



Traveller Mediation Service

2023 Annual Report

www.travellermediation.ie

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1. MEDIATION

a) Mediation actions in 2023

- Case referrals were processed through the TMS referral procedure
- Team meetings were held on a bi-weekly basis to review current cases and discuss new referrals.
- Referrals were written up and collated on a monthly basis
- Qualified mediators (from the panel of qualified Traveller mediators) continued to work with TMS mediators to assist with mediation cases as required.
- Cases were received from over **22** counties on the Island of Ireland in 2023.
- These cases have included some long-standing violent disputes between Traveller families.
- They have also included conflicts between Traveller & Settled parties, and between Travellers and agencies.
- Case types have included disputes between neighbours, accommodation issues, ongoing inter-family conflicts, and issues with agencies.
- Of the 76 case referrals received:
 - 32 referrals were from members of the Traveller community
 - 11 referrals were from local Traveller Projects
 - 21 referrals from Gardai/PSNI
 - 12 referrals from other agencies

b) TMS Mediation Caseload Breakdown: 1st January to 31st December 2023

No. of Referrals: 76 cases
Completed cases: 54 cases
Current cases: 22 cases (*December 2023*)

Breakdown of cases by county:	
County	No. of Cases
Carlow	1
Clare	6
Cork	5

Donegal	2
Dublin	7
Fermanagh	1
Galway	6
Inter-County	8
Kerry	2
Kilkenny	2
Limerick	5
Longford	2
Louth	1
Mayo	1
Roscommon	3
Mayo	3
Offaly	7
Tipperary	3
Tyrone	3
Waterford	1
Westmeath	3
Wexford	2
Wicklow	2
Presenting as:	
Traveller/Traveller	59 cases
Traveller/Agency	10 cases
Traveller/Settled	3 cases
Advocacy	3 cases
Other	1 case

2. TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT/CAPACITY BUILDING

January to December 2023 Actions

a) TMS MII Accredited Traveller Mediation Programmes

I. 2022 Cork/Kerry Accredited training programme



TMS hosted a graduation event for the 10 Traveller graduates who had completed the 2022 TMS MII Accredited Mediation Programme in the Heights Hotel in Killarney on 5th May 2023.

This celebratory event was attended by the students, their families, the CEO of Kerry Travellers and local garda representatives, and thoroughly enjoyed by all!

b) 2023 MII Accredited Mediation Training Programme: Tullamore

2023 Planned Activity

- TMS to run pre-accredited foundation training programme in the Midlands and in other areas as required.
- To be followed with an MII accredited mediation training programme in 2023 if there is sufficient uptake.

January to December 2023 Actions

- TMS contacted local Traveller organisations in the Midlands counties between January and March 2023 to inform them about the programme. TMS also contacted potential new students individually to assess the level of interest.
- Following an information session for interested students it was decided that TMS would run an introductory 4 week conflict programme, and this would be followed by TMS MII Accredited Mediation training programme.
- The new programme began on 28th April in Tullamore with ten members of the Traveller community (5 men and 5 women) attending.
- The training in Tullamore continued every Thursday through May, June & July, with 8 students continuing to attend.
- TMS organised a visit for the students with PSNI to Omagh Police Station in July to meet with PSNI members and other stakeholders there. Discussions took place with police officers and local reps from different agencies on how TMS might collaborate in NI. The trip was funded through HSE Midlands Traveller Health Unit.
- Extra training was provided every Wednesday in Athlone in July and early August to prepare students for the MII assessment.
- MII assessments were held in August with 6 students successfully passing their assessments.
- Extra individual training was provided, and alternative assessment dates arranged for 2 students who were not available for assessments on the scheduled dates.
- TMS MII accredited mediation course training in Tullamore was completed in September with all 8 students successfully passing their MII assessments to become certified mediators (4 men and 4 women).

NOTE: January 2024

- TMS hosted the graduation event for the eight graduates of the 2023 Tullamore MII accredited mediation programme on 29th January 2024 in the Shamrock Lodge Hotel, Athlone.
- The event was attended by over 40 people (including 4 children) and was a very enjoyable evening.

