

TREOIR ANNUAL REPORT 2021



A Note from the Chairperson

As Chair of Treoir, I am pleased to present our annual report which highlights the work done over the last year. Treoir means direction and guidance which aptly describes the aspirations of the organisation which was set up to provide an information service for its members.



While the rights of children to know their biological identity and to participate in everyday family life are increasingly being recognised, our annual report shows that mothers, fathers and other relatives or kin seek advice and information from Treoir on how to “do family lives” in changing circumstances arise. Queries such as, can a father have access to his children who live with their mother? Is a mother entitled to get child maintenance from the child’s father?

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Veronica Black our esteemed Information and Training Officer for her continuous compilation and updating of our legal and social welfare information, for her staff training and for the provision of our outreach training programmes, offered on Zoom during the pandemic.

Treoir also contributes to policy formation and development as can be seen from our many submissions made to government, working groups and other committees. They address many policy and legal issues long familiar to Treoir – child maintenance, reform of the family law system and gender equality. In our response to a Department of Justice led review of Guardianship in 2021, we recommended that formal registration and certification of legal guardianship for unmarried fathers whose names were on the child’s birth certificate be implemented. I would like to thank Mary Roche, our policy officer for her continuous work in advocating policy and legal reforms.

While teenage pregnancies have declined over time, Treoir continues to coordinate the Teen Parent Support Programme with a focus on the school completion project. Its coordinator Margaret Morris has played a major advocacy role in identifying barriers to the progression of young parents into further and higher education. On behalf of Treoir, I would like to thank Margaret Morris for her extensive work in this area.

The Shared Parenting Programme emerged from several calls from parents who wanted to parent together after a breakdown in their relationship but who needed guidance and support to enable them

to do so. The Let’s Work it Out emerged as a pilot programme in response to their needs. It was funded by Rethink Ireland. While we await its evaluation, the overall impressions are positive. Special thanks are due to Samantha Dunne for developing this innovative programme.

Our newest initiative is Kinship Care, which provides information, support, advocacy and research to highlight the needs and experiences of kinship families. They include aunts, uncles and maternal grandparents and other relatives who help to raise children. Research by Emma Byrne who leads this project has already identified key barriers experienced by Kinship Carers who were denied Guardianship payments, as the children they cared for were neither “orphaned” or “abandoned”. Treoir will continue to research and advocate in this area.

All of these programmes rely on Sharon Kavanagh’s work as Finance and Administration Officer and to whose knowledge of excel I am extremely grateful. A special word of thanks to our Office Assistant Joanne Hickey for her special work during lockdown. I would also like to acknowledge the work of our Information, Membership and Communications Officer Sinead Murray, in compiling this report and to thank her for giving Treoir an expanded presence on social media. Special thanks are due to all our members for your continued support for us and for your valued attendance at this AGM.

On behalf of myself, our membership and the Council I want to thank our CEO, Damien Peelo whose energetic leadership style managed the organisation during a very difficult and uncertain pandemic. He never lost his enthusiasm for both the delivery and expansion of our services. We all greatly value his commitment to the welfare of parents and their children. As this is my first year as Chairperson, I would like to thank my excellent, predecessor Dr Ruth Barrington, for her long and dedicated service to the Board. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank previous Council members who have stepped down Robin Hanan, Liam Kirwan and Dave Sanders for their contributions to Treoir. On behalf of Treoir I also thank our current Council members for their interest, dedication and contributions to Treoir Council meetings and to our HR, Finance and Policy committees.

- Dr. Evelyn Mahon

A Note from the CEO

The last two years brought particular challenges for all organisations and workers as we continued to live with lockdowns, working remotely and attempting to return to the office as restrictions were lifted and then re-imposed. This new look annual report provides highlights from all of our work and documents the issues that many unmarried families faced during these unusual times.



We continued to advance the work areas set out in our Strategic Plan 2019 to 2022. The Information Service provided excellent support remotely for parents in need of information and there was an increase in callers and queries from previous years. The advocacy work emerging from calls led to Treoir supporting the case of a father whose partner died. As they were not married he was refused the widow's grant and the widow's pension. This case is now before the courts and will hopefully lead to legislative change. Treoir secured additional funding from Rethink Ireland for our Shared Parenting Programme, Let's Work it Out. This pilot programme offers parents the opportunity to work towards greater communication and conflict management so that shared parenting of children can be a real possibility.

Our work with Kinship Care has gone from strength to strength and after only one year this project has had some extraordinary successes. By engaging so positively with Kinship Carers, we have managed to build evidence for recognition of the incredible work of carers and the need for a range of supports and services for children who are in Kinship Care.

The Teen Parent's Support Programme supported 12 local projects and administered the School Completion funding. The advocacy and policy development continued to highlight the issues facing young parents. The Programme Manager, Margaret Morris left the organisation in 2022. We thank her wholeheartedly for her incredible work over many years in advocating for the rights and needs of young parents. We wish her success in the next phase of her life. We wish to thank the HSE, HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme, Tusla, Pobal, Citizens Information Board and Rethink Ireland.

I want to thank the staff team at Treoir for their commitment to the work of Treoir and adapting to the reality of life with COVID. They did so with goodwill, professionalism and humour. Finally, I would like to thank the Council of Treoir for their hard work and dedication throughout the year and their willingness to work remotely to provide governance and support to the organisation. Without their voluntary contribution Treoir could not function. I particularly want to thank Ruth Barrington who stepped down as Chairperson in May 2021 after her 8-year term of office ended. Ruth provided excellent oversight of the governance of Treoir and it was a pleasure to work alongside her. I welcome our new chair Evelyn Mahon and I wish her every success in the role.

