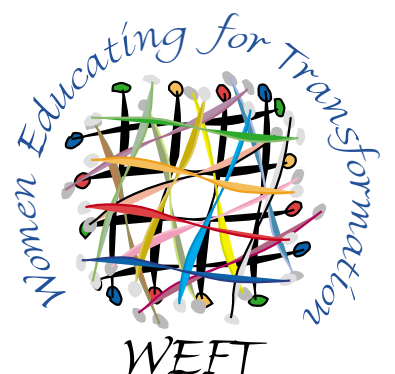
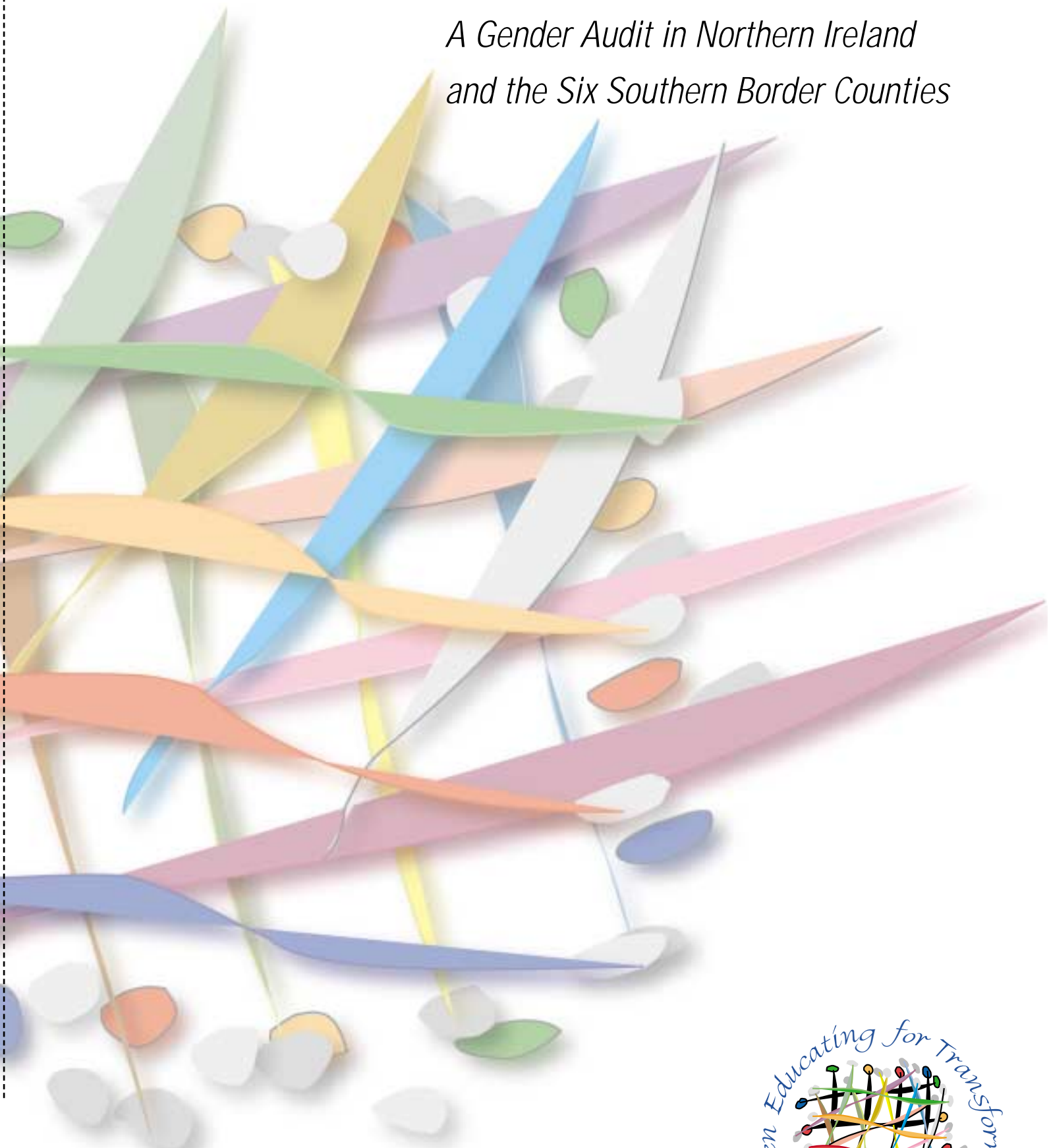


# Balances along the Border

*A Gender Audit in Northern Ireland  
and the Six Southern Border Counties*



# *Balances along the Border*

A Gender Audit in Northern Ireland and the Six Southern Border Counties

*Marie Crawley & Louise O'Meara*

April 2005

## Acknowledgements

It has been my privilege to co-ordinate the ***Building Peace through Policy Project***. There are many people to thank: firstly, the members of the Women's Regional Policy Forum who brainstormed the first outline of the project; the trainers and researchers Marie Crawley and Louise O'Meara for their meticulous research and inspiring training and most importantly, all the women who participated in the training and focus groups for their commitment and enthusiasm. I am also grateful to the Project Advisory Group who gave me sustained encouragement and ideas. Deirdre Hannigan, WEFT (Women Educating for Transformation) finance manager, contributed her usual superb financial expertise and the core management committee provided ongoing support and commitment throughout. Finally, sincere thanks to Anne O'Reilly and all the staff of our partner organisation Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA).

*Iris Lyle, WEFT Manager, April 2005*

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## Authors' Comments

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this report is accurate, no legal responsibility for any errors or omissions is accepted by the authors, WEFT or the Project Advisory Group.

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## *Preface*

Women Educating for Transformation (hereinafter referred to as WEFT) was established in 1995 as an all-island women's organisation engaging in cross-border/cross cultural partnership and strategic policy work. In April 2005 WEFT reluctantly decided to close, a decision directly influenced by the increasingly difficult funding environment within which the organisation functioned.

Throughout its ten year history WEFT worked to bring women together, from diverse backgrounds in both the North and South of Ireland, to share experiences and explore and address issues of difference, equality and conflict in a safe space using creative methodologies. Founded on the core principles of feminism and inclusion, WEFT was dedicated to enabling women to work together to strengthen their voices within emerging structures of participatory democracy and the Peace Process. From its inception WEFT was committed to both the peace process and the equality agenda on this island, and over the last ten years this commitment has been reflected in all the organisation's activities and the manner in which it engaged with participants. In-depth grassroots work was complemented by collaborative work with key policy making organisations both North and South, thereby providing a mechanism for articulating the needs of the women's community sector in both jurisdictions and developing the capacity of the women's sector to engage with national and international strategies.

The reflective and questioning culture at the core of WEFT is illustrated by the number of publications produced over the last ten years. One such report "Research into the Sustainability of Community Women's Groups in the Six Southern Border Counties" was a catalyst for seeding the development of the Women's Regional Policy Forum. This Forum, launched in 2001, implemented a broad based strategy of leadership training, networking and mentoring which gave women the skills to challenge and lobby for structural change, engage with the decision making structures and progress women's equality on a regional basis.

The decision by management to close the organisation was taken in the context of a funding environment in which it had become extremely difficult for women's organisations to secure funding. Available funding was short term, ad-hoc and increasingly tied into a range of extremely demanding conditions and soul destroying bureaucracy. Although WEFT weathered a number of funding crises over its last two years, having to spend an increasingly disproportionate amount of time chasing funding led management to the conclusion that it was no longer viable for the organisation to continue.

This therefore is WEFT's last report.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank the following members of staff employed over the past ten years: Aideen Loftus, Mary-Paul Keane, Angela Coleman, Joni Crone, Deirdre Hannigan and Iris Lyle. The vision and commitment of these women ensured that all WEFT's work was delivered to an exceptionally high standard. I thank also the women who served on the committee since 1995, and consultants and facilitators who carried out specific pieces of work. We are indebted to all the groups and networks that helped us deliver our work; partnership organisations; policy makers and funders supportive of our aims, and all the advisory groups which informed our work. Finally, our thanks must go to all the participants whose contributions, enthusiasm, honesty and courage shaped our direction. These women brought the skills developed during WEFT programmes back into their own areas of work and/or communities. As an organisation, we are

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privileged that the grass roots input of these women will be the tangible legacy of WEFT's work, living on in communities, in work places and in policy debates across the island. We hope that the gap left by WEFT's will be filled by another organisation, and that our contribution and achievements over the last ten years are built upon to further advance the potential of women in both the North and South of the island.

The Irish and UK governments made commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action and the International Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to ensure women's full participation in power and decision making, and to remove all obstacles to equality for women. There remains however a huge gap between rhetoric and reality, and a clear lack of commitment to planned and sustained support for the equal participation of women in policy development and decision making. As WEFT closed, it called on the governments in both jurisdictions to reaffirm commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action and to ensure that both the emerging National Women's Strategy and the Gender Strategy in Northern Ireland contain time bound targets, measurable indicators and commitments to allocate new resources to initiatives aimed at the empowerment of women.

WEFT leaves behind a huge legacy. Confidence, power, energy, growth, transformation, learning, space for dialogue, feminism, reconciliation and friendship are just some of the words used by women to describe the difference WEFT made in their lives. The significance of our work, and impact on all the women whose lives the organisation touched, will live on long after the organisation.

*Heather Floyd*

WEFT Chair

April 2005

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# 1. *Background*

## **Women Educating for Transformation (WEFT)**

Women Educating for Transformation (WEFT) is a not-for-profit organisation set up in 1995 by a group of women working with women's community education groups in Ireland, North and South.

## **Peace Building through Policy Project**

The ***Peace Building through Policy Project*** was established in June 2004 by WEFT in partnership with the Belfast based Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA). The project was overseen by an Advisory Group and comprised an action-training course, focusing on Northern Ireland and the six Southern Border Counties, with the aim of strengthening the capacity of the community based women's sector to influence and lobby policy makers. There were two discrete elements to the project: a gender audit of participation in public bodies in the six Southern Border Counties and Northern Ireland (and comment on women's knowledge of statutory gender mainstreaming processes); and following this, training to facilitate exploration of gender mainstreaming within the community based women's sector. The purpose of this training was to encourage the sector to engage with policy makers and provide participants with a set of gender proofing tools.

The primary focus of this report is presentation of the Gender Audit findings. Details of the Gender Mainstreaming Training Programme are noted in section 7, Appendix (i).

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## 2. Gender Mainstreaming Context

This section of the report sets the research project in context, identifying the rationale behind the need to focus on gender, the origins of gender mainstreaming as a response to gender inequality and an overview of policy and legislative commitments to gender mainstreaming throughout Ireland.

### 2.1 Why focus on gender?

Gender inequality continues to be a feature of Irish society, both North and South. In particular, women remain significantly under-represented in many national and local decision making arenas, a fact borne out in the Northern Ireland and six Southern Border Counties context by the findings in this report. Consequently decisions continue to be made at all levels, and in all areas of society, that are largely uninformed by the policy priorities and needs of women.

There are a number of reasons why, in a modern democracy, this situation is unacceptable<sup>1</sup>:

- Gender equality is a fundamental principle underpinning the concept of social justice, and human and civil rights
- Equality of representation between women and men is a pre-requisite to participative democracy. In its absence, the needs and priorities of one section of the population continue to be 'represented' by another
- Gender balance on decision-making bodies leads to identification and introduction of unseen and/or new issues on the policy agenda.
- Governments, both North and South, have stated they are committed to the pursuit of gender equality in numerous ways at national, European and international level.

### 2.2 Gender Mainstreaming – Origins

The concept of gender mainstreaming effectively entered international public policy in 1995, when it featured in the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The conference defined the term broadly and committed the institutions of the United Nations (UN) to the systematic incorporation of a gender perspective into policymaking. In 1995 it was also adopted by the European Union (EU) when a number of internal developments led to gender mainstreaming becoming a significant EU policy consideration. Not least of these was expansion in the number of EU member states, a number of whom had experience of mainstreaming gender in their own national policies.

In light of a strong EU and UN policy framework, mainstreaming gender equality was the single most important element of the Fourth EU Action Programme (1996-2000) on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. EU commitment was strengthened further in 1997 by the Treaty of Amsterdam in which Articles 2 and 3 make equal opportunities a central objective of the European Union, one which it would henceforth strive to incorporate into all EU policies.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the European Women's Lobby 'Lobbying Kit', July 2003

### 2.3 The role of gender mainstreaming in achieving gender equality

The concept of gender mainstreaming was developed as a strategy to achieve gender equality. It evolved from recognition that positive actions for women alone will not achieve gender equality. Gender mainstreaming can be defined as a process which involves the incorporation of gender considerations into all policies, programmes, practices and decision-making so that at every stage of development and implementation, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men and appropriate action taken to promote gender equality.

Some see gender mainstreaming as an approach premised on women being active participants in shaping the vision of a society and its politics, rather than passive participants in the existing structures which essentially perpetuate the status quo. Others would contend gender mainstreaming is concerned solely with increasing the number of women in the labour market, without necessarily transforming current employment practices in any significant way. Either way, gender mainstreaming represented a conceptual shift from a focus on women as a vulnerable group (with women's issues being considered as marginal topics on global and national agendas), to an approach which emphasised that women's and men's roles and responsibilities must be an integral part of policy analysis, planning, decision making, evaluation and impact assessment. Development of gender mainstreaming was therefore based on a realisation that women's equality cannot be achieved by treating men and women identically, or through protective measures aimed exclusively at women. Instead the fact that women's unequal status is based on, and sustained by, structures of systematic inequality had to be recognised and addressed by policy makers.

### 2.4 Gender Mainstreaming and Positive Actions

Gender mainstreaming, as an approach to gender equality, works hand-in-hand with a positive action approach. These are two distinct yet inter-dependent approaches to the achievement of gender equality. Gender mainstreaming initiatives are aimed at ensuring that a gender analysis informs all policy areas, while positive action programmes tackle the structural inequalities women continue to experience. Positive action programmes (also known as gender specific initiatives) are essential if gender equality is to be achieved. However, mainstreaming gender equality in itself does not replace the need for women specific policies and positive actions, but should nonetheless incorporate such actions and activities as part of the overall process.

*'A mainstreaming strategy needs to support women to collectively assess their situation, express their priorities and concerns, strengthen their public voice, advocate and lobby for public reform, and develop approaches to substantively influence societal decision making. Mainstreaming is, by its nature, a collaborative effort. It depends on allies, coalitions, and the participation of actors from a wide range of disciplines working together to identify shared goals and mutually reinforcing strategies'<sup>2</sup>*

### 2.5 Gender Mainstreaming - International Commitments

The UK and Irish governments are subject to the following commitments to gender equality by virtue of their membership of the EU, and ratification of UN policies:

- Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty of Amsterdam (1999). The Amsterdam Treaty recognises equality for women as a basic democratic principle and all member state policies are obliged to incorporate an equal opportunity dimension. While these Articles do not create legally

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<sup>2</sup> *Gender Mainstreaming: A Critical Look*. Paper presented by Joanna McMinn as part of the *Peace Building through Policy* Gender Mainstreaming Training Programme

enforceable rights for European women, they do represent a Treaty-based political commitment to gender mainstreaming which the European Commission has cited as both legal authority and "political cover" for its subsequent proposals.

