



European Union
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WOMEN INTO PUBLIC LIFE



**Total grant aid under INTERREG IVA Programme:
 €898,945**

The Women into Public Life Project has been awarded €898,945 under the EU's INTERREG IVA Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) www.seupb.eu for a programme of activities to be delivered over a three year period from 1st January 2010. Donegal County Council is lead partner for this project, and is working with partners from Northern Ireland, Donegal and Scotland as follows:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Donegal County Council (Lead Partner) | (Lead Partner) |
| Second Chance Education Project for Women (SCEPW) | |
| Foyle Women's Information Network Engender, Scotland | (FWIN) |

Aims and likely benefits of the project

The project aims to address the continuing under representation of women in decision making fora and to develop policies to address this issue.

The project proposes a range of interventions at local, national and cross-border level (including training, advocacy, strengthening of civic networks and support for women taking leadership roles). It proposes to work in

collaboration with public sector organisations to enhance the role and the participation of women in decision-making and to positively impact on public service delivery.

Specific aims of the project are the following:

- Impact on public service delivery by increasing the number of women engaged in decision making at all levels through increasing women's skills, by engaging women in civic networks and by strengthening women's voices. It also aims to increase the number of women in public life, thus enabling effective targeting of public services
- Provide opportunities and encouragement to women living on the periphery of Europe away from the centres of power to become engaged with political processes at local, national and European level and to develop mechanisms and networks by which "grassroots" women can impact on national, regional and European policy issues;
- Engage with public bodies, women's organisations and networks to develop a common approach to engendering public life
- Create a debate within the region
- Disseminate examples of good practice from other European states and to create opportunities for learning and networking.

Project Objectives

There are five key objectives of the project:

- **To create a sustainable North West Ireland Cross Border Women into Public Life Forum** - to bring together a wide range of public bodies and women's organisations in the North West to research models of best practice and adopt new ways of working to ensure an equitable gender balance in decision making fora in the North West. Actions here will draw on best practice and lessons learned from the Scottish partner, Engender
- **To promote and to increase the number of effective women leaders in key decision making roles** - to bring together 24 women community leaders from North West Ireland to engage in cross border skills

training, gender analysis and research, to exchange best practice with Engender in this region and to promote these women as potential leaders and decision makers within public and political fora

- **To build the capacity of women across the region to find their voice, to begin to engage in public life and to impact effectively on public service delivery** - to develop and deliver leadership training to 108 women across the Region (including Scotland), to bring together local women's sector organisations to address policy issues and strengthen civic networks, developing and strengthening mechanisms by which grassroots women can impact on national policy agendas and to support women to take up leadership roles in their communities;

- **To exchange information, expertise and best practice in cross border and regional co-operation** - to establish a regional management process for the Project which allows for maximum learning from partner organisations (including Engender), to deliver a series of 9 seminars and events across the Region (including Scotland) in response to policy issues as they emerge from project activities, to host a regional conference which captures the learning from the Project and further disseminates best practice across the Region (including Scotland) on engendering public and political life and creating a true democracy; and

- **To support women to engage in civic networks at national and European level** - for project partners (including Engender) to develop an understanding of civic networks at national, regional and European level and to create opportunities for women from the geographic periphery to engage in national and European policy forums.

Role of Donegal County Council as lead partner

Donegal County Council was approached by the project partners in October 2009 to request that we, as a public body, assist the project in the drawdown of funding under this programme. Donegal County Council reached agreement with the project partners to employ a clerical officer,

Ms. Eilish Boyle, to undertake the financial reporting, management and auditing requirements associated with this project, for the three year funded period.

Ms. Eilish Boyle is currently located in the INTERREG Unit, Community & Enterprise Division of Donegal County Council and is based in Station Island, Lifford. Eilish can be contacted at 074 91 72526 or by email at eboyle@donegalcoco.ie.

Project Location - Women Into Public Life project staff

The Women Into Public Life project is based in the offices of Donegal County Council, following an open procurement exercise. Three staff are employed by the project:

Project Co-ordinator - Noirin Clancy
Outreach Worker - Maureen Fox
Financial Administrator - Terri Conway

All of the above staff can be contacted at Station Island, Donegal County Council offices, Lifford on 074 91 72901.



Staff employed on the Women Into Public Life Project:

From L-R: Terri Conway (Financial Administrator), Maureen Fox (Outreach Worker), Noirin Clancy (Project Co-ordinator), Eilish Boyle (Clerical Officer).
Photograph by Mr Michael Cooper, Corporate Photographer SEUPB, under the INTERREG IVA Programme.



Women into Public Life Steering Committee.
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