

Women's Support Network News

WSN

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August 2006

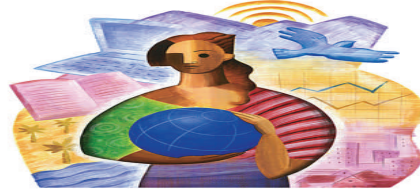
Where do women figure in the U.N.?

On the 4th July Women's Support Network hosted a workshop to examine the topic 'Where do women figure in the U.N.'. This event was well attended with a variety of groups and organisations represented. Kate McCullough, Chair of NIWEP (Northern Ireland Women's European Platform) facilitated the workshop.

Prior to a group discussion Kate gave an overview of the setting up of the United Nations Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) and the key concerns in terms of gender analysis which included -

Women's groups and others from around the world have been strong supporters of the United Nations and have actively shaped the UN's work on peace, human rights, economic & social development, security and environmental issues, and gender equality. Women's groups are therefore disappointed that gender equality and strengthening the women's machineries within the UN system were barely noted, and were not addressed as a central part of the reform agenda.

Kate further noted that more than ten years after the commitment to gender parity at the Beijing Conference, the UN is still offering only token representation of women on critical committees and in senior positions within the organisation.



Kate then explained that while this was frustrating a number of measures could be taken by women in Northern Ireland, these include -

- Getting involved with NIWEP and in particular the Committee
- Lobby government in relation to UN reform to include gender mainstreaming, including increasing women in high level positions i.e. Gordon Brown MP, United Kingdom Chancellor of the Exchequer is the high level panel member
- Feeding into the CEDAW report - The UN is intending to examine the UK for its compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in January 2008. This means that any "alternative/shadow" report by NGOs (non-government organisations) will need to be submitted before autumn 2007.

This workshop proved to be informative and led to an interesting group discussion. WSN intend to host two workshops later in the year on the themes of CEDAW and the European Women's Lobby/Gender Roadmap. We will keep you informed of the dates when they have been finalised.

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WOMEN'S POLICY FORUM

The Women's Policy Forum's next meeting will be held at 11.00am on 21 September in **Windsor Women's Centre**, Belfast. The agenda will be based around ongoing funding issues and policy developments including the Gender Strategy, the Sexual Orientation Strategy which is out for consultation, and hopefully the Anti-Poverty Strategy.



WSN would like to say a big **THANK-YOU** to Rosemary Adair, Rosemary is a post-grad student with the Women's Opportunities Unit and the University of Ulster. She was on placement with WSN for the past two months. Some of the articles in this Newsletter have been researched and co-written by Rosemary.

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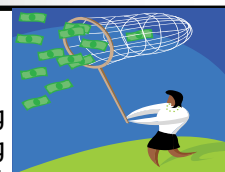
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Funding News

Funding info

GRUNDTVIG

The GRUNDTVIG fund is for both the formal and non-formal sector of adult education - including voluntary and community sector groups, FE colleges, workplace and lifelong learning organisations. GRUNDTVIG is the lifelong learning action of the [SOCRATES II EU programme](#). It is named after the founder of the Nordic tradition of lifelong learning.



What activities can be funded -

European cooperation projects - projects which are product oriented, which bring together at least three institutions across three countries to pool experience and expertise and aim to produce new learning materials, tools and methods for assessment or awareness-raising activities. Application deadline: pre-proposals by **1 Nov**

Thematic Networks and Project Networks - which are policy oriented, large scale projects involving at least six organisations across six countries, provide a forum for discussion on key policy issues or a basis for continuing contact between institutions that have participated in projects. Application deadline: pre-proposals by **1 November**

Contact Ted Hartley from WEA, email thartley@wea.org.uk, tel 01709 837001, mobile 07813 770134

For more info go to www.socrates-uk.net.

European Commission funding for The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All 2007

Funding is now available from the European Commission for projects that provide information and promote the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All in 2007 has three key aims:

- making European Union citizens aware of their right to non-discrimination and equal treatment
- promoting equal opportunities for all – access to employment, education, in the workplace or in the healthcare sector
- promoting the benefits of diversity for the European Union.