- The delivery of EU Structural Funds (including Peace II) is guided by cross cutting themes known as horizontal principles. One of these is Equal Opportunity. Groups applying to EU Structural Funds are expected to demonstrate how their project addresses the horizontal principles. In other words, all measures and interventions should openly and actively take into account the situation of both men and women.
- In the last 20 years, the EU has adopted a series of Action Programmes to finance trans-national initiatives on gender equality. The current Action Programme has a budget of €50m and will end in 2005.
- Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) drawn up by the UN (1979).

## 2.6 Gender Mainstreaming – Commitments in Northern and Southern Ireland

The Irish Government, the former NI Assembly and the UK government have individually and collectively made considerable legislative and policy commitments to the achievement of gender equality. Some of these commitments are common to all as they are derived from international obligations, whilst others emanate from domestic legislation and policy commitments. Regardless of their origins, it is fair to say that policy commitments to the achievement of gender equality on the island of Ireland have never been stronger. These legislative and policy commitments are outlined below.

### Southern Ireland

The commitment to Gender Mainstreaming in the South of Ireland is embedded in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2000-2006 and identified as one of the horizontal principles of the Plan. Responsibility for the process lies with implementing agencies accountable for different elements of the NDP. Other positive action responses to gender inequality include legislation such as the Equal Pay and Equal Status Acts, and policy commitments including:

- National Strategy for Women
- Equality for Women Measure (NDP)
- National Steering Committee on Violence against Women
- Childcare and Social Inclusion Programme

A number of mechanisms and arrangements have been put in place to support the implementation of the National Development Plan commitment to gender mainstreaming. These include:

- A Gender Equality Unit, established in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, to provide advice and support to policy makers and implementing bodies. To date the Unit has
  - trained over 800 policy makers;
  - produced a wide range of information resources and guidance materials;
  - created two databanks of gender disaggregated statistics;
  - published several research and statistical reports;
  - implemented a programme of supports for community and voluntary groups; and
  - implemented two pilot gender budgeting initiatives.
- Gender Impact Assessment Guidelines, approved by government in 2000.

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## Northern Ireland

The single most significant commitment to structural gender equality in Northern Ireland is contained in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and is known as the Section 75 Statutory Duty. This places a statutory obligation on public authorities to carry out their functions relating to NI with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between different categories, including between men and women. In addition, the Ministerial Foreword to the draft Gender Equality Strategy, '*Gender Matters*', which was the subject of consultation at the time of writing, notes that

*'Government is fully committed to mainstreaming gender equality into all areas and stages of policy development – from design to implementation and evaluation.'*<sup>3</sup>

It further states that the Gender Equality Strategy is intended as framework to facilitate gender mainstreaming as a means of tackling gender inequality in Northern Ireland. A number of mechanisms and initiatives have been put in place to support the implementation of the gender equality dimension of Section 75. These include:

- Establishment of a Gender Equality Unit within the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFM/DFM) whose role is to promote gender equality across the Northern Ireland Departments and provide advice and support to policy makers
- Publication of a Gender Impact Assessment Handbook by OFM/DFM<sup>4</sup>
- Production of a Guide to the Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming under the EU Programmes<sup>5</sup>
- Guidance notes on Section 75<sup>6</sup>, produced by the Equality Commission (NI),
- Research on Gender Equality Indicators, commissioned and published by OFM/DFM<sup>7</sup>

### 2.7 Gender Mainstreaming Terminology

There is a growing body of vocabulary used in relation to gender equality work. Some of the more common terms are defined as follows.

**Sex** refers to the biological differences between women and men.

**Gender** refers to the social differences between women and men that are learned, changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures. For example, while only women can give birth (biologically determined) biology does not determine who will raise the children (gendered behaviour).

**Gender Equality** means that women and men have equal conditions for realising their full human potential, enjoying civil rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and differences between men and women, and the roles they play.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Gender Matters' A consultation document, Sept 2004, Ministerial Foreword, Rt. Hon Paul Murphy

<sup>4</sup> 'Gender Impact Assessment Handbook', Marie Crawley & Louise O'Meara, on behalf of OFM/DFM August 2004

<sup>5</sup> A guide to mainstreaming equality in the EU Structural Funds, Dept. of Finance and Personnel, revised (2004)

<sup>6</sup> Guide to the Statutory Duties, revised edition, ECNI (2005) and Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment revised edition, ECNI (2005)

<sup>7</sup> Guide to the Statutory Duties, revised edition, ECNI (2005) and Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment revised edition, ECNI (2005)

**Gender Mainstreaming** is a global approach to achieving gender equality – it is a means to the end of gender equality. Gender mainstreaming involves the incorporation of gender considerations into all policies, programmes, practices and decision-making so that at every stage of development and implementation, analysis of the effects on women and men is possible, and appropriate action taken to promote gender equality.

**Gender Proofing and Gender Impact Assessment** refers to specific tools used to ensure that all policies and practices within organisations have equally beneficial effects on men and women.

**Gender Budgeting** focuses on the analysis of public expenditure and revenue from a gender perspective, identifying the implications for women/girls compared to men/boys. The ultimate goal is to reprioritise both expenditures and revenue-raising methods in order to promote gender equality.

**Gender Disaggregated Statistics** are statistics and data gathered and analysed according to sex. Gender disaggregated data is a key instrument in gender mainstreaming, providing the evidence necessary to make the case for focusing on gender equality – i.e. that significant disparities remain and that, for the most part, these impact adversely on women.

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### *3. Introduction to the Report*

The purpose of this report is to present an audit of gender representation on decision making bodies in Northern Ireland and the six Southern Border Counties. The establishment of baseline information is an essential part of any gender mainstreaming process as it facilitates identification of priority areas for action. This in turn enables organisations to set realistic and achievable targets for change.

#### **Research Methodology**

The methodology employed for the research included the following:

- Desk research to produce an audit of current levels of women's representation on agreed community, voluntary and public structures in the North and six southern border counties.
- Design and facilitation of two focus group discussions to illicit views of the community based women's sector, and agencies that support it, in both jurisdictions. These focus group discussions took place in August 2004 in Monaghan and Newry. Nineteen (19) participants attended the discussion in Monaghan and thirteen (13) in Newry. A number of methods facilitated maximum participation, including individual reflection, pair work, small group discussions, and plenary discussion.
- A one-to-one telephone interview with a worker connected with the Northern Ireland community based women's sector to tackle a 'gap' in the [regional] spread of women participating in the focus group sessions.

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## 4. Gender Audit Findings

The gender audit results presented below constitute a baseline outlining the number of women involved in decision making in Northern Ireland and the six Southern Border Counties. The disproportionate under-representation of women confirms the imperative to continue the pursuit of equality for women. The results of the gender audit of bodies and agencies are set out under the following headings:

- 4.1 Government
- 4.2 Local Government
- 4.3 Civil Service
- 4.4 Local Development Agencies
- 4.5 Health
- 4.6 Education
- 4.7 Europe
- 4.8 Public and Other Bodies

The audit results represent a moment in time and, as such, are subject to change. In particular, changes in personnel of public bodies resulting from Local Elections in the South held in June 2004 were, in many instances, not confirmed at the time this data was gathered. Readers wishing to use the data are advised to check its currency at the time of use. The data obtained came from a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, in particular the 38th Edition of the IPA Year Book & Diary, the Northern Ireland Yearbook 2004 and the Northern Ireland Public Appointments Commission Annual Report. It should also be noted that the percentages given may not always total 100 as these have been rounded up to the nearest full percentage figure.

### 4.1 Government

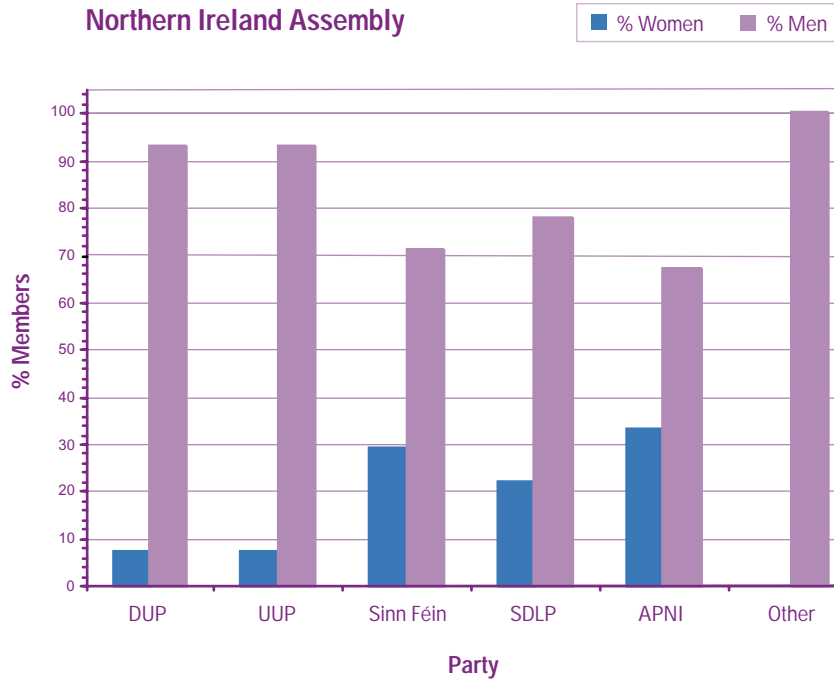
#### Northern Ireland: The Northern Ireland Assembly

The Northern Ireland assembly was established in 1998 as an outcome of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. It has responsibility for all aspects of government except those non-devolved issues which remain the responsibility of the British Secretary of State for NI. Non-devolved responsibilities are categorised into excepted and reserved matters. Reserved matters include policing, security, prisons, criminal justice, income tax, national insurance and regulation of telecommunications and broadcasting. Excepted matters include elections, European policy, peace and reconciliation and foreign policy.

#### Composition of Northern Ireland Assembly, by political party

Party	Women	Men	Total Seats	% Women
DUP	2	28	30	7
UUP	2	25	27	7
Sinn Féin	7	17	24	29
SDLP	5	13	18	22
APNI	2	4	6	33
Other	-	3	3	-
Total	18	90	108	17

### Northern Ireland Assembly



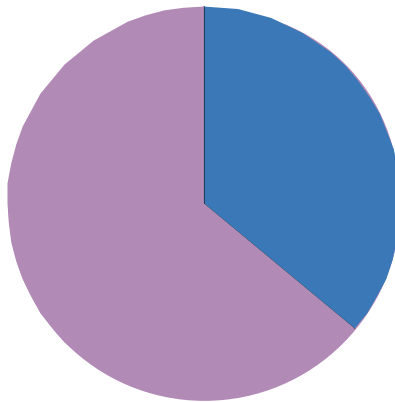
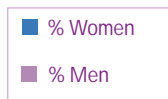
### The Civic Forum

The Civic Forum was established under the Belfast Agreement to allow civic society in Northern Ireland - non governmental organisations and ordinary citizens – a means of expression in relation to the new political institutions. It brings together the trade unions, business, the voluntary sector and a host of other representatives to discuss economic, social and cultural issues. The Civic Forum has not been in operation since the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland suspended the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive on 14 October 2002.

### Composition of Civic Forum Membership

	Women	Men	Total Seats	% women	Chair	V Chair
Civic Forum	21	37	58	36	M	F

### Civic Forum



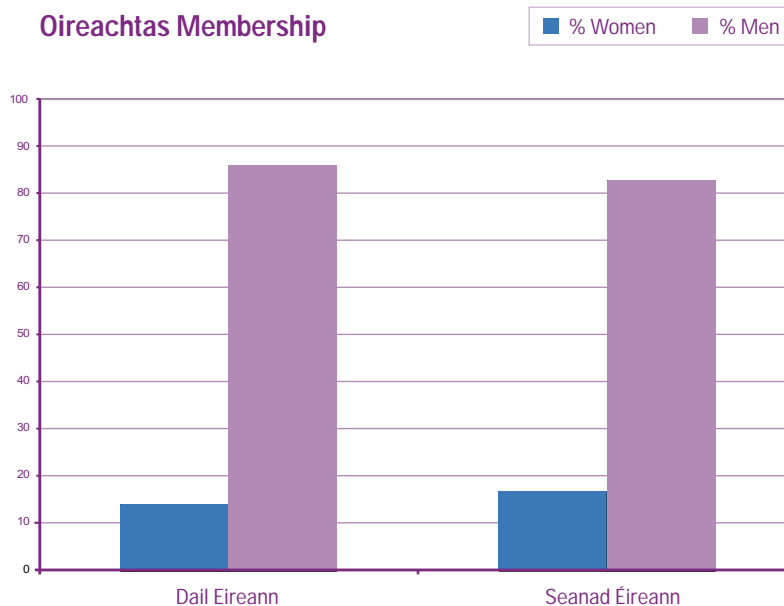
## The South

The Oireachtas (National Parliament) consists of a President and two Houses: Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann. There is a maximum term of five years in the Dáil. The Seanad has 60 members with 11 nominated directly to the House by the Taoiseach. Forty three members are elected from 5 panels of candidates – the Cultural and Educational Panel, the Agricultural Panel, the Labour Panel, the industrial and Commercial Panel and the Administrative Panel. The remaining 6 are elected by universities. Membership of both houses, by gender, is illustrated overleaf.

### Composition of Oireachtas membership

Oireachtas	Women	Men	Total Seats	% women
Dáil Éireann	22	144	166	14
Seanad Éireann	10	50	60	17

### Oireachtas Membership



## Scotland & Wales Assembly

The following statistics are included here for purposes of comparison.

### Composition of Scottish and Welsh Assemblies

Party	Constituency women	Constituency men	Regional women	Regional men	% women
Scotland	31	40	18	38	39
Wales	22	18	8	12	50

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### Scottish & Welsh Assembly Membership



### North/South Ministerial Council

The North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) was established on 2 December 1999, under the terms of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. It brings together Ministers from the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Irish Government on a regular basis, to develop consultation, co-operation and action within the island of Ireland on matters of mutual interest within the competence of both administrations. The work of the North/South Ministerial Council covers 12 sectors, 6 have North/South bodies and the other 6 operate through existing agencies in each jurisdiction. As such it is not a Body but rather a collective where the members vary according to the subject matters/areas being dealt with. The NSMC is unable to meet at the time of writing due to the suspension of the NI Assembly. At its last meeting in plenary format in June 2002, the gender breakdown of Ministers present was 17 males and 4 females.

