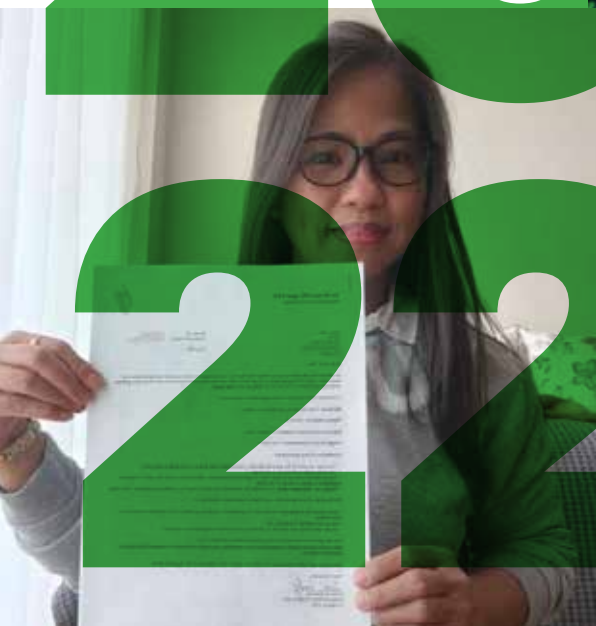
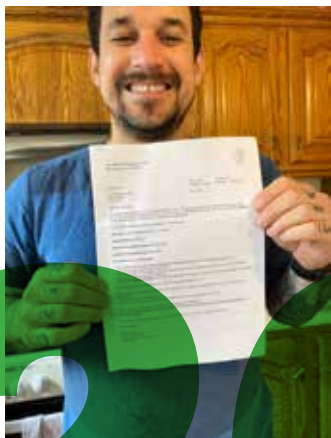


2022

# Migrant Rights Centre Ireland Annual Report



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# Message from the Chair

**On the 31st of January 2022, Minister Helen McEntee opened the Regularisation Scheme for Long Term Undocumented. This scheme was life changing for thousands of people, delivering a positive impact in communities all across the country.**

The scheme was the result of eleven years of campaigning with Justice for Undocumented for a pathway to papers for migrants who have been living here long term. Huge time and energy were put into communicating the regularisation scheme, training community members on the scheme criteria and one to one casework to assist people to apply. We are very proud of this work.

As the world began to return to normal after the pandemic, the war in Ukraine suddenly erupted. With over 62,000 refugees arriving in Ireland throughout the year, the most pressing issue was accommodating such large numbers at speed. At the same time, a small number of far-right actors, began to spread hate in local communities. MRCI joined the Ukraine Civil Society Forum and grew our work through the Far-Right Observatory to respond.

By the end of 2022, over 40,000 new employment permits were issued, tripling the amount issued in 2021. In 2022 the government extended general employment permits to care and homecare workers, meat workers, construction workers, healthcare assistants, haulage drivers, dairy

workers, and bus and coach drivers. This has had a big impact and our work in this area is therefore set to grow.

We had promising progress in relation to reform of employment permits and secured Ministerial Agreement in the Employment Permits Bill to make it easier for general employment permit holders to change employer.

After eight years calling for a new identification system for victims of trafficking, the government launched its Heads of Bill to give effect to a new system called the National Referral Mechanism. MRCI has worked hard to ensure that our priorities for victims of trafficking are included in this Bill.

We continued to deliver specialist information and supports through the Drop-in Centre. We are providing training, and mentoring supports to worker leaders in the meat sector and homecare sectors to develop their skills and capacity in organising.

We were deeply honoured to receive the John O'Connell award from NUIM Maynooth, for Outstanding Contribution to



Social Justice and Equality as part of their 40 years of change celebrations. We were also delighted to hold another amazing Gala to celebrate with members of Justice for Undocumented.

These important achievements would not be possible without the amazing work of the staff, team, board, volunteers, community members, funders, donors, and supporters, and we sincerely thank them all.

We want to give special thanks to all who gave so generously in 2022. So many people helped undocumented individuals and families to pay for the regularisation scheme and helped to raise over €57,000

for Mohammed Younis in his fight for justice. This has truly changed lives.

We look forward to 2023; to providing supports to people seeking assistance on employment permits; to advancing equality in the employment permit system; to securing rights for victims of trafficking for labour exploitation; and to empowering workers to organise in agri-food and homecare. We will meet the challenges of 2023 with determination, passion and creativity.

