address, clearly showing that cohabitation is on the rise. Yet these families, though treated in the same way as married couples by the Department of Social and Family Affairs, are seriously disadvantaged within the tax system if one of them chooses to be a stay-at-home parent. They are treated very differently than married parents.

Treoir, the national federation of services for unmarried parents and their children, urged the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social and Family Affairs to recommend treating cohabiting couples in the same way as married couples in both the income tax and social welfare systems. In the short term this would mean that cohabiting parents with one income would benefit by the tax credits and bands of both of them. In the long term, Treoir recommends that the income tax and social welfare systems be completely individualised.

Treoir also recommends that state support for families should be focused on children rather than parents. Then the living and working arrangements of the parents would be irrelevant in families receiving benefit. Treoir recommends that the current supports to families – Child Benefit, Family Income Supplement and Qualified Child Allowances should be collapsed into one payment and added to the savings achieved through the

individualisation of the Income Tax system to make a single substantial payment of all children.

For further information please contact:

Margot Doherty

Assistance Chief Executive

Treoir

087 2263164

margot@treoir.ie

Treoir is the national federation of services for unmarried parents and their children whose main aim is to promote the rights and welfare of unmarried families. It provides a national information service to unmarried parents and those involved with them. See www.treoir.ie