### North/South Implementation Bodies

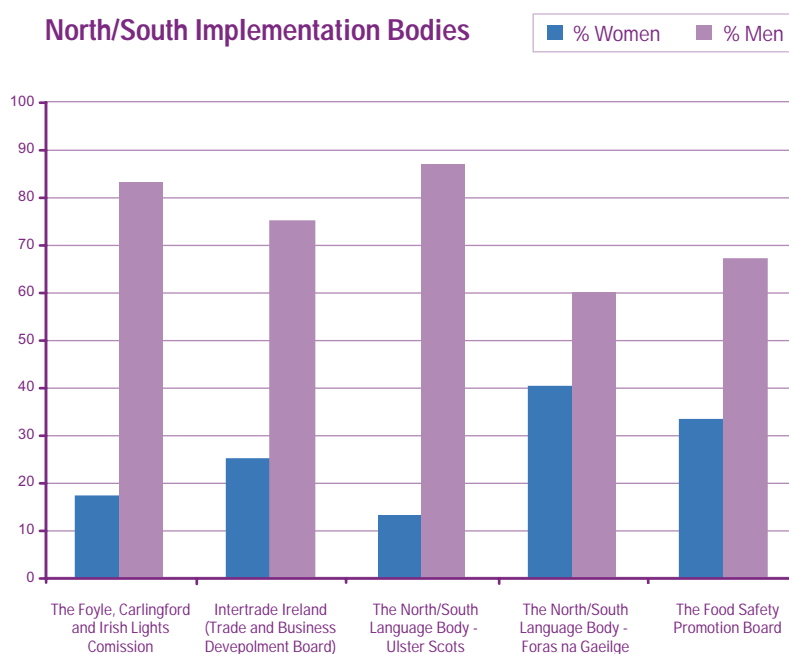
Six North/South Implementation Bodies, established by international agreement between the British and Irish Governments, came into being on 2 December 1999. These bodies implement the policies agreed by the Ministers in the NSMC, with all but two overseen by Boards. The Implementation Bodies are: The Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission; The Trade and Business Development Board; The North/South Language Body (Ulster Scots Agency and Foras na Gaeilge); The Food Safety Promotion Board; Waterways Ireland; and The Special EU Programmes Body.

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## Composition of North/South Implementation Bodies

Body	Women	Men	Total Seats	% women	Chair	V Chair
The Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	2	10	12	17	M	N/A
Intertrade Ireland (Trade and Business Development Board)	3	9	12	25	M	N/A
The North/South Language Body – Ulster Scots	1	7	8	13	M	M
The North/South Language Body – Foras na Gaeilge	6	9	15	40	F	N/A
The Food Safety Promotion Board	4	8	12	33	M	M
Waterways Ireland	No overseeing Board					
The Special EU Programmes Body	No overseeing Board					

North/South Implementation Bodies



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## 4.1 Local Authorities

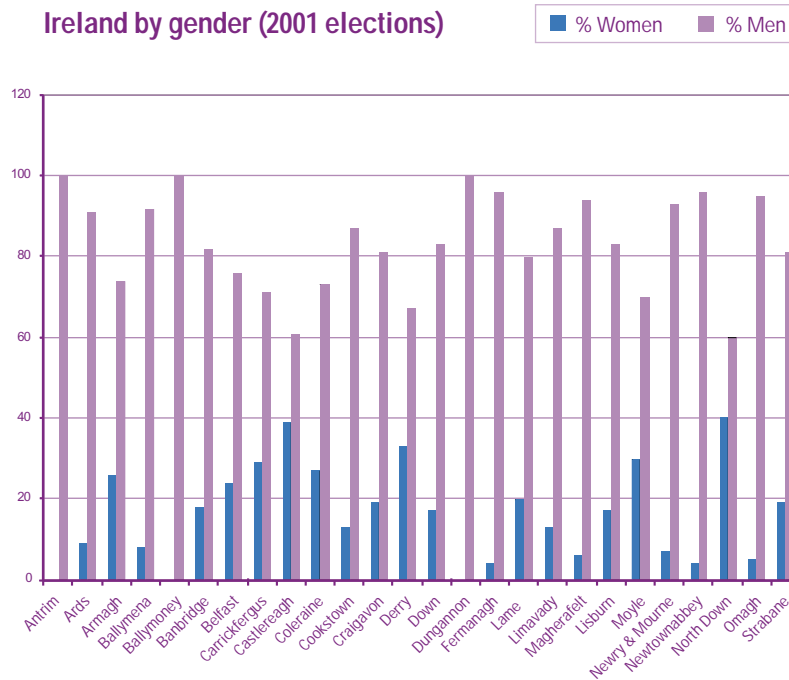
### Northern Ireland

There are 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland. Local authorities are responsible for the delivery of key services such as refuse collection and disposal, street cleansing, health and environmental services, community development, indoor and outdoor leisure, parks and recreational facilities, as well as support for the arts, tourism and economic development. Elected representatives are also actively involved in strategic partnerships designed to improve the quality of life for people in their areas.

### Composition of local councils in Northern Ireland (2001 elections)

Council	Women	Men	Total Seats	% Women
Antrim	0	19	19	0
Ards	2	21	23	9
Armagh	6	16	22	26
Ballymena	2	22	24	8
Ballymoney	0	16	16	0
Banbridge	3	14	17	18
Belfast	12	39	51	24
Carrickfergus	5	12	17	29
Castlereagh	9	14	23	39
Coleraine	6	16	22	27
Cookstown	2	14	16	13
Craigavon	5	21	26	19
Derry	10	20	30	33
Down	4	19	23	17
Dungannon	0	22	22	0
Fermanagh	1	22	23	4
Larne	3	12	15	20
Limavady	2	13	15	13
Magherafelt	1	15	16	6
Lisburn	5	25	30	17
Moyle	5	10	15	30
Newry & Mourne	2	28	30	7
Newtownabbey	9	16	25	4
North Down	10	15	25	40
Omagh	1	20	21	5
Strabane	3	13	16	19
Total	108	474	582	19

### Local Councils in Northern Ireland by gender (2001 elections)



### Southern Ireland

Local Authorities have been given recognition by the Constitution in an amendment approved by referendum on 11 June 1999. They operate under the supervision of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. There are 29 County Councils, 5 City Councils and 80 borough and town councils. Members of these are elected every five years on a system of proportional representation. Principal services provided by local authorities are divided among 8 programmes:

1. Housing and building
2. Road transportation and safety
3. Water supply and sewage
4. Development incentives and controls (planning)
5. Environmental protection
6. Recreation and amenities
7. Agriculture, education, health and welfare
8. Miscellaneous services

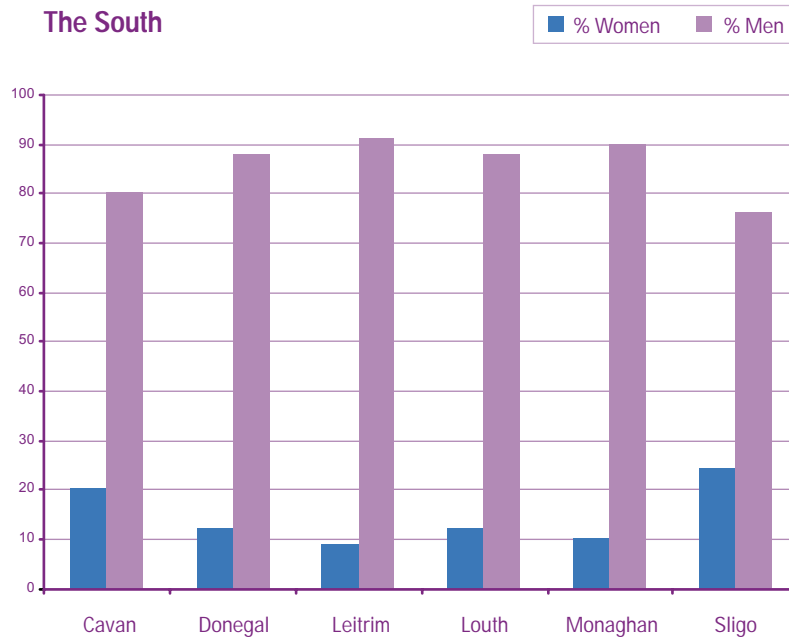
### Composition of local councils in Southern Ireland

Council	Women	Men	Total	% women	Chair/Mayor	V Chair/Dep Mayor
Cavan	5	20	25	20	M	F
Donegal	3	26	29	12	M	M
Leitrim	2	20	17	9	M	M
Louth	3	23	26	12	M	M
Monaghan	2	18	20	10	M	M
Sligo	6	19	25	24	F	M

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### The South



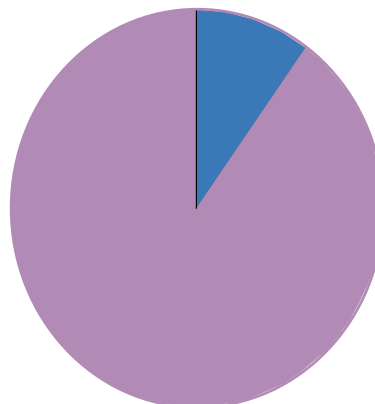
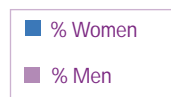
### Regional Assemblies

Two regional assemblies, one of which covers the research area, were established in 1999. Their functions are to promote the co-ordination of public services in their areas, monitor the general impact of all EU programmes of assistance under the Community Support Framework in their areas and manage new regional operational programmes in the Community Support Framework and the National Development Plan 2002 – 2006. Members are appointed by their constituent city/county authorities. The Border Midland and Western Regional Assembly covers 14 counties including Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo.

### Composition of Regional Assemblies in Southern Ireland

Regional Assembly	Women	Men	Members	% women
Border Midland and Western Region	3	26	29	10

### Border Midland & Western Region



West

### 4.3 Civil Service

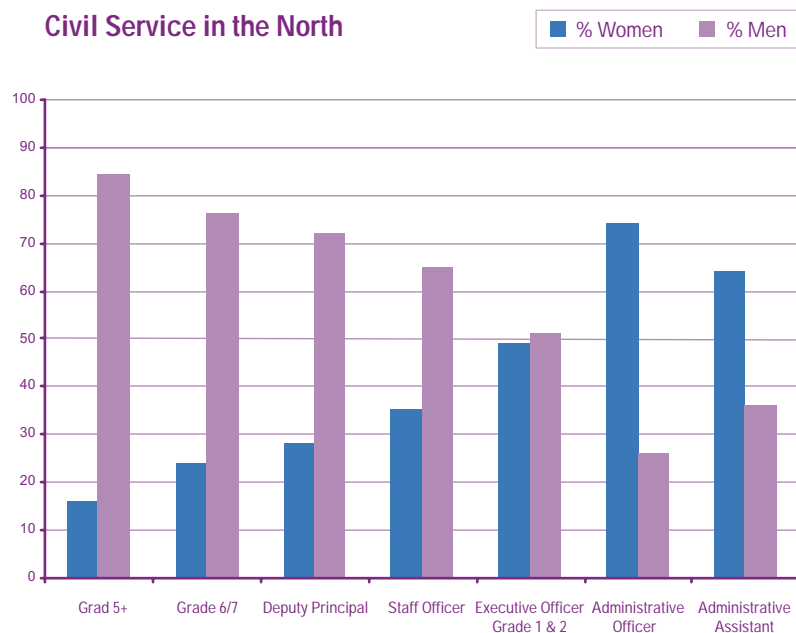
The role of civil services is to help Governments formulate their policies, carry out decisions and administer public services for which they are responsible.

#### Northern Ireland

#### Gender breakdown of Northern Ireland Civil Service by Grade, 2002

Grade	Women	Men	Total No.	% women
Grade 5+	41	214	255	16
Grade 6/7	306	991	1297	24
Deputy Principal	598	1543	2141	28
Staff Officer	947	1742	2689	35
Executive Officer Grade 1 & 2	3954	4071	8025	49
Administrative Officer	6442	2292	8734	74
Administrative Assistant	2146	1232	3378	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>14434</b>	<b>12085</b>	<b>26519</b>	<b>54</b>

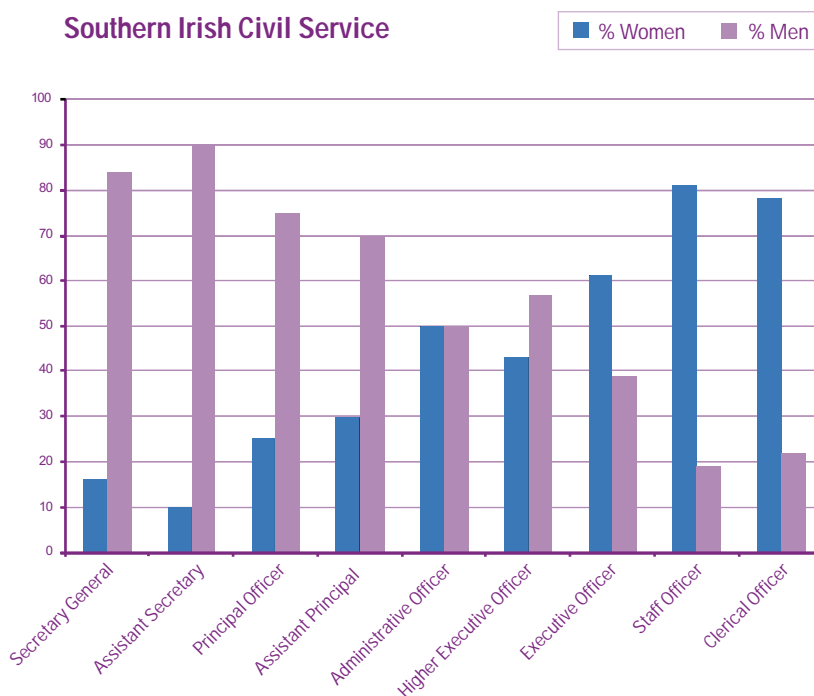
Civil Service in the North



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## Gender breakdown of Northern Ireland Civil Service by Grade, 2002

Grade	Women	Men	Total No.	% women
Secretary general	4	20	24	16
Assistant Secretary	13	119	132	10
Principal Officer	127	326	453	25
Assistant Principal Officer	372	597	969	30
Administrative Officer	382	389	771	50
Higher Executive Officer	1236	1675	2911	43
Executive Officer	3075	1960	5035	61
Staff Officer	1133	266	1399	81
Clerical Officer	9548	2637	12185	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>16889</b>	<b>7990</b>	<b>24879</b>	<b>68</b>



## 4.4 Local Development Agencies

### Northern Ireland: Local Strategy Partnerships (LSPs)

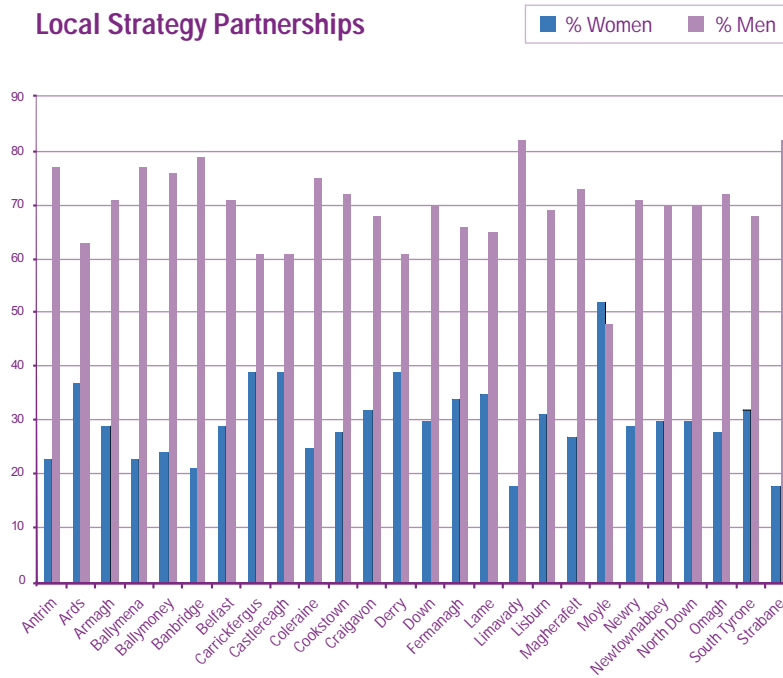
The Local Strategy Partnership model in Northern Ireland evolved from District Partnerships during Peace I. There are 26 LSPs, one in each council area. They play a direct role in taking decisions on the allocation of the Peace II resources and in managing and accounting for that expenditure. The LSPs were designed to be an equal partnership between 2 strands; local government and the main statutory agencies operating at a local level and the four pillars of the social partners – trade unions, community and voluntary sector and agriculture and rural development.