The activities undertaken and funded during the Year will focus on the discrimination some individuals suffer owing to their race or ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability, all of which are grounds for discrimination that may be addressed at European level. Funding will be given to meetings and events, information and awareness campaigns, and research projects at EU and national level. Schemes also need to make people in the EU more aware of their rights to enjoy equal treatment and live a life free of discrimination.

The name of the UK national body with a role in promoting activities will be announced soon. Further information can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equality2007/index_en.htm.

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Rowntree Ireland Grants supports work that nurtures the democratic process, fosters a culture of equality and human rights, addresses issues of poverty and social inclusion and promotes dialogue, understanding and co-operation across religious, racial and political divides. The deadline is 4 September. For further information -

Telephone 0190 4627 810

Email info@jrct.org.uk

Web www.jrct.org.uk/

Department of Education - Community Relations Core Funding Scheme

This fund will support the recurrent costs of organisations engaged in developing programmes which can contribute to the improvement of community relations and lead to the appreciation of cultural diversity in Northern Ireland.

The deadline for applications is 22 September. For further information -

Telephone 028 9127 9268

Email press.office@deni.gov.uk

Web www.deni.gov.uk



Outreach & Development News

B.A.G.

The Belfast Advisory Group are continuing to meet on a regular basis to enable groups to receive regular updates and to discuss any issues affecting them. WSN intend to host a B.A.G. meeting in September. For further information on this contact Siobh ann at the network office.

Newsbites

WSN continue to send out regular email bulletins on current news and updates. WSN can post information for your group or you can add your email address to this contact list to get regular updates.

Newsletter / Information

The Newsletter is a way for WSN to keep our members apprised of the work we are doing on their behalf. It can also be used by member groups for sharing information with other groups or for promoting events within local centres. WSN encourages member groups to use this service.

For further info, contact Siobh ann on 9023 6923 or alternatively you can email to outreach@womenssupportnetwork.org

Childcare Info from Employers for Childcare

Real savings for working parents and employers with childcare vouchers

Bringing up children is a rewarding experience but not always on the household budget. High childcare costs can deter some parents from returning to work when they are left feeling they are working to pay for childcare.

In response, forward-thinking employers are increasingly developing childcare policies to help employees balance work and family life. Many employers are helping their staff pay for registered childcare by providing childcare vouchers.

Employers For Childcare Vouchers offer a flexible and easy way to help working parents afford quality childcare through savings on registered childcare.

- Childcare vouchers can be used to pay for all types of registered childcare including registered childminders, day nurseries, cr ches, play-groups, after-schools, breakfast clubs, holiday play schemes and workplace nurseries
- Childcare vouchers are available to all working parents – both mums and dads - whose employers operate a childcare voucher scheme
- Childcare vouchers are not means-tested
- Childcare vouchers are independent of tax credits
- Working parents can each **save up to  99.63 per month** on registered childcare through exemptions on income tax and National Insurance Contributions. Companies providing childcare vouchers for employees **can save up to 12.8 %** on the value of vouchers through exemptions from National Insurance Contributions (on vouchers up to the value of  55 per week).

For more information on childcare vouchers or for information on local childcare in your area, please ring Freephone 0800 028 3008 or visit www.employersforchildcare.org

Childcare in Extended Schools Conference Friday 29th September 2006, 9am – 1pm

Ramada Hotel, Shaw's Bridge, Belfast

In March 2006, Peter Hain, Secretary of State, announced the  61 million Children and Young People's Package. This includes  20 million over two years to allow schools to audit and identify needs in their school and community, and to put in place services to address these, e.g. breakfast clubs, after school provision and adult learning. It is the Government's intention that schools will become the hub of their communities. One of the services a school might offer to its community is additional early years childcare provision, including wrap-around care or signposting to available provision.

Employers For Childcare welcomes the extended schools initiative whilst recognising that it raises concerns for both school principals and existing childcare providers. Employers For Childcare is hosting the first conference of its kind in Northern Ireland for both school principals and childcare providers.

The conference will cover:

- Government policy on Extended Schools in N.I.
- Setting up and managing a Children's Centre on-site
- Contracting out childcare services
- Signposting to childcare in the community
- Working in partnership to provide appropriate, accessible childcare
- Insurance issues and staff contracts
- Parents need wrap-around care to be able to work to support their families
- Children need quality childcare provision to grow and develop

Don't miss out on this valuable opportunity to network and learn from others in comfortable surroundings with good food. To register, please contact Employers For Childcare on 028 92610661 or email: info@employersforchildcare.org

This conference is supported by the RTU.

