



“The Rural Network for Northern Ireland is open to everyone concerned with developing rural areas. We aim to inform, involve and inspire all those with an interest in the future of rural Northern Ireland”

NRN objectives

The Northern-Ireland Rural Network defined **four objectives** in line with the mandatory objectives set by EU Regulation No 1305/2013, and a further NRN-specific objective:

- ➔ Increase the **involvement** of stakeholders in the implementation of rural development;
- ➔ Improve the **quality** of implementation of rural development programmes;
- ➔ **Inform** the broader public and potential beneficiaries on rural development policy and funding opportunities;
- ➔ Foster **innovation** in agriculture, food production, forestry and rural areas;
- ➔ *Inform policy development by gathering evidence on the economic and social needs of rural areas and raising awareness of the need for rural proofing.*

Membership

The Northern Ireland Rural Network is **open to any individuals and organisations** with an interest in rural development. Members can **apply online or via a short form** detailing their name, e-mail address and area of interest.

How to become a member?

Members are asked to select one or more **areas of interest** from:

- 1) agri-food and farming
- 2) agri-environment and forestry
- 3) rural economic and community development

How are members involved?

Communications with them are targeted according to their choice while registering.

All LAG members are automatically signed up to the Network. As of May 2016 the Northern Ireland Network was considering whether all programme beneficiaries could automatically be signed up.



The NSU and RDP management

The NSU and the Managing Authority

- ✓ The Managing Authority (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, DAERA) **chairs the Network Steering Group and manages the Network Support Unit (NSU)** contract with the external provider (for more information, see under “Governance” heading).

The NSU and the Monitoring Committee

- ✓ The Network Steering Group, chaired by the Programme Managing Authority, **meets** prior to each Programme Monitoring Committee (MC) meeting.
- ✓ The MC members, as well as NSU representatives and DAERA/MA representatives from each programme priority, are **represented** in the Network Steering Group.
- ✓ An update from the Network Steering Group is provided at each **Monitoring** Committee meeting.

Regional NRN structures



- ✓ The Northern Ireland Network forms part of the UKNRN. However, there is no overall UK RDP and, like each region - England, Scotland, Wales - also **Northern Ireland has its own Programme and NSU**.
- ✓ At UK level there is **regular informal collaboration** with the NRNs in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England, which includes **working together to deliver a small number of UK level events**, and **co-ordinating participation** in the EU Rural Networks events. Training sessions at UK level have been held with the ENRD, and Ireland has joined the UK for an Evaluation Helpdesk training session and some sessions on co-operation.



NRN Governance

Steering Group



A Network Steering Group **directs** the activities of the Network and **approves** the Network Support Unit work plan (see also above).



[Download: Northern Ireland Network Governance diagram \(EN\)](#)

Communication



As of August 2016 the Northern Ireland Rural Network was drawing up a **communication plan**.

- ✓ Information points and participation in fairs to raise awareness of the Network and sign up new members were taking place.
- ✓ As an example, 250 new members joined the Network at the stand during the Balmoral Show- NI’s agricultural fair-.

NRN self-assessment

Currently (August 2016) the NI Rural Network is developing their Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy.



The **EU performance indicators** will be used as a basis, and further indicators will be developed based on their specific needs.



The **new website** has been designed with data-gathering as an integral facet, so information regarding the website's impact will be available.

Timeline of NRN Workplans

1st period

1 Apr 2016 –
31 Mar 2017

2nd period

1 Apr 2017 –
31 Mar 2018

3rd period

1 Apr 2018 –
31 Mar 2019

4th period

1 Apr 2019 –
31 Mar 2020

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NRN Resources

Financial resources (2014-2020)	Budget
Total NRN public funds:	£1 1 million
Out of which national co-financing:	£880 000
Out of which EAFRD:	20%

Human resources	No
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff	4.5



Contacts

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Download: *NSU Organigram (EN)*