- Damien Peelo

Treoir Values

- We help parents who are not married to each other better understand complex family law issues, specifically access and custody, maintenance and guardianship.
- We also promote shared parenting and provide parenting tips to help parents develop good parenting relationships.
- We believe that children have a right to be loved and cared for by both parents, where possible, and safe to do so.
- We advocate for changes in the Constitution to ensure that all parents have the same rights regardless of their marital status or gender.
- We develop policies to influence and advance the reform of the Family Law system.
- We campaign for a systematic review of how public services and social welfare are delivered to reflect the changing family structures of the 21st century.

Treoir's Strategic Goals:

Treoir provides information to unmarried parents concerning legal, financial, parenting and social issues as well as advocating for their equal rights.

- Treoir will maintain and develop the National Specialist Information Service for unmarried parents of the same or opposite sex, expectant parents, parents living together or apart, their extended families and those working for them.
- Treoir will work to increase the membership and participation of members in policy formation, awareness raising events and the overall development of the organisation.
- Treoir will advocate effectively on behalf of parents of children not married to each other to ensure the best outcomes for all.
- Treoir host the Teen Parent Support Programme and Kinship Care within Treoir.
- Treoir will work to develop and pilot the delivery of mediation and a shared parenting service for parents who are not married to each other.



2019

Calls: 3,292

Queries: 7,888

2020

Calls: 3,316

Queries: 8,177

2021

Calls: 3,653

Queries: 13,345

Overview of Treoir

Treoir Council

Dr Evelyn Mahon *Chairperson*
 Louise Bayliss *S.P.A.R.K.*
 Adele O'Connor *Doras Bui*
 Catherine McCurdy *Barnardos*
 Lorraine Barry *Ringsend & Irishtown FRC*
 Marian Barnard *Anew*
 Rosemary Grant *Independent Member*
 Patricia O'Donovan *Independent Member*
 Robin Hanan *Independent Member**
 Ruth Barrington *Independent Member**
 Dave Saunders *From Lads to Dads**
 Liam Kirwan *Independent Member**

*Stepped down in 2021.

Staff

Damien Peelo *Chief Executive Officer*
 Margaret Morris *National Coordinator TPSP*
 Veronica Black *Information and Training Officer*
 Joanne Hickey *Office Assistant*
 Samantha Dunne *Shared Parenting Officer*
 Sharon Kavanagh
Finance & Administration Officer
 Mary Roche *Information & Policy Officer*
 Emma Byrne
National Coordinator of Kinship Care
 Sinéad Murray *Information, Membership & Communications Officer*

Treoir Member Organisations

Aislinn
 Anew
 An Cosán
 Barnardos
 Carr's Child and Family Services
 Clarecare
 Coombe Women's Hospital
 Doras Bui
 Family Support Network
 Familibase Youth Service
 Foróige
 From Lads to Dads
 Home-Start
 Irish Traveller Movement
 Limerick Social Services Council
 Mary Immaculate College
 Men's Aid
 National Maternity Hospital
 Raheen Family Resource Centre
 Rainbows Ireland
 Rotunda Hospital
 Ringsend and Irishtown Family Resource Centre
 Sligo Social Service Council
 SPARK
 St Andrew's Family Resource Centre
 St. Anne's Day Nursery
 St Catherine's Community Services Centre

Honorary Life Members

Gemma Rowley
 Margret Dromey



The National Information Service and Outreach

Treoir provides a free, confidential, and up-to-date national information service for parents who are not married to each other, their families and practitioners involved with parents. We also provide information to parents on our website through social media, advertising, and our online publications. The high volume of support requests received by Treoir has increased annually which demonstrates the consistent increase in births outside of marriage.

According to the CSO, the number of births registered outside of marriage continues to rise. In 2020, 38.4% of births were registered outside of marriage, compared to 38.1% in 2019. For the Vital Statistics Third Quarter 2021, it rose again to 42.6%. The National Information Service had 3,653 Calls which generated 13,345 Queries in 2021. In comparison, in 2020 there were 3,316 calls and 8,177 queries and in 2019 3,292 calls and 7,888 queries. Most of these queries were telephone calls and callback requests. This increase shows the issues facing unmarried parents are becoming increasingly complex.

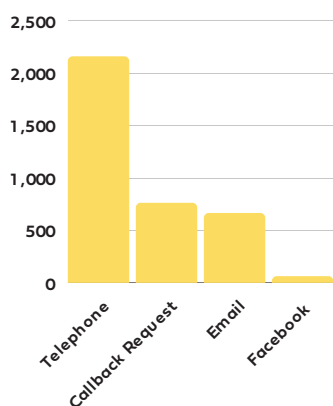


Figure 1 - Contact Method

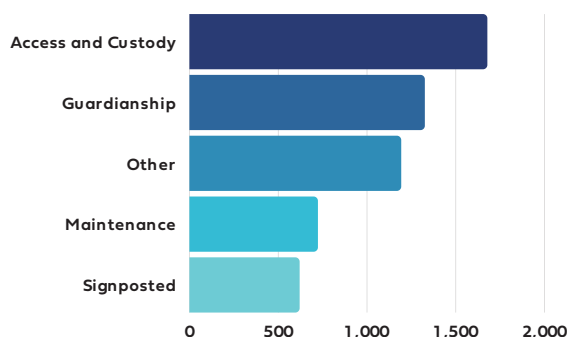


Figure 2 - Top Queries

*the subqueries in the "Other" category were Legal Processes (332) and Parenting (422). Legal processes includes applications to the Family Court.

