



The National Federation of Services for
Unmarried Parents and their Children

Annual Report 2022



Note from The CEO

With two years of Covid-19 restrictions and a stop and start return to the office 2022 felt a bit more like old times. However, some post covid advantages remain such as blended working and the use of technologies to make online meetings and remote working easier to manage. We continued to advance the work areas set out in our Strategic Plan 2019 to 2023. As the staff team returned to the office on a phased basis, we adapted our service delivery model to ensure that parents using our services continued to receive personal, timely responses to their queries.

The information service provided excellent support as the information officers returned to answering calls both directly and through our messaging service. The number of calls remained like last year but there was an increase in the number of queries generated from each call. This highlighted the complexities of callers needs. The Teen Parent's Support Programme (TPSP) had an exciting year with news that the European Social Fund (ESF) application to extend the TPSP nationally was successful. This is a strong recognition of the excellent work of the 11 local projects in providing wrap-around supports to teen parents. The TPSP National Manager provided crucial information and data to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) for their application and will be working with them and Tusla in the role out of the expansion of the programme.

Treoir continued to administer the School Completion funding to the 11 TPSP projects and developed new reporting systems to help streamline this work and make reporting easier to co-ordinate. The Programme Manager, Margaret Morris left the organisation in 2022 after 17 years of service to the TPSP. 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 were delighted to welcome Samantha Dunne to the role in June 2020.

Our work with Kinship Care continued to go from strength to strength and after our second year of funding there has had some good successes. By engaging so positively with Kinship families, 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. We were sorry to see Emma Byrne leave at the end of last year but want to thank her for her tremendous work for the past two years. Her dedication to the role was immense and in a short period of time has truly helped to put Kinship Care on the legislative and policy map. We are excited to have hired Laura Dunleavy as our new National Manager of Kinship Care in 2023.

I want to thank the staff team at Treoir for their commitment to the work of Treoir. Covid-19 brought its challenges, and they adapted well to each stage while always keeping the needs of parents to the fore. There were a few staff changes during 2022 as outlined above, and in addition Mary Roche moved on from Treoir from her information and policy role. We wish Mary every success in her future work. We are delighted to welcome Gayle Smith to that role.

Finally, I would like to thank the Council of Treoir for their hard work and dedication throughout the year and for providing governance, guidance, and support to the organisation. Without their voluntary contribution Treoir could not function. I particularly want to thank the Council members who retired during 2022 for their time and commitment, Catherine McCurdy and Robin Hanan and I wish you both well.

**DAMIEN
PEELO**
CEO OF
TREOIR



Note From The Chair Of The Board

I am very happy to present our Annual Report which highlights the work Treoir did in 2022.

The main aim of Treoir, meaning guidance, is to develop a pathway towards equality for unmarried parents and their children.

Much has changed for families since Treoir was founded in 1976 including an ever increasing birth rate to parents who are not married. While many live like married families, they don't realise that they do not enjoy the same rights especially in relation to their children as married couples. This year's report clearly shows the queries that arise from these family formations and the legal challenges which they raise for both fathers and mothers.

Our figures reveal that 40% of our callers are fathers who engaged with their children, many who are interested in sharing parenting but who are not recognised legally as guardians as they are not married to the mother of their child. Treoir in their submission to the Dept. of Justice recommended the immediate certification and registration of these fathers as an interim position pending future family law reform.

Another issue raised by fathers, (who do not live with their children) is getting access to their children if a mother objects, often requiring a court application. Fathers without their own accommodation find it very difficult to spend time with their children as caring parents.

The non-payment of child maintenance by fathers is a key issue raised by mothers. Its non-payment increases the risk of child poverty and may reduce a mother's active support for his access to their child. Treoir has made a submission on maintenance as outlined in this report.

Treoir has continually advocated for changes in the treatment of lone mothers within the social welfare system. The recent change in status of "lone parent" to "Job Seeker" is an example of

unintended consequences of public policy. It was a controversial move with a compromise outcome related to age of dependent child raised to 7, rather than 14 requested by some. Now lone -mothers are treated as 'earner- carers'.

While many are keen get employment that would raise them above a poverty level, their predictable welfare payment maybe reduced when their labour force earnings increase. While childcare provision has increased there is no public childcare provided over the weekend and at night, so mothers if they work incur childcare costs. They can also lose their medical card when they return to work.

"They are between a rock and a hard place".

Treoir has always been a strong advocate for the teenage mothers and manages the National Teen Parenting Support Programme. This support will soon be offered to young mothers up to age 24 following the successful application to the European Social Fund for the expansion of the programme.

Treoir continues to support calls from mothers who are migrants and who seek advice on how to access social welfare, acquire citizenship, access childcare and other supports. These calls raise queries that concern many government departments, so Treoir is often a "first one stop shop" for them, providing initial information, referral, and support.

Our second year of hosting Kinship Care Ireland has been beneficial for Treoir as well as Kinship Care. This important work, in providing information, support, advocacy, and research for people caring for children, to whom they are related or know, aligns very well with Treoir's work. Our kinship care officer will pursue both the legal and social welfare issues that are faced by kinship carers.

I would like to thank my fellow Council members for their time and commitment to supporting the work of Treoir by providing oversight, guidance and support to this important work. I would like to specifically mention Veronica Black, whose daily research on social legal changes we have constantly drawn upon on for our policy and information leaflets. I know that our members have appreciated her outreach services which relay complex legal information in an easy to understand way. I would like to thank our CEO who has managed Treoir in the post Covid era and is managing our transition to hybrid working. We greatly value his ongoing commitment to the welfare of parents and their children.