#### Composition of Local Strategy Partnerships (LSPs)

LSP	%Women
Antrim	23
Ards	37
Armagh	29
Ballymena	23
Ballymoney	24
Banbridge	21
Belfast	29
Carrickfergus	39
Castlereagh	39
Coleraine	25
Cookstown	28
Craigavon	32
Derry	39
Down	30
Fermanagh	34
Larne	35
Limavady	18
Lisburn	31
Magherafelt	27
Moyle	52
Newry	29
Newtownabbey	30
North Down	30
Omagh	28
South Tyrone	32
Strabane	18

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## Local Strategy Partnerships

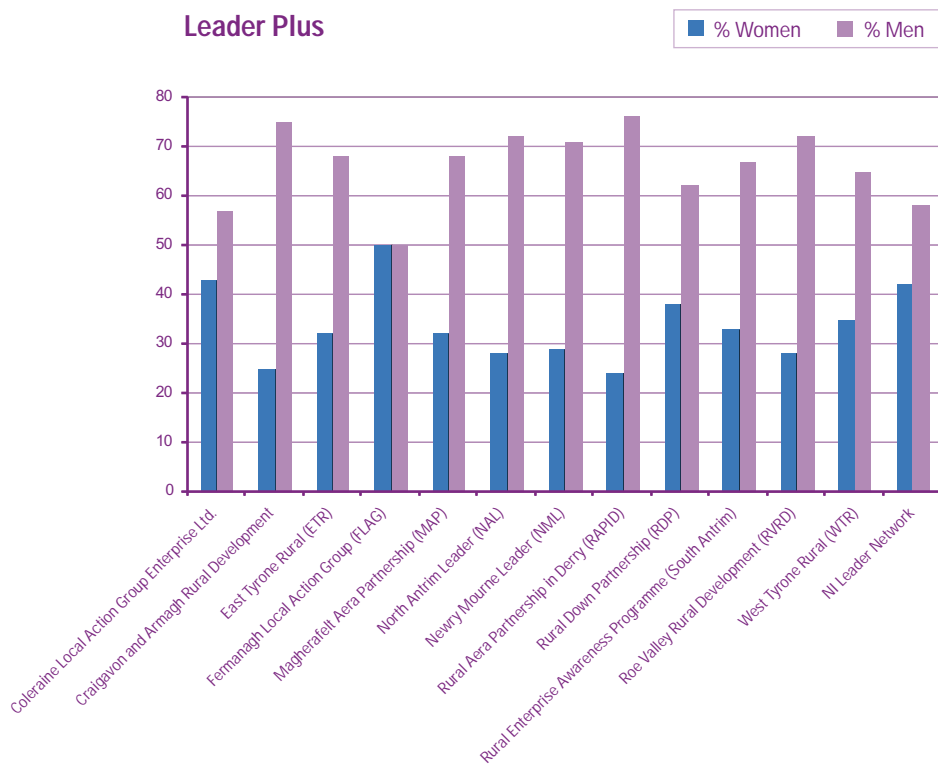


## Leader Plus

LEADER+ is a European Union programme to support rural development through the establishment of locally based development schemes.

## Composition of Leader Bodies

Name of Organisation	Women	Men	Total seats	% women
Coleraine Local Action Group Enterprise Ltd.	9	12	21	43
Craigavon and Armagh Rural Development	4	12	16	25
East Tyrone Rural (ETR)	7	15	22	32
Fermanagh Local Action Group (FLAG)	7	7	14	50
Magherafelt Area Partnership (MAP)	6	13	19	32
North Antrim Leader (NAL)	4	10	14	28
Newry Mourne Leader (NML)	5	12	17	29
Rural Area Partnership in Derry (RAPID)	4	13	17	24
Rural Down Partnership (RDP)	6	10	16	38
Rural Enterprise Awareness Programme (South Antrim)	3	6	9	33
Roe Valley Rural Development (RVRD)	6	16	22	28
West Tyrone Rural (WTR)	8	15	23	35
NI Leader Network	5	7	12	42



### The South: City and County Development Boards (CDBs)

In 2000, city and county development boards were established in each city and county council in the South. The boards are representative of local government, local development bodies (area partnerships, LEADER groups and city and county enterprise boards) and the state agencies and social partners operating locally. The CDBs have drawn up, and are overseeing, the implementation of a city/county strategy for economic, social and cultural development for each city or county area, which will be the template guiding all public services and local development activities.

### Composition of City and County Development Boards

County Development Board	Total	Women	Men	Chair	% women
Cavan	25	3	22	M	12
Donegal	36	5	31	M	14
Leitrim	28	6	22	M	21
Louth	28	7	21	M	25
Monaghan	26	8	18	F	31
Sligo	30	8	22	M	27

West

### City & County Development Boards

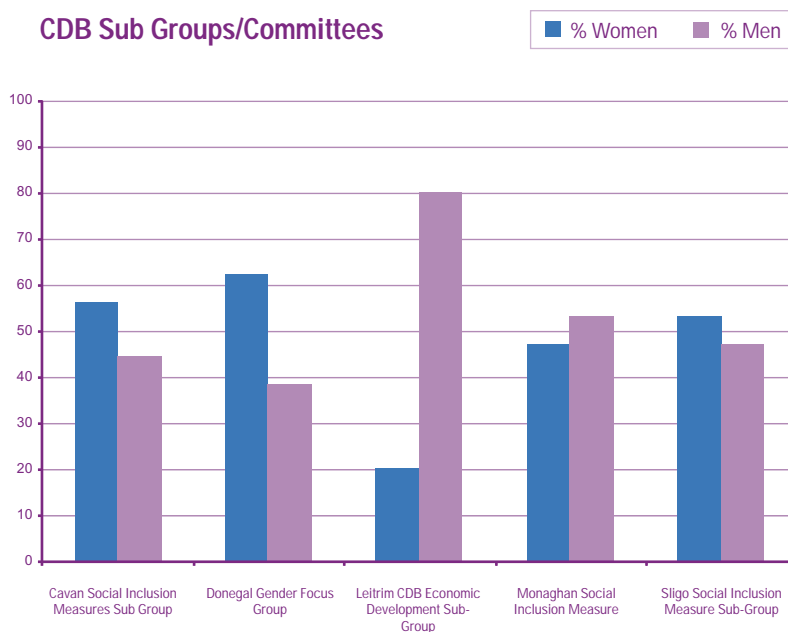


Individual Boards have established Sub Groups/Committees to carry out their work. Gender disaggregated data for the membership of a selection of Sub Groups/Committees is presented below.

### Composition of Sub Groups/ Committees

County Development Board	Total	Women	Men	% women
Cavan Social Inclusion Measures Sub Group	16	9	7	56
Donegal Gender Focus Group	13	8	5	62
Leitrim CDB Economic Development Sub-Group	15	3	12	20
Monaghan Social Inclusion Measure	15	7	8	47
Sligo Social Inclusion Measures Sub-Group	17	9	8	53

### CDB Sub Groups/Committees



### County Enterprise Boards

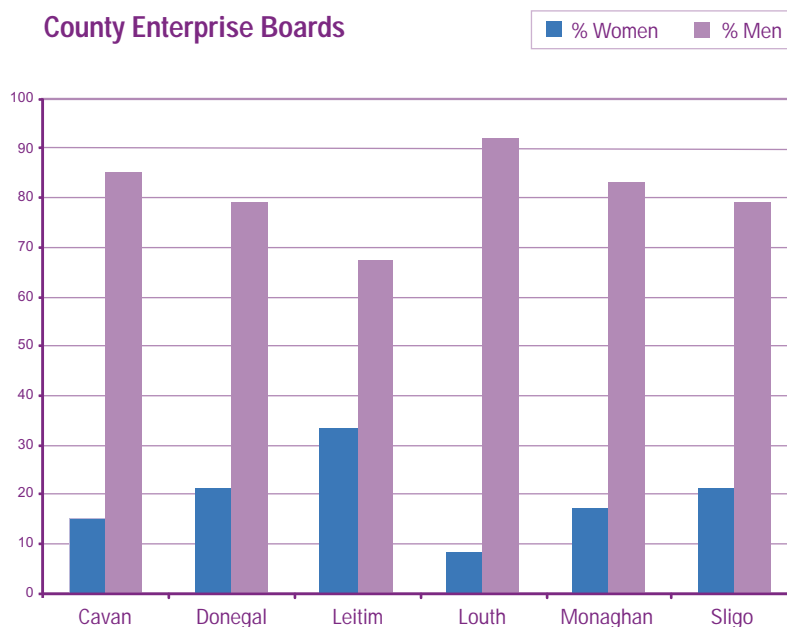
There are 35 city or county enterprise boards in the South which were established in 1993 as companies limited by guarantee. Their role is to promote micro enterprises (ten employees or less) at local level. There are normally 14 Board members with an independent chair person – four members are selected by the local city/county council and the remaining members are nominees of the state agencies, social partners and representatives of others such as small businesses and local development associations.

#### Composition of County Enterprise Boards

County Enterprise Board	Members	Women	Men	Chair	% women
Cavan	13	2	11	M	15
Donegal	14	3	11	M	21
Leitrim	12	4	8	M	33
Louth	13	1	12	M	8
Monaghan	12	2	10	M	17
Sligo	14	3	11	M	21



## County Enterprise Boards



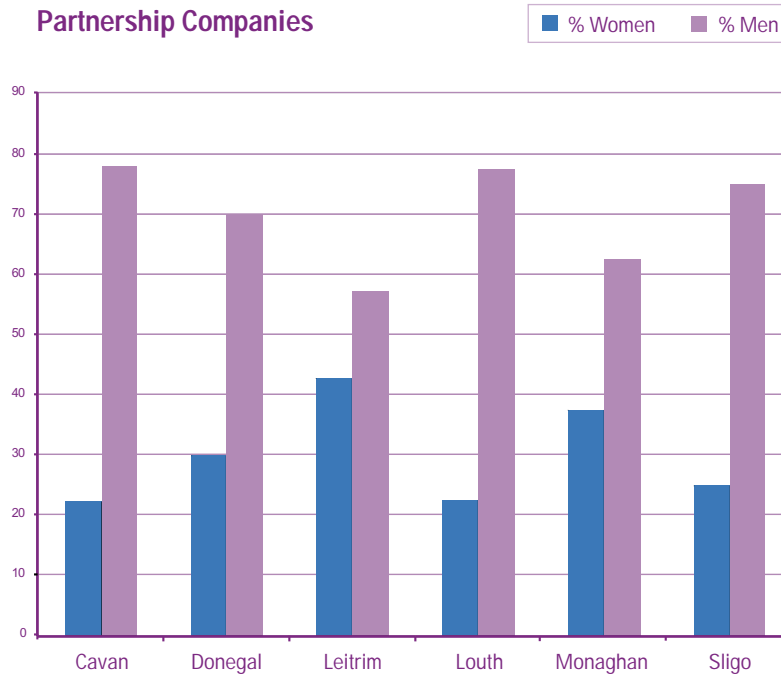
## Partnership Companies

Thirty eight partnership companies were established in the South as an area based response to long-term unemployment. These companies are legally constituted, with boards of directors for each drawn at local level from the social partners, state agencies, community and voluntary organisations and elected representatives. Their function is to prepare a local development plan to counter disadvantage for their area and to implement that plan based on funding made available from Area Development Management Ltd. In 2000 the remit of Partnership Companies was widened to increase their emphasis on social inclusion. A number of partnership companies are also Leader companies. These are denoted by an asterisk the table below.

County	Partnership Company	Members	Women	Men	% women
Cavan	County Cavan Partnership	18	4	14	22
Donegal	Inishowen Partnership Board	18	8	10	44
	Pairtocht Gaeltacht Thir Chonail*	21	6	15	29
	Donegal Local Development Company*	27	5	22	19
Leitrim	Co. Leitrim Partnership Board	21	9	12	43
Louth	Dundalk Employment Partnership	20	4	16	20
	Drogheda Partnership	11	3	8	27
Monaghan	Monaghan Partnership Board	16	6	10	38
Sligo	Co. Sligo Leader Partnership Company*	24	6	18	25

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## Partnership Companies



## Leader+

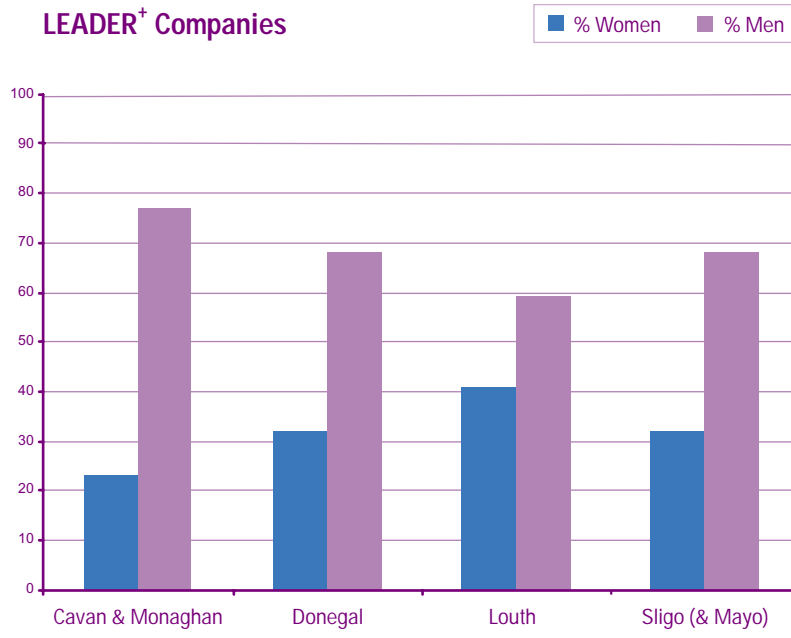
LEADER+ is a European Union programme to support rural development through the establishment of locally based development schemes.

