

## **Consortium for the Regional Support for Women in Disadvantaged and Rural Areas**

### **Survey of Women's Regional Consortium Partner Members**

**April 2020**

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WRDA**

**WOMEN'STEC**  
Enabling women into non-traditional employment



**WSN**  
WOMEN'S SUPPORT NETWORK

**Women's Centre Derry**  
ACCESS & EMPOWERMENT

**women's**  
RESOURCE & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
Supporting Women's Groups and Networks Across Northern Ireland



**nirwn**  
Northern Ireland  
Rural Women's Network



## Introduction

This survey follows on from the 'Survey of Women's Regional Consortium Partner Members April 2019'. The purpose of this survey is to gauge progress on the five recommendations in the original survey report and to gauge Partner member's current engagement with, awareness off and satisfaction with the work of the Women's Regional Consortium (WRC) so that the plan for future work can take account of member feedback.

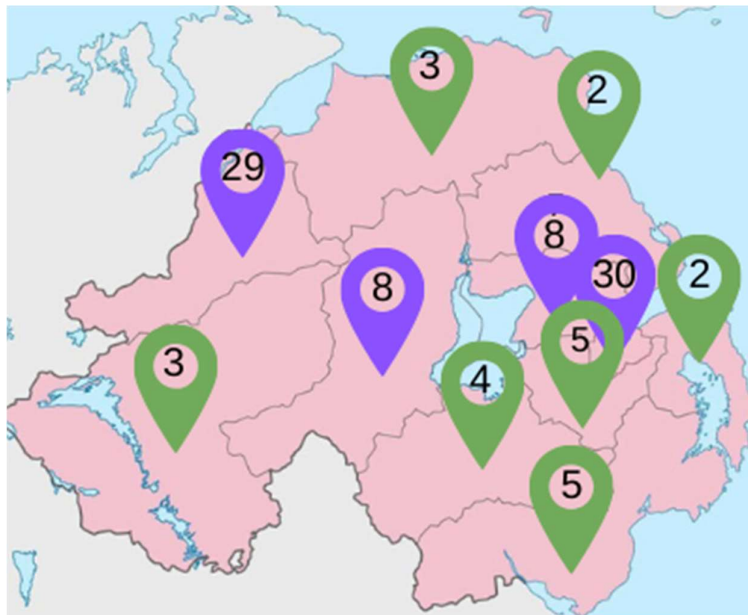
## Recommendations from April 2019 Survey Report

1. Community Relations/ Good Relations and Reproductive Rights should be incorporated into WRC existing themes
2. A strategy to increase engagement with women under the age of 34
3. Partners should do more to publicise their involvement with WRC
4. Partners should promote the information services of WRC to their members and engage with content creation
5. Work is needed to increase the understanding of Brexit's specific impacts on women

## Demographics

### 1. Geographic Spread

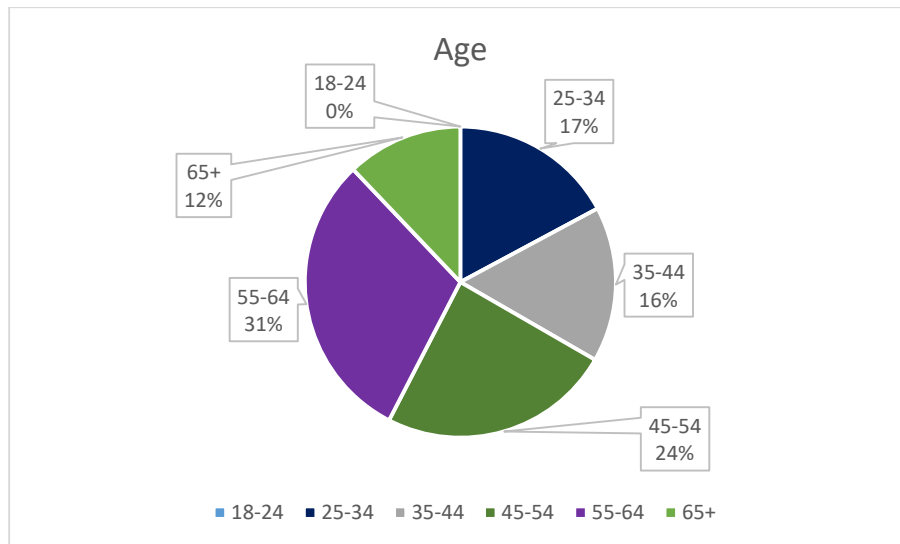
The survey received 173 responses covering all 11 Council areas. The average was 16 responses per council area ranging from 52 responses from Belfast City Council to three responses for Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.