**Lucy Peprah**  
Chair



# Our Vision, Mission, and Values

**From its inception, MRCI's emphasis on community work has been critical in bringing about the empowerment and participation of migrant workers on issues that concern them.**

Community work is concerned with addressing the root causes of inequality through collective action for change. Core to our theory of change is supporting migrants in low wage work to organise, engage in and lead on issues that affect their lives. We operate a sophisticated structure that combines a front-line service, building the capacity of migrant workers by using a community work process, and engaging in strategic public awareness, policy, and advocacy.

## Our Vision



Our vision is for an open, equal, just and diverse society where migrant workers and their families can move, work and live in dignity.

## Our Values



- People closest to the struggle are closest to the solution.
- People acting collectively make change possible.
- People lead when they have the tools to do so.

## Our Mission



Grounded in social justice, anti-racism and equality, our mission is to empower migrant workers in low-paid and precarious work to secure and advance their rights through collective action.



# Our Impact – at a glance



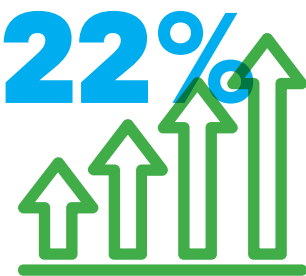
In January 2022, the long awaited regularisation scheme opened. In total, 11,404 people applied across the two strands of the scheme.



Provided support to 28 people who have experienced severe forms of labour exploitation and suspected trafficking for labour exploitation.



MRCI's free and confidential Drop-in Centre provided 4,689 information and casework supports to migrant workers and their families.



Our supporter network grew by over 22% over the year

MRCI delivered 19 clinics in Dublin, Galway and Cork supporting 686 people to apply for the regularisation scheme.



Assisted 10 groups of workers to advocate for better terms and conditions of employment in the meat processing sector, impacting 1,200 workers.



John O'Connell award from NUIM Maynooth, for Outstanding Contribution to Social Justice!



Secured Ministerial Agreement in the Employment Permits Bill as part of our campaign to make it easier for permit holders to change employer.



Nearly 1,600 people donated to over €57,000 for Mohammed Younis appeal.



In May, over 200 volunteers took part in a national Poster Day of Action to promote the scheme for undocumented people. This resulted in fliers and posters in over 900 locations across the country.



# Advancing Rights



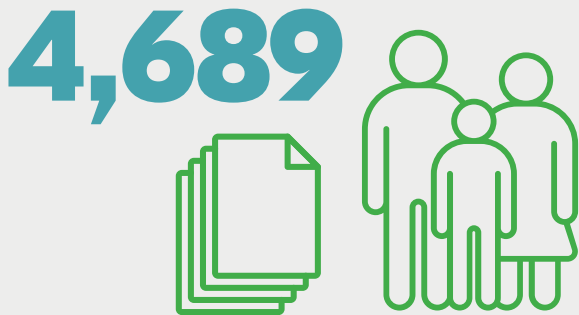
## The Drop-in Centre

During 2022, MRCI’s Drop-in Centre continued to operate via telephone, website, email, video calls and face-to-face appointments.

### Highlights in 2022



We provided 3,092 information and casework supports on the regularisation scheme to a total of 2,560 people. The top five nationalities were: Filipino 20%, Brazilian 11%, Pakistani 9%, Mauritian 5%, Nigerian 4%, Chinese 4.



Provided free and confidential information and casework supports on 4,689 cases to migrant workers and their families.



People supported were in essential job sectors, including homecare workers, mushroom workers, meat factory workers and dairy farm workers, restaurants and retail workers.



caseworkers supported people from 119 nationalities.



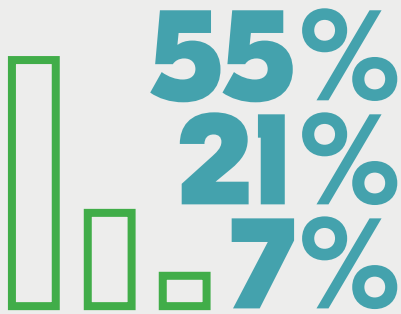
63% of cases were successfully closed.



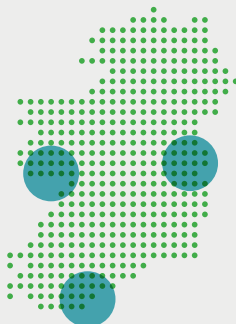
Conducted 2 separate Migrants Forums on Family Reunion in English and Chinese language.



