

COUNTY KILKENNY TRAVELLER PROFILE 2013

Carried out by Community Consultants Ltd with Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement.



K. T. C. M.
**Kilkenny Traveller
Community Movement**



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County Kilkenny Traveller Profile 2013
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1. INTRODUCTION

This profile of Travellers living in County Kilkenny was commissioned by the Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement (KTCM) who were directly involved in overseeing and carrying out this research. Community Consultants were successful in tendering for the work and commenced work in May 2013. The aim of carrying out the profile was to:

- a. Gather useful information in relation to the Traveller community in Kilkenny, e.g. ages, family size, living conditions, etc.
- b. Make this information available to service providers and local organisations in order to assist with planning responses to Traveller's needs including guiding the future development of the KTCM, e.g. provide them with information about housing, health, children and education.
- c. Gain a better understanding of the Traveller community in Kilkenny, their perception of their needs, the challenges they face and the resources they bring to their community.

The work was led by Maria Power, Community Consultants Ltd., and was carried out by Maria and the Outreach Team at KTCM. This work was also supported by the Community Health Workers, staff in the housing section of Kilkenny County Council and the Kilkenny Traveller Interagency Group (KTIG), who have committed to responding to the report's findings.

The work was carried out as agreed on a confidential basis i.e. personal information in relation to individual family name was coded and referenced by the consultant only and was not made available to anyone else. In addition, only information which Travellers were comfortable and agreeable to providing was recorded. While detailed data on all families was not made available, the level of data captured is substantial and is line with trends in other data collection reports on Travellers.

The report that follows is organised under the following headings:

1. Methodologies used to carry out this work
2. Background Information from other studies on Travellers
3. Data Captured in this study
4. Data Analysis & Recommendations
5. Conclusion & Summary Table listing the Recommendations

Appendices are shown at the end of the document.

It is hoped that this report, complemented by other national research reports with Travellers, will focus Kilkenny organisations, service providers and interagency groups on responses which target the needs identified by Travellers living in County Kilkenny.



2. METHODOLOGIES

This work was carried out using participative, qualitative methodologies. It was agreed to use to such methods in order to provide research experience for the Outreach workers, utilise their existing skills, gain access to local knowledge, in addition to familiarising the various Traveller communities in County Kilkenny with the role of the Outreach workers. The following specific approach was followed:

- Travellers led the research process from the outset by attending facilitated research meetings with the consultant on a regular basis in Kilkenny.
- This included gathering data, inserting data into spread-sheets, cross-checking and correcting data. The KTCM Outreach workers and Community Health Care workers were directly involved in this process, as were staff from the housing section of Kilkenny County Council.
- The Outreach workers (Kitty Murphy and Kathleen Cash) chaired and facilitated public consultation meetings with Travellers in Rosbercon and Kilkenny city, which included families from Urlingford, Callan and Thomastown and Bennettsbridge.
- The Outreach workers completed area surveys in relation to all key locations relevant to Travellers in County Kilkenny. (Bernie Power, Kitty Murphy and Kathleen Cash).
- Creative inputs, surveys and participation was maximised at each meeting.
- The consultant designed and led the process with the KTCM team. In addition, the consultant provided training to the Outreach team, provided administrative support at the public consultation meetings, completed the data input, carried out the data analysis, presented the report to KTCM for verification and prepared the final report.
- The final report will be presented by the KTCM Outreach workers to KTIG in October 2013 in a power point presentation.
- The work was carried out over a two month period: May – June 2013.
- The report and presentation was finalised over the summer of 2013.

Data on Traveller families currently living in various locations throughout County Kilkenny was gathered through local work by the Outreach workers and at team meetings. Personal data which would identify families was not recorded on the data sheets but instead a coding number was used. On this basis families were more forthcoming with information about their family size, ages and related information e.g. living conditions.

Collecting data on every Traveller family living in Kilkenny was not possible but a significant number of families were identified i.e. 80% of official figures. This data and analysis is given in chapters 4 and 5. This work is mostly qualitative, as it captures information as Travellers wish to provide it and in how they perceive their circumstances. Where information was not made available or is categorised differently, this is explained in each section.

Detailed information was not captured for one key location i.e. Ferrybank/Piltown area. This is in part due to the fact that there is no Outreach worker dedicated to this area and therefore relationships and direct communication with Travellers and Traveller families is under-developed. This weakness in the data collection forms part of the recommendations in relation to future planning and work.



3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT TRAVELLERS

This chapter provides a brief overview of other pieces of key research which are relevant to Traveller life in Ireland. These reports are available separately and are referenced at the back of this report.

The context of Traveller life in Ireland is important and many of the issues identified twenty years ago continue to perpetuate Traveller life today, not least for many Travellers living in County Kilkenny. Below are key findings that relate to Travellers living in Ireland as captured in these pieces of research:

3.1 All Ireland Traveller Health Study (AITHS)

This piece of research titled the “All-Ireland Traveller Health Study” was co-ordinated by UCD and carried out during 2010, working in partnership with Traveller peer-researchers throughout all locations in Ireland – North and South. Community Consultants acted as a support to this process in the Cork-Kerry region.

This research takes as its guidance the social determinants of health as defined by the World Health Organisation in 2002. The key findings from the AITHS are as follows:

- Traveller life expectancy remains at levels last experienced by the general population in 1941. A Traveller boy can expect to live to 61 years (77 in the general population) and a Traveller girl to 70 years (82 in the general population).
- A Traveller baby born in Ireland is almost 5 times more likely to die than a baby born to the general population.
- Heart Disease /Stroke: a male Traveller is 3.5 times and a female Traveller is 5 times more likely to die from heart disease/stroke than the general population.
- Respiratory: a male Traveller is 7.5 times and a female Traveller is 5 times more likely to die from respiratory diseases.
- Suicide: a male Traveller is 6.5 times and a female Traveller is 5 times more likely to die of suicide.

- 9 out of every 10 Traveller children in Ireland had a health problem; asthma, chest infections, poor hearing, challenging behaviour, etc.
 - 55% of adult Travellers smoke compared to a national average of 29%. High consumption levels of alcohol and drugs are both issues of concern for Traveller families – see information gathered from public consultation meeting on page 12.
 - 42% of families felt discriminated against.
 - 1 in 3 Travellers cannot read or fill out forms
 - Last CSO figures show unemployment for Travellers at 75% compared to national average of 9% (higher in 2013 for both groupings)
 - Living conditions are generally very poor for those living on sites, in trailers or mobile homes.
- These findings relate to Travellers living in Kilkenny as much as elsewhere in Ireland.

3.2 Travelling in Austerity

This report written in 2013 by Brian Harvey and commissioned by Pavee Point highlights the following key findings in relation to austerity cuts affecting the Traveller community in particular. Since late 2008, there has been a dramatic disinvestment by the state in the Traveller community, listed as follows:

State funded programmes for Travellers	Budget
Interagency Activities -	-100%
Traveller Education -	-86.6%
Traveller Accommodation -	-85%
Equality -	-76.3%
National Traveller organisations -	-63.6%
FÁS Special Initiative for Travellers -	-60%
National Traveller Partnership -	-32.1%
Traveller SPY youth projects -	-29.8%
Health –	-5.4% ¹

1 Cuts to these budgets commenced prior to 2008.

<u>Other Programmes of importance to Travellers</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Equality and Rights agencies -	-69%
Local & Community Development Programme -	-42.3%
Initiatives against Drugs -	-32.5%

Combining these cut-backs, the effects on the Traveller community is drastic and a huge set-back in terms of community development and Traveller development.