Original image by Chumwa - File:Northern Ireland - Local Government Districts.png, CC BY-SA 2.5, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=32111963>

(Figure 1. Percentage of responses per council area)

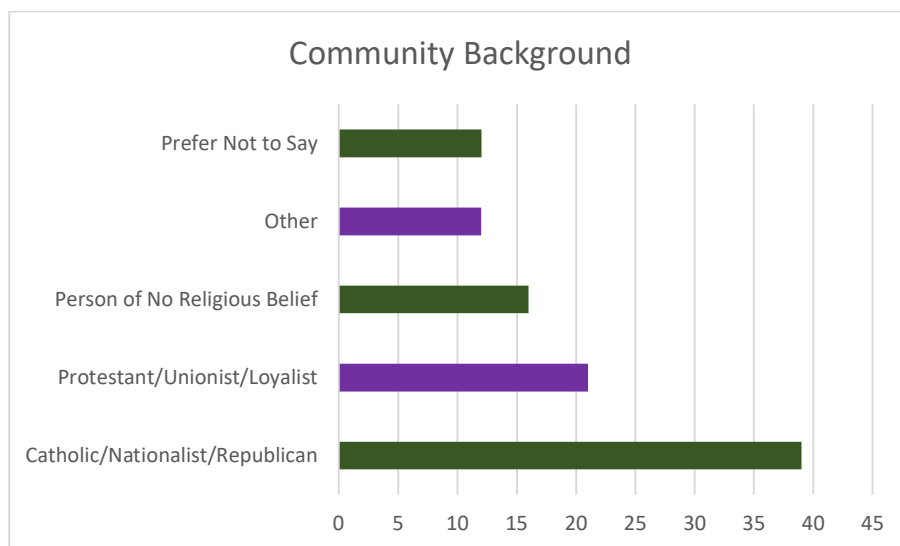
## 2. Age Profile



(Figure 2. Respondent's age by percentage.)

The majority of respondents were older women and 17% (29 respondents) of responses were from women under the age of 34. This is a 6% increase in young women from April 2019 and demonstrates that Recommendation 2 from '*Survey of Women's Regional Consortium Partner Members April 2019*' is being met but further work is still needed.