Hardship Fund, paid for the applications of 56 individuals and 20 families



Top presenting issues were Regularisation 55%, General Immigration 21%, Work Permits 7%,



We held 19 Regularisation scheme clinics in Dublin, Cork and Galway



Assessed, screened, and supported 17 people who presented with signs of trafficking for labour exploitation.

## Justice for the Undocumented

**In 2022 Justice for Undocumented focussed on ensuring as many people as possible were informed about the life changing regularisation scheme and were supported to apply.**

The scheme allowed undocumented people who met the criteria (4 years undocumented or 3 years undocumented if you had children, or 2 years in the International Protection process) to get a residence permission (stamp 4) in Ireland.



### Highlights in 2022

- 11,404 people applied across the two strands of the scheme.
- By December 2022, over 6,500 people have received a Stamp 4 status.
- Our dedicated web page for the scheme had 37,266 Unique Page Views.
- Published 4 videos to build confidence in the regularisation scheme (English, Mongolian, Chinese and Portuguese)
- 21 undocumented volunteers were trained on the scheme and how to support their own community via in person training day
- We held 2 online general scheme information sessions with over 1,200 registrations
- 65 co-ordinators and 200 volunteers took part in Poster Day of Action for Poster Day to promote the regularisation scheme reached 900+ locations.
- We held 19 face-to-face clinics, in Galway, Cork and Dublin supporting 686 people with their applications.

## Tackling Severe Exploitation and Trafficking for Labour Exploitation



**Exploitation across a number of sectors including restaurants, agriculture and in the private home continued to grow. After eight years calling for a new identification system, the government launched its Heads of Bill to give effect to a**

**new National Referral Mechanism, which will be put on a statutory footing for the first time. The Bill proposes a role for NGOs (with government departments and agencies) around identification.**

### Highlights in 2022

- Submitted comments to the Department of Justice first draft of National Action Plan on Combatting Human Trafficking
- Responded to Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report including, press release and 2 radio interviews.
- Participated on panel of IHREC's first Irish trafficking conference on experiences with compensation for victims of trafficking.
- MRCI and other NGOs met with Minister for Justice Helen McEntee to push for legislation to reform the National Referral Mechanism.
- Made submission on the Heads of Bill, General Scheme of the Criminal Justice (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Bill 2022 to both the Department of Justice and the Committee on Justice to reform the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking.
- In December, MRCI presented to the Committee on Justice on the above Heads of Bill.
- MRCI provided content for Citizens Information Centre e-training module on Trafficking for Labour exploitation.



## Mohammad Younis



**After 20 years in Ireland, and 13 years fighting to enforce an award of €91,000, Mohammad never saw a penny of what he is owed.**

Mohammad had come to Ireland to work as a Chef in a Dublin restaurant in 2002. On arrival, he was forced to work 11 hours a day, seven days a week. He earned just €0.55 cents an hour. For the first three years working in Ireland, Mohammad only had one day off per year on Christmas day.

His employer did not renew his work permit and Mohammad became undocumented. He was living in overcrowded

accommodation, and his employer constantly threatened him with deportation while holding on to his passport. He was bullied, abused and exploited.

For seven years, he only worked, ate and slept. After seven years living like this, Mohammad bravely came forward and spoke out. He brought a case against his employer and was awarded €91,000 for unpaid wages. Mohammad was left with nothing. As he turned 68 with his health failing, with no hope of compensation from the state insolvency fund which pointed to his lack of immigration status while in work, MRCI launched a fundraising appeal to get Mohammad home.

### Highlights in 2022

- MRCI launched a funding raising appeal, which went well beyond what we had hoped to raise. Nearly 1,600 people donated to Crowdfunder raising over €57,000
- MRCI advanced the lodging of a complaint to the Council of Europe in his case.

## Empowering Migrant Workers

### Worker Empowerment in Agri-food

**In 2022 MRCI grew and strengthened its work across the country with meat processing workers. The number of non-EU migrant workers with employment permits in the sector continues to grow and stands at approximately 3,500 workers up from 2,000 in 2021. The majority of permit holders in the sector are from Brazil (60%).**



### Highlights in 2022

- Outreach and development work took place with workers in eighteen meat processing plants.
- Worker leaders and committees received education, training, and mentoring supports towards developing their skills and capacity in organising and raising critical issues with their employer.
- Ten groups have begun and continued ongoing direct engagement with their employer.
- Gains and improvements in conditions (overtime, pay rates, breaks, health and safety) have been made for hundreds of workers in at least ten of the facilities.