3.3 Kilkeny Traveller Community Movement strategic plan

KTCM developed its three year strategic plan in 2012 titled “Towards 2020”. This plan focuses on key areas of concern to Kilkeny Travellers including: Community Health Care; After-Schools; Community Development and St. Catherine’s². There are detailed actions relating to each of these key areas of work contained in the KTCM strategic plan. These areas remain a priority for Kilkeny Travellers.

This strategic plan is robust, costed and focused. At the time of its development, it was recommended that a strategic manager was required to oversee a higher level of integrated governance, ensure the provision of operational support to the various co-ordinators and develop a stronger link to Traveller work at national level. Funding for this post is still not in place. Without such a resource, integrated planning and responding to the needs identified in this plan remains constrained and limited.

All public services are required to focus on Traveller needs, but service providers and Travellers need a strong, independent Traveller organisation to exist and engage with if real and substantial progress is to be made in an integrated manner across all areas of work.

2 Re-development of St. Catherine’s Halting Site.

Discrimination: All the above reports, including this report based on the experiences of Travellers living in County Kilkenny identify the high level of discrimination that Travellers face every day in many aspects of their lives, e.g. in the area of employment, sports and recreation and accessing daily services including shopping. This must be a priority consideration for all organisations in any future work with Travellers, in addition to considering in detail all the other priority areas identified in this report.

The data and analysis provided on pages 10 to 33 about Travellers living in Kilkenny County follows similar trends to that identified in national reports. Travellers in Kilkenny and elsewhere are behind the general population in all quality of life measures, i.e. accommodation, living conditions, education, health, employment and social integration. This report localises the information so that service providers and organisations who work with Travellers may do so with additional focus and closer targeting of their work.

Travellers regularly engage in consultation meetings, identify their needs, participate in responses and patiently wait for improvements. The experience of this research process highlights that the Travellers who participated in this study are willing to engage in responses, take on leadership roles and work locally with a wide range of stakeholders. This is an opportunity for all organisations concerned with equality to engage and make progress in partnership with Travellers.





4. DATA COLLECTION

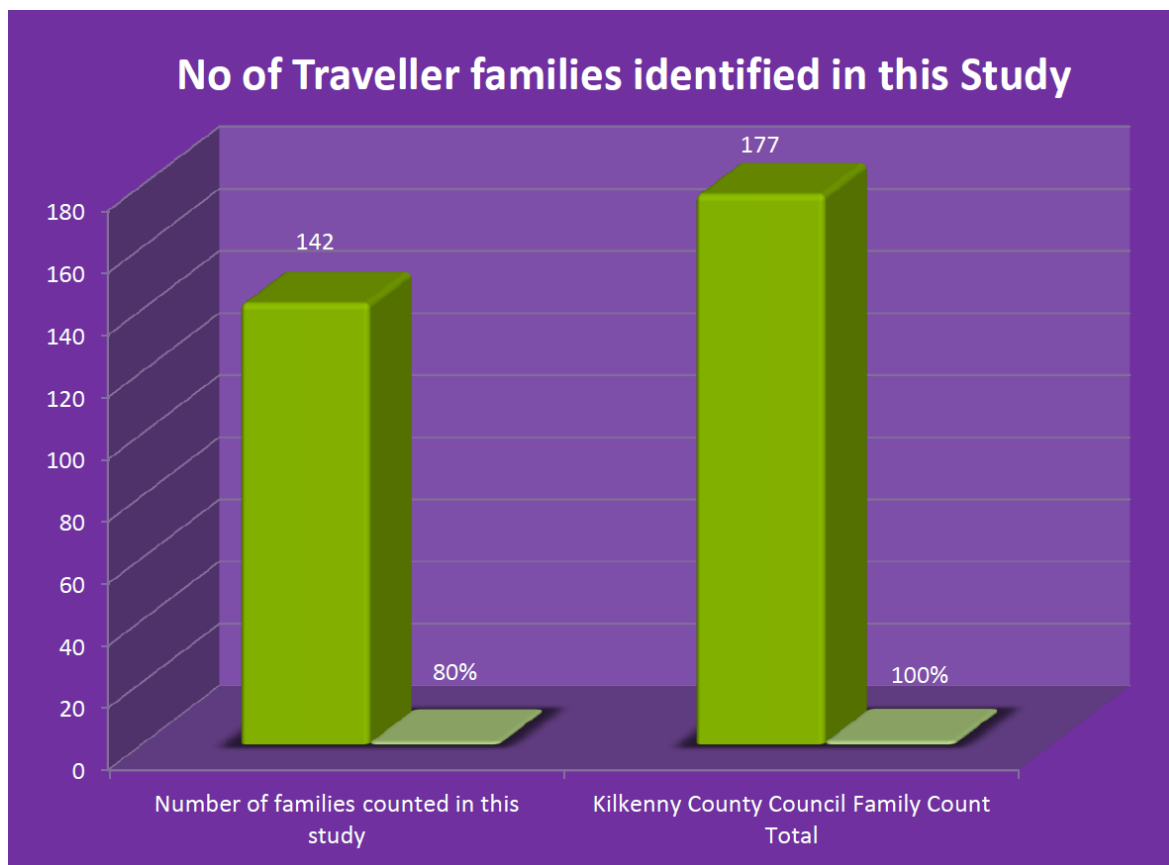
According to the annual count of Traveller families in November 2012 (Kilkenny County Council) the Traveller population in Kilkenny was estimated at 177 families. For the purposes of this study, gathering data on all Traveller families living in Kilkenny was not possible for a variety of reasons, e.g. not all families wished to be identified as Travellers, some did not want to participate and others could not be located or contacted. However, **data was captured for 142 families i.e. 80%**, which provides a snapshot in May 2013 for this group of Traveller families living in Kilkenny.

It is also generally accepted by many studies on/with Travellers, that the counting of Traveller families is under-reported, for a variety of reasons including non-participation and non-self-identification.

4.1. County Kilkenny Traveller Population

Information about 142 Traveller families living in County Kilkenny was captured as part of this profile work. This includes important information on **493 individual Travellers** from age 1 month to some Travellers aged in their 80s. Key data relating to these families is as follows:

Population Data	Numbers
Number of families identified in this study	142
Number of individual Travellers included within these families	493
As a percentage of Traveller headcount Kilkenny County Council 2012	80%