Event Profiles

NI ANTI POVERTY NETWORK AGM

The NI Anti- Poverty Network Annual General Meeting was held on 22nd June and incorporated an overview of the new PAP project, (Poverty Awareness Project). The AGM emphasised the fact that as yet, there is no concrete anti – poverty strategy in NI, or a regional action plan. Director Frances Dowds welcomed the recent Green Paper on welfare reform which aims to empower people into work but also highlighted the fact that no specific resources were mentioned. She emphasised that NIAPN's resolution was to actively involve those with direct experience of poverty.

The presentation by Save the Children aimed to demonstrate an approach to poverty that was 'not charity but justice'. The speaker added that one in three children in NI live in poverty and their aim was to hold the government to account for this. The NIAPN presentation communicated a vision to empower communities to overcome poverty. The speaker mentioned that the idea for PAP came from an idea to explore the hurdles of those living in poverty.

Following the AGM and presentations were four workshops designed to pilot test the PAP project material: poverty and policy, children and poverty, poverty awareness and women and poverty. This was the first opportunity for members of the NIAPN Anti - Poverty Network to sample some of the workshops contained within the various modules. It was also an opportunity to comment on the proposed content.

The Women and Poverty workshop's aim was to allow participants to increase their awareness of the gender dimension to poverty and the social exclusion in NI and it was a chance to discuss these in a relaxed informal way. One method of doing this was through the use of a board game which highlighted how easily particular members of the community can slip into poverty. Participants concluded that the board game format would be particularly useful in communicating the issue of poverty to teens and young adults. Each participant learned something new about poverty and came away with an increased understanding of its existence.

GLEN TRAVELLER WOMEN'S GROUP

On the 20th June 2006 at An Munia Tober in the Blackstaff Complex, the Glen Traveller Women's Group provided an opportunity to see the work of the traveller women in a workshop entitled 'A Travellers Tale'. Key themes showcased on the day included literacy support, health and well being and an exploration of personal

community and global issues. These themes were explored through 'learning in action' by means of circle time, story telling, sketches and drama. Circle time is a means whereby the women come together to relax and exchange ideas and opinions freely while story telling. This is an important tradition in traveller culture and is used to refresh and preserve the memories of their way of life. Sketches were also on display on the day and allowed the women to define what was of importance to them.

The group members also took part in a number of drama pieces aimed at highlighting issues such as health and well being and financial independence. In the future the group hopes to prepare women for further literacy courses and GCSEs.

NEW WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR SEYMOUR HILL

Around 40 people attended the opening day for Mosside Women's Group as they celebrated the opening of their new women's centre. Healthy eating and aromatherapy were on offer on the day, as well as advice from Women's Aid, N.I.H.E, P.S.N.I and Lisburn City Council. Training and course information was available from Paragon Training, Women into Politics and Dunmurry High School Parents Centre.

The opening ceremony took place at 12.15pm on the 21st June at 28a Hornbeam Rd. Mary Barnes, the Health Development Worker for Down Lisburn Trust officially cut the red tape. Onlookers included



the Mayor of Lisburn J Craig, Alice O'Kane and Margaret McLarnon of Lisburn Partnership, Adree Wallace from Catalyst Consulting, as well as committee members and



the health team from Down Lisburn Trust. Angela Bryans, Project Development Worker for Seymour Hill and Conway Community Network, would like to thank Lisburn City Council, Awards for All, Down Lisburn Trust, N.I.H.E,

Seymour Hill and Conway Residents Association, Martin Phillips and Samuel Brown for all their help and support in making this project possible. A special thanks to Mary Barnes Down Lisburn Trust, Michelle Watson and Mark Black of Seymour Hill and Conway Residents Association for all their hard work.

The centre will be opened 9am-1pm week days and 7pm-9pm two nights a week. For all information please contact Angela Bryans on 07971044078.



New Term Programmes and Courses

Women's Community Education programmes

September sees the start of the new academic term, and not just for the kids! The women's centres and organisations offer a number of programme/courses for women. The learning is flexible, accessible and on-site crèche or childcare/care & travel costs are subsidised. This is just a sample of what is on offer, for further information contact the centre/organisation directly.