- TMS, the graduates and their families, and Blossom Development were delighted that representatives from the following agencies attended and participated in the event to support the new graduates:
 - Laois Traveller Action Group, Offaly Traveller Movement, HSE, Garda Diversity Unit Dublin, Westmeath Garda Superintendent, Offaly Community Garda, Athlone Community Garda, PSNI Omagh



c) Peer Mediation in Prison (PMIP) Programmes in 2023

Planned Activity in 2023

- To continue to deliver the Peer Mediation in Prisons Programme in partnership with Irish Prison Service, and the ETBs.
- To work with the prisons as listed to support the development of a Prison-based Peer Mediation Service in the individual prisons.
- Members of the Traveller Mediation Panel to continue to co-facilitate the Peer Mediation training in prisons in 2023.
- TMS will explore the possibility of offering the peer mediation programmes in other prisons if additional resources become available.

January to June 2023 Actions

Portlaoise Prison:

- PMIP Part 2 training in Portlaoise prison took place on Mondays in February and March, with four men passing their assessments on 28th March.
- In April a meeting took place with the IPS Chief officer in Portlaoise to discuss the possible delivery of an accredited mediation training programme in 2023, and to progress the setting up of a prison mediation service.
- An Advisory Group has now been set up to support the service and the prisoner representatives are designing t-shirts.
- 16 prisoners signed up for the accredited programme (approved for funding by IPS in June).

Cork Prison:

- TMS began delivery of a Peer Mediation in prisons (PMIP) Part 1 in February 2023 with the aim of completing Parts 1 & 2 programmes to prepare students for an MII accredited Mediation Training Programme in Cork Prison by September 2023.
- TMS completed the Part 1 PMIP in Cork prison with 9 men taking part in March.
- The Part 2 PMIP commenced in April, with the 9 men continuing to attend the weekly sessions.
- 8 prisoners successfully completed the Part 2 programme, passing their course assessments and received their certificates in May.
- The IPS Director General presented the certificates.
- TMS is continuing to work with Cork Prison IPS and teaching staff to help develop and sustain the Cork Prison Mediation Service.
- The Cork Prisoner Mediation Service is up and running, with 10 prisoner mediator volunteers.

Midlands Prison

- TMS PMIP Part 1 training re-commenced in Midlands prison in January in section A of the prison.
- PMIP Part 2 training took place in Section B every Wednesday in March with 8 men. The 6 men available all passed their assessments.
- The remaining two men who were not then available were assisted to prepare for their assessments on 26th April and both passed on that date.
- A meeting with staff and prisoners from Midlands Prison about setting up a prison mediation service took place in May.

Loughan House Prison

- TMS delivered a 4 week Conflict Training programme in Loughan House prison in late January which ran until the end of February.
- 14 Traveller men took part in this programme.
- A one day Conflict Management Skills training was delivered in May to a group of 12 Traveller prisoners.
- TMS ran 2 Conflict Skills training sessions in Loughan House prison with 8 Traveller men in October.

Mountjoy Prison

- TMS and a trainee mediator participated in a mediation workshop in the Progression Unit in Mountjoy prison. 11 Traveller men and 2 non-Traveller men participated.

d) TMS MII Accreditation Mediation in Prison Programmes in 2023

Planned Activity in 2023

- To support and co-deliver the MII accredited training pilot programme in Portlaoise and Cork Prisons, in partnership with Blossom Development/ Maynooth University.

2023 Actions

- In June funding approval was received from IPS to deliver an MII accredited Mediation training programme in Portlaoise and Cork Prison in September 2023.

Portlaoise Prison

- TMS began delivery of the MII accredited mediation course in Portlaoise Prison on 2nd October in partnership with Blossom Development Company.
- The programme ran from 10 am to 4pm each Monday.
- 11 participants engaged in the programme (including 4 Traveller prisoners and 2 teachers).
- TMS continued co-delivery of the MII accredited mediation course in Portlaoise Prison in November and December 2023.
- All 11 participants continued to engage in the programme.
- It is anticipated that the course will be completed in mid-January 2024.

Cork Prison

- TMS began delivery of the MII accredited mediation course in Cork prison on 5th October in partnership with Blossom Development Company.
- The programme ran from 10 am to 4pm each Thursday.

- TMS continued co-delivery of the MII accredited mediation course in Cork prison through November and December 2023.
- 10 participants continued to engage in the programme (including 5 Traveller prisoners, and 1 teacher).
- It is anticipated that the course will be completed by the end of January 2024.

Note: A total of 20 students (including 3 staff and 9 Travellers) successfully passed their Mediators Institute of Ireland assessments in February 2024 to become certified mediators.

e) Traveller Womens' Programme

Planned Activity in 2023

- TMS will promote and deliver 8 week tailored Conflict Skills training programmes for Traveller women in a number of locations nationally in 2023, in response to demand.