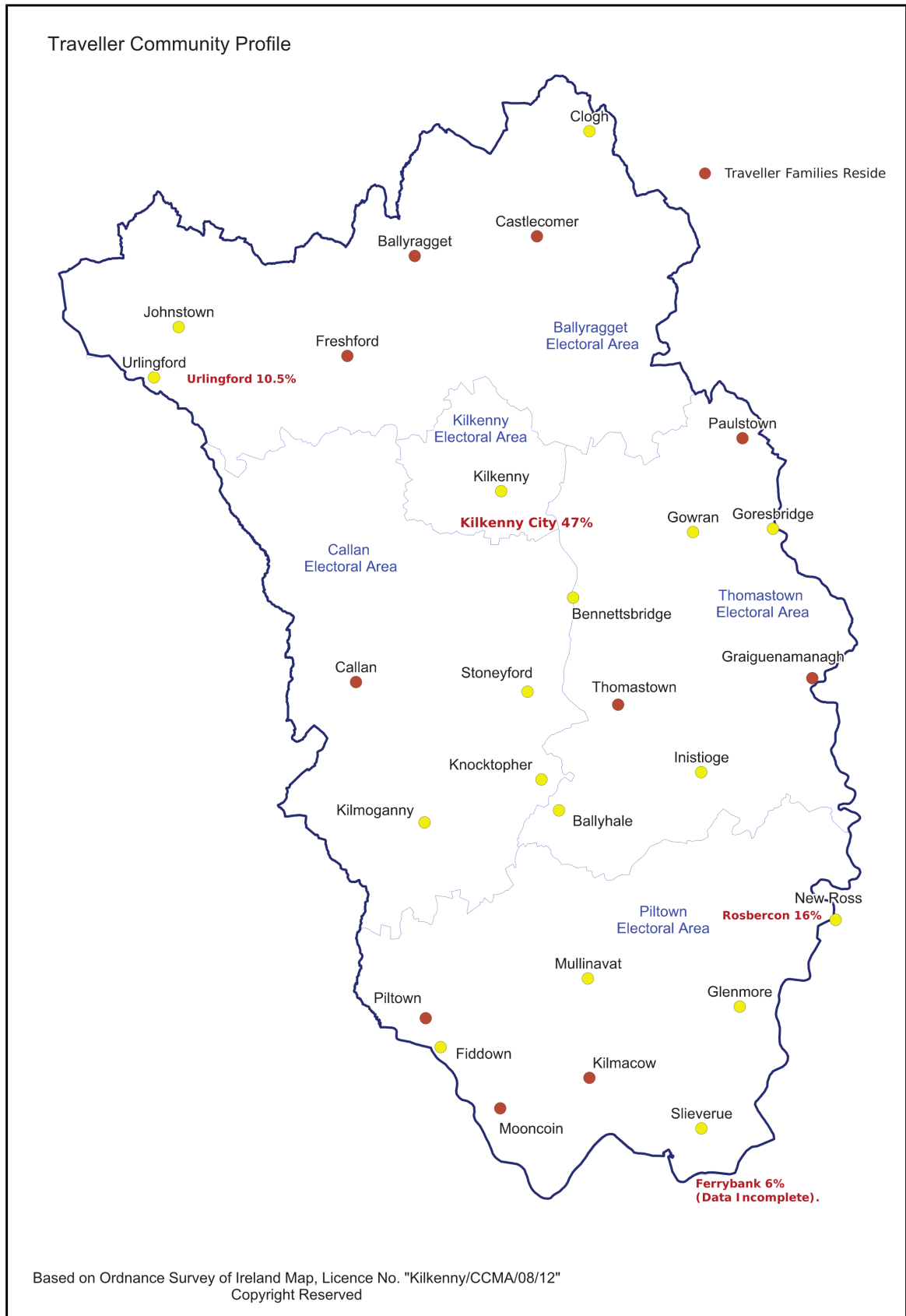


NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL TRAVELLERS INCLUDED WITHIN THESE FAMILIES 493

4.2. Main Locations for Traveller Families identified in this study

Area	No of families	%
Kilkenny City Areas	35	25.5
Hebron	19	13
Wetlands	12	8.5
Rosbercon	21	15
Urlingford including Ballyragget	14	10
Callan 8; Thomastown 6; Castlecomer 5	19	13
Other rural areas: Bennettsbridge; Gowran, Kells, Paulstown, Graiguenamanagh	13	9
Ferrybank/Piltown (under reported as figures not available/provided)	9	6
Total	142	100

4.2.1. Study population



Data about 142 families was captured as part of this study. However, for 36 families only base line information was captured, i.e. name, location of residence, accommodation type and age range. 27 of these families live in local authority/private rented accommodation across Kilkenny city. 18 (67%) of these are in their 20’s; 4 in their 30s; 4 in their 50s and 1 in their 70s. The remaining 9 families live in the Ferrybank/Piltown area and consist of 17 adults with 27 children between them.

While detailed information was not captured about every single family, it would be reasonable to extrapolate the main findings to all families living in Kilkenny.

The detailed information below is about 106 families and their 215 children:

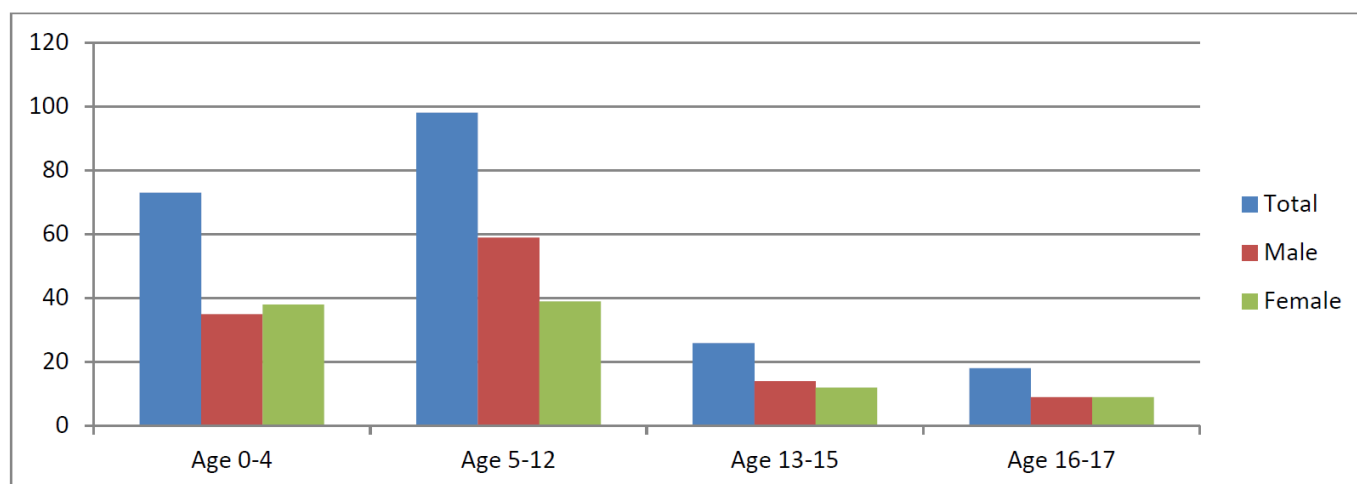
Population data	Numbers
Number of families in this study	142
Number of families where all data was captured	106
Number of families where all data was not captured/made available	36
Total number of Travellers included in the data analysis	449



Gender	Total	Male		Female	
Number of Adults over 18	234	112	48%	122	52%
Total number of children	215	117	54%	98	46%



Gender	Total	%	Male		Female	
Age 1mth-4 years	73	34%	35	30%	38	39%
Age 5-12 years	98	46%	59	50%	39	40%
Age 13-15 years	26	12%	14	12%	12	12%
Age 16-17 years	18	8%	9	8%	9	9%
Total	215					



For the 234 adults over 18	Total	%
18 – 29/under 30	116 ³	49.5%
30 – 39/under 40	51	22%
40 – 49/under 50	30	13%
50 – 59/under 60	7	3%
60 – 80	10	4.5%
Not known	20	8%

These figures relate to the 103 households where details were captured and includes three households where there are two families living in the same accommodation space (total 106). The majority of families consist of two adults plus children.

