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Mapping Minority Ethnic Languages in NI

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1.1 Background
It is important to emphasise that for black and minority ethnic (BME) people there can be many barriers in accessing services other than the language barrier. Many people from BME backgrounds are native speakers or otherwise fluent in English and the language barrier is not an issue. Yet, for those not fluent in English it is the language barrier that is often cited as the most significant impediment to accessing health and social services as well as other public services. Connolly cites a number of studies indicating that language ‘provides one of the most significant barriers to accessing services’ (Connolly 2002: 39).

The legislative framework
Research has demonstrated high levels of racist prejudice in Northern Ireland (Connolly 2000) and racism has had a long history on the island of Ireland (Rolston & Shannon 2002). It was only recently that this was recognised in anti-discrimination and equality legislation in Northern Ireland (NI). This legislation provides a strong framework in which the rights of those not fluent in English to access services are recognised.

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 outlawed racial discrimination in NI. It prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination and does cover the provision of goods and services in addition to other areas. As a language barrier can prevent access to services, refusal to address this could constitute indirect discrimination. In relation to interpreting the ECNI/ DHSSPS Racial Equality in Health Good Practice Guide state:

...failing to provide interpreting facilities in relation to service provision, when it is known that there is a language barrier, could be construed as unlawful racial discrimination (ECNI & DHSSPS 2003: 41).

In addition Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) places a statutory duty on designated public bodies to ‘ensure that consistent with their responsibilities, all functions are carried out with regard to’ the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial groups and eight other categories, and have due regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different racial groups (and two other categories). This legislation involves public bodies taking a proactive role in tackling inequality.

Also, in 2001 the DHSSPS wrote to Trust Chief Executives regarding the provision of interpreters, specifically referring to asylum seekers. The letter instructs GPs to reclaim costs from local Health and Social
Service Trusts and states: 'This action [resourced interpreter provision] ensures that asylum seekers have full and equal access to all health and social care services'.

Other legislation relevant to the area includes the Children's (NI) Order 1996, the Human Rights Act (2000), and initiatives coming from European directives and local policy strategies such as Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) and New Targeting Social Need (TSN).

Initiatives can be looked at in the context of tackling institutional racism. This concept moves away from looking at racism as an individual phenomenon. McVeigh writes ‘institutional racism reminds us that racism is not just about attitudes. It is also about structures, processes and outcomes’ (McVeigh 2002: 8). In relation to the language barrier the effects of structures and processes built up by the majority community to address the communication needs of the majority community can have some serious outcomes for the minority:

I never realised my husband would die. I though he would get better. Maybe the doctor told me, many, many times but I did not understand, I did not know the words and I never saw anyone so ill before (MCRC in ECNI & DHSSPS 2003: 5).

My wife had appalling experiences. She had serious problems following a stroke and other conditions before we came here. Neither the GP or the hospitals put on an interpreter despite my wife having very little English. I got very fed up having to interpret complicated vocabulary when I couldn’t. We had to bring our own interpreter. In the end she went home because the treatment was so bad (McVeigh 2002: 22).

A member of the community’s son died of leukaemia aged six. The family did not know what was happening and did not know what their son was dying of... [they] felt this was due to the language barrier (Holder 2001: 9).

I saw a women the other day who had been all around the health departments. She had severe headaches and she had had every test under the sun. Finally the doctors decided it must be psychosomatic so they sent her to me. I was the first doctor who’d been able to speak to her directly, without her husband being present to interpret. It turned out the headaches were caused by the husband hitting her. She hadn’t been able to tell anyone before (MCRC in ECNI & DHSSPS 2003: 5).

The current situation
All of the above provide a framework in which the inequalities of access to services must be addressed. Tackling language-based inequalities of access in services can be done in a number of ways.
Breeching the barrier in direct one-to-one contact with service users can be facilitated through the provision of interpreters. Information on services can be provided in minority ethnic languages. There have been a considerable number of public sector initiatives to address the language barrier.