**DR
EVELYN
MAHON**

**CHAIRPERSON
OF THE BOARD**



About Us

Treoir was set up as a Federation of Services for Unmarried Parents and their Children in 1976 and is a membership based national organisation. The focus initially was to provide information and support to unmarried mothers and the professionals who supported them. It was founded at a time when unmarried women experienced high levels of discrimination and stigma. Their children were “illegitimate” as they were not the children of a married couple.

Since the foundation of Treoir almost 5 decades ago, so much has changed in Ireland. Birth rates outside of marriage for example in 1976 were just 3.8% of all births while in 2021 it has risen to 41% of all births.

Family formation has changed dramatically over the past 50 years and some of the legislation has changed to reflect the new realities, such as the Children and Family Relationships Act 2016, Children First Act, Marriage Equality, yet there is a lot more required to ensure parity for all family types and not just those families based on marriage. However, the overall financial circumstances and treatment of lone parents are still unsettling. Poverty rates are higher among lone mothers who are most

disadvantaged, those who leave school while in second level, and are unable to return to either education or to work and Treoir aims to remove known obstacles and advocating for new policies. Treoir has always been a strong advocate for these mothers as demonstrated by our co-ordination of the Teen Parents Support Programme. This programme recognised the need to support young mother who were at a high risk of dropping out of school when pregnant with the inevitable effect on their continued education and training prospects. It also recognized the need for young fathers to be supported to be able to take on a larger role in their child’s life.

Treoir hosts the National Kinship Care programme. Kinship Care involves the full-time parenting of children by grandparents, older siblings, aunts, uncles and other relatives or close friends of the family. It occurs for many reasons, for example, death of a parent, parental substance misuse, abandonment, illness or imprisonment. Kinship care may be defined as: “Family-based care within the child’s extended family or with close friends of the family known to the child, whether formal or informal in nature.”

VISION Treoir’s vision is of an Ireland where unmarried parents and their children enjoy full equality under the law, and where their legal, civil and economic rights are vindicated both in practice and in legislation.

MISSION Treoir, in partnership with its member agencies, promotes the rights and best interests of unmarried parents and their children through providing specialist information, support services, training, and advocating for their rights.

TREOIR STAFF

Damien Peelo
Chief Executive Officer

Veronica Black
Information & Training Officer

Joanne Hickey
Office Assistant

Samantha Dunne
National Coordinator TPSP

Sharon Kavanagh
Finance & Administration Officer

Gayle Smith
*Information & Policy Officer*****

Saoirse Peelo
Administrative Assistant

Sinéad Murray
Information, Membership & Communications Officer

Mary Roche
*Information & Policy Officer***

Margaret Morris
*National Coordinator TPSP**

Emma Byrne
*National Coordinator of Kinship Care****

* Left March 2022

** Left August 2022

*** Left December 2022

**** Joined October 2022

TREOIR COUNCIL

Dr. Evelyn Mahon
CHAIRPERSON

Louise Bayliss
SPARK

Adele O'Connor
Doras Bui

Lorraine Barry
Ringsend & Irishtown FRC

Marian Barnard
Anew

Catherine McCurdy
*Barnardos**

Robin Hanan
*Independent Member**

Rosemary Grant
Independent Member

Patricia O'Donovan
Independent Member

Dr. Brian Tobin
Independent Member

Caitríona Nic Mhuiris
*Kinship Care***

* Stepped down May 2022

** Joined November 2022

HONOURARY LIFE MEMBERS

Margaret Dromey

Gemma Rowley

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 Blanchardstown

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

SPARK

St Andrew's Family Resource Centre

St. Anne's Day Nursery

St Catherine's Community Services Centre



The National Information Service

“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 by telephone, email, online and face to face. We also provide online information to parents on our website through social media, advertising, and our online publications.

Requests received for information by Treoir have become more complex over time leading to more queries per caller and longer duration of calls. According to the CSO, the number of births registered outside of marriage continues to rise. In 2021, 41.4% of births were registered outside of marriage.

This represents a 3% increase from 2020 (data not yet available for 2022).

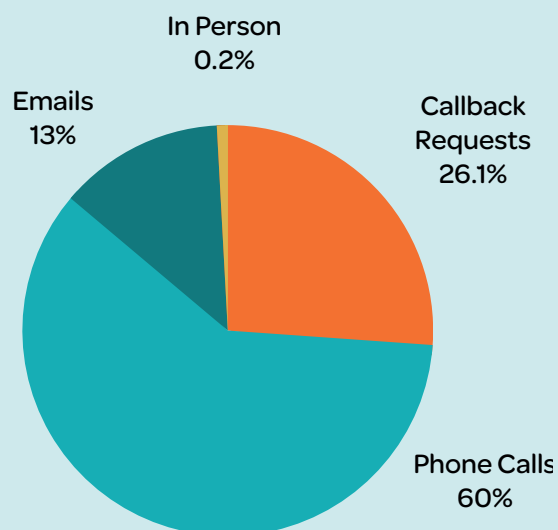


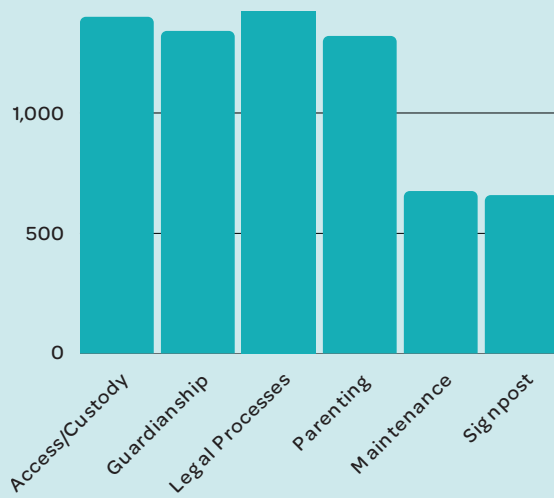
Fig 1.