## Composition of LEADER Companies

County	LEADER Company	Members	Women	Men	Chair	% women
Cavan & Monaghan	Cavan-Monaghan Rural Development Co-op Society Ltd	22	5	17	M	23
Donegal	Inishowen Rural Development Ltd	19	6	13	M	32
Louth	Louth LEADER	17	7	10	M	41
Sligo (& Mayo)	Western Rural Development Company Ltd.	19	6	13	M	32

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### LEADER+ Companies



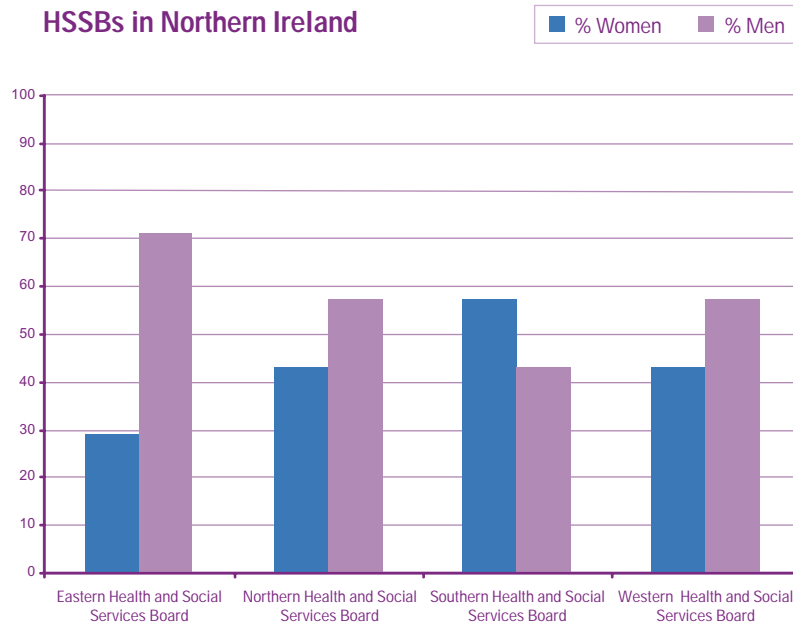
## 4.5 Health

### Northern Ireland: Health and Social Services Boards (HSSBs)

Health and Personal Social Services in Northern Ireland are provided as an integrated service. The 4 Health and Social Services Boards (Eastern, Northern, Southern and Western) are agents of the DHSS&PS in planning, commissioning and purchasing services for the residents in their areas.

#### Composition of HSSBs

Board Area	Women	Men	Chair	% women
Eastern Health and Social Services	2	5	M	29
Northern Health and Social Services	3	4	M	43
Southern Health and Social Services	4	3	M	57
Western Health and Social Services	3	4	M	43

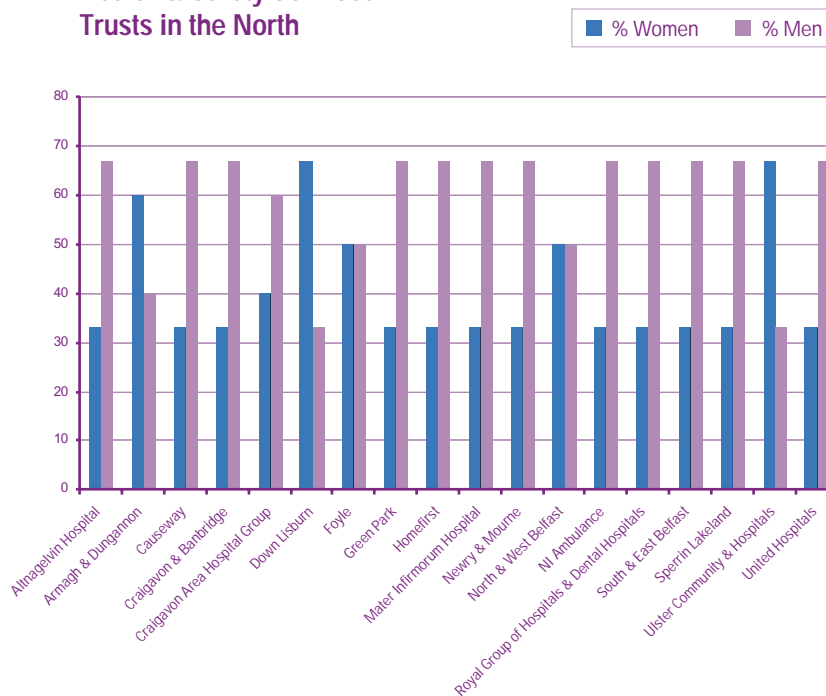


### Health and Social Services Trusts

The 19 Health and Social Services Trusts are the providers of health and social services. They manage staff and services on the ground and control their own budgets.

Health and Social Service Trust Area	Women	Men	Chair	% women
Altnagelvin Hospital	2	4	M	33
Armagh & Dungannon	6	4	M	60
Causeway	1	2	F	33
Craigavon and Banbridge	2	4	M	33
Craigavon Area Hospital Group	2	3	F	40
Down Lisburn	4	2	F	67
Foyle	3	3	M	50
Green Park	2	4	M	33
Homefirst	2	4	M	33
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	2	4	F	33
Newry & Mourne	2	4	M	33
North & West Belfast	3	3	M	50
NI Ambulance	2	4	M	33
Royal Group of Hospitals & Dental Hospital	2	4	M	33
South & East Belfast	2	4	M	33
Sperrin Lakeland	2	4	M	33
Ulster Community & Hospitals	4	2	F	67
United Hospitals	2	4	M	33

### Health & Safety Services Trusts in the North



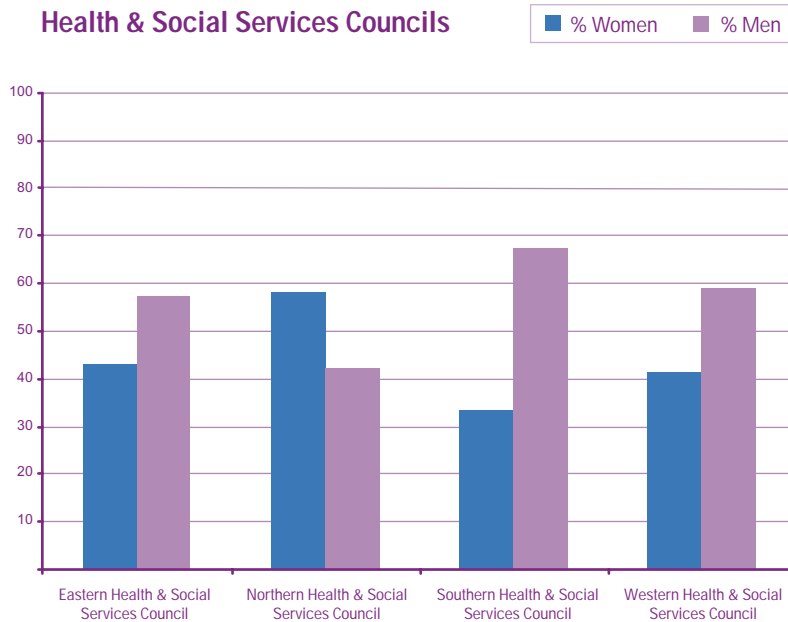
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## Health and Social Services Councils

Monitoring the health and personal social services is the duty of the four Health and Social Service councils - one for each board area. The councils advise the public about services. They also advise on how services might be improved.

### Composition of Health and Social Services Councils

Council Area	Women	Men	Chair	% women
Eastern Health & Social Services	12	16	M	43
Northern Health & Social Services	11	8	M	58
Southern Health & Social Services	7	14	F	33
Western Health & Social Services	9	13	M	41



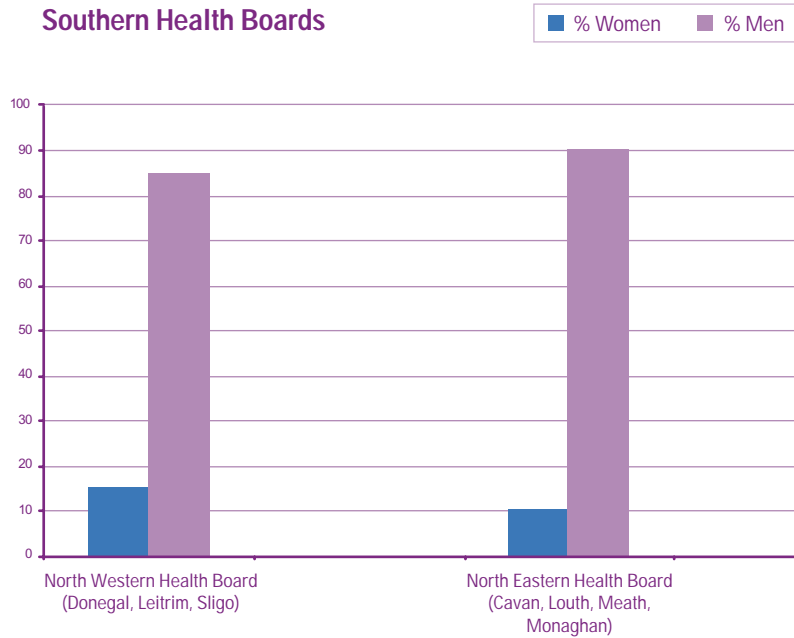
## The South: Health Boards

Eight Health Boards have been responsible for the administration of health services since 1971. Membership consists of those appointed by the constituent local authorities, those elected by medical and paramedical professions, and those appointed by the Minister for Health & Children – three members to each board.

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Board Area	Total	Women	Men	Chair	% women
North Western Health Board (Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo)	27	4	23	M	15
North Eastern Health Board (Cavan, Louth, Meath, Monaghan)	30	3	27	M	10

### Southern Health Boards



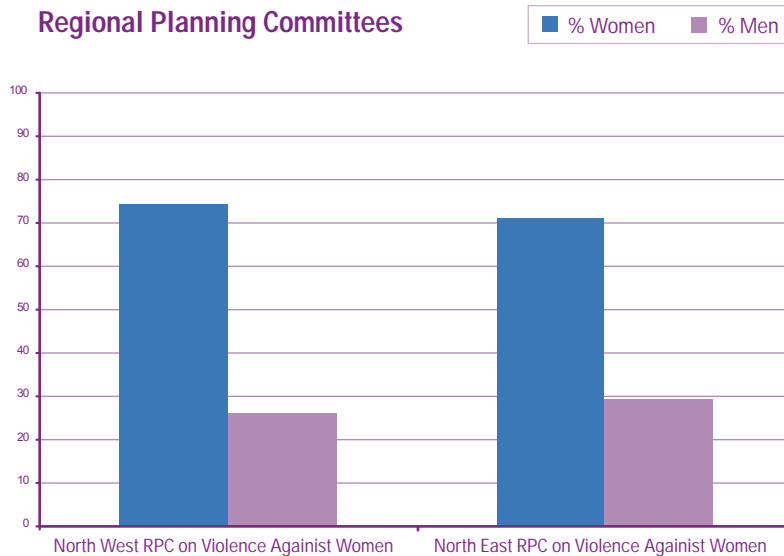
### Regional Planning Committees on Violence against Women (RPCs)

The Regional Planning Committees on Violence against Women were established in each Health Board area as a recommendation of the Report of the Task Force on Violence against Women. They comprise a wide range of groups from the public, community and voluntary sectors. The main areas of responsibility are to identify what services area in place in the region, where gaps exists and to identify what strategies and actions are required to address these gaps.

### Composition of Regional Planning Committees

Board Area	Women	Men	Chair	% women
North West	23	8	F	74
North East	16	5	F	76

## Regional Planning Committees



### 4.6 Education: Northern Ireland

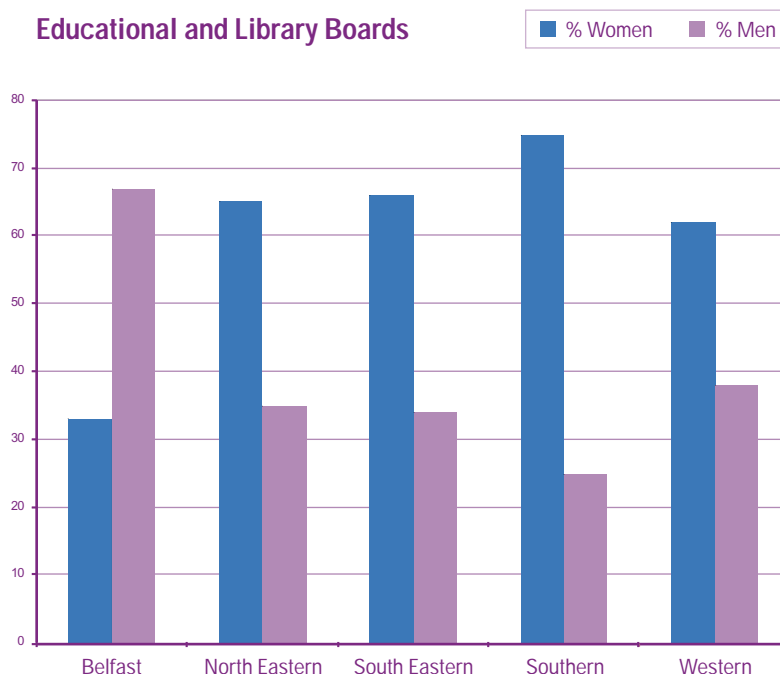
The Education and Library (NI) Order 1972 took control of the provision of education and library services from local authorities and placed it under the direction of five Education and Library Boards. Each Board is responsible for primary, secondary and pre-school education within their respective areas.