"Thank you so much for the brilliant session you delivered. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive"

Social Work Team Lead,
HSE.

"Following on from our meeting, I'd like to invite you back again due to popular demand!"

--Coordinator,
Dominican Justice Office

OUTREACH WORKSHOPS

Tailored workshops are offered to groups of unmarried parents and to professionals who provide services to parents. The workshops cover general helpline queries to do with guardianship, access, custody and maintenance. In advance of the workshops, participants are sent Treoir publications and information about the Let's Work it Out programme, Kinship Care and the Teen Parent Support Programme. See below for data on the number of completed workshops for 2021.

- Workshops for Workers: 15
- Workshops for Parents: 3
- Total Workshops: 18
- Total Participants: 360
- Counties: Carlow, Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Galway, Kildare,
- Laois, Offaly, Waterford, Wexford & Wicklow.

Figure 3 shows that 40.6% of callers were mothers while 34.1% were fathers, neither of whom were married. After our primary group of unmarried parents, the next biggest group of callers were married parents (10%).

When we look at the gender breakdown of our callers, we had a slight difference between the number of women calling (48.9%) versus men calling (40%).

43% of callers are between the ages of thirty and thirty-nine years of age. The second largest percentage is between the ages of forty and forty nine at 22%.

In 2021, there was an increase in callers in all age groups.

The Human Rights and Equality Commission report "Monitoring Adequate Housing in Ireland" (2021) showed that female lone parents and their children account for 53% of all homeless families, and are much more likely to experience poor accommodation and discrimination in the housing market.

Details collected from callers show that 34% were living in secure accommodation i.e. owned their own home or were living in local authority housing while 66% were living in insecure, shared or temporary accommodation i.e. all other categories shown.

We know from our calls that insecure accommodation not only affects the well-being of the child and parents, but it also significantly complicates the ability of parents to share parenting and to arrange access. Treoir supports a constitutional right to housing.

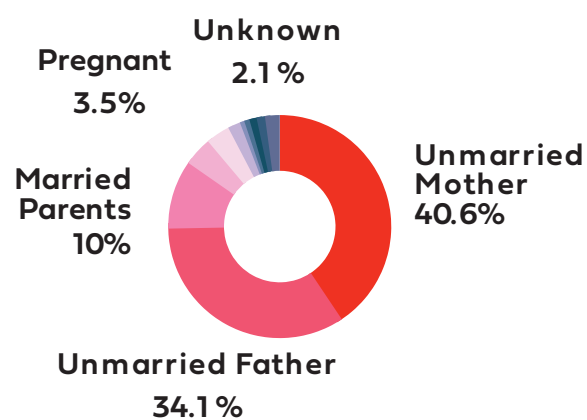


Figure 3 - Profile Of Callers

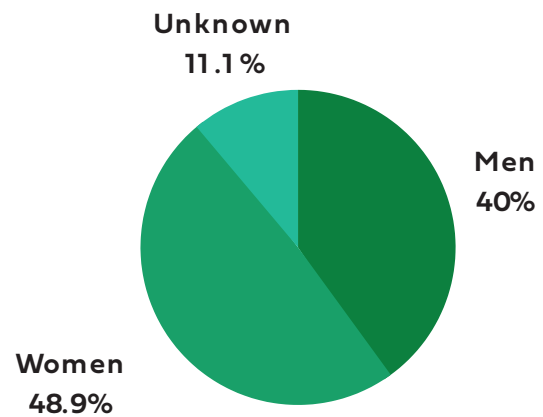


Figure 4 - Gender Breakdown

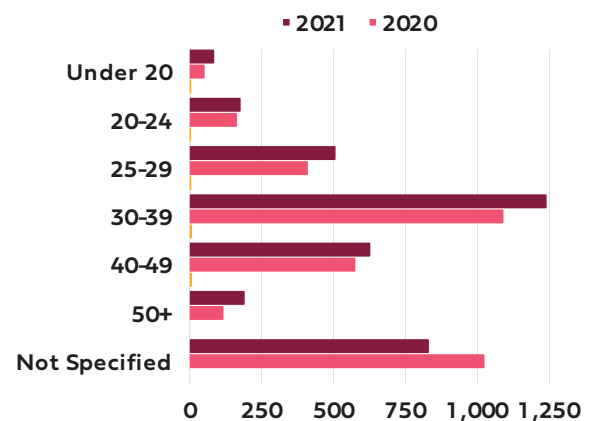


Figure 5 - Age Profile

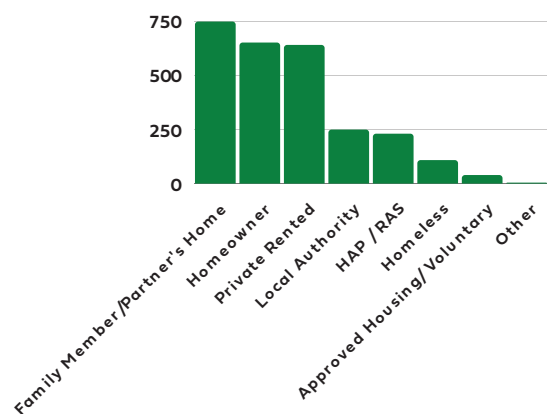


Figure 6 - Accommodation Status Of Callers

"It's so good to speak to someone who knows the information - I can't thank you enough, you're an absolute star"

-Treoir Caller

National Information Service Case Studies

Missing Statutory Declaration

The mother of a child contacted Treoir in relation to a lost statutory declaration for joint guardianship that she and the father had completed and signed in the presence of a solicitor. The parents no longer lived together. The father lives abroad, but they co-parent amicably and the daughter spends time with him during the holidays.