3,625 Calls 14,814 Queries

The National Information Service had 3,625 calls which generated 14,814 Queries in 2022.

We continue to provide a direct person to person service and same day response whenever possible. In comparison, in 2021 there were 3,653 calls and 13,345 queries were registered. The number of calls has therefore remained stable, but the number of queries has increased year on year.

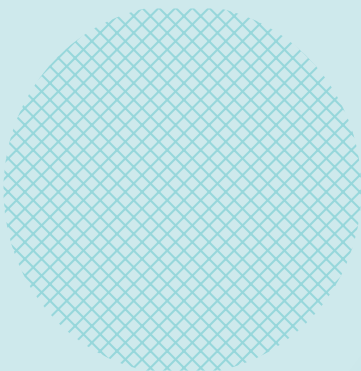
86% of the contacts were over the phone. However, as the issues facing unmarried parents become more complicated, we're seeing an increase in the number of queries for each call and the length of calls.



The most frequent queries in 2022 involved Access & Custody (1,405), Guardianship (1,346), Legal Processes (1,631), Parenting (1,325), Maintenance (677), and Sign Posting (660).

Legal Processes incorporates many sub headings such adoption, surrogacy, legal aid, how to make applications to court, court documents, etc. Most of the signposted queries were to One Family for counselling, FLAC, and Community Law and Mediation.

Fig. 2



TREOIR

Case Study

As seen above, we've maintained the number of calls that we're receiving but the calls are increasingly complex and require significantly more time to support the client fully. Below is a case study from 2022 that demonstrates the complexity of some of Treoir's calls and how marginalised, vulnerable people regularly face multiple, intersectional barriers to accessing their and their children's rights.

This case would have represented one call but 5 queries (Child Maintenance, Birth Registration, Legal Processes, Citizenship, Sign-posting) and 17 sub-queries which happened over a 4 month period.

Note: To protect the mother's identity, we have not named the countries she and the father originate from.

In December 2022, a migrant mother from a South American country, arrived at the Treoir office looking for support initially on how to register the father's name on the birth certificate of her 4-month-old baby.

The mother had arrived on a Stamp 2 student visa to learn English during covid-19 and therefore she had limited English. She had been working part-time before giving birth.

She and the father of the child had been in a relationship, however shortly after the baby was born, he refused to put his name on the birth certificate and moved back to his home country (within the EU) in order to avoid paying child maintenance.

We liaised with Migrants Rights Centre who informed us that if his name could be put on

the birth certificate, her child would be entitled to EU citizenship under the Chen Case, which would also give the mother the right to stay in Ireland.

In order for his name to be on the birth certificate without his consent, she would need a court order naming him as the father. Due to the Convention on the Recovery Abroad of Maintenance, it was easiest for her to apply for a Child Maintenance order.

We put her in touch with Central Authority for International Maintenance Recovery and they confirmed they could help her given his home country is signed up for the Convention. However, a DNA test would have to be provided and the application would have to go through his home country's family court system so it would still be a lengthy process. The language barrier also made it extremely

difficult for her to communicate with the Central Authority so we assisted her with this.

At the same time, without public childcare or family to support her, the mother was unable to work and was at risk of poverty. When she sought support from the Department of Social Protection she was told that she was not entitled to any social welfare payments and that applying for social welfare could put her future residency applications in jeopardy.

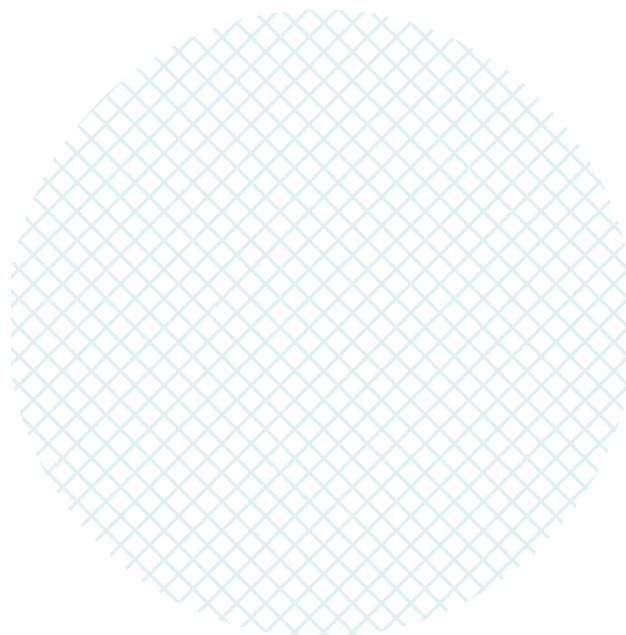
On advice from Irish Network Against Racism, she made a complaint in relation to this to the Children's Ombudsmen.

As the mother's case was highly complex, we knew that the mother not only needed Treoir's support but also legal advice in relation to the benefits and risks of applying for child maintenance, her immigration status, and applying for social welfare. We also signposted her to services that could provide her with immediate relief in relation to food, clothing, and nappies.

The Children's Rights Alliance supported Treoir by providing a lawyer to advise her on her situation and what was the best course of action. We also received support from the HSE to provide a professional translator for the mother as her friends had largely been translating for us.

The case highlights a number of key issues. The need for translation services to be more readily available both to government departments and the courts, as well as non-profit services like Treoir.

The need for all government departments to child poverty-proof policies and ensure decisions are made considering the best interests of the child, regardless of immigration status. The need for governments to address issues that arise, for both mothers and fathers, when the name of the father will be mandated on the birth certificate and the need for improving systems to retrieve maintenance from abroad.