In interpreting these include the funding of full-time interpreter posts such as the EHSSB funded Chinese Community Interpreters, or the Urdu-Punjabi and Chinese interpreters funded by an interagency grouping in the area of the Southern HSS Board. Bilingual workers have also been employed such as the SEELB Home Schools Liaison Officers. Some organisations, such as the NI Housing Executive have set up telephone interpreter services. Other services call on freelance interpreters facilitated by minority ethnic organisations or the private sector. Regarding information provision a number of organisations have been producing and using multilingual resources. Examples of this would include leaflets translated into minority ethnic languages by the Health Promotion Agency NI, or materials produced by South and East Belfast HSS Trust in a range of minority ethnic languages and in audio and video as well as leaflet formats. Voluntary sector organisations providing services have also often produced multilingual resources or provided interpreters. For example, the NI Council for Ethnic Minorities has delivered interpreter training and both them and FLEX (Foreign Languages for Export Department) at the University of Ulster have interpreter registers. Lee and Baillie (2001) have developed a code of practice for the Chinese Welfare Association's interpreters.

The overall picture however seems to be patchy at best. Services users have indicated that the provision of interpreters and translated materials remains the exception rather than the norm (Holder & Lanao 2001: 8). Family members, including children are sometimes used. Practitioners offering services also have difficulty in sourcing materials or interpreters. It must be acknowledged that Northern Ireland is not yet offering the necessary provision, even though there are pockets of very good practice such as those mentioned above.

This contrasts with the situation in Great Britain (GB) where most areas have public sector interpreter services. For example, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne an interpreter service, based in Newcastle General Hospital was established for health and social services in 1995. In Scotland the Scottish Interpreting, Translation and Communication Forum Good Practice Guidelines (see section 3.2)
lists six local authority interpreter services. In relation to the south of Ireland provision has largely been left to the private sector with seemingly harmful consequences. A paper given by Phelan (2001) illustrates that whilst interpreting is happening in Ireland interpreters are rarely trained or assessed in anyway. Phelan concludes there has been an 'alarming lack of policy at a government level' and a 'general lack of awareness of the importance of competent interpreting and of the damage that can be done by untrained interpreters'.

The rationale for the research
The advent of the new legislative context and the increase in visibility of BME groups has led to increasing awareness across HPSS and other public services of the need for initiatives to tackle language barriers and sensitise materials. Statutory organisations are frequently in contact with the MCRC Community Health and Social Wellbeing project regarding questions on how to sensitise materials, requesting information on what languages to translate into and which formats. Such requests are growing. The rationale for this research lies in these questions.

Firstly the effective communication of information is a complex matter and is not a question of sending existing English-language materials to translators. There are many questions on format and consultation involved in the production of effective materials. The project had previously tried to address this through the publication Guidelines on the Production of Multilingual Materials (see Section 3.2).

In essence this means gearing information strategies to languages, formats and dissemination to sections of minority ethnic communities and not just relying on the methods designed to meet the communication needs of target groups in majority ethnic communities, which are unlikely to reach many people from BME groups.

In the enthusiasm to translate there was sometimes a degree of over simplification of the task and resources were not always being put to best use. Of course many projects involving translation have had a very positive effect, but there are a number of language and community specific issues to be addressed. For example, the MCRC project had also undertaken research with the Bangladeshi community. This had recorded, amongst other issues, that the majority of the community originate from the Sylhet region of
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Bangladesh and are speakers of Sylheti (Holder 2001). Sylheti is a largely spoken dialect of the Bangladeshi national language Bengali. In efforts to tackle the language barrier for the Bangladeshi community materials had been translated into written Bengali, which was ineffective.

There are a number of similar questions around communicating with other groups. For example how many members of the Indian community used the written form of Hindi as opposed to the spoken language of Punjabi? And of those who do which proportion of this section of the community were also fluent users of English anyway? Within the Pakistani community what were the proportions in relation to the use of written Urdu or spoken Punjabi? What about the written use of Chinese languages? What about the language profile of the very large (yet largely invisible) number of Arabic speakers? What about the many other emerging communities from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas? What were the differences within communities on grounds of gender, age, and occupation? Were there differences within linguistic communities in different parts of NI?