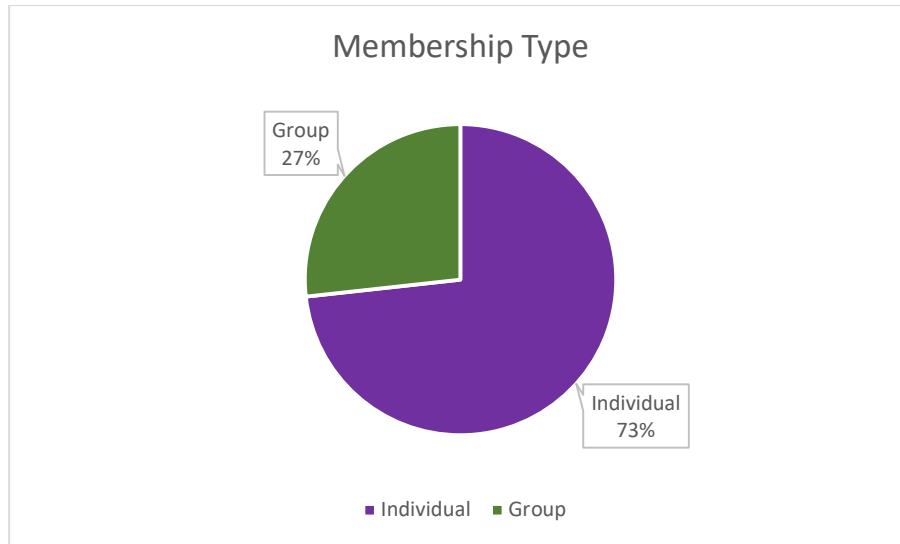
## 3. Community Background



(Figure 3. Respondent's Community Background by percentage.)

Following discussions after a review of 'Survey of Women's Regional Consortium Partner Members April 2019' it was decided to add 'prefer not to say' as a category. Respondents who identified as 'other' accounted for 12% (21 respondents) indicating the WRC Partners are engaging Northern Ireland's newly arrived communities. Women from a PUL background continue to be underrepresented at just 21% (36 respondents).

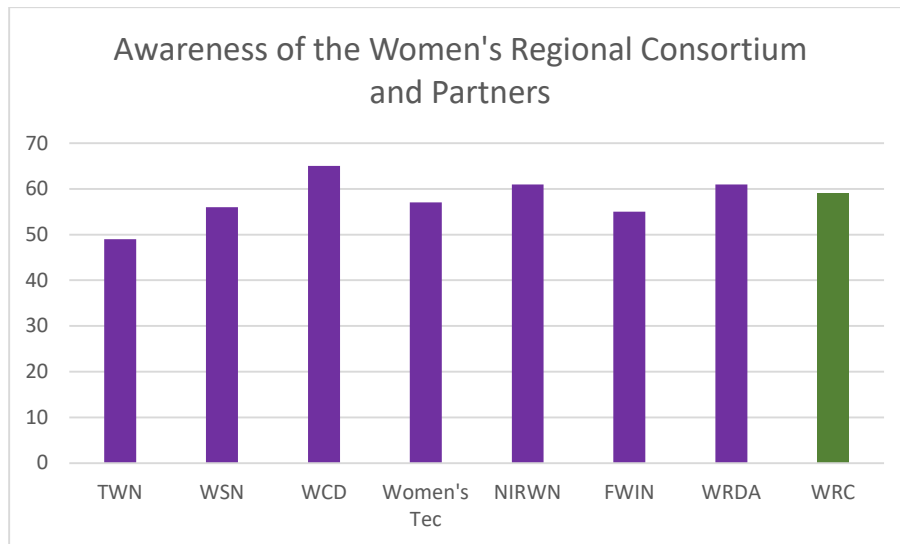
#### 4. Membership Type



(Figure 4. Respondent's membership type by percentage.)

The WRC aims to be the strategic partner linking grass roots women and policy makers. 73% of respondents (126 respondents) were individuals indicating the WRC partner organisations have strong links to grass roots women and the WRC as a whole is well placed to act as an accessible conduit between women in the community and policy makers.