Atlas, Lisburn

Contact Helen 9260 5806

Atlas offer courses in computers & IT, personal development, art & leisure and assertiveness.

Greenway Women's Centre

Contact Jo/Nuala 9079 9912

GWC offers various IT courses, maths & english GCSEs, essential skills, first aid, sign language, basic hygiene and health & safety as well as vocational courses and a volunteer programme.

Ardoyne

Contact 9074 3536

Ardoyne Women's Group are offering Parenting & Learning Together and various IT programmes including CLAIT and ECDL.

Ballybeen Women's Centre

Contact Amanda 9048 1632

Ballybeen Women's Centre's education and training programme includes: pre-access courses, GCSEs, community development, intro to women's health, and various IT programmes.

Ballymurphy Women's Centre

Contact Deborah 9022 3220

Ballymurphy operate a Stress Clinic from 9am – 9pm, 52 weeks of the year, this offers holistic and complementary therapies, such as Reiki and Aromatherapy to promote physical and mental well-being.

Falls Women's Centre

Contact Jacqui/Madeline 9032 7672

Falls Women's Centre offer IT training such as ECDL, other programmes include Women in Leadership and personal development courses.

Shankill Women's Centre

Contact Sandra/Roberta 9024 0642

Shankill Women's Centre offers courses in essential skills, flower arranging, Irish language & history and various GCSE courses.

Women's News

Contact 9032 2823

WN's are offering Community Publishing and Media Skills training. This is fully accredited training.

Women's Tec

Contact Helen/Patricia/Arlene 9074 9810

New courses will be commencing week beginning 11th September 2006. These will be ICT courses consisting of ECDL, Basic Computers and MOS Word Core. There are a few spaces still available for ECDL and Basic computers. Women'sTec will also be taking part in the 'Job Scene' fayre in the Odyssey on the 28th & 29th September.

Footprints Women's Centre

Contact 9092 3444

Courses include social and recreational programmes such as confident cooking, right through to accredited courses at levels 1, 2 and 3, including personal development and essential skills, Women Progressing at level two and level three is access to uni – women's studies. This helps create a flexible and progression route for women.

Windsor Women's Centre

Contact Joan/Martina 9023 5451

There are a range of courses available including holistic therapies, where students can gain nationally recognised qualifications, other programmes included GCSE level courses, assertiveness training, group therapy, counselling, anger & stress management, I.C.T., Pilates and more!

Women into Politics

Contact Isobel/Susan 9024 3363

WIP offer accredited and non accredited training. These courses include: Lets Talk Politics (O.C.N. Level 1), Making The Leap (O.C.N. Levels 2&3) Women and Conflict and Training for Trainers. These programmes can be tailored to meet the needs and interests of the group and aim to enable women to develop the confidence to talk about issues of most concern to them.

Lenadoon Women's Group

Contact Greta/Joanne 9061 1205

Courses available include personal development, Parenting classes are also available for parents of children and young people.

Carew II

Contact Andrew 9045 1730

Carew offer a full range of programmes including NVQs, IT programmes such as CLAIT and ECDL, as well as personal development courses such as creative writing.

WSN Policy work June - August 2006

The Draft Smoking Order (NI) 2006

This consultation was in questionnaire format, the key areas covered in the response included the definition of smoking, smoking premises, penalties and exemptions.

The Women's Support Network overall are in favour of the draft Smoking Order – legislation that aims to protect employees and members of the public from exposure to second hand smoke. We believe that this legislation where smoking certain premises will be illegal will go some way to enhancing the general health and well-being of employees and the general public in Northern Ireland.

In terms of the Social Impact Assessment WSN would have some concerns in relation to the evidence showing that people categorised as being in the lower socio-economic groups are more likely to smoke. This may mean that as smokers are more prevalent in lower socio-economic groups they therefore may be more likely to attract a penalty if they break the law. Our concern is that these penalties may have a disproportionate impact on people who live on lower incomes.