January to December 2023 Actions

- TMS designed a new Womens' programme during January and February 2023.
- In February TMS made contact with local Traveller projects to inform them of the new TMS Traveller Womens' programme starting in April 2023.
- The new TMS Traveller Womens' Conflict Management programme commenced in Kerry on 26th April and ran over 6 weeks in May and June. 7 women attended.
- TMS held two 'train the trainer' sessions with co-facilitators for the womens' programme. (The co-facilitators were drawn from the newly graduated Traveller mediators).
- A second TMS Womens' Conflict Management Programme ran in Kilmallock, Limerick over a 4 week period in May & June. 4 women attended.
- The TMS pilot Traveller Womens' programme delivered in the first half of 2023 was reviewed in June and the key learnings from the course were implemented in the subsequent courses.
- In Early October TMS delivered a workshop with Cavan Travellers Project to ascertain whether they wished to go ahead with the 'Introduction to managing conflict programme'.
- 24 Traveller women signed up for the programme.
- The programme started on Friday 13th October with the 24 women and was completed in mid-November with 90% attendance every week.
- TMS delivered two workshops to staff in Bray Travellers Project over November and December on the 'Foundations for Managing Conflict.' (This was initially to have been a women's group but evolved into a mixed gender staff group).

f) Other TMS Training Programmes/ Workshops delivered in 2023

Planned Activity in 2023

- In partnership with Traveller organisations, to deliver tailored workshops and training programmes for Traveller men, women, and youth groups, with the aim of building skills in managing difficult relationships and situations, using Alternative Dispute Resolution methods.

January to December 2023 Actions

- TMS delivered one-to-one Conflict Coaching sessions for 4 Traveller men who had been engaged in disputes during this period.
- TMS delivered 6 x 2 hour conflict skills training introductory workshops on Thursday mornings in October and November to 10 Traveller men in the Clare Traveller project.
 - On 30th November the 10 men received their certificates for completing the six-week TMS course. Those attending the certificate event included staff from the Traveller project, HSE and local Gardai (the superintendent and Inspector and community garda).
- TMS delivered two workshops to staff in Bray Travellers Project over November and December on the 'Foundations for Managing Conflict.'
- TMS continued to engage with a soccer club in Offaly who have 27 young Traveller men from Offaly, Galway and Kildare through 2023. Engagement with this group facilitates TMS to reach these younger Travellers and to build rapport.
- TMS also continued to support the Boxing Club members in Athlone to build rapport.

Programme Design

- TMS designed new materials for mediation training courses for the Young Pavees Programme, Womens' Programme, and the new MII Accredited training programme over this period. TMS also worked with the TMS Panel and a videographer to develop a training video in 2023.

3. TMS TRAVELLER MEDIATION PANEL

Planned Activity in 2023

- The TMS panel of qualified Traveller Mediator/trainers to continue to receive ongoing supervision in their mediation practice, and to follow a structured CPD/training programme in 2023 to enable them to co-deliver workshops/training programmes in areas including Peer Mediation, Restorative Practices, Circle work, and Conflict Coaching.
- To explore the possibility of forming a new regional panel in Cork/Kerry from the 2022 MII Mediation training programme graduates.

January to December 2023 Actions

- TMS met with CEO of Kerry Travellers in March to discuss the procedure for members of her staff (those who are graduates of the 2022 accredited mediation training) joining the TMS panel of mediators/trainers to create a new Munster regional Panel.
- Developing the CPD Panel programme to broaden its guidance and governance procedures, and to include the new Munster panel.
- CPD training sessions started with the new Munster panel in April and then took place on a monthly basis.
- TMS CPD panel training sessions for the Midlands Panel also continued on a monthly basis.
- TMS facilitated a teambuilding Munster panel session in Killarney in May.
- A joint facilitated teambuilding session with the two panels (Midlands and Munster) took place in Tullamore in June.
- TMS engaged with members of the Traveller Panel and other volunteers to design, write, and participate in a video roleplay recording to demonstrate the mediation process.
- TMS facilitated ongoing meetings with the Midlands panel to continue the design process for 3 x Traveller led / featured mediation and conflict management videos in May and June.
- Recorded Traveller led mediation video in June.
- Redesigned CPD 2023 programme for September to December 2023 (bespoke for each group).
- One panel member assisted with facilitation of Cavan women's programme.
- 3 panel members assisted with training sessions/mediation cases in 2023.

