



Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2014 - 2020 LEADER Report 2021

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Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Reader Information

This document may be made available in alternative formats, please contact us to discuss your requirements

Background

This is an update report that provides analysis of Section 75 survey returns for the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) LEADER programme.

Methodology

This report is based on the position of applications to the LEADER programme on 11 August 2021 and the equality make up of the Local Action Group (LAG) Boards in 2016 and 2018 who administer the programme. No reporting has been carried out on the equality survey returns from the Village Renewal, LAG Co-operation scheme or Rural Tourism schemes as the returns are small in number and the applicants are not the beneficiaries. However, they are included in the overall LEADER application figures. The following definitions have been used in the report:

LAG Members – Members of the LAG Board.

Total LEADER Applicants – applications made to the LEADER programme.

Successful Leader Applicants – all successful applications to the LEADER programme.

Total Scheme Applicants – all applications that were matched to the scheme.

Successful Scheme Applicants – applications to the scheme that have completed their project or accepted their letter of offer.

Unsuccessful Applicants – Any application that did not reach the assessment panel stage, or was rejected for support by the assessment panel, or did not accept their letter of offer.

Context Indicator – the relevant rural level context indicator except where stipulated.

The analysis provided at scheme level is based on the actual number of returns where the survey question has been answered by the respondents. For example, where 500 surveys have been returned for a scheme but only 490 have answered a particular question, the breakdown for each category will be calculated based on the 490 responses. This also applies to successful and unsuccessful applicants.

The analysis of the LAG Boards follows the same methodology as the scheme analysis but it additionally identifies the respondent as a public or private member.

Annex B provides the source and links to the comparative context indicators used in analysis.

Annex C provides a full list of questions and Section 75 categories. For the purposes of reporting a number of the categories are excluded from the report to avoid individual statistical disclosure for categories with a low number of responses.

Contact Details

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2. OVERVIEW OF LEADER PROGRAMME

Table 1 Diversity of LAG Board Members and Total LEADER Applicants

		LAG Board 2018	LAG Board 2016	Total LEADER Applicants	Successful LEADER Applicants	Rural Area
Gender	Male	63%	69%	73%	79%	50%
	Female	37%	31%	27%	21%	50%
Marital Status	Married / Civil Partnership	72%	71%	72%	78%	55%
Disability	Yes	17%	9%	4%	1%	26%
Dependants	A child or children	31%	39%	64%	63%	37%
	Adult with disability	6%	14%	3%	1%	12%
	Dependent Elderly	5%	32%	3%	3%	10%
	None	58%	43%	33%	33%	61%
Racial Group	White	100%	*	100%	100%	99%
Country of Birth	Northern Ireland	92%	90%	94%	95%	91%
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	*	*	99%	99%	94% ¹
Religion	Catholic	47%	43%	53%	52%	47%
	Protestant	*	53%	38%	39%	45%
Political Opinion	Nationalist	42%	36%	31%	29%	27% ²
	Unionist	41%	46%	24%	20%	39% ³
Age*	16-24	0%	*	1%	*	15%
	25-44	13%	*	49%	*	35%
	45-64	57%	55%	44%	43%	32%
	65 & over	30%	19%	7%	3%	18%
	16-40	11%	20%	37%	43%	42%
	Over 40	89%	80%	63%	57%	58%

Notes

1 No rural context information available. Northern Ireland context figure used as a proxy.

2 This refers to those farmers who see themselves as Irish only in the census.

3 This refers to those farmers who see themselves as British only in the census.

* Categories have been suppressed to avoid statistical disclosure of categories with less than 5 responses.

Response Rates

LAG Board

49%

108 Section 75 survey forms were returned from Northern Ireland's 221 LAG Board members giving an overall response rate 49 per cent in 2018 compared to 87 per cent in 2016.



88 per cent of respondents indicated they are LAG Board members, 6 per cent of respondents indicated they are LAG member and not a board member, and 6 per cent of respondents did not answer the question.



48 per cent of respondents indicated they are a public representative (i.e. member of the council) and 52 per cent of respondents indicated they are a private representative (i.e. not a member of the council) or did not answer the question.

LEADER Applicants

74%

1,514 valid applications have been made with 1,567 Section 75 survey forms issued as some applications have multiple applicants. To date 1,167 completed or partially completed Section 75 forms have been returned giving a valid response rate of 74 per cent.

