

Rural Network for Northern Ireland - Supporting the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (2007 - 2013)



What is the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme?

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme is a six-year (2007-2013) funding programme, with a budget of £500 million, that will bring into effect the rural development priorities or axes of the European Union Rural Development Regulation:

- Axis 1** Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors;
- Axis 2** Improving the environment and the countryside;
- Axis 3** Improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of the rural economy; and
- Axis 4** Implementation of the Leader approach – Building local capacity for employment and diversification.

What is the Rural Network for Northern Ireland?

The Network is set up, in line with the European Union Rural Development Regulation to support the implementation and delivery of the 4 axes of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme. It will do this by:-

- **Exchanging Information**
- **Identifying and sharing practice**
- **Providing training and support**
- **Supporting Local Actions Groups to promote and assist the development of co-operation projects**
- **Developing online communication tools (www.ruralnetworkni.org.uk) and networking opportunities**

Who is the Rural Network for Northern Ireland for?

The Network is for everyone involved in the development, management and implementation of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme to enable the sharing and use of good practice and experience and to support the coordination and communication across the different axes of the programme.

What difference will the Rural Network make?

The Network will make a real contribution to the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme, by helping to add value to the funding available, through making sure that everyone involved with the Programme can benefit from training, sharing the good ideas and experiences that are developed, whether at policy level or by people and organisations locally.

How is the Rural Network managed?

The Rural Network for Northern Ireland is managed by the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council (RDC) and is supported by the advisory services of the Agri Rural Forum.

What is RDC?



RDC was established by Government in 1991 and became a fully independent organisation in April 2009.

RDC is currently managed by a 9 member Council comprised of representatives drawn from a wide range of rural interests.

This independent Council of rural stakeholders is working to bring about positive change for those who live, work and enjoy the countryside.

In practical terms this means:-

- **RDC provides objective analysis so decisions can be based on clear evidence**
- **RDC delivers practical actions and solutions**
- **RDC identifies, promotes and shares best practice**

What is the Agri Rural Forum?



The Agri-Rural Forum was established in 2000 to increase mutual understanding between the different interests on agri-rural issues arising from the EU Structural Funds programmes.

The Forum includes: -

- **The Ulster Farmers Union**
- **Northern Ireland Rural Development Council**
- **Rural Community Network**
- **Northern Ireland Leader Network**
- **Northern Ireland Environmental Link**

What is happening elsewhere in the UK, Ireland and Europe?

At a UK level, a UK National Rural Network has been established to link the four rural development programme networks in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This provides a direct link to the European Commission and other networks across Europe.

At a European level, the European Commission has established the European Network for Rural Development. This will bring together the rural development networks from all the member states in the European Union.

In addition to the UK Network the Rural Network for Northern Ireland will also establish links with the Network established in the Republic of Ireland.

Making it happen

While the RDC and the Agri Rural Forum has overall responsibility for managing and developing the Rural Network for Northern Ireland, its success will only be possible with the participation of everyone involved within the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme.



For further information please contact the Rural Network for Northern Ireland on:-

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Web: www.ruralnetworkni.org.uk

UK National Rural Network

www.uknationalruralnetwork.org.uk

European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)

<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>

Ireland Rural Network

www.nrn.ie



Department of
**Agriculture and
Rural Development**
www.dard.gov.uk
IN IRELAND
**Talmhaíochta agus
Forbartha Tuaithe**
IN IRELAND
**Farms an
Kintra Foirdeirín**



'The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development: Europe
investing in rural areas.'



The Rural Network for Northern Ireland is managed by the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council (RDC) through the Agri Rural Form as part of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD).

