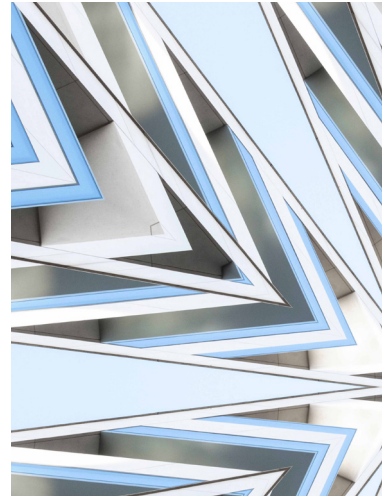


ARTHUR COX



PRO BONO

Pro Bono Impact Report 2019/2020

“Partnering with law firms, in-house counsel and NGOs creates a powerful combination of skills and experience benefitting pro bono clients and our community.”



ARTHUR COX
PRO BONO

Arthur Cox believes universal access to justice and legal services is essential to the rule of law. We provide free legal services to a wide range of clients, from individual refugees and social enterprises to not for profit organisations.

Providing high-quality legal services to those without the means to pay has long been a part of the firm's culture and part of our commitment to give back to the communities where we live and work.

This report provides a snapshot of our pro bono projects, which include secondments, legal information, strategic litigation and legal clinics.

We partner with NGOs, charities and independent law centres who deliver frontline legal services to the most vulnerable people in the community. Our pro bono practice focuses on the most important issues, including immigration, housing and helping the most vulnerable people access justice.

Arthur Cox is committed to further developing our pro bono practice. We view it as an important component of a lawyer's professional responsibility and as lawyers we have a professional responsibility to use our legal skills for the public good.

Geoff Moore
Managing Partner

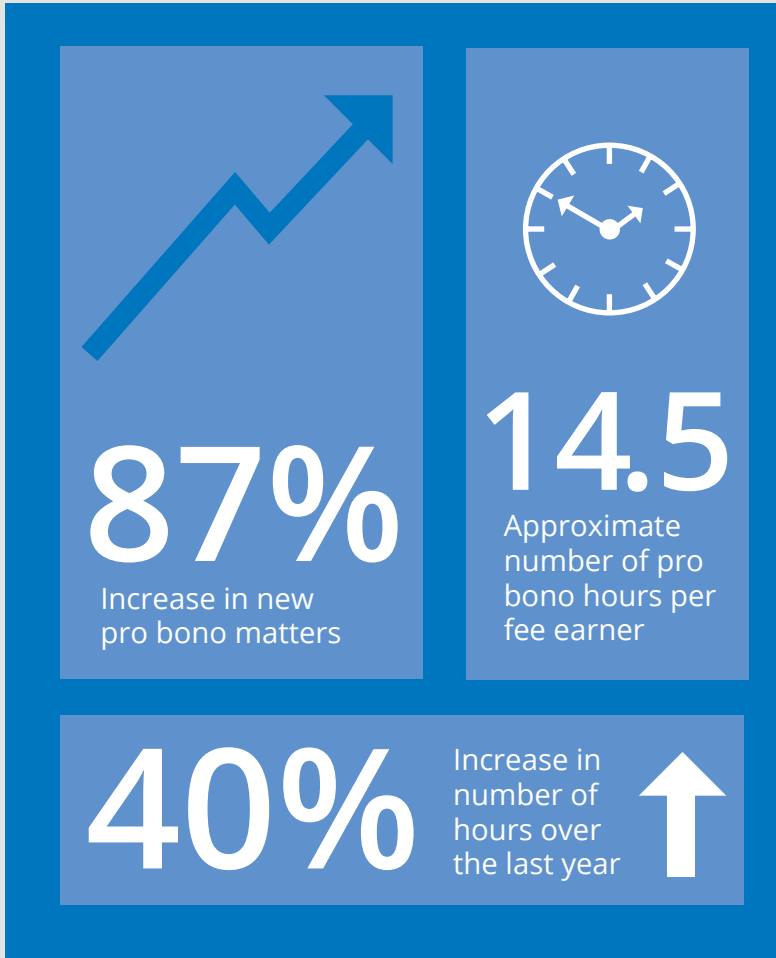
Pro bono in Ireland is gathering momentum, creating opportunities for both those in need of legal assistance and legal professionals. Partnering with law firms, in-house counsel and NGOs creates a powerful combination of skills and experience benefitting pro bono clients and our community. Through these partnerships we develop pro bono projects to improve access to justice for our target groups, including women, children, people with disabilities, people at risk of homelessness, trafficking survivors, LGBT+ people, and refugees.