'Protect Life – A Shared Vision The Northern Ireland Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan' (2006-2011)'

WSN have some concerns with the strategic aim of this strategy: **"To reduce the Northern Ireland suicide rate, particularly among young people and those most at risk"**. The strategic aim is strong and to the point and more importantly with a robust statistical basis, success can be measured and monitored. However while we understand it is important to prevent suicide among young people in this region, the evidence as outlined on page 14 shows that there is a higher prevalence for suicide amongst those aged 25 - 54. We would therefore urge the department to ensure the suicide rate is reduced across all age ranges and would suggest that the strategic aim could simply be, **"To reduce the Northern Ireland Suicide Rate"**.

WSN believe that there is a need for comprehensive research to be undertaken as to why suicide occurs and why suicide and self harming rates have increased noticeably over the last number of years. Through anecdotal evidence we are aware that reasons for suicide can vary, for example depending on age and gender. Therefore, we think that support services provided must take account of this. For example the needs of young people and adolescents can be very

different to that of people aged over 25. Therefore a 'one size fits all' approach to suicide prevention may not provide the panacea. This strategy must provide a joined-up approach of service provision to ensure any level of success. We therefore strongly recommend that there are clear links with the 'Promoting Mental Health Strategy' and the 'Drugs and Alcohol Strategy'.

Furthermore, following the analysis showing how people living in deprived areas and more starkly, people experiencing economic deprivation are most at risk of suicide, we believe there should be a clear link between this strategy and the proposed NI Anti-Poverty Strategy. The analysis shows that the suicide rate is more than double for people experiencing economic deprivation compared with those who do not live in economically deprived areas. Links between poverty and suicide must be researched, recognised and addressed.

WSN would recommend:

- The need for proper co-ordination and joined up working between relevant government departments and statutory agencies and strong links between relevant government strategies
- Better co-operation between statutory and local community organisations delivering front-line services
- Improved training and development for frontline staff particularly GPs. It is striking that almost 80% of those who die by suicide in Northern Ireland had seen their GP in the six months prior to their death (para. 3.7)
- The need to develop more accessible services in local communities and outside normal working hours.
- The need to enhance suicide awareness and simultaneously reduce the stigma attached to those who may seek help around mental health issues generally. It is important that these co-ordinated services are adequately resourced.
- WSN strongly supports the need for services which promote positive health and protect children from bullying and concurs that such services should be available in all schools and Youth settings (pg.42)

In conclusion, the Women's Support Network welcomes the proposed implementation of a Suicide Prevention Strategy in Northern Ireland. Notwithstanding the points made above, we would reiterate that the overall strategic aim be more inclusive, recognising the tragic circumstances of suicide across all age groups.

WSN Policy work June - August 2006

SEUPB Pre-consultation on the EU Operational Programmes (inc. Peace III) 2007 - 2013

WSN attended a SEUPB seminar and roundtable to feed into the pre-consultation exercise. At this seminar three questions were posed for consideration (see below), WSN used these as the basis of our written response to SEUPB, these augment the verbal response made by WSN during the roundtable discussion.

Can you identify projects/areas of intervention for the future programmes?

The heart of the peace building process in Northern Ireland begins with developing the capacity of individuals and groups, this leads to the development of communities and to a vibrant, diverse and participative civic society. Therefore the role of Peace-building should be centred on capacity building. A research report commissioned by Women's Support Network clearly demonstrates that 'the activities of the women's sector contribute to Peace and Reconciliation' (Taillon 2000). These activities include: Education and Training, Community & Economic Development, Health & Well-being, Information, Advice & Support, Early Years Provision, Work with Young People, Celebrating Diversity. This capacity building activity should be supported through Peace III monies.

Who should deliver the programme locally?

There have been difficulties in the administration of Peace II, groups reported delays in vouching as a cause of financial hardship within their organisations. It was also felt that financial monitoring and evaluation should be proportionate to the amount of funding received. Other issues and suggestions include -

There needs to be a more streamlined application process with fewer intermediary bodies all sharing information with a streamlined application process incorporating ease of accessibility and shorter, more concise applications procedures.

There are many good examples of 'best practice' within the women's sector, for example: many women's groups and organisations have worked hard to develop standardised and robust financial accounting systems only to find that the divergent requirements of various IFBs place great strain on finance workers within these organisations. SEUPB could also do more showcasing of examples of good/best practice.

What can be done to enhance cross-border cooperation within the new programme?