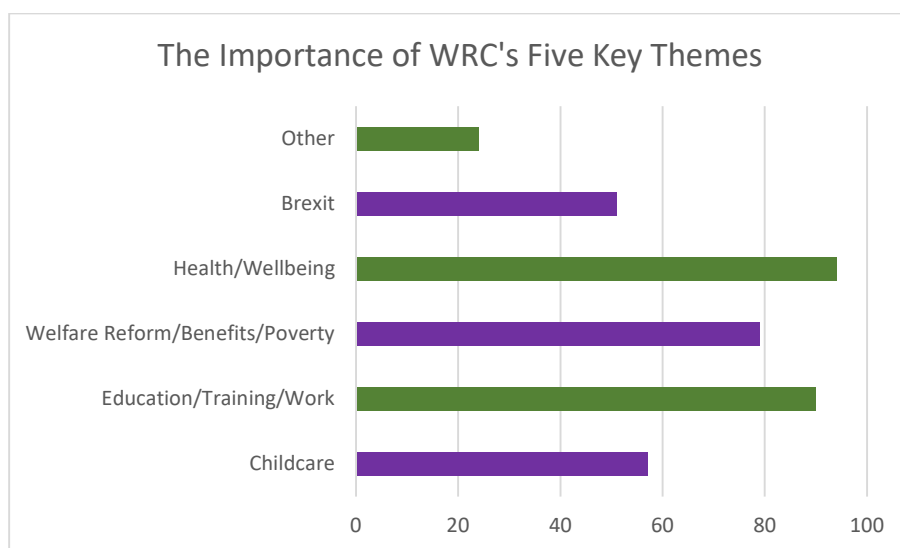
**Respondents Awareness of the Women's Regional Consortium and Partners**



(Figure 5. Percentage of Respondents aware of the WRC and Partners.)

Recommendation 3 from 'Survey of Women's Regional Consortium Partner Members April 2019' called on partners to do more to publicise their work with the WRC. This recommendation has been is being successfully implemented as awareness of the WRC increased from 50% of respondents in March 2019 to 59% of respondents in April 2020.

**Respondents Views on the Work of the Women's Regional Consortium**



(Figure 6. Respondent's ratings of WRC's five key themes by percentage.)

The survey provides strong evidence that the WRC is focussing on issues women consider important. Health/wellbeing was considered to be important by 94% of respondents, Education/Training/Work was considered to be important by 90% and Welfare Reform/benefits/Poverty by 79% of respondents. Such high levels of agreement amongst respondents indicates strong endorsement of the need for continued work in these areas.

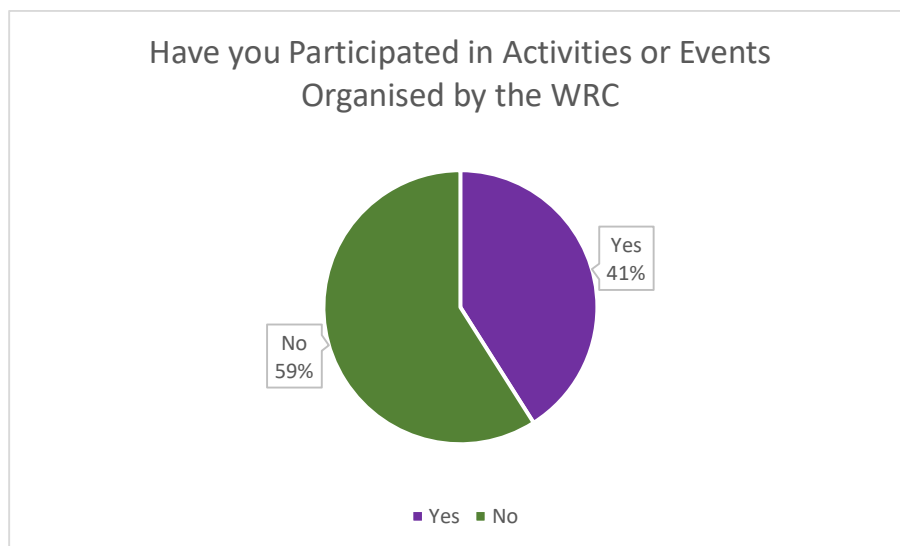
Recommendation 5 from 'Survey of Women's Regional Consortium Partner Members April 2019' stated work is needed to increase the understanding of Brexit's specific impacts on women. This recommendation has not been successfully implemented as the percentage of respondents who thought Brexit was important to them decreased from 52% of respondents in March 2019 to 51% of respondents in April 2020.