While recent pro bono developments in Ireland are promising, the challenge of unmet legal needs is great and pro bono work alone can never be a replacement for a properly resourced national legal aid system.

The Free Legal Advice Centre (FLAC) reports receiving over 25,000 requests for legal information and advice annually from individuals trying to navigate the courts without legal representation, and struggling with inaccessible court forms and procedures. Plans to host the PILnet Global Forum in Dublin in 2021 will serve as an important event to highlight key developments and challenges as the pro bono sector in Ireland continues to grow.

Carolann Minnock
Pro Bono Associate

Pro bono statistics



Our partnerships

As a signatory to the UK Collaborative Plan, Arthur Cox has adopted an aspirational target of 25 hours of pro bono per fee earner per year.

We fund **seconded placements** with our pro bono partners; Threshold, Community Law and Mediation, Free Legal Advice Centres and the Immigrant Council of Ireland.

Arthur Cox is a **Sustaining Partner** providing core funding for the Public Interest Law Alliance (PILA).

As part of our collaboration with **Kids in Need of Defence (KIND)** a team of 15 lawyers represent 5 unaccompanied refugee minors in their applications for family reunification.

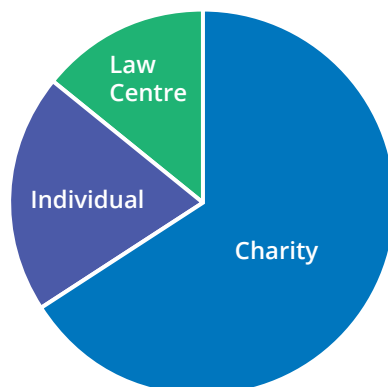
Achievements



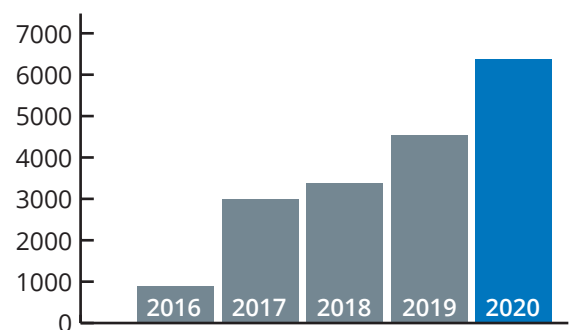
In May 2020, Arthur Cox was awarded a **Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation Award for Exceptional Pro Bono Contributions** for leading a multijurisdictional study on access to legal aid for victims of domestic violence on behalf of the Public Interest Law Alliance in Ireland.



Pro bono work percentage by beneficiary type



Pro bono hours overview





Key pro bono developments

Inaugural Pro Bono Week

November 2019 marked the first celebration of Pro Bono Week Ireland, which saw law firm and NGO partners come together to raise pro bono awareness amongst the legal profession and civil society.

Global Refugee Pledge

The first Global Refugee Forum (“GRF”) took place in December 2019 at the United Nations in Geneva. The GRF brought together diverse stakeholders to join the global dialogue and strengthen our shared commitments to refugees.

To demonstrate our commitment to helping some of the most vulnerable people in society access justice Arthur Cox has committed its 1500 pro bono hours to working with partners such as the Immigrant Council of Ireland, Migrant Rights Centre Ireland and through our participation in the KIND pilot project.

Aspirational Target of 25 hours

February 2020, Arthur Cox set an aspirational target of 25 hours of pro bono work per lawyer per year.

UK Collaborative Plan Member

March 2020, Arthur Cox became one of only two Irish firms to be a member of the [UK Collaborative Plan](#) for Pro Bono a profession-led initiative for law firms. Each of the participating law firms has a strong institutional commitment to pro bono and access to justice. Member firms work collaboratively to develop the systems and infrastructure to allow pro bono services to be effectively delivered to address unmet legal need. The Plan also incorporates an aspirational target of 25 pro bono hours per fee-earner each year.