4. COMMUNICATION/STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT/ADVOCACY

a) Planned Activity & Actions in 2023

- To facilitate inter-agency / community / Traveller Workshops which lead to improved understanding of and communication between all the stakeholders.
- To continue to work closely with Garda Diversity Section through delivering training/facilitating workshops etc as requested, and through liaising on specific concerns / issues.
- Continuing to work through the Garda/Traveller Advisory Group (which TMS chairs).
- Continue to progress the joint Garda/Traveller Dialogue initiative with the Garda Racial Intercultural and Diversity Office:
- Continue to sit on Boards of Traveller Counselling Service, NTRIS, ITM, EHI, NTMHG, OTM, TPI , WMTAG, Bray Travellers Project, Involve.
- Continue to work collaboratively with the Traveller Counselling Service and Exchange House Ireland to develop and progress the Conflict & Mental Health Initiative (as reported below).
- Continue to deliver presentations/inputs on TMS work to TMS stakeholders and others when requested.
- Continue to work closely with PSNI in delivering workshops/training sessions as required, and advising/liasing on individual cases and on specific issues.

January to December 2023 Actions

- TMS held meeting in Omagh with PSNI and other agencies around cross-border disputes in February.
- TMS held a multi-agency meeting in OTM with regard to an ongoing dispute in Tullamore in February.
- TMS gave a presentation on the work of the TMS to a meeting of the Irish Professional Mediators Organisation in March.
- TMS attended a Traveller Pride event in Mountjoy main prison in June. The event was a concert and a chance for TMS to meet with Traveller men to explain the work TMS is currently doing in prisons. The event was also an opportunity to network/share information with agencies and teachers.
- TMS delivered a Webinar presentation for MII members in June.
- TMS co-organised (with the National Garda/Traveller Advisory Group) and facilitated an information morning between members of the Gardai and local Travellers and Traveller organisations from the 4 midlands counties in May. Approximately 35 people attended.
- TMS has come off the Boards of ITM and Minceirs Whidden due to lack of staff resources.
- TMS has joined the Board of Involve due to close working relationship and engagement with young Travellers.
- As in training section above TMS delivered the following training to groups of Gardai:
 - TMS delivered a training workshop to 50 gardai on August 21st in Store St Garda Station as part of the Garda Diversity Officer training.

- TMS delivered a second training workshop to 80 Gardai in Westmanstown on 28th August.
- TMS delivered an information morning to 40 Gardai from Kerry and Limerick on 17th November in Templeglantine, Limerick.
- These events provided an opportunity for participants to engage in informal dialogue on issues of concern, with the aim of building understanding, and enhancing cooperation.
- TMS Attended Longford Traveller Project, Traveller Pride event in Longford town.
- TMS Attended Galway Traveller Movement, Traveller Pride event in Ballinasloe.
- TMS attended Traveller Pride event in Kildare. This is Kildare's first time to hold such an event. It was useful networking with a meeting different Travellers from the area.
- TMS attended Traveller Pride event in Tullamore where there were over 300 Travellers from all over Offaly. This is a good networking event for TMS.
- TMS staff members attended two consultation events (one in Dublin and one in Tullamore) on the new NTRIS strategy in September.
- TMS participated in an event in Tullamore with 3 Longford agencies on 10th October.
- TMS were asked to give a presentation about inter-family conflicts to Travellers and different State/NGO agencies who work with Bray Traveller Movement on 12th December 2023. Over 20 people attended the presentation.
- TMS attended the ITM AGM on 6th November 2023
- TMS attended Involve training on Youth Empowerment, facilitated by NYCI on 6th December.

b) Engagement with Gardai and PSNI in 2023

- TMS worked with gardai on a regular basis on case referrals as well as providing advice and support to gardai regarding cases/issues in a number of counties in 2023.
- Ongoing communication with Garda National Diversity & Integration Unit on individual issues as well as delivering workshops as requested.
- As detailed above, TMS delivered 3 training workshops to a total number of 170 Gardai in Dublin and Limerick during 2023.
- Ongoing contact and meetings with PSNI about cases/disputes in counties in N. Ireland.
- TMS is Chair of the Garda Traveller Advisory Group (forum for exploring best ways for both communities to work together). 6 meetings of this group were held during 2023.
- TMS organised two Garda/Traveller Dialogue Days with the Garda Diversity and Integration Unit in 2023, as detailed below.

c) Garda/Traveller Dialogue Days in 2023: *Building Trust and Bridging Divides*

1. Garda Traveller Dialogue Day in Mallow, Cork

- A One Day Workshop for Gardai and Traveller representatives was held in the Mercy Centre, Mallow County Cork on Wednesday 5th May.
- Traveller representatives attended from a number of projects in Cork and Kerry, together with Gardai from Kerry and Cork.