Household/Family Size	No	%
Two adults with 0 children ⁴	35	34%
Two adults with 1-2 children	29	28%
Two adults with 3-4 children	14	13.5%
Two adults with 5-6 children	8	7%
Two adults with more than 6 children	7	6%
Single parents with up to 7 children	10	9.5%
Total	103	100%

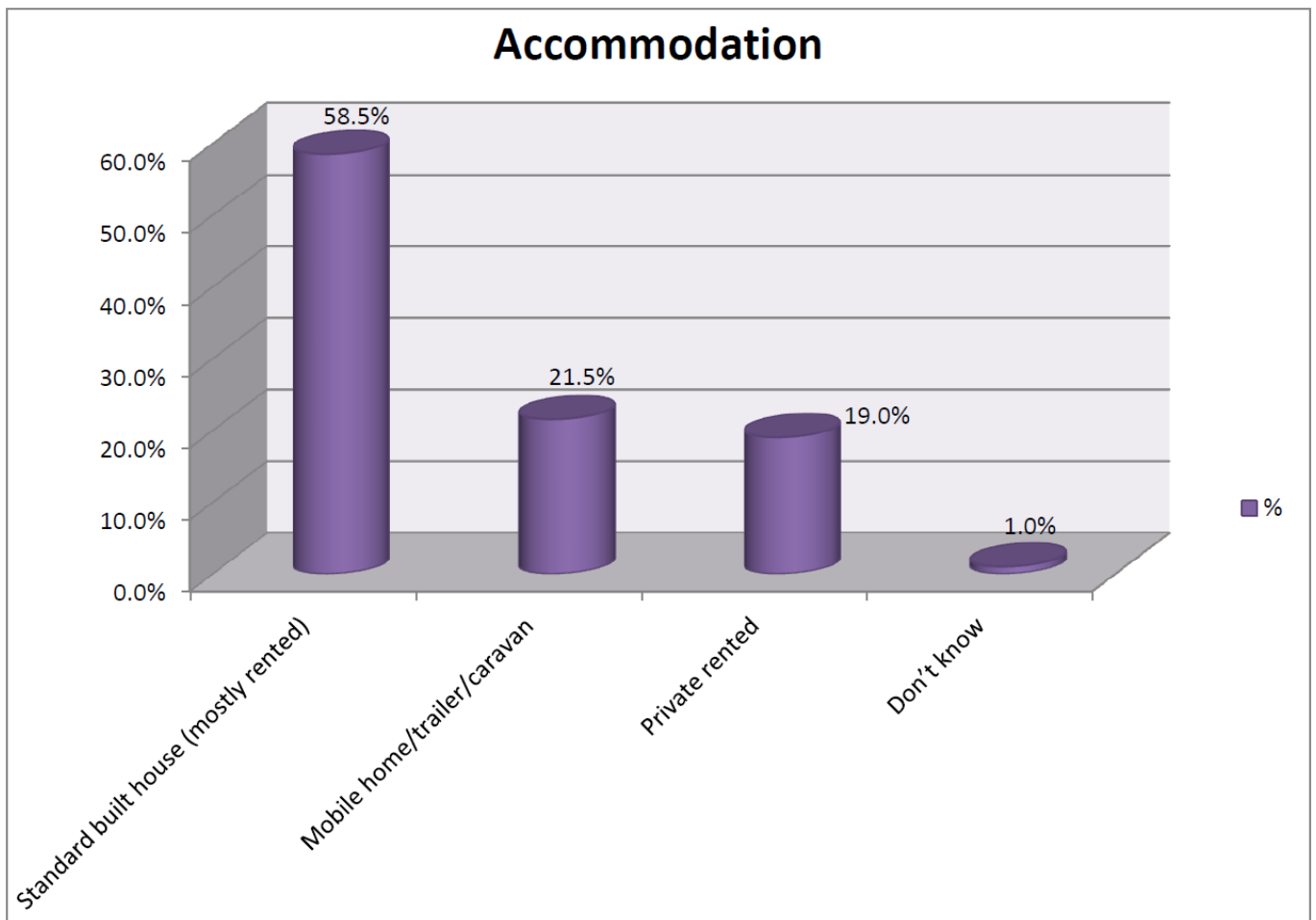
³ 20 of these are under age 20.

⁴ This relates mostly to Travellers in their early twenties or those that are retired.

4.3. Accomodation

There were 130 households identified in this study containing 133 families. The following is the type of accommodation lived in:

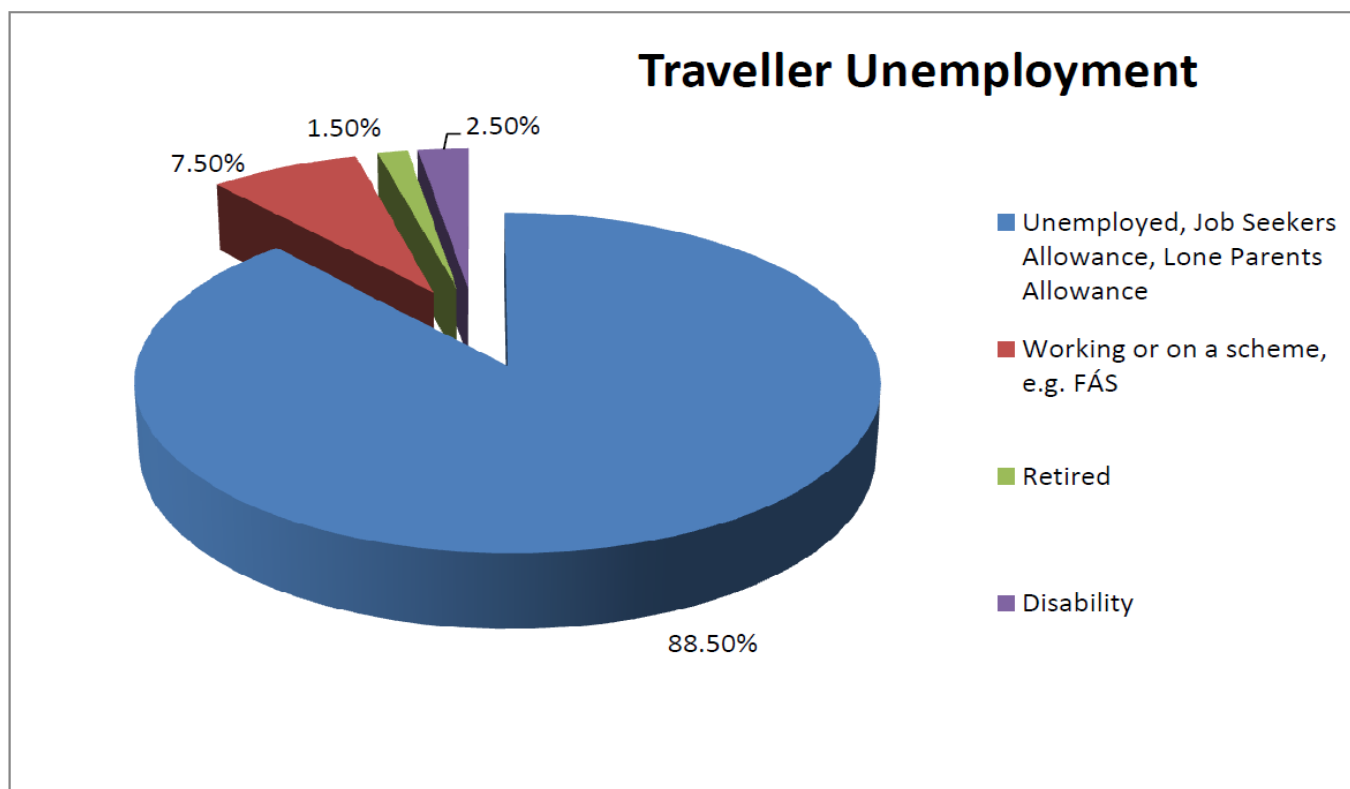
Type of accomodation	No	%
Standard built house including local authority rented	76	58.5%
Mobile home/trailer/caravan	28	21.5%
Private rented	25	19%
Don't know	1	1%
Total	130	100%



4.4. Unemployment

This was a topic that some Travellers were less forthcoming about, particularly the men. However, as can be seen below Travellers did describe their employment status, in addition to it being cited as a major area of concern at public meetings, specifically by female parents who were concerned about the future for their children. From local knowledge, it is understood anecdotally that the primary ‘supplementary’ occupations for Travellers living throughout Kilkenny revolve around: horse trading, surfacing driveways/roads, tree and hedge cutting, pvc guttering, markets/car-boot sales, sports training, car mechanics, child-minding and hairdressing.