All of the above information is vital to developing initiatives that will ensure the effective communication of information. The project did not feel that it could confidently give accurate answers to all of the above questions. This information was not available anywhere, except within the individual linguistic communities themselves. Community activists would have a good idea about the linguistic profile of their own communities, but this information was not collated anywhere across the BME sector. In addition, to answer specific questions activists were relying on estimates, as this was the only method available.

It became essential therefore to conduct research to address these issues and put into the public domain information that could assist in the effective provision of information and could also inform initiatives regarding interpreter provision of the range of emerging languages. The research would need to gather information on: which languages and dialects were spoken by which BME communities in NI; on the use of written forms of these languages; on the levels of English in different BME communities; information on the mother tongue profiles of the non-English speakers within communities; on the number of emerging communities and language profiles and on effective dissemination mechanisms within communities.
The research is also able to input into other initiatives that have emerged within its lifetime. Within the HPSS the 'More than Words' regional interpreter service project began in 2002. This three-year foundation project will set up accredited interpreter training and an interpreter register within the HPSS sector. The lead agency in this project is the EHSSB. In addition the linguistic diversity branch of DCAL are also engaged in a number of initiatives regarding minority ethnic languages. This included a one-day inter-agency conference in November 2002 entitled 'Issues and opportunities addressing service provision and ethnic minority languages: removing the barriers.' DCAL also commissioned two pieces of research on minority ethnic languages by Dunn, Dawson and Morgan (2002a)(2002b). The MCRC project has also worked with the Interpreter Sub-Group of the ECNI convened Racial Equality Forum. The group lobbied statutory agencies for the above initiatives. The Race Equality Unit of OFMDFM had also set a heading within its project grants for initiatives on interpreting and translation. Funding from this source was sought and awarded for this work. Additional financial assistance was also obtained from DCAL. More recently interpreters, to highlight their views and experiences, have established an Interpreter Forum.

The research saw the nature of the language barrier as key to a more in-depth understating of effective communication.

**The nature of the language barrier**

Whilst the actual existence of ‘the language barrier’ may seem straightforward there are still many instances of assumptions being made that can have a detrimental effect.

At one crude level, being the speaker of a language other than English appears to be confused by some with a hearing impairment or even with lack of intelligence. This can lead to information being shouted ‘loudly and slowly’ which is not considered helpful (Moore 2002: 5.2). Service users have also reported being treated in a patronising manner due to being speakers of other languages (Holder & Lanao 2001: 9).

There is also an issue regarding levels of English. This is the case when an individual can speak a few words in English (or maybe more) and it is assumed they can understand everything that is being said to them. In fact they may not understand anything. This is compounded as the first word many people will learn is ‘yes’, and responding with ‘yes’ or nodding (also undertaken out of politeness) is often misinterpreted as having understood (ECNI/DHSSPS 2003: 49). This can lead a practitioner to feel that
they do not need to supply an interpreter when there is in fact a considerable language barrier.

On the other side of this is accent prejudice where a fluent speaker of English who has a non-‘local’ accent is considered not to speak fluent English.

**The monolingual majority**

Monolingualism can be cured learn another language, proclaims a Canadian poster which makes fun of the arrogant assumptions of many English speakers, in most parts of the world it is perfectly normal to speak two or more languages or dialects in the course of daily life (Edwards 1996: 4).

The misconceptions outlined in the previous section are perhaps not surprising given the overwhelmingly monolingual background of broader society, which can lead to an undervaluing of languages and language issues. All languages can be seen to have their own beauty and own conversation, humour, literature, film etc. There is discussion about the relationship between language and cultural identity. Discussing speakers of Arabic and other languages Alouane (2002) argues:

The relationship between language and what is currently called ‘cultural identity’ is of a very complex nature... the language [a person] speaks is part and parcel of their identity and culture... learning languages means understanding other people and their way of thinking, [and of] opposing racism, xenophobia and intolerance (Alouane 2002:1).

Our current monolingual context can lead to the undervaluing of languages and language skills.