Queries, Age, Client Type

- In 2022, 78.4% of our callers are unmarried parents, followed by married parents at 10.7%.
- The gender breakdown is similar to the previous year. Women continue to be the main callers at 49% with 40% of men.
- The majority of other family members calling are grandparents, evenly split between the maternal and paternal grandparents.
- The majority of unmarried mothers and fathers were aged between 30-39, followed by 40-49. This is a continuation of last year's age profile of callers and is also reflective of the CSO's findings of rising age of mothers when they have their first child.

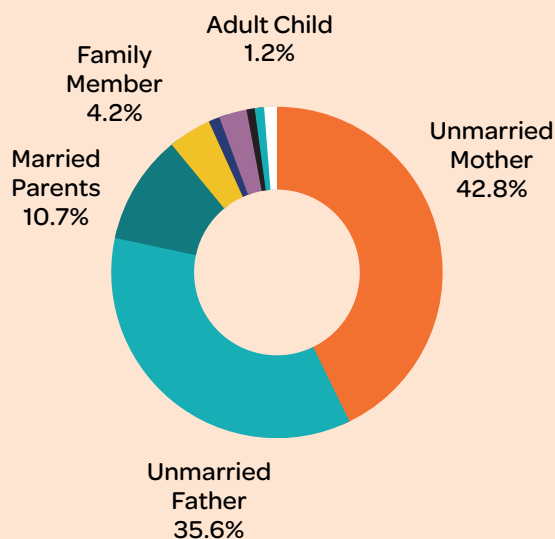


Fig. 4

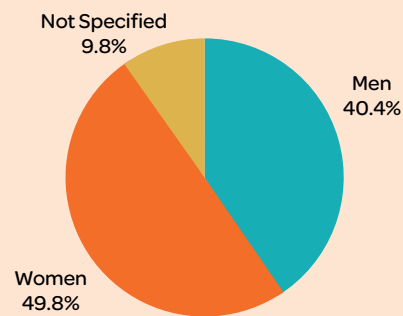


Fig. 5

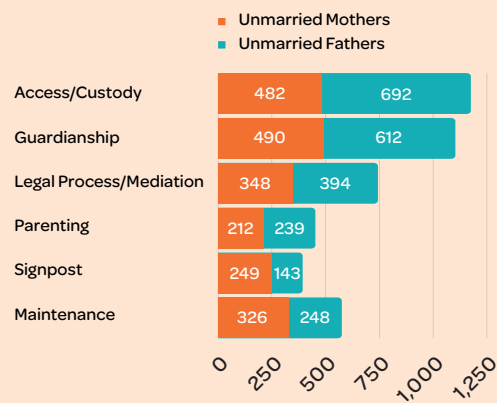


Fig. 6

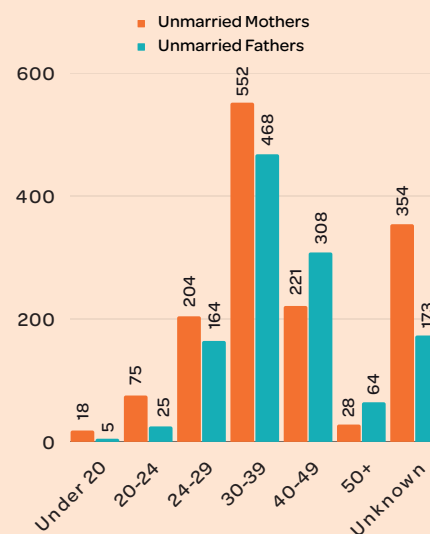


Fig. 7

HOUSING STATUS OF CALLERS

Over 70% of unmarried parents, both mothers and fathers, who told us their accommodation status, were living in insecure, temporary, or shared accommodation.

When we add their children, we found that 1,992 children with at least one parent are in insecure, temporary, or shared accommodation.

The majority of these parents were living in private rented accommodation or at home with their parents.

For the non-custodial parent, typically the father, living in shared or emergency accommodation can prevent their children from seeing and spending time living with him. This can be a huge source of tension between parents and can have negative effects on the child.

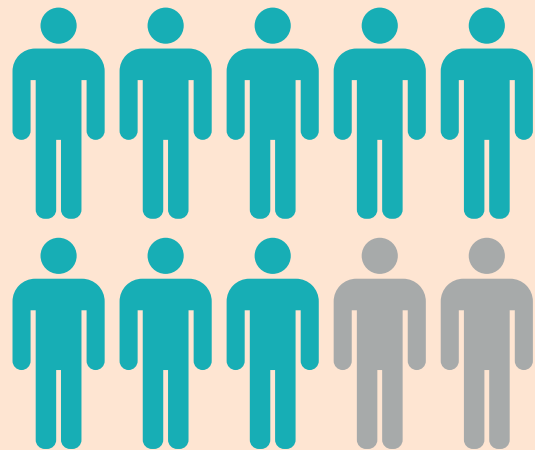
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF CALLERS

Of the 2,666 unmarried parents who called us, and their employment status was recorded, 70% were in employment.

63% of unmarried mothers were in employment, compared to 79% of unmarried fathers.

Of the women who were working, 51% of them were also receiving a social welfare payment, compared to 6% of men.

63% OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS WERE IN EMPLOYMENT, COMPARED TO 79% OF UNMARRIED FATHERS.



TREOIR Information Service And Treoir Policy

An analysis of our calls helps us to identify gaps in policy that impact families. Engagement with parents is critical to our work and informs how we target specific policies and legislation.

The statistical information from the information service help inform Treoir's policy agenda such as our submission to government on the budget, childcare, housing, social welfare and Court reform.

2023 and 2024 will be important years for social change, specifically for non-marital families, and we expect to see legislative and constitutional reform. Treoir looks forward to being part of that change.

Modern Family Court System - A large proportion of Treoir clients are signposted to Counselling services, Free Legal Advice, Civil Legal Aid, and Family Mediation. This shows that clients often require additional support to resolve their queries, such as counseling, mediation, and free legal advice. A significant amount of our calls are also about explaining Legal Processes which are often difficult and overly complex.