Number of adults over 18	234	%
Unemployed or Job Seekers Allowance, Lone Parents Allowance	207	88.5%
Working e.g. community worker or on a scheme, e.g. FÁS	18	7.5%
Retired	3	1.5%
Disabled	6	2.5%



4.5. Local Amenities

Travellers identified key amenities of importance to them:

<p>Kilkenny Hebron</p>	<p>KTCM, local shops, Aldi, community halls, primary school, access to the Watershed sports complex and boxing.</p> <p>▶ No local health centre, after-schools or youth services – across town.</p>
<p>Kilkenny including St Catherine's (Wetlands)</p>	<p>Creche, shops and large supermarket. Fr. McGrath centre with community hall and youth services, access to the Watershed sports complex and boxing. St. Patrick's primary school main school accessed.</p> <p>▶ School transport to/from the site has ceased.</p>
<p>Rosbercon</p>	<p>Schools, only small shops and garage, parish hall, football pitch, running track, and after-schools. Access across town to swimming pool, Tesco, Aldi and Lidl but require transport.</p> <p>▶ Medical centre available but only 1 nurse.</p>
<p>Urlingford</p>	<p>Schools, playschool and afterschool, a variety of local shops. Sports: GAA, soccer and boxing, community hall, health centre and buses to Kilkenny and Thurles daily.</p>

4.6. Public consultations

Public consultations were held in Kilkenny (KTCM) and Rosbercon and all Traveller families in the immediate and surrounding areas were invited and encouraged to attend. The meetings were widely advertised by all Outreach workers and community health workers, by word of mouth and leafleting (see appendix for sample poster). Two of the KTCM Outreach workers facilitated separate public meetings. Traveller men and women attended both meetings, were very engaged and participative. The feedback below is taken directly from what was said at the meetings and is from a Traveller perspective only:

4.6.1. Kilkenny meeting

Travellers from all parts of Kilkenny including Urlingford and Thomastown were invited to the Kilkenny meeting. There was a high attendance (approximately 30 families) at this meeting as it included Travellers from several areas – who also represented their extended families. Their key concerns are listed under each topic below:

Education:

- The cost of schooling was seen as very high, particularly the cost of uniforms and school books for large families. Similarly, extra activities in school are too expensive for most Traveller families.
- Some students need assistance with homework, but parents feel it needs to be provided after school in the school, where the environment is more structured.
- Many teachers have a “good attitude to Travellers” but most do not understand or know about Traveller culture.
- “Some Travellers are still leaving school not being able to read or write after all those years in secondary school” resulting in some parents wondering why go at all?
- Most schools are good places for our children mixing with others (settled and Traveller) e.g. John of God.

- Adults would like more courses in the evenings. Men would like more access to sports clubs and a project for their horses.
- School transport has ceased for students from St. Catherine’s making access schools very difficult for some families.

Youth:

- “There is nothing to do when “the kids leave school, they need real jobs, real activities and youth clubs for 16-18 year olds”.

Health:

The Traveller public health nurse is “badly missed” by all families but especially those who have no transport. Families in Castlecomer have to travel to Kilkenny for all health services, including one family who goes regularly to their GP. The following health conditions were identified and experienced by families in order of priority:

1. Mental Health matters e.g. depression/nerves, etc.
2. Chest infections, including lung problems – particular for those living in a mobile home/caravan
3. Asthma – across generations
4. Heart ailments, including blood pressure
5. Diabetes in particular
6. Stomach problems, along with eye, ear and skin problems were identified but further down the list.

Most Travellers in attendance were on medication including anti-biotics and all children attended the GP regularly. Those in attendance indicated that this was the case for other Traveller families they knew also. (This information was elicited through a show of hands to specific focused questions).

Accommodation:

- For families living on the site (St. Catherine’s) electricity is cut off regularly⁵, toilets and showers are outside and the place is badly run down. Most caravans have no running water, no shower/toilet inside, no washing machine or dryer even though they have large families – many living alongside each other. Caravans generally are very damp.
- Some houses in Hebron are very cold in winter as insulation is very poor.
- There is no play area or ramps to slow down traffic in many areas – despite many children living in one small area.
- Group housing is on a main road which is very busy. One woman talked about there being no gates at the end of the road opposite Eurospar, where many children play.

Discrimination:

Almost all of the Travellers who attended the Kilkenny meeting talked about and gave many specific examples of the discrimination they face, e.g. trying to book a hotel for a communion, being refused by several hotels and having to go to Tipperary town instead. Most families have to go elsewhere, away from Kilkenny for weddings. Night clubs do not allow young Travellers in. There were several examples of Travellers being blamed for incidents when they were not present – “we’re all painted with the same brush”. Travellers gave many examples of where they have been refused food at local hotels or restaurants and even when they go shopping for clothes or food – one woman said “eyes are always watching you and following you ... you are never left alone”.

5 This would appear to be when bills are not paid.

4.6.2. **Rosbercon meeting**

Travellers from Rosbercon, Pilltown and Ferrybank⁶ were invited to attend the meeting. Not many attended but those that did could provide information about other families living in these areas – representing approximately 20 families. Their key concerns listed under main topic headings were:

Education:

- Transport to the local school has ceased. Most Travellers living in Rosbercon are a good distance from the school, living in a rural area on a very busy road with no footpaths. Traveller parents' experience of primary school is very positive but this is not the case with the secondary school staff. Some Travellers can't get to meet with school staff despite many requests.
- "It is difficult to keep young Travellers in school after junior cert – they don't see any point in going".
- Many Travellers want more adult education courses. The women in particular, based on previous positive experiences, would like more courses and programmes. They said that they learn a lot, it builds their confidence and this helps them relate well to their children also. The men would like horse programmes, e.g. farrier classes and fitness classes for themselves.
- We need a pre-school in the area – there are currently 10 children waiting to go to school.

Youth:

- Most young Travellers will go to Youthreach, but there are few options after that, especially for 15 – 20 year olds. Travellers "badly need" work-experience and work-placements that includes trades.

6 No Outreach worker in this area so contact with Travellers is very limited.

Health:

The families “badly miss” the Traveller Public Health Nurse who used to call to them. There are at least 8 older Travellers who need attention and no one calls to see them. The following health conditions were identified and experienced by families in order of priority:

1. Heart ailments, including blood pressure
2. Chest infections, including lung problems – particularly for those living in a mobile home.
3. Asthma
4. Stomach problems including ulcers
5. Kidney infections.

All children attended the GP regularly and many had taken anti-biotics often.

Accommodation:

- In Rosbercon, there is mixture of houses and mobile homes alongside each other. Some mobile homes have their own electricity, but most have no electricity, no running water or toilets. There is no proper sewage system in place.
- Travellers live on a very busy road near a crossroads with no footpaths, lights or ramps to slow traffic down.
- One family talked about being on the waiting list for 18 years and still living in a two-bedroom mobile home with teenage girls and boys which is totally unsuitable.
- One older couple was living in rented accommodation with their son who has special needs. Heating is very poor and no one ever calls to them.