Recently, the child was due to visit her father and her passport was up for renewal. The consent of both guardians is required for a child's passport but the father could not find the statutory declaration which is required to renew the passport.

If the statutory declaration is lost or mislaid the parents must complete another declaration. In this case the father of the child agreed to come to Ireland to complete and sign a new statutory declaration with the mother in the presence of a Commissioner for Oaths.

In our submission to Dr Brian Tobin in relation to guardianship:

- Treoir recommend the establishment of a registry of guardians. The registry will be compiled from statutory declarations/ official records completed by the couple.
- The registration of guardianship should also be certified, providing guardians with a card which shows their guardianship status. This would facilitate their everyday lives in which their guardianship identity might need to be demonstrated.

"I will be forever grateful to everyone at Treoir... for being there for me, for listening to me and letting me know that there are good people in this life who do want to help"

-Treoir Caller

Habitual Residency Condition For Child Maintenance

A phone call was received from a undocumented migrant woman who was living in a city outside of Dublin. She is a mother of a 4-year-old child and a three-month-old baby. She is seeking asylum in Ireland where she has lived for the past four years and is currently going through the immigration process. The father of the woman's youngest child is an Irish citizen. However, when the woman gave birth to the baby the man denied he was the child's father and made it clear he wanted nothing to do with him.

The woman informed the Information Officer the father was still in the area and resident at a specific address. The officer immediately informed the woman to make an application, without delay, to her local district Court for maintenance. An application to the Court is free. The Court may order a DNA test to establish paternity before it would issue a maintenance order. If the Paternity test identified the man as the father she could then take the Court order for maintenance to the Registers Office, and have the man named as the father on the baby's birth certificate.

The woman applied to the court for maintenance and established paternity, the judge had issued a Court order which allowed her to name the man as the father on the child's birth certificate. The Court also issued an order stating the child was entitled to an Irish passport on the basis of his father's citizenship status. The mother has since applied for and received an Irish passport for the child.

While all of this was positive news the woman was now faced with another issue. Upon receipt of the baby's birth certificate, she had like all new mothers' applied for child benefit. However, the Department of Social Protection refused her application on the grounds she did not satisfy the Habitual Residency Condition, one of the rules which must be fulfilled to be eligible for the payment.

The woman was signposted to the Migrant Rights Centre for ongoing support.

Policy Development

- In the summer of 2021, a working group on reform of the state's childcare system was established by Minister for Children, Roderic O'Gorman TD, which Treoir was invited to join.
- Treoir, with other stakeholders, was invited to participate in the consultation on a Funding Model for Early Learning and School Age Childcare Services from May-November. The consultation process led to increased investment in childcare, a commitment to improve pay and conditions for workers and an improvement in the standard of childcare provision.
- Treoir welcomed the increased investment and it will continue to advocate for a universal public childcare model that is child-centred and accessible to parents irrespective of their employment status.

THE FAMILY COURTS

COVID-19: During lockdown the Family Courts only heard emergency hearings to do with domestic abuse and the issuing of protection, safety, barring and child care orders. This caused significant distress to parents some of whom were denied access to their children and had no recourse to the courts. Parents struggled financially due to loss of work, which had an impact on their ability to pay maintenance.

Domestic Abuse: Treoir was part of the domestic abuse Working Group set up to lobby government for increased investment in the sector. Throughout 2021 the difference in how domestic abuse is treated in the criminal and civil courts has been the subject of much discussion at the Department of Justice & Equality, Family Justice Advisory Group meetings. Treoir is a member of the Children & Domestic Violence Working Group. We welcome the publication of Justice Plan 2022 by Minister Helen McEntee with a commitment to continue action on domestic, sexual and gender based violence and family law reform.

Courts Modernisation: In conjunction with this work the Department of Children also established a Working Group on Reform of the Family Law System and the Legal Aid Board sent out a call for submissions on the subject. Treoir is a member of the Legal Aid Board External Consultative Committee and participates in monthly meetings on a range of issues to do with the courts and the legal aid system. As part of the ongoing work by the Department of Justice on reform of the family law system the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee has said she will conduct a review of the state's legal aid system in 2022.



External Networking:

- Quarterly Briefing with Department of Social Protection
- Family Law and Access to Justice at Law
- Society, FLAC, and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
- Focus Ireland launch of its Homelessness and Domestic Violence Report
- The Wheel's annual post budget analysis Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice seminar
- Report launch on Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL)
- Department of Education's National Access Forum
- Future of the Irish Social Welfare System.

Submissions to:

- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on the Review of the Student Grant Scheme (SUSI)
- Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection Working Group on Reform of the Child Maintenance System and an oral presentation to Judge Catherine Murphy, Chair of the Child Maintenance Review Group
- Department of Children and Equality on the Review of the Equal Status Acts
- Working Group on Reform of the Family Law System
- Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality on the recommendations in the Report of the Citizen's Assembly
- Treoir made a submission on reform of Ireland's guardianship laws as they relate to unmarried fathers to Dr. Brian Tobin.