This supports Treoir's position for the urgent need for a modern family law system. Treoir has long supported an increased availability for mediation, counseling, and shared parenting courses to provide an alternative to going to court for families, which can increase conflict. When families do need to go to court, the Courts need to be more accessible and easier to understand.

Treoir regularly engages with the Courts Service to provide feedback from clients about how to improve the experience of the Family Courts. We are hopeful the changes made this year will begin to improve things for families and we welcome their work on this.

The eligibility criteria for civil legal aid also need to be expanded as many people cannot afford legal advice and representation

currently. Making the courts more accessible and expanding legal aid will reduce the stress and anxiety for parents and increase the number of people with meaningful access to justice.

Child Maintenance – Mothers call about Child Maintenance slightly more than fathers. One of the top queries related to Child Maintenance for both mothers and fathers is how much child maintenance is owed. The lack of clear guidelines for determining child maintenance (unlike in the UK) causes confusion and conflict between parents when they are trying to agree on themselves, through mediation, or in the courts.

This has informed Treoir’s Child Maintenance policy in three major ways:

1. Child Maintenance needs to be taken out of the family court system to reduce conflict between parents and end the burden on mothers to pursue fathers for financial support. This should be done by creating a separate agency responsible for child maintenance
2. Parents in similar financial circumstances are often ordered to pay wildly different amounts of child maintenance. The amount ordered should be standardized, predictable, and uniform.
3. Child Maintenance should not be included as means for social welfare payments.

Guardianship – Fathers are more likely to call about Guardianship, Access, and Custody than Mothers. Unmarried fathers, who have not lived with the mother, have no automatic right to access, custody, or guardianship. This is not the case for married fathers, however many parents are not aware of this.

Fathers calling about guardianship typically were looking to understand what guardianship is clarifying if they have guardianship and whether or not they were eligible for automatic guardianship through cohabitation.

Mothers’ queries about guardianship were also looking for clarity on what their rights and responsibilities were to the father in regards to guardianship.

This shows that there is still a serious lack of public knowledge about guardianship and guardianship through cohabitation and many fathers believe they have more rights than they do. Treoir continues to urge the government to address the issue of guardianship for unmarried fathers.

Housing – Lone-parent families, mostly headed by women, are overrepresented in homeless and insecure, substandard housing. Fathers who are in temporary, shared, or homeless accommodation often are unable to facilitate access with their child which can have a detrimental effect on their relationship. On top of this, homeless accommodation is traumatic for children. A constitutional right to housing is important for the well-being of children, improving relationships with fathers, and reducing poverty in lone-parent families.

Childcare – Treoir supports a public, universal childcare model which will support mothers accessing education, and returning to work which will support the reduction in lone-parent families experiencing consistent poverty.

Policy Development

Treoir has long advocated for changes to the guardianship system in Ireland. We have called for improvements to the system for establishing guardianship, registering guardians and dispensing with guardianship where appropriate. Guardianship remains one of the main reasons parents call Treoir and with the new surrogacy laws, more parents who have used surrogacy or human assisted reproduction are contacting Treoir in relation to guardianship.

Fathers are more likely to call about Guardianship, Access, and Custody than Mothers. Unmarried fathers, who have not lived with the mother, have no automatic right to access, custody, or guardianship. This is not the case for married fathers; however, many parents are not aware of this. Fathers calling about guardianship typically were looking to understand what guardianship is clarifying if they have guardianship and whether they were eligible for automatic guardianship through cohabitation.

COALITIONS

- National One Parent Family Alliance (NOPFA) - NOPFA continues to interrogate and analyse policy to measure its impact on lone parent households. Child poverty is one of the focuses of Treoir for 2023 with a seminar on child poverty and social inclusion, planned for May 2023.

- The Community Platform - This working group hopes to push for progress in establishing an affordable, quality, model of childcare in Ireland.

POLICY SUBMISSIONS

- Child Maintenance
- Parental Alienation
- Gender Equality
- Guardianship
- Civil Legal Aid Review
- Pre-Budget Submission 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.

Treoir was invited to give a presentation in Maynooth to the 2nd year child and family module for undergraduate. It is hoped that presentations like this will raise the profile of Treoir to individuals who are hoping to work in the social justice arena.

STAKEHOLDER, WORKING GROUPS

- Treoir was invited to sit on the stakeholder group for gender equality and constitutional reform following the Citizen's Assembly. As part of this consultation group, Treoir hopes to influence constitutional reform on areas impacting gender equality and rights for non-marital families, in line with Treoir's core values.
- Treoir is part of the family justice strategy working group with ongoing efforts to reform the Family Court System.
- Treoir is part of the consultancy panel with the Department of Social Protection on enhancing social inclusion and participation of lone parents.
- Treoir attended a Joint Oireachtas committee meeting and gave a submission to the committee on the recovery of child maintenance. Some progress has been made in this area, but more progress needs to be made on this issue.
- Treoir continues to support the O'Meara family who brought their case for the Widow's / Widower's / Surviving Civil Partner Contributory pension to be extended to co-habiting couples, to the High Court. When his application was denied by the judge in October 2022, Treoir lobbied senators to support the "Surviving Co-habitants Couple" bill in the Seanad. The case was unsuccessful at the High Court but has been appealed to the Supreme Court.

Treoir's Communications

Media plays an important role in advancing our work. Not only does it help inform the public of who we are and what we do, which increased calls to our information service, it also provides us with an opportunity to engage the public in discourse about the vision for a more inclusive society.

