

Special EU Programmes Body

Project Case Study

Women into Public Life

Programme:
INTERREG IVA Programme

Theme:
Public Sector Collaboration

Funding:
€898,945

Lead Partner:
Donegal County Council

Website:
www.engender.org.uk

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Geographical area:
Northern Ireland/Border
Region of Ireland and
Western Scotland.

Statistics highlight that parts of the UK and Ireland are lagging behind in the number of women participating in public life, including political positions and other civic focused decision-making roles.

Figures show that Scotland is leading in terms of women possessing a legislative role, with approximately 34% of Members of the Scottish Parliament being women. Northern Ireland has lower numbers with women accounting for around 16% of the NI Assembly. Within the Irish Parliament approximately 13% of those elected to the Dáil Éireann and 17% elected to the Senate are women.

The project aims to help address this gender imbalance through the provision of training, advocacy and the strengthening of various civic networks to encourage women to take up leadership roles.

Lead by Donegal County Council in partnership with 'Engender'; the Foyle Women's Information Network; and the Second Chance Education Project for Women, the project aims to address the gender gap at a legislative level and also help more women acquire the necessary skills to engage in civic networks and participate in policy debate at a local, national and international level.

Speaking about the project, Noirin Clancy, co-ordinator for Women into Public Life, said: "The situation with low levels of women's participation in public and political life is particularly noticeable at a local level. In peripheral regions such as the North West of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Western Scotland this tendency can be especially difficult to overcome given their distance from decision-making institutions."

Key Project Outputs:

- **To bring together 24 female community leaders from the North West of Ireland to engage in cross-border skills training, gender analysis and research.**
- **To develop and deliver leadership training to 108 women across the region.**
- **To deliver a series of 9 seminars and events across the region.**
- **To host a regional conference that captures learning from the project.**



Pictured (l-r) Terry Conway, Maureen Fox, Noirin Clancy and Eilish Boyle, coordinators for the Women into Public Life project.