Lex Mundi Award

In May 2020, Arthur Cox was awarded a Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation Award for Exceptional Pro Bono Contributions for leading a multijurisdictional study on access to legal aid for victims of domestic violence on behalf of the Public Interest Law Alliance (PILA) in Ireland.

PILA is an Irish public interest network whose mission is to facilitate pro bono representation to the most vulnerable in society and engage the legal community to use law to advance social change. Spearheaded by Greg Glynn and Zac Van Horn, the project involved in-depth research on issues relating to access to civil legal aid for victims of domestic violence across ten jurisdictions worldwide. The resulting research was collated as a “best practices” survey and is assisting FLAC in advocating for improvements to the civil legal aid system for victims of domestic violence in Ireland.

Our values in action

To achieve the greatest impact with our pro bono work we deliver through collaboration by partnering with NGOs, charities and independent law centres who deliver frontline legal services to the most vulnerable people in the community. Through these partnerships we develop pro bono projects to improve access to justice.

1. IMMIGRATION ASSISTANCE

Immigrant Council of Ireland

An Increasing number of people are on the move fleeing persecution, conflict and danger. For the past seven years, Arthur Cox has partnered with the Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI), an independent law centre which provides legal assistance to people from a migrant background to protect their rights. Arthur Cox and the ICI collaborate on casework, legal information and family reunification applications to improve the lives of people from a migrant background living in Ireland. Due to its pro bono partnership with Arthur Cox, ICI was able to extend the opening hours of its helpline. Lawyers from the firm staff this helpline on Tuesday evenings from 7- 9pm, which aims to help people seeking information and advice on immigration law and their rights.

"The Arthur Cox secondees continue to increase our capacity to represent clients and carry out advocacy and policy work on behalf of migrants and their families. This is of huge benefit to the many Irish and migrant families accessing our legal services annually...."

Each Arthur Cox secondee has brought enthusiasm, interest and willingness to learn about public interest law as well as a professional approach to work at the Council. Their input has benefitted the entire organisation and they have contributed not only to the Council's legal work, but also to communications, integration and other related areas, such as corporate governance."

Brian Killoran, CEO of the Immigrant Council

CASE STUDY

Immigrant Council of Ireland Secondment Programme: Blaithin Sheil

I worked in the Law Centre with the two solicitors, Catherine Cosgrave and Mary Henderson. I assisted with case management of ongoing interactions with the Department of Justice in relation to our clients' immigration status and got a very real sense of the practical difficulties a migrant person might encounter in Ireland...

A person's immigration entitlements might seem straight forward on paper. But the practical difficulties and barriers they face in accessing comprehensive legal advice or representation, language barriers, knowing who to ask for help and in a timely manner, and other difficult life circumstances that impact their ability to access their rights and can have negative effects on the outcome of their immigration applications.

I assisted with initiating Judicial Review proceedings in 2019 for a young woman who was denied her Family Reunification rights as a refugee because she fell outside the 12-month time limit to apply. Over a year later, I am listening to the virtual Supreme Court hearing of this case. While the legal arguments are incredibly interesting, it must be remembered that behind every important case is an applicant who is trying to assert their fundamental rights and live the normal life that we as citizens and/or Europeans take for granted.

This secondment from Arthur Cox to ICI is the longest running trainee placement programme in the State. The above case study is an account of one secondee of this experience.

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

Many migrants face challenges accessing legal mechanisms to enforce their employment rights, as what exists in statute is not always the reality experienced by vulnerable migrant workers. The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland is a national organisation working for justice, empowerment and equality for migrants and their families.

Arthur Cox works closely with the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland on casework matters, training and educational facilities and institutional support, such as GDPR and employment training. Most recently we accepted a referral to represent an immigrant woman who was trafficked to Ireland and forced to do unpaid work in human trafficking and modern slavery proceedings.

“With Arthur Cox’s legal assistance and representation, we were able to serve and support many migrant workers and their families.