Analysis

Gender



The proportion of female representation on the LAG Board has increased from 31 per cent in 2016 to 37 per cent in 2018. At 21 per cent, the proportion of successful female applicants is slightly lower than the total applicants from females, which stands at 27 per cent. Both the LAG Board and applications are under-representative of females in the wider rural population.

Marriage



Both the LAG Board (72%) and applications to LEADER (72%) are over-represented by people in a marriage or civil partnership when only 55 per cent of the rural population indicate this marital status. There is little difference in LAG Board representation from 2016 but for successful applicants the rate of marriage or civil partnership increases to 78 per cent.

Disability



The proportion of disabled LAG Board members has increased from 9 per cent in 2016 to 17 per cent in 2018. Only 4 per cent of LEADER applicants and 1 per cent of successful applicants are disabled. This is under-representative of the rural population where 26 per cent of the population are considered disabled.

Dependents



The proportion of LAG Board members with no dependents increased from 43 per cent in 2016 to 58 per cent in 2018. The total LEADER applications with no dependents is lower at 33 per cent and equal to the proportion of successful applicants. The application numbers are much lower than the rural context figure of 61 per cent. More than double the proportion of applicants have children compared to LAG Board members, while this trend is reversed for dependent adults. There is only a small difference between LAG Board members and applicants in terms of elderly dependents.

Racial Group



The proportion of white LAG Board members was 100 per cent in 2018. The applications to the LEADER programme are exclusively white, which is representative of the rural population when 99 per cent are white.

Country of Birth



Around 91 per cent of the Northern Ireland rural population were born in Northern Ireland. The LAG Board is representative of this with an increase from 90 per cent in 2016 to 92 per cent in 2018. A slightly higher proportion of applicants (94%) and successful applicants (95%) were born in Northern Ireland

Sexual Orientation



For data confidentiality reasons the sexual orientation of LAG Board members cannot be reported. Around 99 per cent of applicants and successful applicants are heterosexual. These figures are slightly higher than 94% of the population recorded as heterosexual in the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey.

Religion



The proportion of Catholic LAG Board members is exactly representative of the rural population at 47 per cent in 2018, an increase from 43 per cent in 2016. For applicants, 38 per cent are from the Protestant community and 39 per cent of successful

applicants are Protestant. This is under-representative of the rural population where 45 per cent are Protestant.

Political Opinion



Around 27 per cent of the Northern Ireland rural population state their political opinion as nationalist and 39 per cent as unionist. Based on this the LAG Board is over representative of both groups in 2016 and 2018. Applicants and successful applicants are almost representative of those reporting their political opinion as nationalist but under-representative of those reporting their political opinion as unionist.

Age



The proportion of 16-40 year olds on the LAG Board has fallen from 20 per cent in 2016 to 11 per cent in 2018. This increases the under- representation of this age group further when compared to a rural context figure of 42 per cent. The proportion of successful applicants in the 16-40 age group is representative of the rural population at 43 per cent.

3. RURAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT SCHEME

Table 2 Diversity of Rural Business Investment Scheme

		Total RBIS Applicants	Successful RBIS Applicants	Unsuccessful RBIS Applicants	Rural Area
Gender	Male	75%	79%	71%	50%
	Female	25%	21%	29%	50%
Marital Status	Married / Civil Partnership	77%	78%	75%	55%
Disability	Yes	3%	1%	4%	26%
Dependants	A child or children	64%	64%	65%	37%
	Adult with disability	2%	1%	3%	12%
	Dependent Elderly	3%	3%	3%	10%
	None	33%	33%	33%	61%
Racial Group	White	100%	100%	100%	99%
Country of Birth	Northern Ireland	94%	95%	93%	91%
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	99%	99%	99%	94% ¹
Religion	Catholic	52%	52%	51%	47%
	Protestant	39%	39%	40%	45%
Political Opinion	Nationalist	28%	29%	27%	27% ²
	Unionist	22%	20%	24%	39% ³
Age*	16-24	1%	*	2%	15%
	25-44	54%	*	54%	35%
	45-64	41%	43%	39%	32%
	65 & over	4%	3%	5%	18%
	16-40	43%	43%	43%	42%
	Over 40	57%	57%	57%	58%

Notes

1 No rural context information available. Northern Ireland context figure used as a proxy.

2 This refers to those farmers who see themselves as Irish only in the census.

3 This refers to those farmers who see themselves as British only in the census.

* Categories have been suppressed to avoid statistical disclosure of categories with less than 5 responses.

Response Rates

72%

738 applicants who completed equality surveys for LEADER schemes were able to be matched to the Rural Business Improvement Scheme. 1,026 applications have been made to the scheme to date giving a response rate of around 72 per cent. The 738 survey respondents have been designated as successful¹ or unsuccessful² and the results are based on their responses.