Shared Parenting

From work on the information service, Treoir has accumulated extensive experience in listening to parents and their stories about their struggles to parent together after the breakdown of a relationship, as a result we identified the need for additional supports.

Treoir and Dublin Community Mediation (DCM) have teamed up to develop 'Let's Work it Out' which is a nuanced approach to help share parenting. This approach uses dispute/conflict resolution, problem-solving, communication skills and strategies to enhance shared parenting practices. These methods guide and assist parents who may be struggling to achieve a healthy shared parenting relationship. It puts the child at the centre of their parenting relationship.



RETHINK IRELAND Our Social Innovation Fund

The Children and Youth Digital Solutions Fund is a one-year fund created by Rethink Ireland and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

In September 2021, Treoir and Dublin Community Mediation were delighted to be awarded funding to support the development of the 'Let's Work it Out' pilot from 2021-2022. The funding supports equipment and part-time employment of an administrator in DCM as well as an accelerator workshop programme.

Let's Work It Out Case Study

While on an information call, the Shared Parenting Officer had dealt with a query from a parent regarding a guardianship dispute. The parent was experiencing difficulties in receiving parental information from their co-parent and wanted clarity on their rights. The officer responded with information on how to seek a resolution.

The Information Officer, asked the parent if they would like to discuss parenting challenges and were referred to the Shared Parenting Officer. The parent said they would like to improve the situation but felt at a loss of how to do this. They said there were growing concerns of the effect it would have on the child. Months after starting conflict coaching on Let's Work it Out, this parent is progressing well.

This has had a positive impact on both parents in terms of their communication and overall parenting roles.

The issues callers have often stem from solo or parallel parenting where there are communication issues between the co-parents.

47 Parents Referred Onto Let's Work It Out In 2021.

Communications and Membership

In 2021, Treoir had a steady increase on most social media metrics on Facebook (Meta), Instagram and Twitter which has helped us spread our message. We also implemented a system to track the impact of our social media. We ran a paid ad campaign on guardianship and Facebook and Instagram which was very successful in bringing unmarried parents and grandparents to the website and to the helpline.

Top Visited Pages:

- Child Maintenance,
- Fathers,
- Access/Custody,
- Home and Guardianship.

Website:

We had 123,547 users to the website in 2021. 103,850 (84.1%) were new users and 19,697 (15.9%) were return visitors. This is a significant increase from last year with 91,379 total users, 83.3% being new users.

11,0530 Total Twitter Impressions in 2021

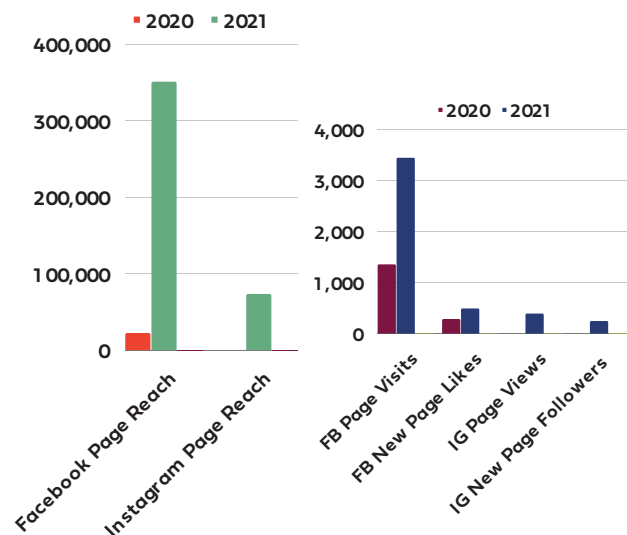


Figure 8 - Facebook (Meta) & Instagram

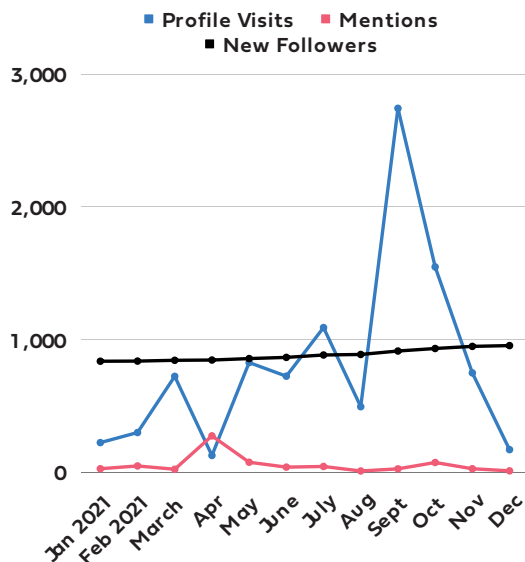


Figure 7 - Twitter

Press Relations

- Right to housing crucial to support family life - Treoir
- Budget Must Prioritise Unmarried Parents to Reduce Poverty - Treoir
- Budget 2022 Fails to adequately Tackle Poverty - Treoir
- Press Release: Treoir Calls on All Parties to Support Bill for Cohabiting Partners - Treoir
- CEO of Treoir Urges Uncoupled Parents to Plan Their Christmas Parenting Arrangements - Treoir

Membership

- Attended Men's Aid's 'International Men's Day' event.
- Attended Amal Muslim Women's Association research launch
- Attended All Together in Dignity's International Day for the Eradication of Poverty event
- Meeting with Amal Muslim Women's Association
- Meeting with All Together in Dignity
- Meeting with Sonas, the domestic abuse charity
- Meeting with Raheen Family Resource Centre (pictured to the right) in December where they decided to join Treoir!
- Planned Membership Events for 2022.