Respondents were given the option to say if there was any other issue they felt the WRC should be focussing on. 42 respondents answered this question and the top three responses are outlined below

1. Equality (5/42 responses)
2. Mental Health (4/42 responses)
3. Violence against women/Domestic Violence (4/42 responses)

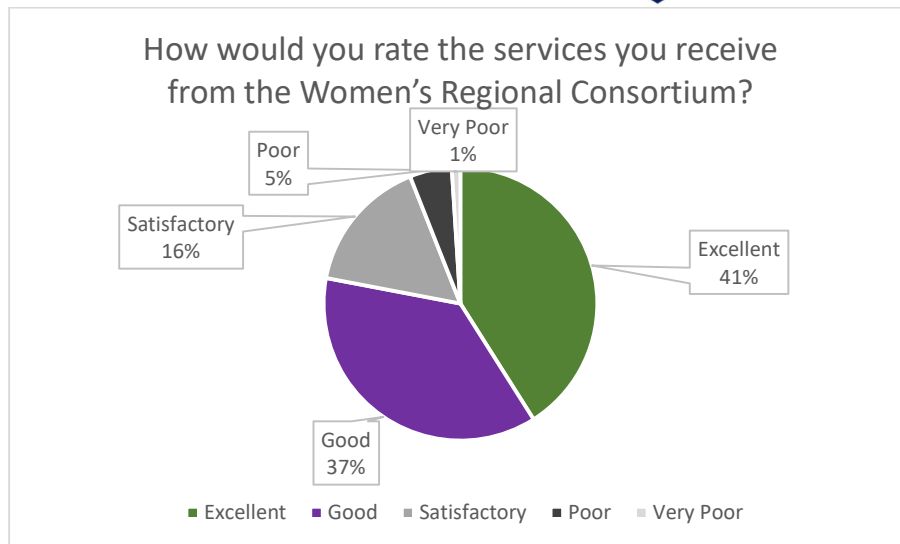
A full list of the responses can be found in Appendix 1.

The level of demand does not represent sufficient evidence to justify expanding the WRC core themes. It is notable that none of the top three responses from this question in 'Survey of Women's Regional Consortium Partner Members April 2019' have been repeated more than three times in the current survey. This could indicate that Recommendation 1 has been successful and these issues were not raised again because they were successfully integrated into the consortium's existing work.



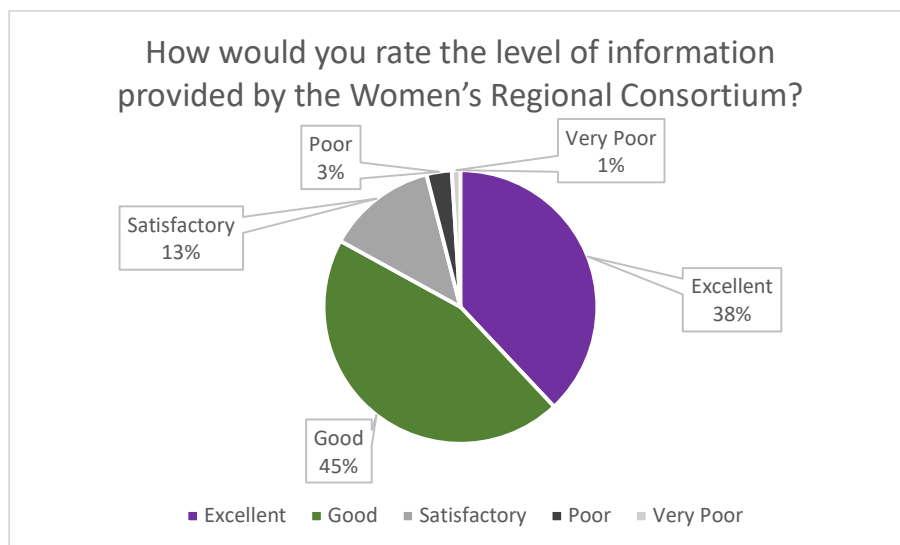
(Figure 7. Respondent's participation in WRC events by percentage.)