Treoir significantly increased our profile in local and national news/media outlets during 2022. Treoir was interviewed 15 times in a range of media outlets compared to just 4 times in 2021. All our press releases are available at <https://www.treoir.ie/category/press-releases>

PRESS RELEASES

- Treoir Calls on Minister McEntee to Review the Legal Aid system without delay 31 March.
- Exclusive Protection of the Family Based on Marriage Must be Put to Referendum, 31st of May.
- Discrimination Based on Marital Status Disadvantages Children, 4 July.
- Budget 2023 Must Emphasise Housing, Food & Energy Security for Lone Parents, 19 September.
- Judge Upheld Department of Social Protections Right To Discriminate Against Parents Who Are Not Married To Each Other, 7 October.

- Treoir Calls on All Parties to Support the Surviving Cohabitant's Pension Bill, 26 October.
- Treoir Welcomes the Report from Child Maintenance Review Group and Look Forward to Examining Further, 16 November.
- Parents Sharing Custody Should Finalize Christmas Access As Soon as Possible, 13 December.

TWITTER

275 Tweets
1,143 Followers
78,669 Tweet Impressions
241 Mentions

FACEBOOK / META

61 Posts & 71 Stories
192,956 Page Reach
382 Link Clicks
1,532 Page Visits
241 New Likes

INSTAGRAM

37 Posts & 87 Stories
70422 Page Reach
7 Link Clicks
684 Page Visits
201 New Likes

TREOIR IN THE NEWS

Treoir significantly increased its profile in local and national news agencies 15 times in 2022, compared to 4 in 2021.

The topics ranged from Shared Parenting, Child Maintenance, Child Contact Centres & Supervised Access, Cohabiting Couples Rights, Lone Parents' Employment, and Reforming Civil Legal Aid.

- Access to legal system blocked by delays to civil aid reform, campaigners warn, The Sunday Business Post, April 4.
- Lone parents deserve more than 'low-paid, precarious work', say advocates, The Irish Times, June 3.
- Barnardos campaigning for supervised access facilities for children of domestic abuse, The Independent, June 17.
- Lack of Child Contact Centres Puts 'Families at Risk' - RTE, June 17.
- Interview about the John O'Meara Cohabiting Couple's & Widow's Pension High Court case on Radio Kerry, July 4.
- Interview about the John O'Meara Cohabiting Couple's & Widow's Pension High Court case on Dublin City FM, July 13.
- Interview about the John O'Meara Cohabiting Couple's & Widow's Pension High Court case on Phoenix Radio, Sep 13.
- Oireachtas committee hears calls for statutory child maintenance agency to ensure payments, The Irish Times, Sept 25th.
- Interview about the John O'Meara Cohabiting Couple's & Widow's Pension High Court case on East Coast Radio, Sept 26.
- Are cohabiting couples being let down by the law when a relationship ends?, Sunday Business Post, Nov 20. Introduction to Treoir Interview, Kilkenny Radio, Nov 21.
- Interview about Shared Parenting at Christmas, East Coast Radio, Dec 13.
- Interview about Shared Parenting at Christmas, Kildare Focus Radio, Dec 13.
- Interview about Shared Parenting at Christmas, Limerick Live 95, Dec 14.
- Interview about Shared Parenting at Christmas, Radio Kerry, Dec 15.

Communications Continued and Membership

WEBSITE

Treoir's National Information Service wants to be a leader in the delivery of accessible information. We began to undertake the redesign of our website and information booklets. We are working with NALA, and IA Labs in NCBI to make our booklets, and website more inclusive for people with literacy issues and people with disabilities.

Website Demographics

- 60% of website visitors were women in 2022, compared to 68.2% in 2021.
- We're seeing this trend in more women on all channels - on the phone, website, and on Facebook and Instagram.
- The age category of most of our website users is 35-44 followed by 25-34, which was the reverse last year.
- The most visited pages were Child Maintenance, Fathers, Access, Guardianship, and Passports.
- 95,167 users visited the Treoir website in 2022 with over 90% of the users in 2022 being new users.

MEMBERSHIP

- Kept Members informed of Treoir's policy positions and submissions, press releases, ongoing campaigns, and events throughout the year.
- Along with the Policy and Shared Parenting Officers, hosted 2 Membership Forums, "Access to Justice:
- The Civil Legal Aid System" and "Let's Work it Out: What is Shared Parenting Mean To You? "
- Attended Members' Events.

Outreach Workshops

Treoir provides free workshops on the legal rights and responsibilities of unmarried parents for parents and professionals working with them. Treoir's outreach work is important as it continues to update, parents and professionals of the changing legal rights and entitlements of unmarried parents and their children.

Number of Workshops:

- 19 (18 of which were online)
- No. of Attendees: 243
- Workshops for Parents: 5
- Counties: Carlow, Clare, Dublin, Galway, Laois, Louth, Meath, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Waterford, and Wexford.

14 workshops were presented to organizations that offer services to parents. Workshops were provided to Tusla, HSE, Youth Projects, Housing Associations, Homeless

Services, Addiction Rehabilitation Centres, Children's Disability Network Teams, Hospice and CareServices, and Social Work Teams in Hospitals.

"Thank you so much for your information workshop yesterday. The ladies got so much information out of it and really enjoyed it."

Family Support Worker

"I just want to thank you for taking the time to present to us today. The presentation was very informative and interesting for the team."

Senior Medical Social Worker

Kinship Care

Kinship care is when care is provided by family or close friends, to children and young people whose parents are no longer able to look after them, in circumstances such as imprisonment, substance misuse, physical or mental health issues, or in the event of their death.



In such situations, it is considered more advantageous for children to remain within the care of their family network, rather than to be placed into the care of non-relatives. However, the reality for carers who step in to perform this crucial role informally, is that they often experience economic hardship, from taking on this additional responsibility.

Although informal kinship care arrangements often involve Social Workers, in circumstances which may be similar to when children are placed into formal foster care, informal kinship placements are generally classified as 'private family arrangements,' and children in informal kinship care currently receive no explicit recognition, supports, or services, through the Alternative Care system.