Analysis

Gender



At 25 per cent, the proportion of female applicants is under-representative of the rural population where 50 per cent are female. The proportion of successful female applicants is lower again at 21 per cent.

Marriage



The proportion of applicants that are married or in a civil partnership are over-represented at 77 per cent compared to a rural context figure of 55 per cent. The proportion of successful applicants married or in a civil partnership are around the same at 78 per cent.

Disability



The proportion of applications made by disabled people to the scheme is under-representative of the population at 3 per cent compared to a rural context figure of 26 per cent. The proportion of successful disabled applicants is lower again at 1 per cent.

Dependents



The proportion of applicants with no dependents is 33 per cent, which is much lower than the rural context figure of 61 per cent. This figure is consistent for successful and unsuccessful applicants. Applications from people with children are over-representative of the rural population. However, applications from people with dependent adults and elderly dependents are under-representative.

Racial Group



Applicants to the scheme are exclusively white, which is representative of the rural population when 99% are white.

¹ Per definition, Methodology Page 3.

² Per definition, Methodology Page 3

Country of Birth



Around 91% of the Northern Ireland rural population were born in Northern Ireland. The applicants and successful applicants are slightly over-representative of the Northern Ireland born population at 94 per cent and 95 per cent respectively.

Sexual Orientation



The applications to the scheme and successful applications to the scheme are around 99% heterosexual compared to a Northern Ireland context figure of 94%.

Religion



The Protestant community are slightly under-represented in both terms of applications and successful applications at 39 per cent compared to a rural context figure of 45 per cent.

Political Opinion



Around 27 per cent of the Northern Ireland rural population state their political opinion as nationalist and 39 per cent as unionist. Those reporting their political opinion as unionists are under-represented in terms of applications at 22 per cent and in terms of successful applications at 20 per cent.

Age



Those aged 25-64 represent 95 per cent of the applicants compared to 77 per cent of the rural population. When broken down by age groups 16-40 and over 40, the applications and successful applications are representative of the rural population.

4. RURAL BASIC SERVICES SCHEME

Table 3 Diversity of Rural Basic Services Scheme

		Total RBSS Applicants	Successful RBSS Applicants	Unsuccessful RBSS Applicants	Rural Area
Gender	Male	74%	77%	68%	50%
	Female	26%	23%	32%	50%
Marital Status	Married / Civil Partnership	75%	70%	81%	55%
Disability	Yes	7%	8%	7%	26%
Dependants	A child or children	54%	53%	55%	37%
	Adult with disability	4%	*	7%	12%
	Dependent Elderly	*	*	0%	10%
	None	41%	44%	39%	61%
Racial Group	White	100%	100%	100%	99%
Country of Birth	Northern Ireland	98%	99%	96%	91%
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	*	*	*	94% ¹
Religion	Catholic	52%	57%	54%	47%
	Protestant	39%	33%	39%	45%
Political Opinion	Nationalist	44%	48%	39%	27% ²
	Unionist	30%	29%	32%	39% ³
Age*	16-24	0%	0%	0%	15%
	25-44	29%	23%	37%	35%
	45-64	53%	54%	51%	32%
	65 & over	18%	23%	12%	18%
	16-40	21%	13%	31%	42%
	Over 40	79%	87%	69%	58%

Notes

1 No rural context information available. Northern Ireland context figure used as a proxy.

2 This refers to those farmers who see themselves as Irish only in the census.

3 This refers to those farmers who see themselves as British only in the census.

* Categories have been suppressed to avoid statistical disclosure of categories with less than 5 responses.

Response Rates

74%

184 applicants who completed equality surveys for LEADER schemes were able to be matched to the Basic Services Scheme. 250 applications have been made to the scheme to date giving a response rate of around 74 per cent. The 184 survey respondents have been designated as successful³ or unsuccessful⁴ and the results are based on their responses.

Analysis

Gender



At 26 per cent, the proportion of female applicants is under-representative of the rural population where 50 per cent are female. The proportion of successful female applicants is slightly lower at 23 per cent.

Marriage



The proportion of applicants that are married or in a civil partnership are over-represented at 75 per cent compared to a rural context figure of 55 per cent. The proportion of successful applicants married or in a civil partnership is lower at 70 per cent.

Disability



The proportion of applications and successful applications made by disabled people to the scheme stands at 7 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. This is under-representative of the rural population when compared to the rural context figure of 26 per cent.