Recommendation 3 from 'Survey of Women's Regional Consortium Partner Members April 2019' stated Partners should do more to publicise their involvement with WRC. This recommendation has been successfully implemented. In March 2019 only 28% of respondents reported having attended a WRC event, this increased to 41% by April 2020.



(Figure 8. Respondent's rating of WRC services by percentage.)

78% of respondents rated the services they receive from the WRC as excellent or good. This demonstrates the quality of work done by the Consortium partners.



(Figure 9. Respondent's rating of the information provided by the WRC by percentage.)

83% of respondents in April 2020 rated the level of information provided by the WRC as excellent or good. This is an increase of 12% on March 2019 and indicates the WRC is providing useful information. A follow up question asked if there was a topic the respondents would like to receive more information and 17 respondents answered this question. A full list of the responses is available in appendix 2. It was mentioned by one respondent that staff were not trained in sensory impairment and this should be explored. Three respondents said they did not receive any information or not enough to make a judgement. This is a significant reduction from March 2019 where 18/22 responded they did not receive any information. This indicates that recommendation 4 which stated partners should promote the information services of WRC to their members and engage with content creation has been successful.

### **Successes**

1. Recommendations 1-4 from April 2019 have been successfully implemented
2. Through Partner memberships the WRC reaches every council area in NI
3. WRC Partners have strong links with grassroots women meaning the WRC is well placed to act as a link between women in the community and policy makers
4. The survey results confirmed WRC is focussing on the issues women find important to them
5. 83% of respondents rated the level of information they receive from WRC as excellent or good

### **Recommendations**

1. Work continues to be needed to increase the understanding of Brexit's specific impacts on women
2. A strategy to increase engagement with women under the age of 34
3. To lobby for women specific funding streams
4. Consortium partners should receive BAME awareness training and set a target to increase the percentage of member groups representing the BAME community



### **Appendix 1- Narrative Answers to Question Three.**

1. Suicide first aid
2. Equality, human rights, women in power
3. Disabled?
4. Implementation of access to reproductive health services for women
5. Suicide/emotional wellbeing
6. Women in decision making roles (barriers and support needed)
7. Mental health therapy
8. Domestic violence
9. Other important professional, support, resources, to aid living, in communities and the future for all
10. Supporting rural businesses
11. Working all organisations together for the common good 😊
12. Domestic and sexual violence/abuse
13. Enhanced service provision for women in rural areas
14. Equal pay and conditions
15. Community cohesion
16. Gender parity; public participation
17. Equality across different groups of women
18. 'women's abuse from the Trust/families'?
19. UNSCR 1325
20. Reproductive choice(unless that falls under health/wellbeing)
21. Faith
22. Minority and diversity issues
23. Women's pension rights particularly the women born in the 50s campaign
24. More encouragement to get more women involved with politics
25. Climate change issues
26. Reducing duplication and building collaboration
27. Cultural awareness from BME women
28. Mental Health
29. Violence v women
30. Addressing bureaucracy especially within DFC and ensuring that equality assessments are carried out on any policy changes e.g HMRC and employers pension cap
31. Equality n Equal pay
32. Community socialisation
33. The environment
34. Don't know
35. Abortion rights
36. Sustainability of Women's groups
37. Coercive control and stalking legislation
38. Equality, gender pay gap, maternal mental health, refugee women and children, climate change
39. Gender lens/budget
40. Breastfeeding support, training and education
41. Rural women, not visible to us and no representation
42. Mental health

## **Appendix 2 - Narrative Answers to Question Six.**

1. NA
2. Not sure how I got an email from you but you have an interesting range of opportunities
3. Information is good but sometimes not timely enough
4. I haven't used any of the information
5. Staff NOT trained in sensory impairment
6. Don't receive any information on any of the a above topics
7. NA
8. Mailing list
9. NA
10. Don't know
11. Don't know
12. It's not seable for me
13. Very good
14. Haven't received enough to make a judgement
15. No experience
16. I'm not sure it's reaching my news feed much, I changed my settings but perhaps more focus on promotion
17. N/A