After two years of operation, the number of carers supported by Kinship Care has increased and we had 196 calls in 2022. One of the main reasons carers call is for information around guardianship and financial support

WHAT SUPPORT DO WE PROVIDE?

Kinship Care provides information, support, advocacy, and research to highlight and address the needs and experiences of kinship families.

Most of the advocacy we do on behalf of kinship carers is to

1) clearly communicate with the Child and Family Agency, about the rights and needs of children and young people in their Care

2) Appeal the refusal of the Guardian's Payment by the Department of Social Protection

- An Online Peer Support Forum is being facilitated monthly (and some carers are being supported to avail of one-to-one counselling support)
- A new round of (8) Self Care and Compassion Workshops took place from September to November
- A Focus Group for Kinship Carers was held in June (very low turnout due mainly to Covid) and Survey Questionnaires were distributed to those who could not attend
- Newsletters and Updates were sent to all carers on our Database.
- Advocacy Support

OUTREACH

- Aftercare Network meetings (Western Region and Eastern Region)
- Family Support Groups in Blanchardstown Area Local Drug Task Force
- Guest Lecture at Technological University Dublin
- Dublin South Central Fostering Social Work Team
- Kinship Care Stand at FRC National Conference
- Invited to take part in an International Forum to develop global guidelines for Kinship care by
- Family for Every Child

RESEARCH

- Participated in research for a Trinity Ph.D. student investigating the experiences of women in recovery from substance misuse and a researcher in AIT studying “An exploration of the parenting experiences of kinship carers, in formal and informal kinship families.”

CONTACT

W: www.kinshipcare.ie

E: info@kinship.ie

P: 087 148 7124

Facebook: facebook.com/kinshipcare.irl

Twitter: @KinshipcareIrl

**We now have 124
Kinship Carers and
95 professionals
on the database
and we had 196
calls in 2022.**

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS, ADVOCACY, AND RESEARCH

- Tusla, they have created an internal working group to explore and inform the next steps within Tusla, in relation to addressing the issues with the lack of recognition, resources, and oversight for informal kinship care (through 'private family arrangements'). Kinship Care provided a research paper, to inform this process, detailing the issues and challenges, as well as possible solutions to 'private family arrangements'.
- Met with staff from Guardian's Payment Section in the Department of Social Protection, Citizen's Information Service, New Directions, and Familibase Ballyfermot.
- Kinship Care submitted a letter to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to draw their attention to 'private Family Arrangements' and the rights of children in informal kinship care. The Department recognised our 'valuable input' and informed that the submission will be circulated to Members ahead of their next private meeting and may be included in any future report.

2022 HIGHLIGHT

Following on from meetings and submissions to the Ombudsman for Children's Office, the need to address the rights of children in informal kinship care was explicitly included in the Report of the Ombudsman for Children's Office to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, pursuant to the combined fifth and sixth reports submitted by Ireland under the simplified reporting procedure.

One of the recommendations made under 'Alternative Care' is 'to implement a clear government policy on the rights of children living in informal kinship care'.

Teen Parent Support Programme

The Teen Parents Support Programme (TPSP) is managed by Treoir and consists of eleven separate projects located throughout the country in a range of statutory, community and voluntary organisations.



The projects, which are funded by Tusla and the HSE (Health Service Executive), support young people who become parents when they are aged 19 years or under and may support them until their children are 2 years of age. Young parents over this age may also be supported depending on their circumstances.

The TPSP provides early interventions which enhance and support the wellbeing of young parents and their children, empower young parents in their parenting role and ensure equal opportunities for parent and child.

COORDINATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The National Programme Manager co-ordinates the TPSP which includes providing secretarial support to the National Advisory Committee (NAC), which was set up to oversee the development of the initiative in 1999 and is a Ministerial appointed committee. The remit of the NAC is to support and oversee the development of the TPSP

nationally, to advise on various areas of its development and to support the national TPSP manager.

The NAC are interested in the expansion of the TPSP nationally, and to encourage and develop inter agency and inter disciplinary work with both statutory and non-statutory agencies in order to best service young parents and their children. To ensure cohesion and the flow of information and communication among all strands of the TPSP structure, the National Manager convenes the TPSP Employing Organisations and brings all TPSP project staff together twice annually.

During 2022 a new National Manager Samantha Dunne, was recruited following the stepping down of Margaret Morris after 17 years. The new manager met with TPSP projects and staff following their appointment in June 2022. In 2022, all staff received training from Pobal in relation to the National Childcare Scheme.

This Scheme includes the Sponsored component which gives free childcare to mothers in second-level education and in other circumstances.

National Expansion of the TPSP

During 2022, the Manager engaged with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in their European Social Funding (ESF) proposal to expand

the TPSP both geographically and increase in age-range to young parents under the age of 25 years. The DCEDIY was successful in securing ESF funding which will be rolled out by Tusla from 2023. The Manager

Young Parents and Housing

For young parents who engage with the TPSP, the ongoing housing crisis continues to deteriorate year on year and TPSP staff continue to raise concerns about developmental delays in young children living in cramped homeless accommodation and other inadequate housing. The Manager continues to engage in the Irish Coalition to End Youth Homelessness where the needs of young parents and their children are represented. Since 2016, TPSP carry out a specific housing census, and data collected is analysed and sent to the Department of Housing.

School Completion Programme (SCP)

The SCP is funded through Tusla's Education Support Services (TESS). The SCP aims to increase the number of young parents who complete the Leaving Certificate or its equivalent. For the 2022/2023, the SCP nationally received just over €252,000 in SCP funding which was divided among the 11 TPSP projects. The National Manager, together with Treoir's Administrative and Finance Officer, administered this fund and reported to TESS.