- The session was facilitated by TMS with support from the Garda Diversity & Integration Unit, and provided an opportunity for participants to engage in informal dialogue on issues of concern, with the aim of building understanding, and enhancing cooperation.
- 36 people attended and the feedback from the day was very positive.



2. Garda Traveller Dialogue Day in Dublin in November 2023

- TMS, in partnership with the Garda Diversity & Integration Unit, held a Garda/Traveller Dialogue Day with five Traveller projects and Gardai from around the South Dublin area on 14th November in Exchange House Ireland.
- Over 40 people attended the event, with very positive feedback from participants on the day.

d) TMS engagement with Irish Prison Service re. PMI Programme future plans

- TMS met with the Director General of the IPS and Principal Officer, Care & Rehabilitation in IPS Office in Longford on 3rd April to discuss TMS funding proposal to co-facilitate MII accredited programme in Cork & Portlaoise prisons in 2023.
- IPS approved funding for TMS to deliver the MII Accredited Mediation Training programme with Blossom Development Co. in Cork and Portlaoise Prisons in 2023.
- A discussion also took place on the viability of rolling out the TMS Peer Mediation Programmes nationally across the 12 prisons, and the costing involved in this.
- TMS submitted a funding proposal to IPS in June 2023 to enable TMS to employ one full-time and two part-time staff members to roll out the Peer Mediation in Prisons programme to all 12 prisons on a national basis.
- TMS was informed that the proposal is being included in the IPS estimates for 2024.
- TMS has not received any further update on the proposal since then.

5. TRAVELLER CONFLICT & MENTAL HEALTH NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE (with Traveller Counselling Service and Exchange House Ireland)

Travellers Transforming Conflict (TTC)

Joint Initiative with Traveller Counselling Service and Exchange House Ireland:

- Dormant Accounts Funding was granted to the 3 organisations through Dept. Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth for this Initiative in early 2022.
- Each of the 3 organisations has accounted separately for the projects they manage under the Initiative and have agreed how the joint pieces of the initiative would be managed between them.
- TMS initiated the Traveller Youth Training Programme (Young Pavees) with funding from this initiative.
- TMS is a member of the TTC Steering Group and has actively participated in progressing the joint actions of the Initiative (Interim Evaluation, Research, Campaign & Conference) through the Steering Group and relevant sub-groups.

a) Traveller Youth Training Programme (Young Pavees)

Rationale

Nearly 6 in 10 (58.1%) Irish Travellers were under 25 years of age (0-24) compared to just over 3 in 10 (33.4%) in the general population CSO 2016

As has been well documented, young Travellers are more likely to leave school early than the general population, and are more likely to experience unemployment. There is a high rate of suicide rate, and they are more likely to suffer mental health issues.

This initiative seeks to build on the work of the Traveller Mediation Service to date in providing training sessions and workshops for young Travellers to help to develop skills around conflict prevention and management. The TMS experience confirms that there is an urgent need for a more targeted service specifically aimed at young Travellers to assist them with developing these skills.

Programme Aim:

- To equip the participants with a range of communication & conflict related skills

Programme Objectives:

- To provide the participants with knowledge, skills and competence in the areas of conflict management and personal and interpersonal development.
- To assist the participants to understand the causes of conflict, and to develop ways of managing conflict within the cultural context of the Traveller community as well as with the wider community.
- To build on the participants' self-awareness, inter-personal and teamworking skills.

b) Planned Activity in 2023: Youth Conflict Skills Training Programme (Young Pavees)

- The six-week programme will continue to be offered to groups of young people on a national basis in 2023.
- TMS will continue to engage with the young people from the 3 groups trained in 2022, offering them follow-on skills in group settings.
- The MII accredited 12 week Mediation programme will be offered to those young people who have completed the 6 week course and wish to further develop their conflict training skills.
- The programme will be delivered at the point when TMS considers that there is a viable group of committed young people ready to commence the programme.
- Following from the recommendations of the Interim Evaluation Report of the Conflict & Mental Health Initiative projects completed in December 2022, TMS plans to apply for funding for a dedicated full-time position to build, develop and sustain the Young Pavees project into the future.

c) January to December 2023 Actions

- In January TMS held a meeting with Southside Travellers to arrange a start date for the Young Pavees course.
- The course began in Southside Travellers on 2nd February and ran every Wednesday until the middle of March. 4 students completed the programme.
- The Young Pavees programme commenced in Longford town on 9th February and ran for 6 weeks on Wednesday evenings. 8 students completed the programme.
- TMS held information sessions with Kilkenny Travellers, Exchange House, and with Kildare Travellers in March and April with a view to running the Young Pavees programme in those locations in 2023.