## Worker Empowerment in Homecare - My Fair Home

My Fair Home (MFH) is the only space in Ireland for migrant homecare workers to connect and organise. Many MFH members were undocumented and applied to the regularisation scheme. Active members were deeply involved in supporting others to apply to the scheme. By November 2022, many carers in MFH had gotten their papers, and were moving to change employers.

### Highlights in 2022

- Training held with 77 attendees on Know Your Rights for carers including negotiation skills.
- Facilitated the Great Care Co-op to come and talk to 35 newly regularised workers.
- MFH core group met 12 times and had 4 network meetings in 2022.
- Reflection and planning day held in October.



## Making Employment Permits Fairer

**In 2022 MRCI continued its work to gain parity of rights for all people who come to work in Ireland on employment permits. We continued to focus these efforts around the upcoming legislation on employment permits.**

This included securing a simple way for people on general employment permits to change employer as a protection from poor conditions and exploitation. It also included advocating against the introduction of seasonal permits and pushing for strong protections for workers. We continued to seek the right to work for spouses and dependents of general employment permit and to seek better family reunion rights.

### Highlights in 2022

- Amendments proposed by three TDs at committee stage that speak directly to MRCI asks re change of employer and seasonal permits.
- Minister English made a commitment at Committee Stage of the Bill to introduce an amendment to make it easier for employment permit holders to change employer while remaining on their existing permit.
- We began to engage with people affected by this campaign. By the end of 2022 we had recruited 84 general employment permit holders into the campaign.



# Justice Gala 2022

MRCI Gala was held on 7th October in the Convention Centre Dublin, with 455 attendees. This was a celebration of a victorious year for Justice for Undocumented and there was great splendour on the night. It was a wonderful night full of dancing, great food, with an amazing band - Back to Basics. Senator Eileen Flynn was the guest speaker on the

night and the MCs were Imelda Morano and Tjanasi Potso. Jayson Montenegro and Champa Wanniarachchi, as founder members of JFU gave a beautiful speech outlining the 11 years campaigning for a regularisation scheme and what the scheme means to them and all the people who were regularised.



# The Bobby Gilmore Fellowship

In 2022, our two fellows Imelda Morano and Albert Bello, active members in Justice for the Undocumented and My Fair Home finished up their fellowship, but not without leaving their mark on the work and the organisation. They will be missed.



# The Great Care Co-op

The Great Care Co-op (GCC) is a social enterprise supported by MRCI and led by migrant women to deliver a new model of local and community-based homecare. MRCI provided organisational development supports to its board. A huge success is the fact that the organisation became fully independent of MRCI in September 2022.



## Growing Reach



### Growing our Supporters Network and Communications

**In 2022, we strengthened our supporter engagement and continued to keep people up to date on changes and developments through regular and accessible posts on our website and social media. MRCI made headlines in the national press on pressing issues around the Regularisation Scheme, trafficking for labour exploitation and an unequal employment permit system.**

#### Highlights in 2022

- Over 560 undocumented people joined our Justice for the Undocumented Campaign in 2022
- Our supporter network grew by over 22% over the year.
- Nearly 1,600 people donated to Mohammad Younis' Crowdfunder. Many Trade Unions and branches also contributed.
- Our supporters helped us raised €8,000 to pay for the application fees of families and individuals who qualified for the Undocumented Scheme
- We published five blogs by migrant workers, using digital tools to amplify their voices.
- Developed and launched a new webpage with clear information on supports for people fleeing Ukraine.

## Rise-Up Project



**The Rise-Up (Rights, Innovation, Solutions and Evidence Based Policy for Undocumented People) project, was wrapping up in 2022. This two-year project funded by the European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM) shared good practice on advocacy and campaigning to improve the capacity of organisations to advance regularisation campaigns across Europe.**

#### Highlights in 2022

- We coordinated and delivered our second Learning Exchange with nine other organisations across Europe. The focus was on better communications on irregular migration and regularisation, community development approaches and the involvement of undocumented people in campaigning for change.
- We collated evidence for a policy brief highlighting the best examples of large scale regularisations in Europe since 2009
- We collected and collated four cases studies on successful campaigns for regularisation and the implementation of these schemes.