On one level this can lead to a discouragement of use of other languages. For example, in a previous study conducted by the author many parents of minority ethnic populations had experiences of bilingualism with children being discouraged (Holder & Lanao, 2002). This was despite a body of evidence showing that children brought up bilingually generally benefit from this. Both in the cultural context of being able to speak with family and community members who do not speak English and also academically due to being able to conceptualise ideas better (Holder & Lanao 2002), (Alouane 2002).

Undervaluing languages and language skills also impacts on interpreters. Whilst an interpreter needs proficient fluency in both languages, this is only one element of the skills required. Interpreting (and the separate discipline of written translation) have
been described as third skills in relation to the knowledge needed to interpret. It is argued that ‘translators and interpreters need to be aware of linguistic nuance and socio-cultural practice in both linguistic groups in order to do their job effectively’ (McPeake & Johnstone 2002: 10). It is important to stress the individual nuances of languages. All languages are structured very differently; it is not possible to ‘literally’ translate word for word one language into another. Interpreting and translation involve translating the meaning of one language into another. This is not always as straightforward as it seems, for example, take the title of this report ‘In Other Words’. At a glance a non-linguist could translate this by looking up these three words in a dictionary and ‘translating’ them into the target language. This is unlikely to convey the same meaning as ‘In Other Words’ that does not have a literal meaning in English deriding from its component words. Rather it is a set phrase in English, or an idiom that means something along the lines of ‘what I mean to say’. The translator would have to find a phrase in the target language that meant the same as this, yet may not necessarily word-for-word resemble it. This is constantly the job of the linguist, in spoken interpreting or written translation. For example, there is no direct equivalent of the English word ‘stress’ in Bengali, meaning the interpreter has to find a way of conveying this concept (Cohen, 1999 in McPeake & Johnstone 2002). There is no equivalent in Portuguese of the cultural concept of Fiancé in English (a word English borrows from French).

This translation of meaning is therefore a skill to be held by the interpreter in addition to fluency in both languages. Non-recognition of this can lead to non-interpreters with some knowledge of both languages being asked to interpret with potentially serious consequences.

One consequence of this is that family members or friends are often called upon to interpret. It is argued that if they have the interpreter skills, want to do it and the service user feels more comfortable with them than someone else, this is not always a bad thing (McPeake & Johnstone 2002). However, if they do not have interpreter skills this is placing a huge burden on them and the service user whose wellbeing and even health depend on accurate interpreting. It is also placing a huge emotional burden on the person called on to interpret, especially if distressing news is to be given. There are also many circumstances when it is entirely inappropriate for family members or friends to interpret, obvious

* The phrase also of course has double meaning – referring in this context to ‘other words’. Differences in languages mean that phrases containing double meanings are notoriously hard to translate.
examples of this include children being asked to communicate personal health data to parents and husbands or their friends interpreting for their wives in suspected domestic violence cases. The dangers of using untrained or unskilled interpreters are further outlined in section 7.3 of the Racial Equality in Health Good Practice Guide (ECNI/DHSSPS 2003).

In addition this can also lead to undervaluing the skills of the interpreter. Interpreters are not always seen in the same light as other practitioners but are seen to be ‘helping out’ as they ‘speak both languages’. This can result in interpreters not being paid or being asked to help out the patient in ways well beyond the scope of their role. In this sense interpreters are seen in the context of ‘charity’ rather than ‘rights’ and this consequently leads to the non-recognition of linguistic abilities as a skill. A practical outcome of the former are requests to service users to ‘bring a friend’. The need to use trained and skilled interpreters should not, however, lead to class based prejudice. The level of formal general education of a perspective interpreter is not necessarily a good indicator of interpreter skills.

There are other misunderstandings concerning language usage. The fact that many languages are oral has already been outlined. In addition the appreciation of the naturalness of native speakers speaking in their native tongue is often misinterpreted. The author recalls a caller to Radio Ulster's Talkback programme complaining on the ‘rudeness’ of Chinese youngsters in his taxi in Belfast who had been speaking in Chinese. The caller insinuated that the passengers were doing so to ‘annoy’ him. This misses the point that it is natural for native speakers to converse in their own languages, as with English speakers abroad. Two native English speakers from NI may live in, for example, France, and may have both learned fluent French, yet on meeting up are more than likely to speak in English rather than French.