Dependents



The proportion of applicants without dependents stands at 41 per cent; this is low compared to a rural context figure of 61 per cent. The proportion of successful applicants without dependents is slightly higher at 44 per cent. The proportion of both applicants and successful applicants with children are much higher than the rural context figure. However, applicants with dependent adults and elderly dependents are under-represented.

Racial Group



Applicants to the scheme are exclusively white; this is representative of the rural population when 99% are white.

³ Per definition, Methodology Page 3.

⁴ Per definition, Methodology Page 3

Country of Birth



Around 91% of the Northern Ireland rural population are born in Northern Ireland. The applicants and successful applicants are slightly over-representative of this with 97 per cent and 98 per cent born in Northern Ireland respectively.

Sexual Orientation



This cannot be reported to avoid statistical disclosure of categories with less than 5 responses

Religion



The Protestant community are under-represented in both terms of applications and successful applications at 39 per cent and 33 per cent respectively when compared to a rural context figure of 45 per cent.

Political Opinion



Around 27 per cent of the Northern Ireland rural population state their political opinion as nationalists and 39 per cent as unionist. Those reporting their political opinion as unionist are under-represented in terms of applications at 30 per cent and in successful applications at 29 per cent.

Age



In terms of applications, those from 16-44 year olds are under-representative of the rural population, while 45-64 year olds are over-representative. In terms of successful applications, the rate for 25-44 age group falls by a further 6 percentage points, while the rate for 65 & over increases by 5 percentage points to become over-representative of the rural population. Applications from 16-40 year olds, at 21 per cent, are under-representative of the rural population when compared to the context figure of 42 per cent. The proportion of successful applicants aged 16-40 is more under-representative at 13 per cent.

5. TREND ANALYSIS

LAG Board Membership

The LAG Boards are over-representative of the rural population over the age of 40. This older age profile may explain the fact that the LAG Board membership is over-representative of the married population and the population with no dependents (due to lower rate of dependent children). In terms of disability and members with elderly dependants or dependent disabled adults, the LAG Boards are under-representative of the rural population. However, when compared to applicants the LAG Boards are more representative of these groups, perhaps again because of its older age profile

Although, the LAG Boards have increased their female representation from 31 per cent in 2016 to 37 per cent in 2018, their membership is still under-representative of the rural population.

Rural Business Investment Scheme

Applications to the rural Business Investment Scheme are reflective of the rural population aged between 16 and 40 and over 40. However, there is large over-representation of applicants aged 25-64, which explains the over-representation of both applicants who are married and applicants with dependent children. The proportion of applicants that have other dependent types or no dependents are largely under-representative of these groups in the population.

In terms of gender, females are under-represented at the application stage and the proportion of successful female applicants is 4 percentage points lower than the total scheme applicants. In terms of religion, the proportions of Protestant applicants and successful Protestant applicants are slightly lower than the rural population comparator.

Basic Services Scheme

Applications to the Basic Services scheme are over-representative of applicants aged over 40, driven by over-representation in the 45-64 age group. This older age profile leads to increases in the proportions with disability and no dependants. The proportion of successful applicants with dependent children is still over-representative of the rural population but lower than the proportion of total scheme applicants.

Both women and Protestants are under-represented in terms of total applicants and successful applicants. The proportion of successful female applicants is lower than the total female applicants.

Conclusions

The older age profile of LAG Board in Northern Ireland can largely be explained by almost half of its membership being made up of local government council members who tend to be older members of society. Also, anecdotal evidence suggests people over the age of 40 in general tend to have already established themselves and their businesses in society allowing them more time to invest in civic responsibilities. This older age profile may also explain many of the discrepancies of over and under representation in the diversity categories. However, overall with the exception of age, the LAG Board is more representative of the rural population than the programmes applicants.

Applications to the Basic Services Scheme are under-representative of those aged 16-40. The age profile of scheme applicants may again largely explain the discrepancies of under and over representation in most of the categories. The age profile itself can again be explained by older people having more time to invest in local community groups and clubs etc. However, the age

profile does not explain the under-representation of women, Protestants and people with a disability. Anecdotal evidence from policy makers and external stakeholders suggests the reason that Protestants are less successful with their applications is because there is a lack of support and perhaps knowledge amongst their community representatives to complete the application appropriately.

