



The National Federation of Services for
Unmarried Parents and their Children

Treoir Press Release 11th October 2016

BUDGET 2017: Protecting the most vulnerable?

Treoir welcomes a number of important measures in Budget 2017 that will make a positive difference for many in particular:

- €5 increase in **all weekly social welfare payments** in line with state pension
- **Christmas bonus** for those on social welfare will rise to 85%
- **Medical card** for all children who receive domiciliary care allowance
- New **Single Affordable Childcare Scheme** from September 2017 for children between six months and 15 years and universal subsidies for all children aged six months to three years
- **Early Years funding** to rise by 35% to €465m
- €36.5m increase in funding for **higher and further education**
- Additional €105m to enable 15,000 more households to avail of the **Housing Assistance Payment Scheme (HAPS)**
- €28m increase in allocation for **emergency accommodation** to €100m
- **47,000 new social housing units** by 2021
- €100 increase in **Home Carers' Credit** to €1,100
- Reduction of each of the three lower USC rates by half a percent (1% rate will drop to 0.5%, the 3% will drop to 2.5% and the 5.5% rate will drop to 5%)
- Increase of the ceiling for the 2.5 % band rate
- 2.5% USC rate ceiling increased from €18,668 to €18,772

Treoir acknowledges that there are many social competing demands however Budget 2017 fails to prioritise and allocate resources fairly. Despite economic growth, many families are still living in significant poverty. Lone parents' deprivation levels were in 2013 twice as high as deprivation experienced by the general population. As many aspects of our economy are recovering it is imperative that addressing children's poverty, in particular lone-parent families, are prioritised.

Greg Straton, Chief Executive Officer of Treoir, the National Federation of Services for Unmarried and their Children, says: "*we welcome some of the*

measures in particular the €5 increase in weekly social welfare payments which was long overdue. However, this amount falls short in addressing the significant increase of the cost of living in recent years. It is particularly disappointing that the childcare measures will not be effective until September 2017.”

Treoir believes that Budget 2017 fails to introduce specific measures to support lone parents to move off the one-parent family payment and to transition to sustainable employment and out of social welfare. In addition, Budget 2017 has ignored once more the opportunity to review the operation of the Single Person Child Carer Tax Credit to make it automatically available to the qualifying secondary carer when the primary carer does not claim it.

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Notes to the Editor:

About Treoir

Treoir is the Irish word for direction and guidance. Treoir is a membership organisation which promotes the rights of unmarried parents (both opposite and same sex) and their children in Ireland. Treoir operates a National Specialist Information Service for unmarried expectant parents, unmarried parents, their families and those involved with them and advocates on their behalf.

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