Another misconception often raised is best summed up by the question: ‘Why don’t “they” just learn English?’ On the one level this question contains racist anti-multicultural undertones. However, in emphasising this it is wrong to assume that non-English speaking migrants have a problem with learning English. It is preferable for individuals to be empowered to access a service themselves rather than having to use an interpreter. Whilst individuals may have no barriers to wanting to learn English research shows there can be considerable barriers to accessing English teaching. Leong (2002) in a report for the Basic Skills Unit of DEL and EGSA identifies a
number of these barriers including: learning in mixed ability classes; minimum quotas of students for classes; undesirable tutor techniques and attitudes; less than adequate provision of ESOL classes and other areas. For rural ethnic minorities the availability of childcare can also be a barrier to attending classes (Holder & Lanao 2002). Of course whilst initiatives to address this will advance empowerment this will not alleviate the need for interpreters due to new migrant communities and the fact that, as everyone who has studied a language knows, new languages are not learned overnight.

**Broader language issues: Languages of ‘Choice’ and ‘Need’**
There has sometimes been a distinction drawn between languages of need and choice. Namely that minority ethnic languages spoken by those who do not speak English are languages of ‘need’ as without language support non-English speakers cannot access services. The Irish language has been termed a language of ‘choice’ as Irish speakers will also speak English and be able to access services through English. Whilst this distinction carries some merit in terms of essential service access it is important not to undervalue and degrade languages of choice. Both local political culture and the predominantly monolingual nature of the broader community have been detrimental to all language rights. Failure to recognise this can lead to unhelpful divisions between languages of need and choice. It is important to recognise that minority ethnic languages are often also languages of choice. This is the case, for example, when families decide to bring children up bilingually, so that future generations are not excluded from the community language and culture for many of the reasons outlined above. Many of those who do use their languages of choice in public are often confronted with same prejudices regardless if the language is Irish or minority ethnic. A cultural change in attitude and value of languages is needed to address monolingual attitudes to the individuals right to use languages of their choice.

**1.2 Glossary of terms:**

How stated terminology is used in the context of this report.

**Abbreviations:**

BME: Black and Minority Ethnic
CWA: Chinese Welfare Association
DCAL: Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DHSSPS: Department of Health, Social Service and Public Safety
DEL: Department of Employment and Learning
EGSA: Educational Guidance Service for Adults
EHSSB: Eastern Health and Social Services Board
ECNI: Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
HSS: Health and Social Services
MCRC: Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
NICEM: Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
OFMDFM: Office of the First and Deputy First Minister
RAG: Refugee Action Group
SEELB: South Eastern Education and Library Board
QUB: Queen’s University Belfast
UU: University of Ulster

Researcher Mouloud Alouane
Minority Ethnic languages
Minority ethnic languages refer to the languages, other than English, spoken by people from minority ethnic backgrounds in NI. In the context of this report this does not include the Irish language or Ulster-Scots spoken in majority ethnic communities.

Interpreting (Undertaken by an interpreter)
Spoken conversion of one language to another.

Translation (Undertaken by a translator)
Written conversion of one language to another.

Language level categorisations:
Basic level: No English to enough English to get by in simple situations such as basic shopping. Interpreter needed to access services.
Intermediate level: Reasonable English to converse and write informal text. Would have difficulty in more complex situations such as medical appointments when an interpreter may sometimes be needed. Would have difficulty in writing more formal documents and reading jargon used by statutory agencies.
Proficient level: Fluency in English to near native or native level. Would be able to deal with situations as native speaker would without requiring an interpreter. Ability to read and write more complex materials.

Oral and written languages:
Most of the world’s languages do not have a written form, for many other languages a written form is being developed but is used only by a minority of the its speakers. This is also the case with a number of minority ethnic languages in NI such as Punjabi, Sylheti, and others. The use only of the spoken form in NI is indicative of two factors, firstly that the language is an oral language and is not generally written (such as Punjabi) and secondly that second generation members of a community will learn only the oral form (this is often the case in Hindi and Cantonese). The non-usage of the written form of the language should not necessarily be seen as a question of literacy.