# Submissions, Consultations and Oireachtas Committee Presentations

- Contributed to the Children's Rights Alliance Report Card
- Committee on Justice on the Heads of Bill, General Scheme of the Criminal Justice (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Bill 2022
- Department of Justice and the Oireachtas Committee on Justice on the Bill to reform the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking.
- Housing Commission on a Referendum on Housing in Ireland
- Consultation on the National Minimum Wage
- Consultation on Regulations for Providers of Home Support Services
- Cross-Departmental Review Group of the Atypical Working Scheme for non-EEA Crew in the Irish Fishing Fleet



## Networks and Solidarity

**MRCI supports and engages across a range of progressive civil society spaces. MRCI is a member of the Children's Rights Alliance, Community Work Ireland, Community Platform, Far Right Observatory, Irish Network Against Racism, Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed, National Youth Council of Ireland, National Women's Council, Ukraine Civil Society Forum and the Platform for the International Cooperation of Undocumented Migrants.**

We joined the May Day Rally with organisers from My Fair Home, Justice for the Undocumented and agri-food. We marched for housing rights and in support of Trans rights.

In 2022, MRCI prioritised involvement in writing and publishing, the Community Platform's, Towards Collaborate Governance Discussion Document, supported the strategic direction and governance of the Far Right Observatory, and of the Ukraine Civil Society Forum. We participated in the policy group of the Community Work Ireland. We continue to provide payroll supports to Amal's Women's Association.





# Team, Governance and Funders

## Organisational Development

We held a team day to agree organisational priorities for 2022 and four quarterly planning session with the team to deliver on these. We held a review of 2022 and planning for 2023 with the team and board in December. We had a team building day in July and a Christmas party in December. We developed a new Equality and Anti-Racism statement for our website.

We updated our Data Cleaning and Erasure Policy, updated MRCI's IT equipment policy and Mobile Phone Device Policy. In May we were thrilled to go back to in-person team meetings every second Thursday and continued our check in meetings every Monday morning and team fun meetings every Friday morning.

In November we were very proud to be the recipient of the John O'Connell award for Outstanding Contribution to Social Justice and Equality as part the NUIM Maynooth 40 years of change celebrations.