- TMS met with staff in Offaly Traveller Movement and agreed a start date for a Young Pavees course there in March. The start date was subsequently deferred and re-scheduled to start on May 2nd.
- TMS started a Young Pavees course in OTM on May 2nd. The course ran for 3 weeks but was discontinued because of difficulties in attendance for some of the students.
- TMS held a follow-on session with Southside Travellers students in Dublin, and discussed with them bringing all the Young Pavees Traveller students who had so far completed a course together in June/July.
- TMS held a session for the young Travellers in Ballina on June 14th to look at progression options.
- In June TMS, EHI and TCS representatives wrote and sent a proposal to DCEDIY for 2024 DA funding. The funding proposal included an application for a TMS full-time dedicated Young Persons' trainer/facilitator.
- It was not possible to run the course in July and August as many of the young people were on holiday, and/or the local Traveller Projects were closed for their summer breaks.
- In September TMS held a meeting with young Travellers in STAG in Dublin around bringing all the young Travellers together who had completed the course.
- TMS organised a meeting in Ballina youth project about bringing the group together with other groups who completed the first course, and similarly with the LTI group in Offaly.
- A meeting also took place in Loughrea with TMS and the young Travellers who had completed the 6 week course, in the hope of bringing them to the bigger group in September.
- The follow-on meeting was scheduled to take place with all the groups (Mayo/Dublin/Offaly/Galway in Athlone to assess number of students who wished to sign up to do the MII accredited Mediation Training programme in September.
- Unfortunately, this meeting did not go ahead due to lack of students available to attend, and the accredited programme start date has been deferred due to a lack of sufficient numbers of young people wishing to sign up to it at this time.
- TMS brought together a second group in Offaly who are interested in starting a Conflict Skills course in January 2024.
- Introductory workshops were also held with young Travellers in Birr Garda diversity project and Birr Youthreach with the aim of delivering conflict training programmes in 2024.

d) Learning from the Pilot project and interim Evaluation

As has been highlighted in *the Interim Evaluation Report of the Conflict & Mental Health Initiative below*, the process of initial engagement with groups and the groundwork required to introduce and interest groups in exploring the possibility of running this innovative programme took longer than anticipated, and this has been a key learning of the pilot.

The initial target was to deliver a larger number of training course around the country. So far the initiative has completed three courses and provided introductory training to over twenty young travellers. The strategy was overly ambitious given the allocated time frame and given its part-time basis (two days per week). The plans also did not factor in the need

for pre-development work in the community to raise awareness and recruit young people. This is a key element of the initiative and has proven to be time-consuming. However, it has meant that the initiative is more grounded and integrated at community level, and it has developed good relationships and identified young people at risk of involvement in conflict.

The overall assessment from the Interim Evaluation (up to December 2022) was:

Overall the initial round of training appears to have achieved its objectives and to have created a small cohort of young Travellers in Longford, Tullamore and Ballina who are willing to engage on these issues and are interested in further training. Another important aspect was the involvement of young Traveller women who feel they can play a more positive role concerning conflict resolution but also feel they need support.

The Interim Evaluation Report of the Conflict & Mental Health Initiative was finalised and circulated in early 2023.

e) Steering Group, Evaluation, Research, Campaign & Conference

Planned Activity in 2023

- TMS will continue to actively participate on the TTC Initiative Steering Group, to represent TMS on the relevant sub-groups in 2023, and to foster more integrated ways of working together.
- To work collaboratively with Traveller Counselling Service and Exchange House Ireland on the development of a national campaign to highlight the issues and impacts of conflict on Traveller mental health.
- To support and monitor (through the research sub-group with Traveller Counselling Service and Exchange House Ireland) the in-depth piece of research to be carried out on all the projects of the Conflict & Mental Health Initiative in 2023.
- To host (with Traveller Counselling and Exchange House Ireland) a national conference to showcase the initiative outcomes in early 2024.

e.i) Evaluation

- As above, the interim evaluation of the TTC (CMHI) projects was finalised in January 2023 and final report is available to view on the TMS Website (www.travellermediation.ie)

e.ii) Research

2023 Actions

- TMS is a member of TTC Initiative's Research sub-committee.