#### Composition of Education and Library Boards

Board Area	Total	Women	Men	% Women
Belfast	36	12	24	33
North Eastern	37	11	24	65
South Eastern	35	11	23	66
Southern	36	8	27	75
Western	37	12	23	62



## Educational and Library Boards



## Vocational Education Committees (VECs)

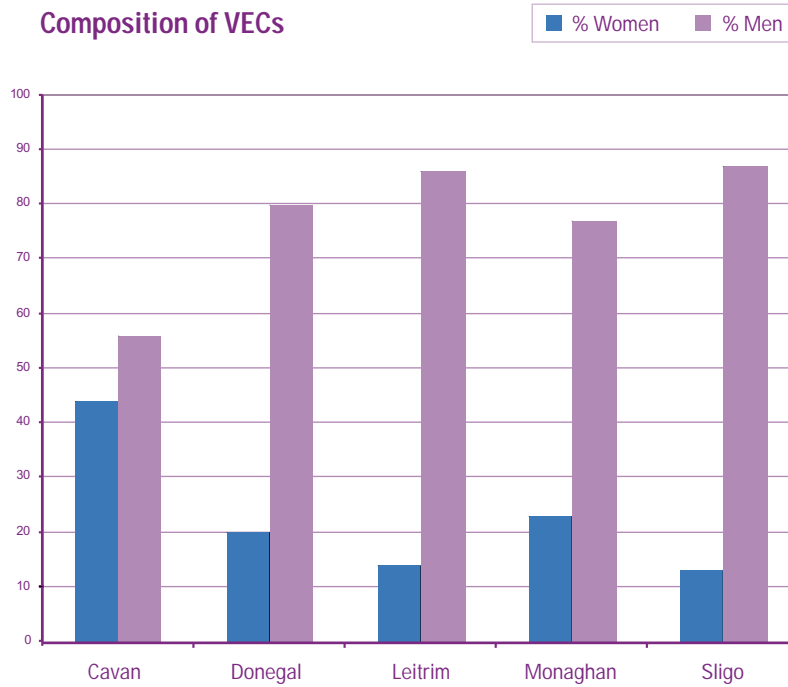
Vocational Education Committees are statutory committees established under the Vocational Education Acts 1930 – 2001. There are 33 VECs operating in respect of local authority areas. These committees have their own corporate status and do not come within the system of city and county management. They provide and manage vocational schools and community colleges, employ administrative and teaching staff and provide education and ancillary services for their areas. These activities are financed mainly from state funds and partly from local rates.

### Composition of VECs

VEC	Total	Women	Men	Chair	% women
Cavan	16	7	9	M	44
Donegal	20	4	16	M	20
Leitrim	14	2	12	M	14
Louth	Data not available at time of going to print				
Monaghan	22	5	17	F	23
Sligo	16	2	14	M	13

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### Composition of VECs

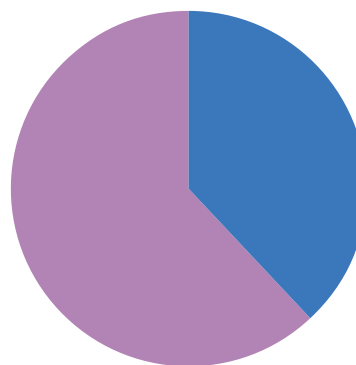
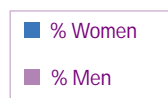


### 4.7 Europe: European Parliament

The European Parliament consists of 626 members (MEPs) of whom 15 are elected in the four southern Irish Euro-constituencies, and three in the constituency of Northern Ireland.

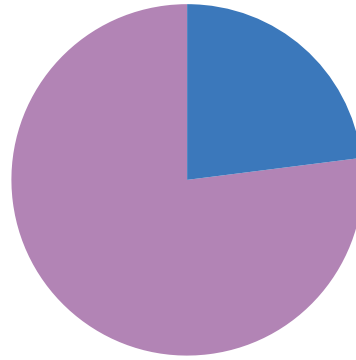
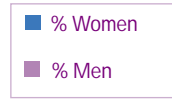
Country	Members	Women	Men	% Women
Southern Ireland	13	5	8	38
England, Scotland, Wales, N Ireland	78	18	60	23

### MEPs South of Ireland



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### MEPs England, Scotland, Wales, NI



### Southern Irish European election results by gender and party, 2004

Party	Members	Women	Men	% Women
Fianna Fáil	4	0	4	0
Fine Gael	5	2	3	40
Labour	1	0	1	0
Sinn Féin	1	1	0	100
Independent	2	2	0	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>38</b>

### England, Scotland, Wales, N. Ireland: European election results by gender and party, 2004

Party	Members	Women	Men	% Women
Conservative	27	3	24	11
Democratic Unionist Party	1	0	1	0
Green	2	2	0	100
Labour	19	6	13	32
Liberal Democrat	12	5	7	42
Sinn Féin	1	1	0	100
Plaid Cymru	1	1	0	100
Ulster Unionist Party	1	1	0	0
Other	14	0	14	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>23</b>

## 4.8 Public and other Bodies

### Northern Ireland: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) is a non-governmental public body established under the Housing Executive Act (NI) 1971. Its primary responsibilities cover a wide range of issues relating to housing and its provision. This includes assessment of housing conditions and requirements and devising strategies to address these.

Body	Total	Women	Men	% women	Chair
NIHE	11	2	9	18	Male

### The Equality Commission

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland is an independent public body established under the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Its duties include working towards the elimination of discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity, encouraging good practice and overseeing the implementation and effectiveness of the statutory duty on public authorities contained in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act and keeping the relevant anti-discrimination legislation under review. It took over the functions previously exercised by the Commission for Racial Equality for Northern Ireland, the Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland, the Fair Employment Commission and the Northern Ireland Disability Council.

Body	Total	Women	Men	% women	Chair
Equality Commission	18	9	9	50	Female

### Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission was created by Section 68 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It aims to protect and promote the human rights of everyone in Northern Ireland in law, policy and practice.

Body	Total	Women	Men	% women	Chair
Human Rights Commission	6	2	4	33	Male

### Invest Northern Ireland

Invest Northern Ireland was formed in April 2002 as the main economic development organisation. Its aim is to add value to the economy and create wealth through the promotion of innovation, research and development, design and creation of an enterprise culture and to attract investment from outside Northern Ireland.

Body	Total	Women	Men	% women
Invest Northern Ireland	13	5	8	39

### Rural Community Network NI

The Rural Community Network (RCN) is a voluntary organisation established by local community organisations to articulate the voice of rural communities on issues relating to poverty, disadvantage and community development.

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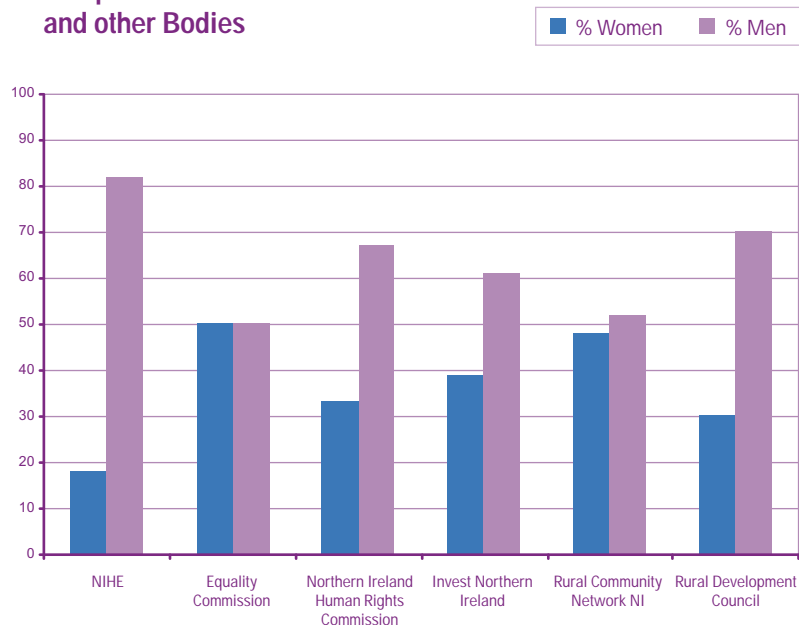
Organisation	Members	Women	Men	% women	Chair
Rural Community Network NI	21	10	11	48	M

### Rural Development Council

The Rural Development Council (RDC) exists to address the needs of deprived rural areas in Northern Ireland. It was set up in 1991 as an independent organisation under the Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Programme to work in partnership with a spectrum of rural interest groups. The RDC is managed by a 20 member council which is made up of rural community representatives drawn from the private sector, local government, environmental interests, LEADER Groups and the agriculture industry. Four members are nominated by district councils.

Organisation	Members	Women	Men	% women	Chair
Rural Development Council	20	6	14	30	F

**Composition of Public and other Bodies**



### The South of Ireland

#### ADM/CPA

Area Development Management Ltd. (ADM) is an intermediary company established by the Irish Government in agreement with the European Commission to support local social and economic development in the South of Ireland. The Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) is a statutory body that works to prevent and eliminate poverty in Ireland. In 1995 ADM and CPA were awarded responsibility for the implementation of a substantial part of the EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in the Border Region of Ireland (1995-1999). This Programme was established to provide practical assistance to the region after the autumn declarations of cease-fires in 1994.

## Composition of ADM/CPA committees/panels, by gender

Committee/Panel	Members	Women	Men	% women	Chair
Joint Management Committee	13	5	8	39	M
Cross-Border Management Committee	10	3	7	30	M
ADM/CPA Selection Panel - Priority 1 & 2	7	2	5	29	M
Cross-Border Selection Panel - Priority 5	13	5	8	39	F

### BMW Operational Programme Monitoring Committee

This monitoring committee was established to monitor the effectiveness and quality of the implementation of all expenditure under the Regional Operational Programme. EU Structural Funds contribute approximately €4 billion for the Operational Programme for the BMW Region for the period 2000 - 2006. This is complemented by public and private sector funding bringing the projected expenditure to over €10.7 billion. Membership of Monitoring Committees is taken from government departments, social partners, implementing agencies, regional authorities and the European Commission.

### Composition of Committee, by gender

Committee	Members	Women	Men	% women
BMW Operational Monitoring Committee	33	6	27	18

### City and County Childcare Committees

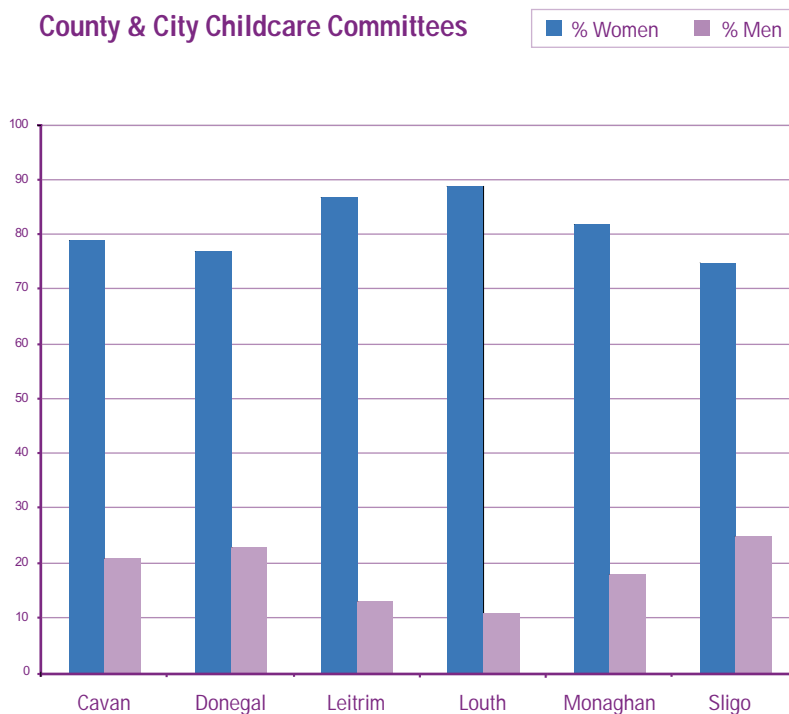
33 city and county childcare committees (CCCs) were established in 2001. Their membership comprises representatives from the statutory sector, social partners, local development partnerships/groups, national voluntary childcare organisations, parents and providers of childcare in each local area. The City & County Childcare Committees aim to advance the provision and co-ordination of quality childcare services through the implementation of a five year strategy which sets out the framework for the development of childcare based on a shared vision and analysis of local needs.

### Composition of City & County Childcare Committees, by gender

County Childcare Committee	Members	Women	Men	% women	Chair
Cavan	14	11	3	79	F
Donegal	22	17	5	77	M
Leitrim	23	20	3	87	M
Louth	18	16	2	89	F
Monaghan	17	14	3	82	F
Sligo	24	18	6	75	F

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### County & City Childcare Committees



### The Equality Authority

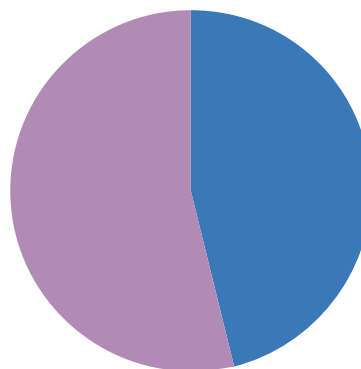
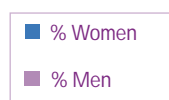
The Equality Authority is an independent body set up under the Employment Equality Act 1998 which replaced the Employment Equality Agency with an expanded role and functions. The Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000 outlaw discrimination in employment, vocational training, advertising, collective agreements, the provision of goods and services and other opportunities to which the public generally have access, on nine distinct grounds. The Equality Authority promotes and defends the rights established in the equality legislation and provides leadership in creating a wider awareness of equality issues and mainstreaming equality considerations across all sectors.

### Composition of Equality Authority, by gender

Body	Total	Women	Men	% women	Chair	V Chair
Equality Authority	11	5	6	46	Female	Male

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### Equality Authority



### International Fund for Ireland (IFI)

The International Fund for Ireland (IFI) is an international body established by the Irish and British governments with the objectives of promoting economic and social development and encouraging contact, dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland.

Body	Members	Women	Men	% women	Chair
IFI	7	3	4	43	M

### Irish Rural Link (IRL)

IRL is a non-profit organisation, which represents rural community groups and associations at national and international levels. It was formed in 1991 and directly represents over 200 community groups.