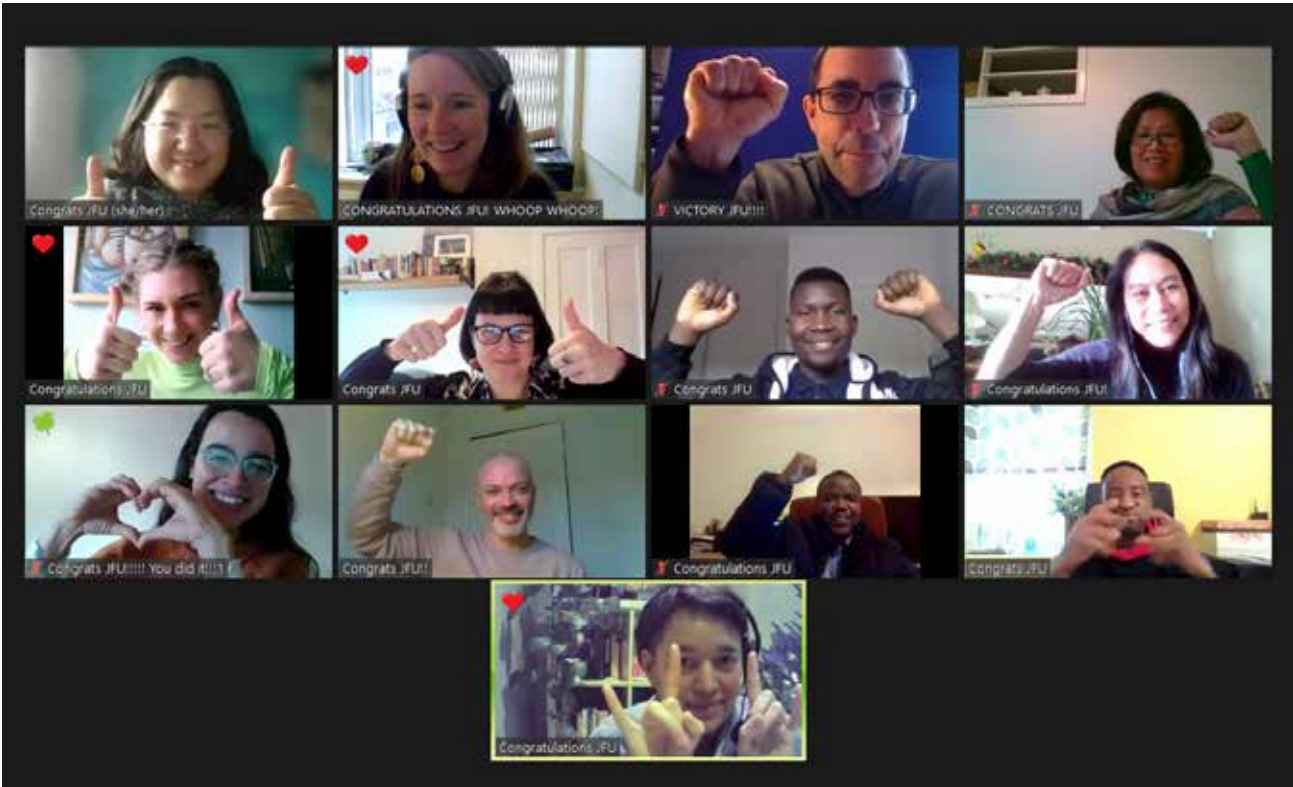
## Our Team

Our small but mighty team have been key to achieving everything we did in 2022. With commitment and passion, our staff works tirelessly for migrant rights, community empowerment and justice and equality.

Esohe Ajayi and Emma Flanagan joined us from Maynooth University on their placement for 14 weeks. To all JFU and MFH community members which helped deliver the nineteen clinics across the country.

This year, we said goodbye to the wonderful Rhye Reid and wish them well in their career. We also said goodbye to our two wonderful fellows Imelda Morano and Albert Bello and also wish them the best in the future. We welcomed Sylwia Nowakowska and Karina Korotkevica back from maternity leave. We welcomed Elsadig Ishag as our Trainee Caseworker. We wished Caroline Franca and Tatjana Dobosa well as they both went on maternity leave.

One of our team and board's greatest strength lies in its diversity, with people from eighteen nationalities and varied backgrounds. Amongst the many things that unites us is that we collectively for justice and equality.



# Our Board

MRCI's Board are a source of support and strength, helping the organisation navigate difficult periods and remain focused on our goals and strategic objectives. Our Board met five times in 2022, including the AGM. We held a team and board day in December to review 2022 and plan for 2023. In 2022, MRCI was able to pay off its final building instalment.

We said goodbye to Reverend Pat Raleigh who was a valued member of the board for many years. His legacy will not be forgotten, and we are deeply grateful for his contribution. We welcomed Champika Wanniarachchi, Founder member of Justice for Undocumented and Ian McArdle, Deputy General Secretary of the Communications Workers Union.

Special thanks to our Board of Directors Anastasia Crickley, Angelisa Zerpa Andara, Bobby Gilmore, Champika Wanniarachchi (elected July 2022) Dee Lowry, Francis Njúgúna, Ian McArdle (elected July 2022) Lucy Peprah (Chair), Michael O'Sullivan and Raluca Anucuta.

# Compliance

MRCI complies with the Charities Governance code for Community and Voluntary organisations in Ireland and the Statement of Guiding Principles for fundraising. MRCI has a dedicated section on company governance on our website to

## Finance Sub-group and Audit Committee

The overall purpose of the Finance Subgroup is to, on behalf of the Board, monitor the financial management of the organisation and ensure best practice is maintained. The Finance Subgroup met four times during 2022. A big thanks to our Finance Subgroup, Cathal McAllister, Francis Njúgúna, and Michael O'Sullivan.

## Employment Sub-group

The Employment Subgroup aims to, on behalf of the Board, maintain and develop excellent employment practice within MRCI. The Employment Subgroup met five times in 2022. A big thanks to the Employment Subgroup members Lucy Peprah, Angelisa Zerpa Andara, Raluca Anucuta and Dee Lowry

ensure full transparency in our operations. MRCI is fully compliant with the annual requirements of Revenue, the Charities Regulatory Authority and Companies Registration Office.