- The Research sub-committee met regularly during this period in a support/monitoring role to the Research consultant who was engaged in January to carry out the research piece commissioned by the TTC.

Details:

- The research consultant was contracted in January 2023 to carry out the research.
- The Research consultant started to carry out the research piece commissioned by the TTC in late February.
- The Research sub-committee met regularly in a support/monitoring role with the researcher.
- A research focus group was held by zoom on 18th April as part of this research.
- TMS facilitated the researcher to organise further focus group sessions and one to one meetings with Traveller representatives.
- Organised and participated in a wider cohort Information-sharing Partnership meeting.
- The research report was completed in a draft stage by October, and was reviewed by the committee during October and November.
- The final report was completed in December and will be printed and circulated in January 2024.

e.iii) TTC Initiative Steering Group

2023 Actions

- TMS continues to actively participate as a partner in the national partnership initiative with Traveller Counselling Service and Exchange House Ireland: 'Travellers Transforming Conflict' (formerly 'Conflict and Mental Health in the Traveller community') and attended regular meetings of the steering group of this initiative from January to June 2023 to progress actions.
- TMS also participated in regular TTC Budget sub-committee meeting during this period.
- The Steering Group also spent time during the monthly meetings to discuss the focus and process for the national campaign.
- The Group then invited a representative from Montague Communications to join a meeting for a further discussion.

e.iv) TTC National Campaign

2023 Actions

The Steering Group also spent time during the monthly meetings to progress the national campaign, and a TTC sub-group has now been formed to work with Montague Communications to provide a communications/campaign strategy for the initiative.

e.v) 2024 National Conference

2023 Actions

- A Sub-group of TTC Steering Group has been formed to organise the conference.
- Date and venue for the conference:
 - Venue: Dublin Castle
 - Date: 16th April 2024

f) Travellers Transforming Conflict Initiative: Funding & Recruitment

2023 Actions

- In June TMS, EHI and TCS representatives wrote and sent a proposal to DCEDIY for 2024 DA funding. The funding proposal included an application for a TMS full-time Young Persons' trainer/facilitator.
- TMS advertised for the position of a full-time Facilitator/Trainer for Young Person's Conflict Skills Development Programme in September.
- Interviews for this position took place on 1st November.
- The successful candidate was Verona Caldwell.
- Verona Caldwell commenced employment on 4th December.

6. TMS ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Planned Activity Areas in 2023

- a) Development of TMS staff**
- b) Development of TMS 3 Year Strategic Plan/TMS data collection**
- c) Recruitment of new TMS staff**

a) Development of TMS staff team

2023 Actions

- The TMS 12 month employment one day a week contracts (through DAF funding) for Thomas McDonagh and Mary Ward finished at the end of April 2023. Thomas and Mary will now revert to working with TMS as panel members.
- One TMS staff member completed a 14 hour Trauma Informed professional training programme during this period.

- TMS staff member attended a Cultural Competency training with the Traveller Counselling Service in Dublin.
- TMS staff member completed (and passed) refresher re certification / MII membership mediation course.

b) Development of TMS Strategic Plan/TMS Data collection

2023 Actions

- The TMS team and RJC Manager met twice over January and February to continue to develop the TMS Strategic Plan 2023 to 2026.
- The final version of the TMS Strategic Plan was agreed and completed at the end of February, and is on the TMS Website (www.travellermediation.ie).
- As part of the TMS Strategic Plan, it was decided to seek funding from DCEDIY to recruit a Service Coordinator from January 2024, part of whose role would be to organise an effective data collection system. The funding for this role was advanced in September 2023

c) TMS Recruitment

2023 Actions

- Following additional funding requested and received from DCEDIY to fund the position of Service Coordinator, and from funding received from Dormant Accounts in 2023, for the Young Persons Facilitator/Trainer position, TMS advertised for 2 new staff positions in September 2023:

1. Service Coordinator TMS (a newly created full-time role)

- Interviews for the Service Coordinator took place on Wednesday 17th October.
- Following the interviews and references, Leah Quinn was offered the position.
- Leah Quinn was appointed to fill the newly created position of Service Coordinator for TMS and commenced employment on Monday 13th November.