Applications to the Rural Business Investment Scheme are representative of the 16-40 and over 40 age group profile. However, there are lower numbers of applicants under 25 and over 65, which why there is a higher proportion of married applicants with dependent children. This under-representation of these age groups is explained by younger members of the rural population not having capital to invest in business and over 65's having reached retirement age. Anecdotal evidence from policy makers and LAG decision making panels suggests the increase in under-representation of successful female applicants could be due to a lack of business experience amongst females.

Overall, women, disabled people and the 16-24 age group are under-represented across both the LAG Boards and the two LEADER schemes. In regards to the Basic Services Scheme, Protestants are also under-represented accounting for just 31 per cent of the successful applications.

ANNEX A – CONTEXTUAL INDICATOR SOURCES AND WEBLINKS

Contextual Indicator Sources

	Farming Context	Rural Area	NI Context
Gender	EU farm structure survey(2016)	Census 2011 Total Rural Population Age 16 and over	Census 2011 Total Population Age 16 and over
Marital Status	DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators Report (2018)	Census 2011 Total Rural Population Age 16 and over	Census 2011 Total Population Age 16 and over
Disability	DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators Report (2018)	Continuous Household Survey 2018/2019	Continuous Household Survey 2018/2019
Dependants	Farm families survey (2001-02)	Continuous Household Survey 2018/2019	Continuous Household Survey 2018/2019
No Dependents	DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators Report (2018)		
Racial Group	No info available	Census 2011 Total Rural Population	Census 2011 Total Population
Country of Birth	No info available	Census 2011 Total Rural Population	Census 2011 Total Population
Sexual Orientation	No info available	No info available	Life and Times Survey 2020 Re-calculated excluding prefer not to say
Religion	DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators Report (2018)	Census 2011 Total Rural Population - Non respondents excluded from calculation	Census 2011 Total Population - Non respondents excluded from calculation
Political Opinion	DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators Report (2018)	Census 2011 Total Rural Population	Life and Times Survey 2020
Age Groups	EU farm structure survey(2016)	Census 2011 Total Rural Population	Census 2011
Young Farmer 16-40	DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators Report (2018)		

Web Links to Sources

EU Farm Structure Survey 2016

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/european-union-farm-structure-survey-2016>

Census 2011

<http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx>

Farm families survey (2001-02)

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/farmers-and-farm-families-northern-ireland-social-survey>

Life and Times Survey 2020

<https://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/2020/>

Continuous Household Survey 2018/2019

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/continuous-household-survey>

Farmer equality indicators: Report 2018 (data source 2011 Population Census)

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/farmer-equality-indicators-report>

ANNEX B – EQUALITY AND MONITORING QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of Scheme

To be completed by all
applicants

1. AGE

What is your age, in years?

2. GENDER

What is your gender?

Male

Female

3. STATUS

Are you ...? (Please tick one box)

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single, that is, never married or never in a civil partnership |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Married or in a civil partnership |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Separated but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Divorced or legally dissolved civil partnership |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Widowed or surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership |
| 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cohabiting |
| 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) _____ |

4. DISABILITY

The Disability Discrimination Act defines disability as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

With regards to the above definition, do you consider that you have a long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your daily activities or the work you can do? By long-term we mean has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months. This definition includes disabilities related to old age.

1 Yes

2 No

5. RACIAL GROUP

(a) To which of these racial groups do you consider you belong?

- 1 White
- 2 Chinese
- 3 Irish Traveller
- 4 Indian
- 5 Pakistani
- 6 Bangladeshi
- 7 Black Caribbean
- 8 Black African
- 9 Black Other
- 10 Mixed racial group (please specify)

- 11 Any other racial group (please specify)

(b) Where were you born?

- 1 Northern Ireland
- 2 Republic of Ireland
- 3 Great Britain (England, Scotland, Wales)
- 4 Eastern Europe
- 5 Elsewhere (please specify)

6. DEPENDANTS

Do you have personal responsibility for the care of ...?

(Tick each box that applies to your circumstances)

- 1 A child (or children)
- 2 A person with a disability
- 3 A dependent elderly person (or persons)
- 4 No dependants
- 5 Other dependants (please specify)

7. COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Please indicate your community background by ticking the appropriate box below.

I am a member of:

- 1 the Protestant community
- 2 the Catholic community
- 3 other (please specify) _____

8. SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Which best describes you:

- 1 Heterosexual/Straight
- 2 Gay/Lesbian
- 3 Bisexual
- 4 Other

9. POLITICAL OPINION

What is your political preference?

Please tick one box

- 1 Nationalist
- 2 Unionist
- 3 No political preference
- 4 Other (please specify) _____

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this survey