Social:

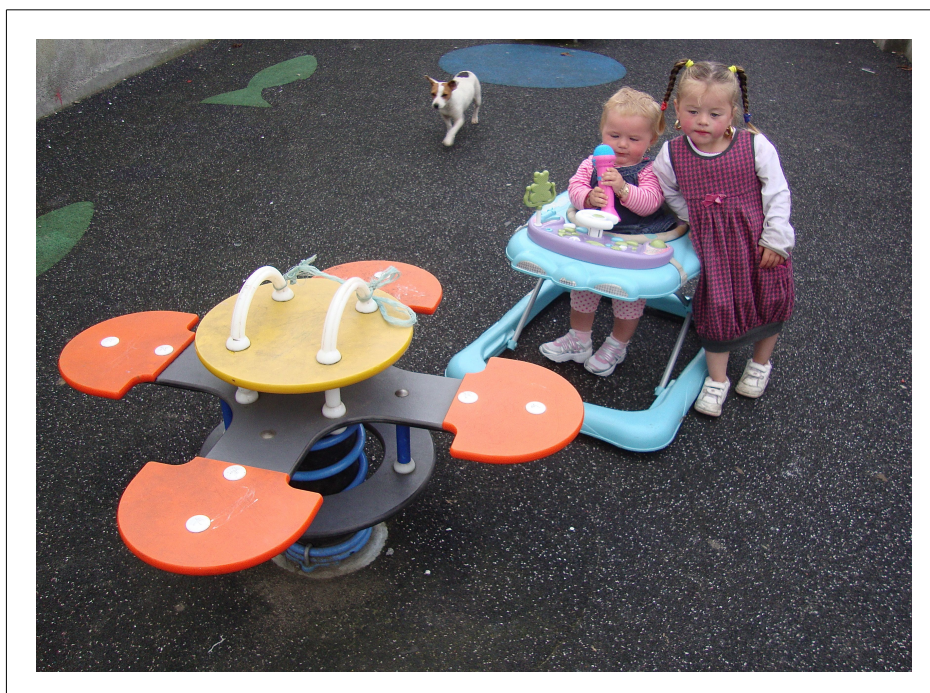
The Travellers living in this area feel they are well integrated into their local area and all mix socially with their neighbours, especially their children. They have access to the local community centre and to all events organised there by themselves and others. They would like to see a play area for teenagers, e.g. a MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) alongside the community centre for all to use. The main difficulty is for the Men’s group gaining access to the gym or the sports centre.

4.6.3. General comments

Travellers, but particularly Traveller men were reluctant to provide information in relation to two topics being explored. This included: (1) information about horse ownership or housing/location of horses, (2) occupations engaged in, which are economically viable but are part of the ‘black market’ economy. It is understandable that these topics are sensitive, but gathering information may help to formulate appropriate policy which support and acknowledge cultural traditions and assist with legitimising key roles for Traveller men. However, ‘real’ trust would need to be built with Traveller men prior to any information being offered.

In relation to law and order, many Traveller women and men and particularly young men, have developed a good relationship with local Gardaí. This is helping to build trust and confidence in the service for all.

All Travellers who participated in the public meetings are interested in Traveller community development and in developing responses that are suitable for their community.





5. DATA ANALYSIS

In addition to collecting core data about Traveller families living in County Kilkenny, key information about Traveller life, e.g. health, education, travel, was also captured at public consultation meetings, which were chaired and facilitated by KTCM Traveller Outreach Workers.

These meetings included open discussion on key topics and self-identification of barriers to full attainment of these rights for Travellers. Each of the discussions related primarily to the local areas in which Travellers live and included extended families living in those areas but who did not attend meetings. In relation to the discussion on health, those who attended ticked wall charts relating to general health and well-being, including the social determinants of health, as advocated by the World Health Organisation (2002) and adopted by the AITH (2010).

Below is a summary of the main findings and related recommendations:

5.1. Education

There are 215 children under the age of 17 in this study. 34% (73) of them are between the ages of 1mth and 4 years and 46% (98) are between the age of 5 and 12. A total of 80% (171) are under the age of 12, which is a significant number of children.

“Some Travellers are still leaving school not being able to read or write after all those years in school”.

This figure is all the more interesting when it sits alongside the fact that almost 50% of the adults (most of whom are parents) are under the age of 30, with many under the age of 20. See comment below under adult supports.

Education was identified as the key area of concern for Travellers living throughout Kilkenny. Concerns ranged from there being no pre-school in Rosbercon and a poor relationship with secondary school teachers, to many Travellers still leaving school without being able to read and write and there not being enough support for homework at school.

While most organisations and individuals would acknowledge the important role that education plays in addressing inequalities and improving positive life outcomes, educational supports to Travellers have been cut by 86.6% nationally.

Recommendations - Education including adult education

- All schools should be willing and be encouraged to be pro-active about meeting with Traveller parents to discuss their children's progress and addressing any barriers that parents or schools are facing.
- A strategy in relation to providing intensive supports and monitoring of literacy levels, in relation to Traveller children should be considered. This work should be designed and piloted collaboratively with Traveller parents and Traveller projects in key locations.
- All Traveller children should have access to homework clubs either in school or at community projects. These services should be targeted and all Traveller children should be offered a place. These clubs require focus, support and the methods used need to be communicated with parents, who in turn may need support.
- Adult education is an integral part of community development and family support. There should be on-going programmes offered in each key location for Travellers. In particular, the Outreach workers who have undergone much training should also be supported to tutor and delivery workshops directly, perhaps providing a combination of KTCM and externally run courses.

5.2. Children & Youth services

While most children are engaged in pre-school services, there is no facility in Rosbercon and many families in Kilkenny (Hebron area) do not participate in early years' services. When querying why this was this was the situation in Hebron, a few Travellers felt that they could not get their children into some of the pre-schools and in most cases, Traveller parents did not know of such services being available.

The biggest concern for Travellers was for their young people from aged 16 onwards. While the numbers in this category in this study are not high, the numbers coming into this grouping in the coming five-ten years will be substantial. The main concerns ranged from:

The high levels of unemployment 88.5%, experienced by Travellers across all ages is deeply concerning. It worries parents that their children have very few positive role models or future opportunities to aspire to.

As parents perceive it, young Travellers are not engaging in ‘real’ work-placement experience, gaining valuable trade skills or seeing options for themselves and there is little for young Travellers to do once they leave school.

Travellers “badly need real work-experience and work-placements” that includes trades.

These persistent circumstances lead to poor self-esteem, poor economic independence, poor perception of options/opportunities and ultimately poor general and mental health.

Recommendations – Children & Youth

- A feasibility study in relation to the setting up of a pre-school in Rosbercon should be carried out.
- Traveller children not accessing pre-school in Kilkenny (and other areas) should be targeted for inclusion as a joint initiative between KTCM and CKCCC.
- Youth services and youth employment services should be engaging with Traveller organisations around the provision of 'real' opportunities that relate to Traveller culture and possibilities. This should be included in a larger more targeted employment strategy for Travellers. See page 31.

5.3. Health

All Travellers who participated and provided information in this study identified personally with the health problems listed earlier. Almost all family members suffer from a range of ill-health, from children right through to older adults. Medication for family members is a common feature as are regular visits to the GP.

The range of top illnesses identified by Travellers were: heart conditions including diabetes, blood pressure and stroke, respiratory related illnesses including asthma, which was a particular feature of those living in mobile homes/caravans, and finally stomach related problems.

While mental health was not identified by some groups, it was identified as a top priority by Travellers living in Kilkenny. The AITHS would identify mental health as a priority for Travellers.