Responding to queries

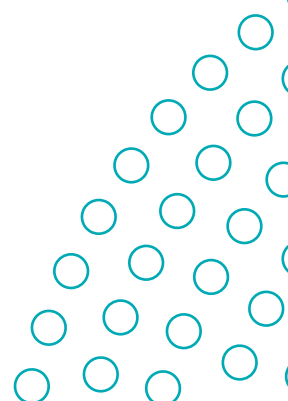
The TPSP National Manager acts as a source of information, advice, guidance, and referral to other support for pregnant and parenting teens, their families, and professionals in non-TPSP areas. During 2022, the manager also promoted the TPSP across Tusla local area networks.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY

- Pre-Budget Submission to the Department of Social Protection (DSP)
- Submission to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government on the development of a Housing and Homelessness Youth Strategy which was launched in November 2022
- Treoir is committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance, accountability, and transparency with 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 2022 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.



EVENTS

The National Coordinator represented Teen Parents at the following events:

- Tusla Family Support Services
- Tusla Education Welfare Services (TESS)
- Department of Children, Equality, Integration, Disability & Youth (DCEIDY) - The National Framework for Children and Young People
- Pobal (in relation to the NCS)
- Tusla – Dialogue with Bernard Gloster
- The Prevention and Early Intervention Network (PEIN)
- The Parenting Network
- The Children’s Rights Alliance
- Tusla - Child and Family Support Network

COALITIONS

- The Parenting Network
- Local Area Committee, Donegal
- The Irish Coalition to End Youth Homelessness(ICEYH) - For TPSP parents the ongoing housing crisis continues to deteriorate year after year and TPSP staff continue to raise concerns about developmental delays in young children living in cramped homeless accommodation and other inadequate housing. TPSP completes an annual housing census that is sent to the Department of Housing

643 Teen and Young Parents were supported nationwide in 2022.

Governance, Accountability and Transparency

GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND TRANSPARENCY

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FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

- This committee met four times during 2022 This Committee's work included:
- Overseeing the implementation of the organisational budget, developing the budget for 2023 and reviewing 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 Administration Officer support the Committee.

HR COMMITTEE

This Committee met four times during 2021/22 The work of the Committee included:

- Updating key policies and procedures including Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Engagement with staff on Treoir's Hybrid working policy
- 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 a number of Treoir's submissions including:

- Call for submissions from the Department of Justice on Guardianship
- Pre-budget submission
- The Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality
- 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 2022

**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 2022.**

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

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

		Restricted Funds 2022 €	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Total 2022 €	Total 2021 €
	Notes				
Incoming resources					
Other Income	3	84,836	9,210	94,046	116,759
Charitable activities	3	732,020	7,841	739,861	709,368
Total incoming resources		816,856	17,051	833,907	826,127
Resources expended					
Charitable activities	4	(780,905)	(10,413)	(791,318)	(781,388)
Total resources expended		(780,905)	(10,413)	(791,318)	(781,388)
Net surplus for the financial year	5	35,951	6,638	42,589	44,739

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

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

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	2022 €	€	2021 €	€
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	9		2,645		5,978
Tangible assets	10		7,355		5,070
			<u>10,000</u>		<u>11,048</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	12	19,866		17,954	
Cash at bank and in hand		329,004		317,592	
		<u>348,870</u>		<u>335,546</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(61,351)		(91,664)	
Net current assets			<u>287,519</u>		<u>243,882</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>297,519</u>		<u>254,930</u>
Reserves					
Restricted funds	17	212,183		176,232	
Unrestricted funds	17	85,336		78,698	
Members' funds			<u>297,519</u>		<u>254,930</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

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

DETAILED TRADING AND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022	2021
	€	€
Income		
HSE Dublin CH09	227,849	226,835
Tusla	19,005	19,188
HSE Crisis Pregnancy Prog	119,800	132,483
Membership fees Citizens	1,690	390
Information Board Rental	34,400	34,400
Income	7,028	6,000
Other Income	492	919
POBAL	53,638	44,301
Kinship Care	75,000	78,000
Tusla - Tess	264,769	252,161
LGBTI	-	2,800
Rethink Ireland	9,836	22,950
HSE Other	-	5,700
Community Foundation	20,400	-
	<u>833,907</u>	<u>826,127</u>
Administrative expenses	<u>(791,318)</u>	<u>(781,388)</u>
Operating surplus	<u><u>42,589</u></u>	<u><u>44,739</u></u>

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

SCHEDULE OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022 €	2021 €
Administrative expenses		
Wages and salaries	343,774	360,641
Social security costs	30,469	27,565
Staff training / Human Resources Staff	2,760	12,514
pension costs defined contribution Rent	13,152	7,531
Cleaning	33,630	33,584
Power, light and heat	5,681	1,256
Computer running costs	5,007	2,289
Repairs and maintenance	14,165	7,156
Insurance	3,341	-
Supplies	1,817	1,785
Membership	3,664	1,927
Newspapers	4,406	4,709
Publishing	652	612
Travelling expenses	6,888	(4,765)
Conferences / meetings	1,455	445
Professional fees	4,305	(4,530)
Audit fees	40,190	48,460
Bank charges	3,383	3,383
Printing and stationery	214	211
Advertising / Marketing	1,511	885
Telecommunications	2,348	13,676
Pobal Repayment	5,991	4,764
Administration expenses	7,781	-
School completion expenses	375	472
Amortisation	244,321	244,587
Depreciation	3,333	3,754
	6,705	8,477
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	791,318	781,388
	<hr/>	<hr/>

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.

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



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28 North Great Georges St
Dublin 1, D01 HY46

CHY: 8877
RCN: 20022211

(01) 670 0120
info@treoir.ie
www.treoir.ie



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