# Our Funders and Donors

A special thanks to all our donors and funders in 2022, without which our work would not be possible:

- Cavan County Council
- Columban Missionary Society
- Community Foundation of Ireland
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth — European Social Fund
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth — National Integration Fund
- Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government - Scheme to Support National Organisations
- Department of Justice and Equality — Victims of Crime
- European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM)
- Fórsa Trade Union
- Lakeside Fund
- One Foundation
- Open Society Initiative for Europe
- Order of Discalced Carmelites
- Rethink Ireland- Equality Fund
- Rowan Trust

**Special thanks to all those who gave one off and recurring donations to assist the work of MRCI in 2022, without your support our work would not be possible. We thank those who gave to help people pay for the fees for the regularisation scheme.**



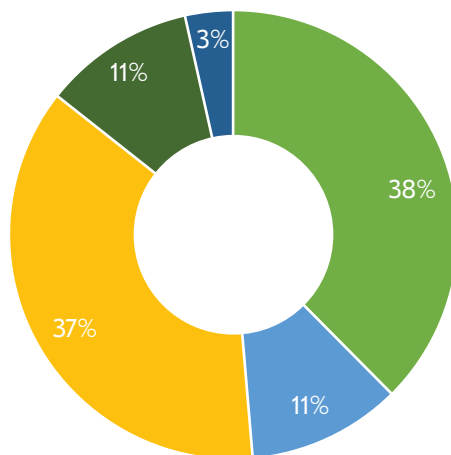
# Financial Review

The financial outcome for 2022 is set out in the audited financial statements.

Our income can be split into four broad categories: Philanthropic, Government Grants, Irish Grants and Fundraising Income (donations and events). Overall, in 2022 our total income increased by €35,156 compared with 2021.

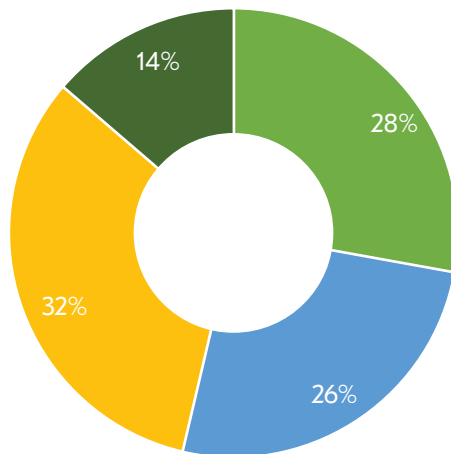
Our expenditure can be categorised in four broad headings: Community Work, Services, Programmes and Organisation costs. Overall, in 2022 our total expenditure increased by €227,303 compared to 2021.

**2022 Income**  
**€1,049,468**



## 2022 Expenditure

### €1,150,045



After 20 years of waiting , today my papers arrived

Oi tudo bem muitos amigos meus brasileiros ja estão recebendo a stamp 4 do governo.atraves do esquema não endocumentados.obrigado vcs

We got it

She got it

She got it!!!!

God is great!!!

I got my visa today from your efforts and hard work



73 Thanks to all Mrcireland today we recive the letter 📬📬 We are so happy . Thank you for all your hard work. 🙏❤️

**CHRONIC FATIGUE**

Congratulations 🎉👏👏👏

my family was also awarded in this new scheme we are very happy, The first question one of my children asked me when we received the minister's decision was if he could go to college and if the father could get a driver's license to take them to know the beach 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

thank you to you **Migrant Rights Centre Ireland - MRCI** who fought for this to become so real in our lives thank you so much 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

I was granted Stamp4 through the Undocumented Scheme,I applied on the 7th of February and got my papers yesterday,30th of June.Thank u MRCI and for your team for making all this possible I'm so happy and forever grateful.To everyone waiting,your papers are coming

Hi, I would like to inform you that I am another person granted stamp4 under the scheme. Thanks a lot for supporting me an many others!

Hi good afternoon  
First of all I would congratulate you all for a hard  
and good work in this page. My husband and I  
received a positive letter last Monday from the  
government  
We are really happy and relieved

Hi guys! Thanks to yours tireless battle for the undocumented scheme, I got my permission letter on Friday 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

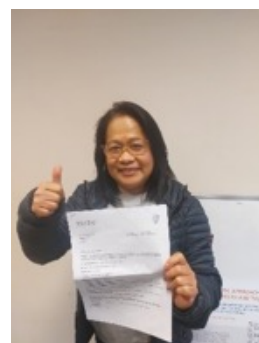


# A Year in Pictures





# Migrant Rights Centre Ireland Annual Report 2022



MRCI is a non-governmental organisation and a registered charity (CHY17071), governed by a board of directors. Our work is made possible by a number of donors and funders, including the Scheme to Support National Organisations 2022-2025.



An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development