Media Appearances

- CEO spoke on Radio Kerry December 14th in light of our Christmas shared parenting statement.
- CEO quoted in the Irish Times November 13 "The modern Irish father: Daddy's home, but does that make him a better parent?"
- CEO quoted in the Sun October 19 "EQUALITY BILL: Unmarried couples could get widow's pension under new bill as dad reveals 'difficult' fight after partner's death"
- CEO featured on TippFM Sept 21 in relation to Lynn Ruane's call for revenue to deduct child maintenance payments from parents who refuse to pay.

Raheen Family Resource Centre



Kinship Care

Kinship Care is when a child or young person lives full-time with a relative or family friend because they are not able to live with their parents. It allows children to remain among family and retain a sense of belonging and acceptance.

Kinship Care, based in Treoir, provides information, support, advocacy and research to highlight and address the needs and experiences of kinship families. Written Policy Submissions were made on SUSI, Flexible Working Arrangements and Budget 2022, in the context of supporting Kinship Families. With a Grant from the HSE National Lottery fund, a series of online Self-Care and Compassion Workshops were delivered for Kinship Carers during late 2021. A Briefing Paper was submitted to TUSLA to underpin the development of a 'Framework for Kinship Care' and a Position Paper was developed and shared with the Alternative Care unit in DCEDIY, Ombudsman for Children's Office and the Children's Rights Alliance.

Kinship Care Queries

Queries were mainly related to legal and social welfare issues, with a significant number of carers indicating that they had previous engagement with the Child and Family Agency, having had the child placed with them by Social Workers through a "private family arrangement," after which the case was then "closed to Child Protection". While some carers may continue to receive intermittent contact and/or limited support from individual Social Workers, this appears to be the exception, rather than the rule.

It is clear from calls/contacts, that taking on the legal responsibility for a child, by making an application to Court to become their Guardian, is a priority for many Kinship Carers, even though this does not entitle them to any payments or additional supports. Carers were signposted to a variety of other organisations,

including IFCA, their local District Court Office, Free Legal Advice Centres, Legal Aid and to local community groups and organisations, where available.

Other issues and concerns raised by carers, relate to the challenges of dealing with substance misuse among birth parents and meeting the needs of children and young people in relation to their education and welfare, particularly in relation to mental health and wellbeing issues, which often arise for young people in Kinship Care.

Financial concerns are the most cited issues for relatives who take on the care of children and young people. In this context, a particular theme emerged, in relation to Kinship Carers being refused the Guardian's Payment on the basis that the Deciding Officer did not regard the child as an 'orphan' or as 'abandoned', if they had one or more living parent and/or contact with, or any type of support from either parent.

In cases where the child has one or more parent still living, the Deciding Officer examines the circumstances which led to the child being looked after by someone other than their parent, assesses the relationship between the child and the parent(s) and arrives at a decision as to whether the child is an "orphan" for the purpose of the payment, and this appears to be receiving particular scrutiny, more recently. A meeting took place between Kinship Care and the Guardian's Payment section to discuss this further. It was confirmed that in the case of private family arrangements, a letter from a Tusla Social Worker confirming that they have placed the child with the relative and that they consider that there is no prospect of any parent having the capacity to take on the care of the child, would be regarded as supporting documentation for an application for the Guardian's Payment.

While this information has assisted some Kinship Carers, there are others who either have not had direct involvement with Tusla, or whose engagement was so long ago, that they could struggle to be able to obtain a supporting letter. A policy submission is being compiled to send to the Minister for Social Protection, highlighting the specific issues pertaining to Kinship Carers and seeking a review of current policy and practices

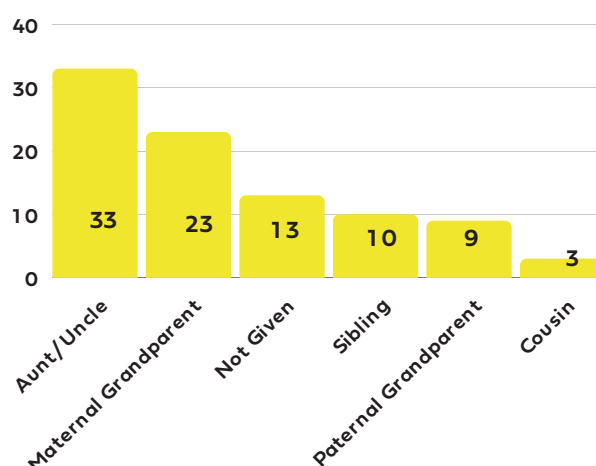


Figure 10 - Type of Relative Providing Kinship Care

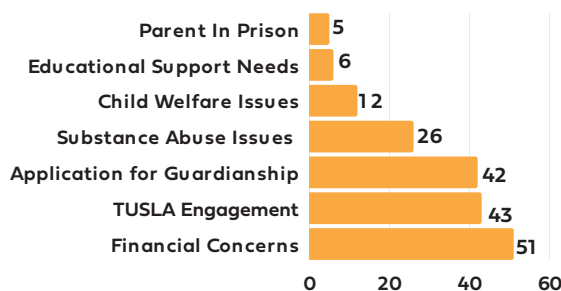


Figure 11 - Needs & Issues Identified

Kinship Care Ireland Case Study

Catherine took over the full-time care of her niece when her sister died. Her sister had asked for her to care for her child, but no formal legal process took place. Information was given to her about the process involved in applying for formal Guardianship of her niece, which she subsequently did. She indicated that she had never claimed any allowances or payments, since she had become a Kinship Carer. The child's father, who was not a legal Guardian, did not have the capacity to parent, due to ongoing substance misuse issues, but he had continued to claim Child Benefit. Catherine did not feel confident about challenging this, as she felt obliged "to keep things positive with him," and in this context she had also striven to maintain contact with him in the best interests of her niece, and he had made some ad hoc contributions towards his daughter's upkeep. Kinship Care supported Catherine to broach the subject of accessing the Child Benefit payment with her late sister's partner and although it was a difficult conversation, she is now receiving the Child Benefit payment for her niece.

