Northern Ireland
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Part of the United Kingdom in the north-east of the island of Ireland

Shares a border to the East and the South with the Republic of Ireland

Population 1.9million
Northern Ireland

A disadvantaged rural border region on the Western periphery of the EU

Suffering from social, cultural and economic problems because of the long term conflict within the region

36% of people live in rural areas

64% in urban ones
The Rural Centre

Established in 1993 as a cross community resource centre.

Helps develop social and economic initiatives throughout the region through the promotion of cross-community and inter community activities.
Europe Direct Northern Ireland

A European Information office part of a network of over 500 offices the 27 member States.

Europe Direct NI promotes the benefit of Membership of the European Union to the inhabitants of N Ireland through study visits, exchanges and partnerships.
Networks for Women in Rural Areas

**Women in Business**: a network of women who run their own business

**Women in Agriculture**: to support women setting up business to add to the farm income

**Women of the World**: linking women from other regions of the world with local women

**Women in Rural Areas**: support, training and education to rural women

**Women’s Resource and Development Agency**: supporting women’s groups across Northern Ireland
Main Challenges for Women in Rural Areas

Political Representation: under representation of women in decision making bodies 13% of Northern Ireland MLAs are female 87% are male.

Poor transport infrastructure: Centralisation of services and jobs and high transport costs in accessing education, health and employment
Main Challenges for Women in Rural Areas

Employment:
• 47% of economically active women are in employment.
• Women employed in part-time employment is 16% higher than male part-time employment.
• 92% are employees, 7% self-employed and a small number are on government training schemes or unpaid family workers.
• 68% of female employees who work part-time say they do want a full-time job as they require flexible working to fit around family.
• 5% of female employees are managers and/or senior officials, compared with 10% of men.
• There has been an increase in the number of women unemployed in the age group 16 – 24 years.
Main Challenges for Women in Rural Areas

**Childcare:** Lack of local affordable and flexible childcare facilities and the availability of a range of flexible working opportunities

**Social Deprivation:** Northern Ireland average of 20% in some areas of high deprivation 36% of children live in households dependent on Income Support

**Lack of Networking:** Not being involved in consultation process

Low Value for maintaining the culture and traditions of the rural area
Initiatives to Support Women in Rural Areas

Rural Development Programmes
2007 – 2013 £500m

Anti-Poverty Programmes
The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) allocated £10m

Rural Transport - Assisted Rural Travel Scheme

Community Development
Financial support to continue with their Community Development work.

Rural Childcare
£13m to childcare organizations to enhance or secure childcare provision in rural communities
Initiatives to Support Women in Rural Areas

Rural Challenge Programme
Small grants programme of £430k targeted at community and voluntary sector to support poverty and social exclusion

Regional Project to maximise Access to Grants Benefits and Services
Public Health Authority and Dept of Health and Social Services targeting 4200 of the most deprived households with a budget of £700k to identify their benefit entitlements