Health problems are much more acute for families living in halting sites, particularly those living in trailers/caravans. Many of these homes are damp, not fully functional, i.e. no inside toilet facilities, no running water or electricity and their outside environment is very poor, e.g. St. Catherine's.

All Travellers referred to the loss and impact of not having a Traveller Public Health Nursing Service. Clearly this service was highly valued by Travellers. The lack of this service was particularly acute for rural Travellers, those without transport and elderly Travellers. Other Travellers reported that almost all of these Travellers are now without a service.

The All Ireland Traveller Health Study gives significant detail about the health status of the Traveller population in Ireland. Travellers living in Kilkenny conform to a large extent to these same patterns. Therefore, targeted local, regional and national responses designed and implemented in partnership with Travellers are required to bring about positive change.

Recommendations - Health

- There is an existing Traveller health project focused on the health concerns of Travellers. Perhaps focusing on specific initiatives in local areas e.g. Rosbercon, Urlingford, Ferrybank, targeted at specific groups of families with key concerns may yield more robust collaborative responses.
- The removal of the Traveller public health nurse is a notable and significant loss for Travellers. Key concerns around older Travellers in particular need to be addressed by the HSE/THU and given the high number of children with consistent ailments - a Traveller public health strategy to address such needs is required.
- Some Travellers talked about not having a nearby health centre. Perhaps this could be explored alongside the previous point and improving access/transport to such centre's might be an option.

5.4. Accommodation

While most people live in standard houses, 21.5% live in non-standard (mobile home/trailer/caravan) accommodation. This is a high number compared to 18.2% nationally. As mentioned already, this type of accommodation leads to a much higher risk of poor health as is evidenced in this and other reports.

In addition, most sites/areas where there are mobile homes, caravans or trailers are very poorly serviced, i.e. for many there is no electricity, no running water, and toilet/shower/washing facilities are outside. Many have no washing machine or dryer despite raising large families.

In addition, the external environment of those sites is very poor including poor sanitation, poor sewage and water drainage systems. These are all well-known high risk factors to poor health/ill-health, resulting in a higher number of days out sick, higher medical costs and absence from work and education.

5.5. Facilities and Infrastructure

Most areas where Travellers live have essential facilities such as shops, schools and access to community facilities. However there are notable exceptions:

- Families in Rosbercon have no public transport to schools or medical centre and the area they live in has poor road safety.
- Men have difficulty accessing sports complexes in general but particularly Rosbercon.
- Many areas (other than Urlingford) do not have adequate access to health clinics or public health nursing.

Recommendations – Accomodation and Infrastructure

- St. Catherine's has been listed as a priority area for re-development for the past number of years. As this re-development plan has been cut back and delayed numerous times, Travellers have become cynical about anything happening. Clear communication is needed about plans (or not) and dates if work is gong ahead. Trust needs to be restored between Kilkenny County Council and families living in this site. The site similar to others in the county is in very poor condition.
- Kilkenny County Council should prioritise the conditions of all halting sites and in particular the needs of families living in trailers/caravans, wherever they are located.
- Future housing needs, particularly for potential new families should be anticipated and evaluated early. From this data alone, it can be anticipated that there will be a significant increase in new families in the coming years.
- Road safety in Rosbercon needs to be examined and evaluated with a view to responding over time.

5.6. Unemployment and Community Development

The biggest concern for adult Travellers, especially those who were parents, was unemployment. They wanted ‘real’ opportunities for their children and adult education programmes for themselves, which they acknowledged builds skills and confidence within their own community.

Unemployment stands at 88.5%, a very high figure for one grouping of people. While employment figures are very low, they are improving and working Travellers provide positive feed-back and role models for the whole community. In addition, Traveller workers build links with the settled community and with service providers. Traveller workers working with service providers build trust within their own community and raise awareness and knowledge for workers/professionals within service organisations.

As the data shows, obtaining specific details in relation to occupations was difficult to achieve but insights were gained into the preferences and supplementary occupations of Travellers. This data alongside an economic analysis of the future needs of the local economy needs to be analysed further in order to develop an appropriate employment strategy which would include specific and culturally acceptable pathways for Travellers.

Community Development is well known method and approach to working directly with disadvantaged communities across many issues which require attention. As can be seen in this study, Travellers in those areas with focused Traveller community development initiatives and inclusion e.g. Kilkenny, Urlingford and Rosbercon fare better. All areas require focused Traveller community development/inclusion, and this is particularly true for the Ferrybank/Piltown area, which currently does not have a dedicated Traveller Outreach worker allocated to it.

Family Support: this study is dominated by young adults many of whom are parents. Almost 10% are lone parents and both these features need to be taken into account by services when planning e.g. future housing needs, childcare, entry into education and parental supports.

Recommendations – Unemployment & Community development

- All key locations should have a Traveller Outreach worker nominated for each area including Ferrybank/Piltown area - this could be developed in partnership with Waterford city. This would build confidence in Traveller workers and within the Traveller community in addressing issues collectively.
- The Kilkenny Traveller Interagency Group (KTIG), possibly led by CKLP, could consider developing a robust strategy to respond to Traveller unemployment. This must include young Travellers around skills development, work placement and alternative occupations.
- More Travellers need to be employed and engaged in work, including various community development roles from childcare to health to youth work. These are the workers that will build bridges between services and Travellers, educating and providing skills and knowledge in both directions. Ideally, community workers should be based in and linked to all locations where Travellers live. These workers can build relationships with all services but will require on-going support and training (via KTCM) to do so effectively.
- The strengthening and continued development of KTCM is essential to Traveller community development and other organisations who wish to enhance their engagement with the Traveller community.
- There are many young parents with young children, with a large increase predicted for the coming years. Courses aimed at young parents should be designed and delivered locally.

5.7. Discrimination & trust

All Travellers who participated in this study talked about the high levels of discrimination they face on a daily basis. Travellers gave specific examples ranging from: attempting to get lunch but being refused, being refused hotel bookings for various events including gyms, young people being refused admission to night clubs and in general being watched and followed around when in supermarkets or in clothing stores. This is a tough environment to be living in on a daily basis. It is wearing, stressful and only feeds back negativity.

“Eyes are always watching you and following you ... you are never left alone”

Over the past few years, particularly with the new programme of work with the KTCM and the KTIG, improvements have been achieved. There are better relationships now between some services and the Traveller community, i.e. some health services, some schools, youth services, Gardaí, local authority and development organisations, e.g. CKLP. However, there is room for improvement.

In particular, trust needs to be built with Traveller men. Traveller men hold significant power within their own community and families and community work is under-developed with this group. It was primarily men who withheld information in this study, i.e. in relation to horses, occupation and the law, and this is understandable. Work with men in other counties has not been easy, but trust needs to be built with this grouping in order that they feel included, valued and understood.

Recommendations – Anti-racism work

- The KTIG should consider an anti-discrimination/anti-racism campaign led by all of the service providers that participate in the KTIG. This campaign could be a joint initiative with KTCM, Kilkenny Integration Forum and Kilkenny Sports and Recreation Partnership.



6. CONCLUSION & SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusion

The data and analysis in this report is specific to Kilkenny Travellers. While many of the insights follow national trends for Travellers, its focus on location, specific families and local knowledge should provide good information for all service providers, including KTCM, to build upon.

There is no doubt that there is very good data and useful information in this report and this would be not be possible without the existence and role played by the KTCM and its workers. It was apparent in this study that the existing workers have valuable skills, capacities and access to communities that outside professionals and organisations do not have. However, it would appear that the existing workers are under-utilised in the provision of this experience, skills and information. The role of the Outreach workers should be enhanced further so that their work in developing greater links between local communities and services can be strengthened to reach its full potential. The enhancement of the Outreach role would in turn strengthen links back into KTCM as a Traveller led, community development and advocacy organisation for Travellers.