MRCI is delighted and proud of our Pro Bono partnership with Arthur Cox. We hope that this relationship and collaboration will continue and that together we can help change the lives of migrant communities and tackle exploitation in Ireland.”

Edel McGinley, Director of the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

2. REUNITING FAMILIES

Kids in Need of Defence

There are an estimated 3,000 undocumented children in the State, many of whom are entitled to Irish citizenship or a right to remain. These children face many barriers including exploitation, homelessness, abuse, lack of education, and health issues. In November 2019 Arthur Cox joined a pilot project led by Kids in Need of Defence, and supported by the Immigrant Council of Ireland and the Irish Refugee Council, whereby Arthur Cox lawyers represent unaccompanied minors entering the State as refugees in their applications for family reunification. Our clients continue to increase and today five clients are assisted by over 15 lawyers across the firm.

AMICUS CASE STUDY:

“This matter involved supporting the defence team in the trial of a defendants’ pre-trial death penalty case in Texas. Our task was to transcribe and analyse various documents with a view to mitigating the death sentence. To do this we collaborated with the mitigation specialists at the Texas Defender Service in order to identify key aspects of the Defendant’s background for purposes of mitigation.

As a result of our collaboration with Amicus defendants’ capital charge reduced to a custodial sentence. The work that the Arthur Cox team did went directly into the mitigation packages produced in order to secure this result - also the detailed work means that the team this case has now been passed to are in an enviable position of having processed disclosure.”

Margot Ravenscroft, Amicus Director

3. RULE OF LAW

Amicus

Arthur Cox is part of a global team that provides legal casework service to individuals facing the death penalty in the United States which directly assists American lawyers defending such cases.

Amicus is a UK charity that conducts research and provides representation to those facing the death penalty in the United States. It aims to ensure better access to justice (in particular around injustice in capital cases in relation to mental illness, intellectual disability, race and poverty) and to raise awareness of the potential infringement of defendants’ rights.

Over 50 Arthur Cox lawyers assist Amicus in its work to challenge the legality of certain death row judgements with an overall aim of ensuring fair trial procedures and justice for those facing a penalty of death. In the past year we supported the defence team in a death penalty trial as described to the left. We recently accepted a new project for Amicus which involves assisting with a pre-trial federal death penalty case of a defendant, out of the Eastern District of Louisiana. To date over 50 Arthur Cox lawyers have reviewed thousands of legal documents to help Amicus in its work to achieve access to justice for all.

“...the impact of this work (carried out by the Arthur Cox team) cannot be underestimated and is a key resource in upholding principles of international justice and human rights, Amicus is proud and grateful for the commitment and support from all our Arthur Cox caseworkers and for the firm for their on-going support of Amicus and our aims.”

Margot Ravenscroft, Amicus Director

4. SAFEGUARDING TENANTS' RIGHTS

Threshold

Landlord and tenant litigation matters are becoming increasingly complex, requiring in-depth legal knowledge and resources. This is due to the complexity of the legislation, shortage of housing in Ireland and the ongoing rent increases across the country. Threshold is a charity whose aim is to secure a right to housing, particularly for households experiencing the problems of poverty and exclusion. Arthur Cox partners with Threshold to help marginalised and vulnerable people at risk of becoming homeless secure a right to housing. Arthur Cox receives referrals from Threshold and represents Threshold's clients as our own before the Courts. Arthur Cox also provides ad hoc legal advice and supports Threshold by placing a secondee on a six month rolling basis with the Threshold team.

Our relationship with Arthur Cox has proved enormously beneficial to both Threshold and to the people that we assist. It has allowed us to increase our capacity, which means that more people in housing distress can be helped and more people can be spared the trauma of homelessness.

John Mark McCafferty,
CEO of Threshold

5. SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES TO ACCESS JUSTICE

Community Law and Mediation

Access to justice is fundamental to the rule of law. However, many disadvantaged and vulnerable groups face challenges in asserting their rights. Community Law and Mediation is a non-profit organisation which works to reduce and remove barriers to the law, on the basis that all people should be able to access basic legal information and advice regardless of their income and background. Arthur Cox supports CLM in a range of ways including providing a full time secondee to the Community Legal Centre in Coolock, and by providing institutional support through education and training. Arthur Cox lawyers also staff a bi-monthly employment clinic on O'Connell Street run by CLM which has been adapted to phone consultation clinics during the Covid crisis.