Body	Members	Women	Men	% women	Chair
IRL	13	6	7	46	M

### Teagasc

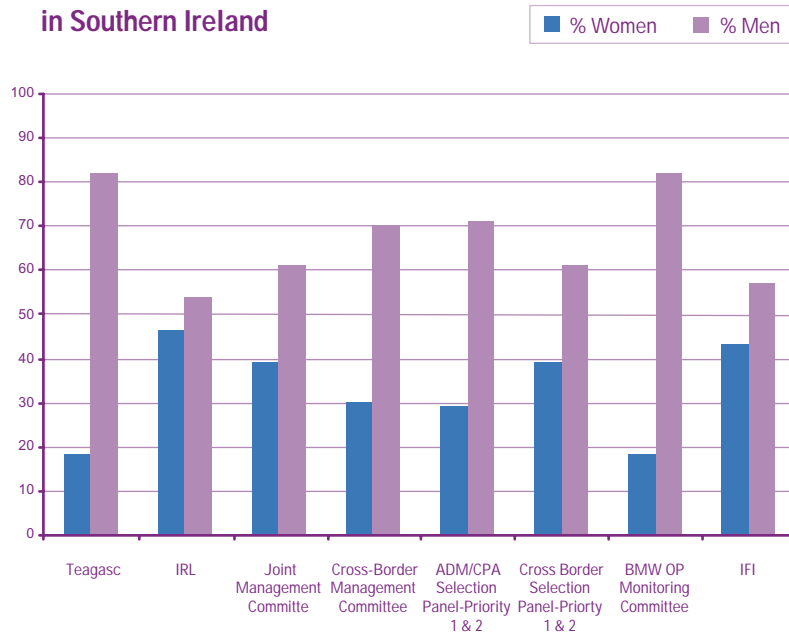
Teagasc was established in 1988 to provide research, advisory and training services for the agricultural and food industry and rural communities.

Body	Members	Women	Men	% women	Chair
Teagasc	11	2	9	18	M

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### Public and Other Bodies in Southern Ireland



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## 5. Findings of Focus Group Discussions

Part of the research methodology included two focus group discussions to illicit views of the community based women's sector, and agencies that support it, in both jurisdictions. The primary purpose of these group discussions was to build an outline picture of women's knowledge of, and participation in, gender mainstreaming processes. Participants were requested to rate and/or comment on the following in particular:

- Their level of knowledge and understanding of gender mainstreaming as a concept and of gender mainstreaming tools and initiatives, including gender proofing, gender impact assessment, gender budgeting and others;
- Positive examples of gender mainstreaming in practice;
- Their perspective on the current and future role of the community based women's sector in gender mainstreaming;
- Barriers to, and opportunities for, gender mainstreaming; and
- Support arrangements and the training necessary to enable the sector to engage in gender mainstreaming.

The following section documents the findings from both focus discussions attended by a total of 32 participants. A telephone interview was held with a respondent from the Derry area, given a lack of representation at the focus group discussions in that region. Qualitative views from the telephone interviewee are included in the following narrative.

### 5.1 Level of Understanding of Gender Mainstreaming

The majority of participants indicated a moderate understanding of the term '*gender mainstreaming*', with 13 of the 32 participants rating their level of knowledge as either 2 or 3 (on a scale of 0-5, 0 being 'extremely limited', 5 being 'very high'). There were equal numbers of participants on either side of 'moderate' rating with 7 participants scoring themselves 0-1 or 4-5, although some participants did not respond to this question. A number of participants indicated that while their understanding of gender mainstreaming was limited they nonetheless had a high degree of understanding of the need for a gender mainstreaming approach to policy development and of the significance of commitment at government level.

*'Have general awareness of Section 75 equality issues but extremely limited regarding gender mainstreaming'*

*'Hard to understand (gender mainstreaming) fully when there are no concrete examples of (it in) practice'*

*'Aware of urgent need for mainstreaming policies'*

### Awareness of Gender Mainstreaming Tools and Initiatives

Participants were asked to identify any gender mainstreaming initiatives of which they were aware, with respect to the following gender mainstreaming tools.

#### *Gender Proofing*

Participants identified a wide number and variety of gender proofing initiatives or organisations adopting a gender proofing approach in the 6 Southern Border Counties. There were fewer examples of initiatives in the North where examples given included local authorities' work on gender mainstreaming "as part of the wider equality agenda", the Gender Equality Strategy and the Gender Proofing CAP Reform initiative. Participants also suggested a number of other examples

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within this category such as 'Women's Aid', 'Women's Coalition' and the 'National Women's Council of Ireland' and, although these are not gender proofing projects per se, they are nonetheless concerned with women's development or an equality for women agenda.

#### *Gender Impact Assessment*

In both workshops, there was some degree of awareness of the commitment to gender impact assessment in Northern Ireland arising from the implementation of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and the statutory duty to carry out equality impact assessments. There appeared to be a limited awareness of organisations using gender impact assessment in the South, possibly because gender proofing is a more familiar term in Southern Ireland.

#### *Gender Budgeting*

There were no examples of gender budgeting initiatives in Northern Ireland, and only two in Southern Ireland (pilots in Roscommon CDB and the PAUL Partnership Limerick). A number of participants had also heard of Scottish gender budgeting initiatives but had little information on these.

#### *Other gender mainstreaming initiatives*

Under the heading 'other gender mainstreaming initiatives', a number of examples were given for both sides of the border. While some of these has somewhat tenuous connections with a gender mainstreaming approach, a number are associated with the promotion of gender equality.

The following initiatives were identified:

- Belfast City Council (specific initiative not given)
- Derry City Council's Positive Action Programme for Women
- WEA Women on the Fringes Project
- Publication of Northern and Southern Women's Manifestos
- Ulsterbus – actively recruited more women drivers
- UN's Stop Violence Against Women campaign
- FAS Gateway for Women
- Fermanagh Women's Network developing gender equality programme – aim to influence policies
- INGAGE (Derry)
- Rural Women's Think Tank (NI)
- Women's Regional Policy Forum
- Equality for Women Measure projects – Leitrim and Donegal

Some participants were not aware of any gender mainstreaming initiatives. Only one initiative was named as being cross border - the FAS Gateway for Women Project (*though it was subsequently established that while this project is a border region one, it is not cross border*), and none was identified as being specifically cross community in purpose. Northern Ireland participants shared a number of examples and comments relating to the equality agenda although the specific issue of gender was not considered in its own right. One respondent commented that support given by local district councils to women's networks and groups *"is tied in with Section 75, with Councils often citing Section 75 as a way they support women's involvement – they see it as 'fitting with the spirit of Section 75'"*. She further suggested that without Section 75, gender mainstreaming and gender proofing terms would almost never be used in councils. In the Southern Ireland context, the breadth of information provided suggested that gender is clearly viewed as a concern in itself, outside of the other eight grounds identified in equality legislation. It was further commented that there is a overall lack of

awareness and/or of understanding of gender equality and what it actually means. Of particular concern is the [incorrect] belief that 'positive action' means it is prohibited to make specific provisions for women *unless the same provisions* are made for men.

### Comment on Tools and Initiatives

Views on the efficacy of existing gender mainstreaming initiatives ranged from total lack of awareness of their existence to cynicism in terms of their impact. Many participants commented on the initiatives being paper exercises that have little effect on changing work practices. Some participants believed that when agencies engaged in token gestures to 'demonstrate action' in this area, they were doing so simply to meet policy and funding requirements. Concern was also expressed about the way in which the obligation to gender mainstream is sometimes interpreted, with examples of pressure being exerted on gender specific organisations (such as Women's Aid) to examine how their services could benefit men. Participants felt there was no effective mechanism in practice for the needs and concerns of women to feed into gender mainstreaming processes in statutory services and this brought into question the ability of tools to be targeted and effective.

*'I don't think (they're effective) – e.g. data collection happens but no follow-on action – take the first step, then nothing seems to happen'*

*'Organisations are ticking boxes and have done nothing'*

### Positive Examples

Participants were asked to identify any positive examples of gender mainstreaming that could be promoted as models of good practice. The following were cited:

- Production of Women's Manifestoes (North and South)
- Work supported by the Women's Regional Policy Forum – for example, a demand that the issue of domestic violence be included in the Cavan County Development Strategy
- Production of a Gender Proofing Handbook
- Establishment of the Women on the Fringes Project
- The Ingage Project in Derry
- The proposed establishment of a Women's Consultative Forum in Derry
- Establishment of the Leitrim Partnership's Women's Development Sub Committee
- Establishment of Equality Fora in Derry, Newry & Mourne and Belfast

However with the exception of the inclusion of domestic violence services noted above, there was little information on the impact of, or evidence of changes brought by, these initiatives.

## 5.2 The role of the Community Based Women's Sector

The majority of participants commented that gender mainstreaming (and more specifically, the objective of gender equality underpinning it) informs the work of the community based women's sector. While participants from the sector commented that they are mindful of 'it' in their work, it appeared that the 'it' referred to gender equality rather than specifically gender mainstreaming.

*'It's on the agenda of women's sector and other organisations. In the women's sector, it is concern, a focus, but not explicitly stated or reflected in action/operational plans'*

*'We are all addressing it in some way – for example through Section 75. We are all at the beginning of it.'*

There are two organisations in the South (funded through the Equality for Women Measure) dedicated Gender Equality projects. One of these was initiated by, and is led from within, the women's community based sector. The approach of these projects reflects a commitment to ensuring that:

*'Gender equality projects adopt a two-pronged approach – one is working with women and the other is to affect decision-making structures'*

Others commented on the consultative role of the women's sector in relation to gender mainstreaming. In particular, reference was made to the input by the sector to County Development Boards' Strategic Plans.

### **Future Role of the Community-Based Women's Sector in Gender Mainstreaming**

A number of issues emerged in discussion about the future role of the community-based women's sector in gender mainstreaming. Firstly, participants suggested the sector should invest in promoting and highlighting its existing role. It is critically important that government agencies are aware of the sector's role and contribution to the community, and that there is commitment at government level to provide appropriate resources. Participants also commented that the sector needed to develop a stronger policy focus. By remaining under recognised and under resourced, the community based women's sector would never be in a sufficiently strong position to be effective in its gender equality work. There was considerable support too for the view that responsibility for gender mainstreaming should not be the sole responsibility of the women's sector, although participants recognised that it was frequently assumed that the sector should adopt the lead role. Finally, participants commented that such a presumption places pressure on organisations to carry out functions for which they may not be resourced. Because gender mainstreaming affects all areas of policy development, there is a considerable risk that in trying to work across all policy areas the sector will spread itself too thinly and have limited impact:

*'There is a risk of being involved in everything leading to exhaustion which has resource implications. The passion is lost from exhaustion'*

Participants suggested a number of practical roles the sector could realistically undertake:

- Research and highlight issues – develop tools for lobbying;
- Get involved in partnerships and representing the sector on multi-sectoral fora and encourage broader responsibility for gender equality;
- Focus intervention on key selected policy areas;
- Develop allies and advocates within other sectors;
- Encourage a broadening of the discussion on gender (it was noted that being seen as a women's issue is a barrier in itself);
- Develop gender equality indicators;
- Encourage funders to follow through on commitments made by projects/ agencies they fund; and
- Monitoring the implementation of CDB Strategies over the 10 year period.

### **Barriers to implementing Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives**

Much of the focus of the discussion on barriers centred on the absence of political will and commitment to gender mainstreaming at governmental level, coupled with a lack of awareness and

information within the women's community based sector itself. Northern Ireland participants commented that gender "*can easily get lost*" because it is only one of 9 grounds (listed under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998). A number of other specific barriers were identified including:

- Negative attitudes – the fatigue mentality (with the equality for women agenda);
- Subtle undermining of the agenda;
- Inertia and lack of political will;
- Lack of awareness and information within the women's sector;
- Lack of resources within the women's sector and lack of progression to the political arena;
- Attitudes to women-only work;
- Absence of publicity which highlights issues, for example, incidents of discrimination;
- Lack of positive role models and champions within government;
- Absence of organisational policies and measurable indicators;
- The ability of organisations to survive on lip service; and
- Lack of awareness of gender mainstreaming as an initiative which benefits everyone.

### **Opportunities for Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives**

Opportunities for gender mainstreaming initiatives were categorised into 2 broad areas: the positive policy context; and the strength of, and commitment within, the women's sector. Reference was also made to the potential role funders could play in promoting discussion and debate and in ensuring that funded organisations act on gender equality commitments.

Specific opportunities identified including the following:

- DARD's Women's Sectoral Programme and RWNs Consortium – 'a toe in the door' from which to negotiate further;
- Rural Women's Think Tank (direct dialogue between the rural women's sector and DARD);
- Gender Equality Projects – Donegal Gender Focus Group;
- Women on the Fringes of Power Project;
- WRDA's Community Facilitators Project – can use local women to undertake consultation;
- The Western Health Board has set up an Equality Forum which was described as 'possibly being an example of good practice in relation to more formalised process for consultation';
- EU and Government guidelines on 60:40 gender balance;
- Publications already available, for example, through the NDP Gender Equality Unit;
- Existing projects and networks; and
- Review of County Development Board (CDB) strategies.

### **Supports and training needed within the community based women's sector**

For women to assume an active role in the pursuit of gender mainstreaming, a number of specific supports and training are essential. These include:

- More information on the terms used in relation to gender mainstreaming
- Provision of increased opportunities for consciousness-raising within the women's sector
- Resources to keep the sector alive
- Leadership training
- The work of the (women's) sector needs to be recognised, supported and built upon
- Opportunities to 'get the message out' – highlight the importance of the agenda

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- Research and promote models of good practice
- Make gender mainstreaming manuals and tools more widely available
- Provision of more education and training on the issue
- Establish post of Women's Minister (in the political sphere)
- Establish the post of Ombudsperson with powers to deal with equality issues which are not being adequately addressed
- Training for the women's sector to strategically plan where it is going in relation to the issue of gender mainstreaming

### **Concluding comment on focus group discussions**

There was a wide variety in information and participant awareness levels in relation to gender mainstreaming, ranging from very informed to extremely limited. This included a significant degree of ambiguity in participant understanding of the term 'gender mainstreaming' with many of the women using the term inter-changeably with gender equality. Additionally, some participants demonstrated limited awareness of the distinction between agencies engaging in gender mainstreaming and agencies having some degree of commitment to gender equality.

However, there was a high level of awareness of the need to focus on work in this area with the majority of participants aware of the commitment to gender mainstreaming at governmental level, both North and South. While this was regarded as positive, participants could provide little evidence of changes 'on the ground'. It is unclear if this is due to lack of information, or if current initiatives have actually had any degree of impact. Either way, participants were concerned about the absence of sanctions to drive agency commitment to gender mainstreaming, with some dismissing existing efforts as '*little more than paper exercises*'.

Overall, there was nonetheless a high level of enthusiasm among participants about gender equality and a belief in the women's sector as a strong base from which to exert influence. Participants readily identified opportunities the sector could utilise to drive a gender equality agenda forward.

## 6. *Balances Along the Border - Concluding Comments*

Clearly the gender audit results presented here suggest that women continue to remain under represented in a number of key decision making bodies. Despite a favourable policy context there is little evidence of any significant progress in terms of women's equality. Specifically, the audit statistics presented demonstrate that the 60:40 gender representation target (endorsed at EU level and by the Irish Government) is not being achieved.

### **Gender Mainstreaming Training**

Participants in the gender mainstreaming training element of this project [see Appendix (i)] stressed the value of developing capacity to increase the use of gender mainstreaming tools, and to better effect. With increased capacity the current positive policy context could be maximised to produce tangible improvements for women, in line with the original impetus and spirit of gender mainstreaming.