There are 20 practical recommendations highlighted by this study, with many grouped under key developmental headings. These recommendations should inform the development of a new KTIG plan which will respond to Traveller needs across all services in partnership with KTCM. Each service area will require further consideration by the agency with responsibility for service provision.

While this study does not provide all the detail required it is a very positive beginning and could act a base-line starting point for all service providers and organisations. Each service provider could take the base line data provided in this report and enhance it further by being specific to their own profiling needs e.g. housing projections, targeted health initiatives, literacy, education initiatives, employment, etc. The baseline data in this study could also be added to over time by the KTCM as it builds links and information about each of its constituent communities and the families who require its support.

6.2. Summary table listing all the recommendations

<p>Education including Adult Education</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All schools should be willing and be encouraged to be pro-active about meeting with Traveller parents to discuss their children's progress and addressing any barriers that parents or schools are facing. 2. A strategy in relation to providing intensive supports and monitoring of literacy levels, in relation to Traveller children should be considered. This work should be designed and piloted collaboratively with Traveller parents and Traveller projects in key locations. 3. All Traveller children should have access to homework clubs either in school or at community projects. These services should be targeted and all Traveller children should be offered a place. These clubs require focus, support and the methods used need to be communicated with parents, who in turn may need support. 4. Adult education is an integral part of community development and family support. There should be on-going programmes offered in each key location for Travellers. In particular, the Outreach workers who have undergone much training should also be supported to tutor and delivery workshops directly, perhaps providing a combination of KTCM and externally run courses.
<p>Children & Youth</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. A feasibility study in relation to the setting up of a pre-school in Rosbercon should be carried out. 6. Traveller children not accessing pre-school in Kilkenny (and other areas) should be targeted for inclusion as a joint initiative between KTCM and CKCCC. 7. Youth services and youth employment services should be engaging with Traveller organisations around the provision of 'real' opportunities that relate to Traveller culture and possibilities. This should be included in a larger more targeted employment strategy for Travellers. See page 31
<p>Health</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. There is an existing Traveller health project focused on the health concerns of Travellers. Perhaps focusing on specific initiatives in local areas e.g. Rosbercon, Urlingford, Ferrybank, targeted at specific groups of families with key concerns may yield more robust collaborative responses. 9. The removal of the Traveller public health nurse is a notable and significant loss for Travellers. Key concerns around older Travellers in particular need to be addressed by the HSE/THU and given the high number of children with consistent ailments - a Traveller public health strategy to address such needs is required. 10. Some Travellers talked about not having a nearby health centre. Perhaps this could be explored alongside the previous point and improving access/transport to such centres might be an option.

<p>Accomodation & Infrastructure</p>	<p>11. St. Catherine's has been listed as a priority area for re-development for the past number of years. As this re-development plan has been cut back and delayed numerous times, Travellers have become cynical about anything happening. Clear communication is needed about plans (or not) and dates if work is going ahead. Trust needs to be restored between Kilkenny County Council and families living in this site. The site similar to others in the county is in very poor condition.</p> <p>12. Kilkenny County Council should prioritise the conditions of all halting sites and in particular the needs of families living in trailers/caravans, wherever they are located.</p> <p>13. Future housing needs, particularly for potential new families should be anticipated and evaluated early. From this data alone, it can be anticipated that there will be a significant increase in new families in the coming years.</p> <p>14. Road safety in Rosbercon needs to be examined and evaluated with a view to responding over time.</p>
<p>Unemployment & Community Development</p>	<p>15. All key locations should have a Traveller Outreach worker nominated for each area including Ferrybank/Piltown area - this could be developed in partnership with Waterford city. This would build confidence in Traveller workers and within the Traveller community in addressing issues collectively.</p> <p>16. The Kilkenny Traveller Interagency Group (KTIG), possibly led by CKLP, could consider developing a robust strategy to respond to Traveller unemployment. This must include young Travellers around skills development, work placement and alternative occupations.</p> <p>17. More Travellers need to be employed and engaged in work, including various community development roles from childcare to health to youth work. These are the workers that will build bridges between services and Travellers, educating and providing skills and knowledge in both directions. Ideally, community workers should be based in and linked to all locations where Travellers live. These workers can build relationships with all services but will require on-going support and training (via KTCM) to do so effectively.</p> <p>18. The strengthening and continued development of KTCM is essential to Traveller community development and other organisations who wish to enhance their engagement with the Traveller community.</p> <p>19. Family Support: There are many young parents with young children, with a large increase predicted for the coming years. Courses aimed at young parents should be designed and delivered locally.</p>
<p>Anti-racism work</p>	<p>20. The KTIG should consider an anti-discrimination/anti-racism campaign led by all of the service providers that participate in the KTIG. This campaign could be a joint initiative with KTCM, Kilkenny Integration Forum and Kilkenny Sports and Recreation Partnership.</p>

**APPENDICES – TEMPLATES USED TO CARRY OUT THE WORK**

KTCM along with other agencies are committed to undertaking a profile of Traveller families living in Kilkenny City and County.

The aim of the Community profile is to:

1. Gather useful information in relation to the Traveller Community in Kilkenny e.g. ages, living conditions, etc.,
2. This information will be used to assist public services to plan ahead to meet Traveller's needs and for the future development of the KTCM e.g. housing, health, children.
3. Gain a better understanding of the Traveller community in Kilkenny as well as their needs, challenges and resources.

The information you give us will be held confidentially and will not be used on a personal basis. I am the outreach worker for your area so please feel free to contact me about this study.

KTCM Traveller Profile Work

List no of families and individuals in attendance:

Location:

Access/barriers to general Health Services	
Housing Status:	
House/Group/Site/Road-side	
General conditions – inside electricity, cooking, heating, water, etc.	
General conditions - outside	
Environmental, Sanitation, Green space, etc.	
Employment & Education:	
Main barriers?	
Horses:	
No kept, where and how?	
Main Social/Legal barriers? For who/age?	
Concerns re Crime or Violence?	
Facilities in the Area: schools, shops, medical centres, clinics , sports halls and organisations, community halls, Youth services, etc.	See next page – carried out by area:

Kilkenny Traveller Profile – Area Survey	
Area Name:	
Facilities in the Area: schools, shops, medical centres, clinics , sports halls and organisations, community halls, Youth services, etc.,	What facilities are in your area?
Name of Outreach Worker for this Area	
Date:	

Excel Spread-sheet for data collection:

Pop Profile				Adults > 18 Age		Employment	Total	Boys Ages				Girls Ages						
No	Name each person + knickname	Location	Acc	M	F	Range	or Occupation	Children	Total	0-4	5-12	13-15 In Sch where	16-17 In Sch/other?	Total	0-4	5-12	13-15 In Sch where	16-17 In Sch/other?

Power Point poster:

KTCM

RESEARCH INTO TRAVELLER ISSUES
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

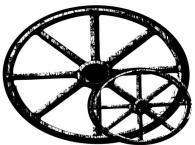
PLEASE COME ALONG TO YOUR COMMUNITY MEETING ON:

References:

- All-Ireland Traveller Health Study (2010) UCD.
- Travelling in Austerity (2013) Pavee Point.
- KTCM Strategic Plan “Towards 2020” (2012)



**Kilkenny Traveller
Community
Movement**



K.T.C.M.

Community  Consultants

**The Councils of the
County and City of Kilkenny**