The emphasis on cross-border co-operation for Peace III may play down the need for continuing work on local reconciliation. In many cases, single identity groups are

willing to work with those of the 'other' identity across the border, but this may not be a priority where reconciliation is more necessary at a local level. Particular emphasis is required in TSN and Interface areas and across and within communities including single identity work. Communities should be considered as geographical entities and as communities of interest (i.e. women, young people, older people, minority ethnic communities, disabled people etc), even where these cross-fertilise each other.

Further Considerations

At the SEUPB seminar the Director of the EU Programmes explained that the context of the development of the new programmes does acknowledge the fact that N.I. is a divided society and that sectarianism still exists. Given this understanding, women's role in peace-building must be acknowledged and supported to continue and develop.

WSN recommend:

Peace III should support activities and projects which seek to reduce inequalities experienced by women within a democratic and human rights framework.

Capacity building, in its broadest sense, should be supported in local communities to enable engagement with civil society. Local communities should be enabled to develop and set their own agendas and articulate their needs and experiences

There should be a smaller number of IFBs or one funding body for Peace III that should operate on a cross-border basis. This will streamline the application and implementation process as well as reduce the amount of resources spent on administration and bureaucracy and should ensure that the available resources are targeted at those groups and communities most marginalised.

Forthcoming Consultations

All Ireland Free Travel Scheme for Older People/with EQIA, DRD, 1st September 2006

Pensions Reform White Paper, DSD, 11th September 2006

The Rates (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order, DFP, 15th Sept 2006

Active Citizenship, Taskforce on Active Citizenship (Department of An Taoiseach), 29th September 2006

Review of the Law on Sexual Offences in Northern Ireland, NIO, 13th October 2006

If you want copies of any WSN responses -call the office and Lynn can email/post you a copy. Alternatively you can view/download our policy/consultation responses on our website - www.womenssupportnetwork.org



NEWS



**YOUR VOICE
 MAKES A
 DIFFERENCE.**

'Dis-Assembly'

Women into Politics invite you to a political dialogue of the Talking & Taking Part Project

With only one month left...

- Will we have a functioning executive and a devolved legislature?
- Will it make a difference?
- What's the alternative?

Join us for a frank and informative discussion of issues of democracy and accountability of government in Northern Ireland.

Date: 24th October 2006
 Time: 10.00a.m. - 2.30p.m.
 Venue: The Atrium, Clanmil Housing
 Waring Street, Belfast

Attendance is free. Lunch will be provided.

Space is limited. To reserve your place, or for further information contact Women into Politics -

Phone 028 9024 3363
Fax 028 9023 7884
Email development@womenintopolitics.org
Post 109 - 113 Royal Avenue
Belfast BT1 1FF

International Dates for you Diary

21 Sept	International Day of Peace
1 Oct	International Day for Older Persons
17 Oct	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
16 Nov	International Day for Tolerance
20 Nov	Universal Children's Day
25 Nov	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
1 Dec	International AIDS Day
2 Dec	International Day for the abolition of Slavery
3 Dec	International Day of Disabled Persons
10 Dec	Human Rights Day



"Can't get a job without experience – Can't get experience without a job"

Sound Familiar?

Job Rotation is an innovative employment programme which provides women with the experience & training they need to solve this typical catch 22 situation. The programme provides a:

- 6 month paid work placement
- National qualification
- Grant towards work related training

A variety of paid placements are currently available including positions of Administration, Marketing, Hospitality and Retail. The placements are available at a number of Northern Ireland's top companies.

For further info on the Job Rotation Programme visit our website at -

Web www.wea-ni.com/JR
Email JR.Info@wea-ni.com,
Telephone **9032 9718**

This project is open to women only through EU funding under 'The Advancement of Women Measure'

Completed application forms, must be returned by **Friday 8th September**

WOMEN'STEC

Enabling women into non-traditional employment

JOB SCENE NI in the ODYSSEY ARENA 28 & 29
 SEPTEMBER

To women of all ages: have you ever thought of a truly different career in a non-traditional job?

WOMEN'STEC is the largest quality provider of training for women in non-traditional skills in Northern Ireland. Since 1993, we have delivered a range of non-traditional skills programmes including ICT, Construction and Environmental courses leading to national qualifications and rewarding careers!

Make the first step, come to our stand at nr. 120.
 Contact: 028 9074 9810 for further information