Community languages:
This phrase has been used to refer to languages spoken by minority ethnic communities in Britain. To avoid confusion with the two

* In the context of this report interpreting and translation refer to minority ethnic languages and English and do not refer to Irish or British sign language. The issues of speech or hearing difficulties and visual impairment are of course as relevant to effective communication with minority ethnic communities as with majority ethnic communities.
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majority ethnic communities in NI this report will not use this definition.
Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and Populations
The biological connotations of terms such as ‘racial group’ mean that the term ethnic groups that is based on social differences is preferred (Connolly 2002). In the context of Northern Ireland minority ethnic communities would include Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Irish Travellers etc. Majority ethnic communities in NI are what are often termed the 'Protestant/Unionist' and 'Catholic/Nationalist' communities. The term black has also been adopted to express a ‘unity of experience of racism, among people whose skin colour is not white’ (ECNI & DHSSPS 2003: 16).

Emerging v established:
Minority ethnic populations that have lived in NI for many years and would include second or more generations are termed established communities in order to differentiate from emerging populations. Emerging populations are new migrant communities which are currently arriving in NI such as Portuguese migrant workers and others. Established communities would include the Indian and Jewish communities both with root in the north of Ireland from the 19th century.

Community v population:
The term community is often used in the context of minority ethnic groups when there is in fact no community structure within the population. This is particularly the case with emerging groups.

Refugee:
‘Refugee in lay terms is a person seeking sanctuary from persecution. In terms of international law… a refugee is defined under the 1951 UN convention’ (RAG 2002: 3) In the UK and Ireland within domestic law a person who has been given a positive decision on an asylum application is a refugee and those waiting for a decision are asylum seekers. For the purposes of this report the lay definition will apply, covering both these terms.

Migrant worker:
A migrant worker is a person who migrates to another country for the purpose of work. This includes work permit holders and migrant workers present through other mechanisms. Typically in NI there are migrant workers filling gaps in the labour market in nursing, software engineering, agriculture and manufacturing.

‘Settled’:
This term is used to describe members of minority ethnic populations who were born in NI or settled in NI due to family, or
marriage. ‘Settled’ in this context does not refer to a non-nomadic lifestyle.

**First and second generation:**
First generation refers to people born outside NI and subsequent generations to those born within NI.
1.3 Methodology

The main objectives of the project were to:

- Provide information on the linguistic make up of minority ethnic languages in NI including use of written forms and to stratify on community, language, gender, age/generation, employment
- Provide information on levels of English proficiency in minority ethnic communities in NI across the above factors
- Develop a methodology in order to survey both established minority ethnic communities in NI and emerging minority ethnic populations
- Provide information on interpreter provision and availability of accessible information from a community point of view
- Record this information into a database of languages, and to provide recommendations on making information accessible
- Develop a Methodology for interpreter skills taster sessions
- Identify potential interpreters and deliver interpreter skills sessions

To do this, the research into minority ethnic languages was carried out through gathering community information followed by telephone surveys where appropriate.

During the research, and in particular reference to the methodology of the survey, contact was maintained with DCAL research branch and other researchers working in the minority ethnic sector. Advice was taken from these sources to ensure quality control as well as to ensure that other ongoing pieces of research were complimentary to each other. The expertise of a wide range of community informants was drawn on for the research. Most of the informants work for their communities in a voluntary capacity, are geographically dispersed, and inundated with requests for consultation. For this reason it was decided that the researchers would go out to groups and individuals rather than setting up a research steering group to which people would be invited to attend. This method also allowed much more in-depth contact and greater opportunities to disseminate information effectively.