Training participants also noted the limitations of initiatives of this type being availed of *solely* by the community and voluntary sectors. They stressed the need for those with responsibility for gender equality within public bodies to undertake similar in-depth capacity building exercises. This would require commitment to critically reflect on the challenges and potential of pursuing gender equality in a much more vigorous way within their agencies.

The persistence of gender inequality as a feature of Irish society, both North and South, is only likely to change if all sectors work in partnership and rise to the challenge of using gender mainstreaming tools to maximum effect.



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## 7. Appendices

### Appendix (i) Peace Building through Policy Project

#### Gender Mainstreaming Training Programme

An important component of the Peace Building through Policy Project was a training programme for women in the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland and the six Southern Border Counties. This Appendix outlines the aims and outcomes of the programme.

#### The aims of the training were:

- 1 to provide an opportunity to explore the barriers to the achievement of a gender equality agenda (in the present post conflict situation) with a view to overcoming these barriers
- 2 to promote peace and reconciliation within the context of participation of the community sector in statutory gender mainstreaming processes
- 3 to identify, and discuss ways of overcoming, the barriers to cross border collaborative policy working on gender mainstreaming
- 4 to develop skills in gender mainstreaming
- 5 to explore gender mainstreaming tools
- 6 to build the capacity to the women's community sector to engage with policy makers on implementation of gender mainstreaming
- 7 to encourage the community women's sector to engage with policy makers on the implementation of gender mainstreaming and to identify how and where participants might use skills and knowledge acquired on the training programme

#### Programme delivery and content

The Programme was delivered over 10 days in various locations within the border region. Six of these days were delivered as 2 day residential sessions. A total of 25 women participated.

The Programme included:

- An exploration of how and why gender mainstreaming evolved as a global response to the gender inequality experienced by women
- An examination of where and why women and men figure in Irish society, North and South
- Getting to grips with the language of gender mainstreaming work
- Consideration of individuals' own responses to gender inequality
- Gender Mainstreaming Tools including: Gender Proofing; Gender Impact Assessment; Gender Budgeting; sex disaggregated data; gender equality indicators
- Learning from case studies and examples of good practice from other countries in Europe and further a-field
- Current gender mainstreaming/proofing implementation in Ireland, North and South
- Exploration of the role of the community based women's sector in promoting gender mainstreaming as a response to gender inequality
- Lobbying and related skills
- Gender mainstreaming and peace building.

*See Appendix (ii) for an overview of the 10 day programme.*

## Training methodology

The training was highly participative, catering for a range of learning styles including individual reflection, pair and small group work as well as plenary discussion. Specialist input was organised through key speakers (many of whom were the best in their field) giving of their expertise and experience. Participants had access to learning sets whereby they could offer and receive peer feedback, share thoughts and offer mutual support throughout the training. All participants were offered individual coaching sessions through which they could raise any issues relating to the training and/or application of the learning in their own work.

## Value of initiative

Towards the end of the programme, participants were asked to evaluate the training initiative. The following aspects were highlighted as being of particular value.

- The training afforded participants opportunities to network and make links with women from other areas doing similar work.
- Gender mainstreaming was de-mystified and was understood more clearly as part of wider equality agendas.
- 'Time-out' to focus and assimilate the learning added to participants' capacity to engage more deeply with the subject matter.
- The access to *'such high level, interesting, informative speakers' also played a part in moving it from being 'just training to a policy connection'*.
- The combination of deepening knowledge around gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and practical tools such as Gender Impact Assessment, Gender Proofing and Gender Budgeting was especially valuable.
- Understanding gender mainstreaming tools within Northern and Southern contexts was important in enabling women from both parts of the island to work together and begin to develop joint approaches to promoting women's equality. Allied to this, the cross border nature of the programme facilitated more in-depth learning, including awareness of what and how other organisations are approaching gender equality issues.

A particular issue common to both parts of the island - the imbalance in gender representation in politics and public decision making – was prioritised by many participants as an important place to focus energy in pursuing women's equality.

The training facilitated the exploration of gender mainstreaming within the community based women's sector and resulted in greater awareness among participants of the value of engaging with policy makers. Many participants left the training programme with a clear plan of action. The training relating to the use of gender proofing tools was viewed, in particular, as a crucial step to developing the confidence and ability to progress gender mainstreaming in the respective jurisdictions.

## Participant Reflections

Participant reflections on the training included:

- The work of gender equality is located firmly within a policy framework and the importance of working and lobbying 'in both directions' is paramount.
- There are some good, positive and successful models that do work, but these need to be publicised and implemented more widely.

- The difficulties of labeling. Publicly pursuing gender equality can impact on the individual's personal life, and this is often a major disincentive. Some women felt they could 'become unemployable' and be 'marked as troublemakers'.
- Other participants highlighted the practical consequences of women's involvement in terms of money, commitment and time. On balance most felt that lack of knowledge, rather than lack of commitment is, and will continue to be, a key issue in the future.

Participants expressed considerable frustration around the under representation of women in decision making, and a strong belief that 'major positive action' is required:

*'we must insist on 50/50 for the next elections, and insist on this from the top'.*

*'Government will have to put it in to practice, rather than pay lip service to it.'*

While acknowledging the difficulties of bringing the learning back to their respective communities, participants nevertheless felt they had a role in this process. This, they suggested, included lobbying for strategies to be put in to place that would remove the barriers currently preventing women from participating (in public life).

### **Peace Building Module**

Given the range of experience and connection to the conflict present amongst the participants, it was essential to emphasise that the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement is relevant to all - regardless of where they are in relation to the conflict. The common factor is to see the Agreement as an opportunity to build the future. More time and work is needed to make more explicit the connections between the work that people do and peace building – in the sense of creating a new future. It was also important to emphasise the different experiences of conflict and the importance of conflict mapping as highlighted by the United Nations.

### Appendix (ii) WEFT Gender Mainstreaming Training Programme Outline

13th October 04	14th October 04	10th November 04	24th November 04	1st December 04
1	2	3	4	5
Setting the Scene	Participants Agenda	GM Tools and Techniques Gender Impact Assessment Gender Proofing	GM Tools and Techniques Gender Equality Indicators & Targets	Gender Mainstreaming Implementation in Ireland, North and South
Building the Knowledge	Gender Mainstreaming – the Global Picture	GM Tools and Techniques Gender Disaggregated Data	GM Tools and Techniques Introduction to Gender Budgeting	Gender Mainstreaming – a critical look
2nd December 04	9th December 05	3rd February 05	4th February 05	24th February 05
6	7	8	9	10
Gender Mainstreaming and the wider policy context	Action Planning	Gender Budgeting – some local experiences	Moving the Agenda On...Action!	Peace Building Module
The role of the women's development / community based women's sector	Proofing Tools	Lobbying for Change	Pre dinner talk "Gender Mainstreaming and Feminism"	

## Appendix (iii) Gender Mainstreaming – Resources

### NDP Gender Equality Unit

Dept. of Justice, Equality & Law Reform  
Bishop's Square  
Redmond's Hill  
Dublin 2.  
Tel: + 353 1 479 0267  
Fax: + 353 1 479 0293  
Lo-Call: 1890 555 509  
Email address: [equalityinfo@justice.ie](mailto:equalityinfo@justice.ie)  
Website: [www.ndpgenderequality.ie](http://www.ndpgenderequality.ie)

### Equality Authority

Clonmel St  
Dublin 2  
Tel: +353 1 4173333  
Fax: +353 1 4173366  
Lo-Call: 1890 245545  
Text Phone: (01) 4173385  
Email address: [info@equality.ie](mailto:info@equality.ie)  
Website: [www.equality.ie](http://www.equality.ie)

### Centre for Advancement of Women in Politics

19-21 University Square  
Queen's University  
Belfast, BT7 1PA  
Email: [www.qub.ac.uk/cawp](http://www.qub.ac.uk/cawp)

### Gender Equality Unit

Room E3.17  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast BT4 3SG  
Tel: (028) 90523289

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### The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Equality House  
7-9 Shaftesbury Square  
Belfast BT2 7DP  
Tel: 02890 500 600  
Fax: 02890 248 687  
Textphone: 02890 500 589  
E-mail: [information@equalityni.org](mailto:information@equalityni.org)  
Website: [www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)

### National Women's Council of Ireland

16-20 South Cumberland St.,  
Dublin 2  
Telephone: (01) 661 5268/661 1791

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## Other Data Sources

Institute of Public Administration (2004) **38th Edition of the IPA Year Book & Diary**. Dublin, IPA  
BMF Business Services (2004) **Northern Ireland Yearbook 2004**. Lisburn, BMF Business Services  
Central Appointments Unit (2004) **Public Appointments Annual Report 2002/2003**. Belfast, OFM/DFM

## Web Addresses

There is a wealth of information available on the topic of gender mainstreaming and related issues. The following provides links to a wide range of websites, each of which will provide further direction.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),  
Gender in Development, <http://www.undp.org>

International Labour Organisation Gender Website  
<http://www.ilo.org>

UNDP, Gender Mainstreaming Information Pack  
[http://www.sdn.undp.org/gender/capacity/gm\\_info\\_module.html](http://www.sdn.undp.org/gender/capacity/gm_info_module.html)

World Bank, Gender Net  
<http://www.worldbank.org/gender/>

UNIFEM's Experiences In Mainstreaming For Gender Equality  
[http://www.unifem.undp.org/pap\\_main.htm](http://www.unifem.undp.org/pap_main.htm)

UNDP Suggestive Checklist of Actions for Gender Mainstreaming  
<http://www.undp.org.in/report/gstrat/strat-11.html>

UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Training Resources, Database of Gender Training Resources  
<http://192.124.42.15/gender/capacity/gmresource.html>

Gender mainstreaming at WHO  
<http://www.who.int/frh-whd/GandH/mainstre.htm>

European Database, women in decision making  
<http://www.db-decision.de>

UK Women's Unit  
[www.womens-unit.gov.uk](http://www.womens-unit.gov.uk)

UK Gender Mainstreaming for Policy-Makers  
<http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/womens-unit/1999/index.htm>

UK Policy Makers Checklist  
<http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation/1999/checklist/intro.htm>

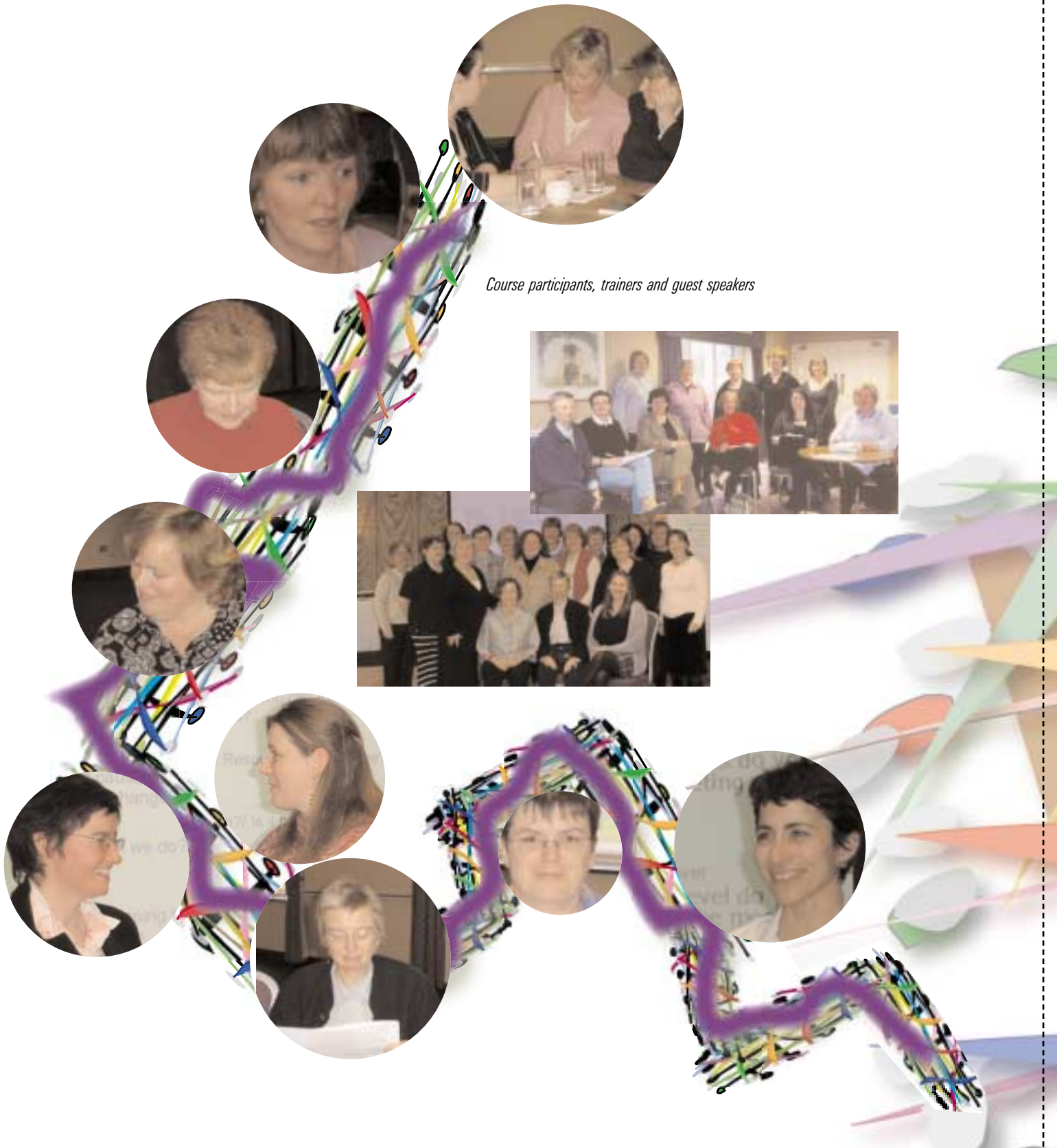
Australia Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women  
[www.dpmc.gov.au/osw](http://www.dpmc.gov.au/osw)

New South Wales Department for Women  
[www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au)

Canadian Indian Affairs and Northern Development Gender Equality Analysis and Guide  
[http://www.inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/eql/index\\_e.html](http://www.inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/eql/index_e.html)

Status of Women Canada GBA: a guide for policy-making  
<http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/publish/gbagid-e.html>

United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women  
[www.un.org/womenwatch/daw](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw)

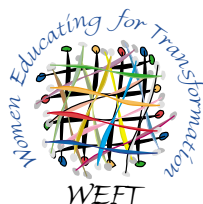


*Course participants, trainers and guest speakers*

*Published by WEFT in partnership with WRDA. More copies of this report are available from WRDA.*

email: [info@wrda.net](mailto:info@wrda.net)

Tel: 028 (048) 90230212



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