2. Facilitator/Trainer for Young Person's Conflict Skills Development Programme (through Dormant Accounts funding and as part of the Joint Initiative with Traveller Counselling Service and Exchange House Ireland: Travellers Transforming Conflict)

- Interviews for this position took place on 1st November.
- The successful candidate was Verona Caldwell.
- Verona commenced employment on 4th December.

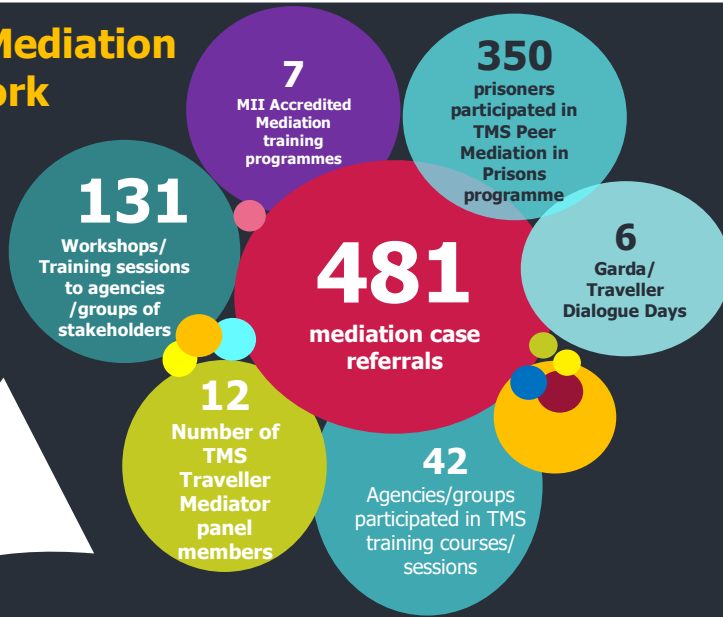
7. TMS STAFF

- Chris McDonagh: Manager
- Frank Kavanagh: Deputy Manager/Mediator/Trainer
- Sharron Kelliher: Mediator/Trainer
- Aileen O'Brien: Project Management Officer
- Leah Quinn: Service Coordinator
- Verona Caldwell: Facilitator/Trainer

8. BENEFICIARY NUMBERS: 2018 to 2023

Traveller Mediation Service work

2018-2023
in figures



<http://travellermediation.ie/>

9. TRAVELLER MEDIATION SERVICE 2023 FINANCIAL RETURN- Core Funds

TMS Income Core Funds 2023	Q1-Q4
Reconciled Bank Balance from 2022	41,256
Grant Payment DCEDIY	257,900 Main Core Funding 17,750 additional core funds (Sept '23)
HSE funding for specific training (attributable to core plans)	1202.76
Total Income with respect to this return	318,108.76

Expenditure	Actual Expenditure full year 2023
Salaries including Revenue Commissioners Payment	160,447.84
Bank Fees	211.41
Management Fee to Restorative Justice in the Community agreed with Dept	28,000.00
Phone	2,134.59
Website, IT Maintenance / Repair	800.03
Insurance (shared with RJC)	1,311.42
Printing / Stationery/ Office supplies	1,736.47
Office Rental and additional room hire	7,051.86
Subscription / affiliation (Mediators Institute of Ireland €200)	260.00
Light / Heat	854.01
Staff Travel and Subsistence	48,273.92
Audit and Accountancy (contribution shared with RJC)	1,983.53
Expenses for Traveller Mediators for mediation assistance and attendance at panel meetings	10,349.83
Traveller Mediation Training Programme	13,183.50
TMS Women's Programme (Venue Hire, Study Supplies) / Dialogue Day	364.49
Training	2,150.00
New IT Package to manage shared documents, files etc including training	4,186.72
Bike to Work	900.00
Recruitment Costs	746.78
	Total Full Year €284,946.40

**TRAVELLER MEDIATION SERVICE 2023 FINANCIAL RETURN- -
Dormant Accounts Funding**

Income 2023	
DCEDIY- Dormant A/C fund	27,300.00
from Traveller Counselling Service (conference contribution)	4,000.00
Carried over from 2022	21,721.78
Total	€53,021.78

Expenditure	Total Expenditure 2023
Salary and Revenue Commissioners Payment	10,036.64
Management Fee to Restorative Justice in the Community/Administration	6,600.00
Staff Travel and Subsistence	3,357.74
Traveller Youth Conflict Skills Training programme: Participants' expenses, venue hire, etc	125.00
	Total spend 2023
	20,119.38