We informed Catherine of the option of requesting a letter from Tusla Social Work, confirming their involvement in the Kinship Care arrangement, to support an application for the Guardian's Payment, but given that her niece had come into her care some years ago, she doubted whether the social worker who had been familiar with the

case would be contactable. We suggested the option of making a Freedom of Information request, which resulted in Catherine receiving a call from a TUSLA social worker, offering to provide the information needed, which was a positive outcome.

However, despite the established nature and necessity of the Kinship Care arrangement, and written support from Tusla Social Work, when Catherine applied for the Guardian's Payment, and followed up with a phone call to ask about the progress of her application, she contacted Kinship Care to let us know that she had been asked detailed questions, mainly about the level of contact with and contributions from the child's father. Catherine described the process of applying for the Guardian's payment as "re-traumatising" as she feels that she had to "relive the circumstances of my sister's death."

"I feel I'm being put through the wringer on this issue. The questions I had to answer were quite personal and some of them were answered more than once. It takes a toll. Also, the feeling that I'm trying to swindle them out of money is a lingering one, as if me and the child's father are in cahoots and splitting the money 50/50".

Catherine continues to access support through Kinship Care.

"I am absolutely delighted with the outcome it will make such a difference that I will have the support now".

-Kinship Carer

"I'd like to thank you for all your help and guidance on this matter, it is much appreciated".

-Kinship Carer

Teen Parent Support Programme

The main purpose of the National Coordinator of Teen Parent Support Programme (TPSP) is to enhance the lives of all young parents.

The Teen Parents Support Programme (TPSP) consists of twelve separate projects which are located throughout the country in a range of statutory, community and voluntary organisations. These projects are funded by Tusla and the HSE.

Each project offers interventions that promote and enhance the wellbeing of pregnant and parenting teens and their children. As part of an interagency approach to family support, TPSP staff begin their engagement with the young people at a critical early point of pregnancy/parenthood. They then work with them to build their capacity both as young parents and as adolescents moving towards early adulthood."

Coalitions:

- The Irish Coalition to End Youth Homelessness (ICEYH)
- The Parenting Network

School Completion Project(SCP)

For the 2021/2022, the SCP received €252,000 in funding this was divided among the 11 TPSP projects. The National Coordinator, together with Treoir's Administrative and Finance Officer, administer the fund and report back to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS). During 2021 the coordinator also delivered an Information Session on teen pregnancy to leaving certificate applied classes in South Dublin and Kildare and to fourth year social care students in the Technical University Dublin, Tallaght.

External Networking

- Tusla Family Support Services
- Tusla Education Welfare Services (TESS)
- Department of Children, Equality, Integration, Disability & Youth (DCEIDY)
- Pobal (in relation to the NCS)
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in relation to Relationship & Sexuality Education (RSE) in schools
- The Prevention and Early Intervention Network (PEIN)
- The Parenting Network
- The Children's Rights Alliance and Focus Ireland.

TPSP and Housing

The Census found that in June 2021, there were 146 TPSP service users with a housing need (consisting of 138 young mothers and 8 young fathers) compared to 128 service users in 2020. The discrepancy in numbers between mother and fathers is because the TPSP supports more mothers than fathers, and this data is not an accurate reflection of the housing needs of young fathers.

Of the remaining young parents, 30 were in homeless accommodation, 64 were in insecure accommodation and the remaining 51 were in accommodation which was considered inadequate either because it was substandard and/or seriously overcrowded. This data is used to inform discussions on Youth Homelessness particularly in relation to the additional supports needed by TPSP service users by virtue of their being both young and parents

Advocacy

- Meeting with Minister for Higher Education in relation to SUSI grant and the barriers for young parents progressing to Further and Higher Education.
- Meeting with Minister for Children Equality, Integration Disability and Youth on the issue of young mothers in education not being included in DES Sponsored component of

NSC. As a partial solution, Minister O'Gorman said these mothers would be eligible for sponsorship by the HSE and Tusla and that the TPSP could use this route.

- Submissions: During 2021, the National Coordinator made a Pre-Budget Submission to the Department of Employment and Social Protection (DEASP) and a submission to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) regarding their Review of the SUSI Grant.

Governance

Governance, Accountability and Transparency

Treoir is committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance, accountability and transparency vis-à-vis its members, funders and the public. Governance, accountability and transparency are shared responsibilities between the Council and the CEO. The Council has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with applicable governance standards and best practices and the CEO is responsible for ensuring that the necessary procedures, practices and protocols are in place and followed at all operational levels of the organisation.

During 2021 the Council met eight times and continued to oversee the implementation of the 5- year Strategic Plan and worked to ensure the organisation is fully compliant with all legislation and the Charities Code.

The Council of Treoir has three sub-committees to carry out important functions on its behalf: the Finance and Audit Committee, HR Committee and Policy Committee.