Public Interest Law Alliance

Arthur Cox is one of three Sustaining Partners for PILA. We provide core funding to sustain PILA's activities, providing a link between the Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC) and the law firms and barristers that provide pro bono services referred by PILA. We accept multiple referrals from PILA each year including, in the past year, a multi-jurisdictional study on access to legal aid for victims of domestic violence.

"Arthur Cox's commitment has helped PILA continue to build an NGO community that is fully informed and equipped to work for more effective, transparent and user-friendly legal systems and frameworks resulting in greater access to justice, rights and entitlements for disadvantaged and marginalised communities."

Rachel Power, PILA & Strategic Development Manager

"The impact of the project on our students was immensely positive and helped us in the implementation of our school's vision to create and develop opportunities for our students that influence their belief in themselves and their career and educational progressions."

Paul Ryder, Principal,
Ringsend College

6. HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE ACCESS LEGAL INFORMATION

Street Law

Street Law aims to improve knowledge by giving young people practical information about law, democracy and human rights. This training also aims to improve skills by using innovative and participatory instructional strategies and developing the skills young people need in order to use this knowledge in their community and in their lives.

To date through our partnership with CLM, Arthur Cox lawyers have helped increase access to legal information by training approximately 100 students and community groups on topics such as human rights, criminal law and making a will. Furthermore in February, Arthur Cox lawyers conducted a Street Law training programme for students at Ringsend College. Street Law training taps into people's inherent interest in the law and aims to promote legal literacy, equality, access to law, and to teach high cognitive and social skills that enhance participants' effectiveness in legal matters.

7. HELPING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH A CRISIS

In times of crisis the challenges are greatest for the most marginalised and vulnerable in society. Thanks to the increased engagement of lawyers across the firm we have been able to increase our assistance and respond to those who have the greatest legal need. Initiatives include attending employment phone consultations organised by partners FLAC and Community Law and Mediation and wherever possible moving projects online to deliver workshops as webinars.

Pro Bono Employment Training Webinar Series

In January the employment law group launched a six month pro bono employment training series for our pro bono and charity partners. This training will now continue in September and will be delivered through online webinars. Following consultations with partners training is tailored to the specific needs of the NGO community with the aim of empowering NGOs to provide the best possible services to their beneficiaries.

Webinar Series for the NGO Community

In April Arthur Cox partnered with TrustLaw, A&L Goodbody and McCann FitzGerald to run a series of interactive webinars addressing the legal challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic designed specifically to help charities, non-profit organisations and social enterprises. These webinars, which are set to continue provide an opportunity to receive expert guidance directly from lawyers on the most critical legal topics relevant to Covid-19.

Assisting Infrastructural Charities

As a result of the COVID-19 crisis there has been a dramatic increase in pressure on infrastructural charities. The charity law group supported Volunteering Ireland and the Charities Institute of Ireland to develop factsheets on volunteering, charity governance and establishing new charities to assist them in responding to the significant increase in queries and the much broader interest in volunteer rights and obligations as a result of the crisis

8. COLLABORATING WITH CLIENTS ON PRO BONO

Most lawyers, both in private practice and in-house, have a genuine desire to be involved with pro bono work. However, not all lawyers have access to meaningful pro bono opportunities. This is particularly the case for in-house lawyers. There is an opportunity to add value and strengthen corporate client relationships by working together on pro bono projects. Arthur Cox currently partners with Microsoft and LinkedIn on the previously mentioned KIND project where we represent refugee minors in their application for family reunification. We also partner with legal counsel at Intel on a cross jurisdictional research project on behalf of the International News Safety Institute which includes researching jurisprudence on the prosecution of and legal remedies for online harassment of journalists.

Dublin
+353 1 920 1000
dublin@arthurcox.com

Belfast
+44 28 9023 0007
belfast@arthurcox.com

London
+44 207 832 0200
london@arthurcox.com

New York
+1 212 782 3294
newyork@arthurcox.com

San Francisco
+1 415 829 4247
sanfrancisco@arthurcox.com

arthurcox.com