Stage 1: Community information gathering

The first stage involved wide consultation with representatives of community organisations and other community informants. In all 27 people/organisations were spoken to in structured face-to-face meetings; there was additional telephone contact with others.
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This contact was used for the following:

- To obtain estimates of demography of minority ethnic populations in relation to numbers, migration patterns, employment, gender, location, age and generation
- To obtain information on mother tongues spoken, the use of written formats of these languages
- To obtain estimates of levels of proficiency in spoken and written English by sections of populations
- To obtain information on the provision of interpreters from a community perspective for the linguistic population
- To obtain information on the existence of communication structures within the populations
- As an opportunity to raise awareness about language rights and current initiatives

In many linguistic communities several different organisations or individuals were approached. The information gathered was informed by available literature. This included: empirical and conference reports on minority ethnic communities in NI, data on asylum seekers and interpreter requests\(^*\), data on work permits granted\(^*\), information on the minority ethnic backgrounds of school pupils in NI, and other sources. Particularly useful reports with language data included information on the Chinese community (Gillespie et al 1999), (Browne 2002), Latin Americans (Holder and Lanao 2001), Bangladeshis (Holder 2001) and Portuguese speakers (Soares 2002).

Towards the end of the research data on ethnic minority numbers from the NI Census 2001 were made available. Whilst a few figures did tally with community estimates much of the census data seemed to be very wide of the mark. A particular example would be that of the Chinese community where the figure of 8,000 is generally accepted, yet the census only recorded a figure of 4,200. Evidence of from Chinese community representatives have pointed to a major undercount. For example, Derry Chinese New Year Celebrations generally attract 200-300 members of the local Chinese community, and the Sai Pak project surveyed a sample of 243 Chinese people in the North West area. Despite this census data indicated only 147 Chinese people in the Derry City Council area! Reasons for the undercount are likely to be both linguistic and cultural. A representative of the Islamic community has also indicated that the

\(^*\) For a list of empirical reports refer to Connolly (2002)
\(^*\) Supplied by NICEM
\(^*\) Supplied by Department of Employment and Learning
\(^*\) Supplied by Education and Library boards
current climate of anti-Islamic racism does not endear Muslims to record themselves as Muslims is the census. This report has therefore relied on community estimates informed by the other available sources, rather than solely on census data. The information was used to gauge baseline information on linguistic communities to set priorities for further research. Due to resource and practical constraints it was impossible to conduct surveys with all linguistic communities identified. In this sense the initial research allowed the setting of priorities to survey communities on grounds of:

- **Need**: was there a substantial section of the community who were not fluent in written or spoken English?
- **Ambiguities**: was it clear which mother tongues were spoken or used in their written form by the community?
- **Practicality**: was there any community structure within the research population, or was the population of a size that could be 'snowballed' with the resources available?

The data gathered also informed the process of constructing a representative sample of the community where surveying was to take place.

Following the meetings and telephone contact the information gathered was collated and sent by post to respondents for feedback. It is important to note that information gathered from community sources proved to be reasonably accurate when it was subsequently subjected to survey.

**Categories used:**

It was decided to stratify the results into six categories and to base this on broad linguistic groups that referenced the recent geographical origin of the languages in question. The language categories were used as they reflect the focus of the research but also because it was not possible to use national or religious categories generally used as community definers for a number of reasons. This included languages being spoken across different states, for example Portuguese (covering Portugal, Brazil, and Portuguese-speaking Africans) and Arabic covering 22 countries in two different geographic regions (north/Central Africa and the Middle East). With Arabic it is not possible to categorise speakers as Arabs or as the Arab community as other ethnic groups are present within this linguistic group. It was not possible to use religious categories such as 'Muslims', as there are many different linguistic groups (Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, English and many others) within the Muslim faith, as well as speakers of these languages who are not Muslims. The following categories were therefore used:
• **South East Asian languages**
  Including Chinese languages, the Philippines, Korea, Japan and others

• **South Asian languages**
  Pakistan, India, Bangladesh etc. These are grouped together due to some linguistic similarities

• **Arabic speaking communities**
  This brought together data on the 22 countries of North Africa and the Middle East where Arabic is the major language

• **African languages**
  Information on languages spoken by people from central and southern African origin

• **Central Asian languages**
  Information on speakers of Turkish, Farsi, Pushtu, Dari and other languages

• **European languages**
  Information on European languages including speakers of Spanish and Portuguese from Latin America

**Stage 2: Further Information and Telephone Surveys**
On examination of the data from the first stage it was decided to undertake extensive surveys with the following populations:

• The Chinese community
• The Indian community
• The Pakistani community
• The Bangladeshi community
• The Albanian speaking community

In addition it was decided not to undertake surveys, but to gather more detailed information from the African and Arabic speaking communities. This information was compiled by Romana Khaoury and Mouloud Alouane respectively. The two researchers had substantial contacts within the respective target communities through semi-structured interviews and meetings with several dozen individuals.