Some of our activities (e.g. in-person outreach, conferences, travel) could not occur due to COVID restrictions. This led to a level of underspend with some of the restricted funding. Treoir plans to carry out these activities in 2022 and 2023 as we return to a more normal working environment.

Finance and Audit Committee:

- This committee met four times during 2021. This Committee's work included:
- Reviewing the budget for 2020 and the management accounts
- Overseeing the external audit
- Ensuring Treoir is compliant and the financial provisions of Charities Governance Code
- Reviewing, updating and developing policies and procedures

The members of this committee are Marian Barnard (Chair), Evelyn Mahon, and Lorraine Barry. The CEO and Finance And Administration Officer support the Committee.

HR Committee

This Committee met four times during 2021. The work of the Committee included:

- Implementing Treoir's remuneration policy
- Updating key policies and procedures including working from home policy and return to work policy post covid-19 restrictions.
- Compliance with the Governance Code as it relates to staffing policies

Members of this Committee are Rosemary Grant, Patricia O'Donovan (Chair) and Marian Barnard. The CEO Supports the Committee.

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee met four times during the year.

The Committee engaged on number of Treoir's submissions including:

- To the Maintenance Review Group
- Review of the Equal Status Act
- Development of a strategy for a universal National Childcare Scheme

Members of this Committee are Louise Bayliss (Chair), Rosemary Grant, Evelyn Mahon and Adele O'Connor. The Information and Policy Officer supports the Committee.

Financial Statements

Company Registration No. 82321 (Republic of Ireland)

Treoir the national federation of services for unmarried parents and their children annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

		Restricted Funds 2021 €	Unrestricted Funds 2021 €	Total 2021 €	Total 2020 €
	Notes				
Incoming resources					
Other Income	3	109,450	7,309	116,759	22,008
Charitable activities	3	709,368	-	709,368	731,905
Total incoming resources		818,818	7,309	826,127	753,913
Resources expended					
Charitable activities	4	(768,229)	(13,159)	(781,388)	(665,491)
Total resources expended		(768,229)	(13,159)	(781,388)	(665,491)
Net surplus for the financial year	5	50,589	(5,850)	44,739	88,422

The income and expenditure account has been prepared on the basis that all operations are continuing operations.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	2021 €	€	2020 €	€
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	9		5,978		9,732
Tangible assets	10		5,070		12,265
			<u>11,048</u>		<u>21,997</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	12	17,954		14,586	
Cash at bank and in hand		317,592		253,897	
		<u>335,546</u>		<u>268,483</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(91,664)		(80,289)	
Net current assets			<u>243,882</u>		<u>188,194</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>254,930</u>		<u>210,191</u>
Reserves					
Restricted funds	17	176,232		125,643	
Unrestricted funds	17	78,698		84,548	
Members' funds			<u>254,930</u>		<u>210,191</u>

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on and are signed on its behalf by:

.....
Marian Barnard
Director

.....
Evelyn Mahon
Director

DETAILED TRADING AND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	2021	2020
	€	€
Income		
HSE Dublin CH09	226,835	225,725
Tusla	19,188	18,274
HSE Crisis Pregnancy Prog	132,483	148,000
Membership fees	390	1,300
Citizens Information Board	34,400	34,400
Rental Income	6,000	8,375
Other Income	919	203
POBAL	44,301	65,506
Kinship Care	78,000	10,000
DEASP	-	2,130
Tusla - Tess	252,161	240,000
LGBTI	2,800	-
Rethink Ireland	22,950	-
HSE Other	5,700	-
	<u>826,127</u>	<u>753,913</u>
Administrative expenses	<u>(781,388)</u>	<u>(665,491)</u>
Operating surplus	<u>44,739</u>	<u>88,422</u>

TREOIR THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SERVICES FOR UNMARRIED PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

SCHEDULE OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	2021 €	2020 €
Administrative expenses		
Wages and salaries	360,641	300,503
Social security costs	27,565	21,396
Staff training / Human Resources	12,514	3,463
Staff pension costs defined contribution	7,531	7,201
Rent	33,584	33,404
Cleaning	1,256	1,972
Power, light and heat	2,289	3,499
Computer running costs	7,156	5,222
Repairs and maintenance	-	707
Insurance	1,785	1,593
Supplies	1,927	1,874
Membership	4,709	3,010
Newspapers	612	668
Publishing	(4,765)	6,826
Travelling expenses	445	1,037
Conferences /meetings	(4,530)	6,070
Professional fees	48,460	12,180
Audit fees	3,383	3,383
Bank charges	211	215
Printing and stationery	885	1,400
Advertising / Marketing	13,676	48
Telecommunications	4,764	4,519
Administration expenses	472	695
School completion expenses	244,587	233,947
Amortisation	3,754	2,316
Depreciation	8,477	8,343
	<u>781,388</u>	<u>665,491</u>

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the HSE, HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme, TUSLA, Pobal, Citizens Information Board and Rethink Ireland without whose financial support the organisation would not exist.

We would also like to thank of various government departments who have kindly given their time to Treoir either through making presentations or discussing policy issues.

We are thankful to Caitríona Nic Mhuiris and Dr. Roisín Farragher, founding members of Kinship Care, and all the work of the Kinship Care Steering Group. This group provides guidance and support for the Kinship Care work in Treoir.



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Treoir is a company limited by guarantee; company number 82321, Charity number: CHY 8877. Treoir is also registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority, Ireland's national statutory regulatory agency for charitable organisations. Charity Registration Number: 20022211