For the rest of the communities information gathered in the first section was used. It is worth noting that the information given by the community groups who were latterly surveyed did correspond reasonably with the results of the survey, indicating that information gathered in this way can be methodologically reliable. It is more difficult however, when we are looking at a population without
community structures where it is probable that individuals are isolated from others in the population and therefore are unlikely to be in a position to estimate language or other data regarding the population.

The survey populations were chosen for the following reasons:

- **The Chinese community:**
  Research, including information gathered in the initial stage of this report had indicated that a high number of the Chinese community faced language barriers in accessing services. In addition there are a number of different languages spoken such as Cantonese, Hakka and Mandarin, that are quite different although often colloquially referred to as Chinese. Would there be differences in English levels across and within these groups? There is also varied usage of the written form of Chinese leading to questions over whether documents translated into traditional or simplified Chinese were effective in reaching sections of the Chinese community. Surveying the community was done in partnership with the Chinese Welfare Association and the Wah Hep community organisation (Craigavon).

- **The Indian community**
  Whilst the initial stage had suggested only a minority of the Indian community who were not proficient in English there remained considerable ambiguity surrounding method of effective communication to reach this section of the population. There had been translation of materials into Hindi. However, there was some debate as to whether this was an effective method of reaching non-English speakers, as not every one would speak or write Hindi, and most of this section of the community would use the spoken language of Punjabi. In addition to the Hindi-Punjabi speaking section of the population there was an estimated 33% of the community who were speakers of south Indian languages. The general feeling was that this group would have very high levels of English. However, there was no data available. Surveying the community was done in partnership with the Indian Community Centre.

- **The Pakistani community**
  The national language of Pakistan is Urdu. Many of the Pakistani community in NI are known to be Punjabi speakers. Research was needed firstly to determine English levels across gender and occupation but also to look at the level of written usage of Urdu and when translation of materials into Urdu does assist effective communication and when it does not. The survey of the community was done in partnership with the Pakistani Community Association, the Al Nisa group (both Belfast based) and the Al Nur group (Craigavon).
• **The Bangladeshi community**
The Bangladeshi national language is Bengali. However, the majority of the community originate from the Sylhet region of Bangladesh and speak the generally spoken dialect of Sylheti. Research was needed to examine the extent of usage of written Bengali as well as to ascertain English levels. The survey was done in partnership with the Bangladeshi Welfare Association.

• **The Albanian speaking community**
The Albanian speaking community includes Kosovan refugees and people from Albania and Macedonia. There is no community association. The community was selected to ascertain data on English language usage on this population and also as this would be more broadly applicable to other recent migrant communities. The Albanian speaking community was chosen as the project had good contacts with it. A researcher, Shpresa Berisha, undertook the survey using the snowballing technique to obtain a viable sample.

And for further information:

• **The African community**
Respondents in the initial stage of the research had stated that there were barriers in accessing services other than language, which was not a big issue for the community. Almost all Africans would speak English, often along with several other languages. Often languages could be determined from national origin and therefore, rather than undertaking a survey, further information was gathered on the community through interviews with a broader range of informants within the communities.

• **The Arabic speaking communities**
Within the Arabic speaking community there was less ambiguity over the use of the written form. The dialect of Arabic spoken could also be determined by national or ethnic origin, as often could English levels. It was decided therefore not to conduct a survey with Arabic speakers but for a researcher to gather further information.

**Development of Survey methodology:**
A researcher, Charo Lanao, developed methodology for the survey. This was done taking advice from the DCAL research branch and drawing on the existing methods used by a number of other bodies including the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT), the Integrate Ireland Language and Training at Trinity College and local researchers based at UU.

**Telephone surveys:**
We analysed a number of different methodologies in order to conduct the survey, including both written materials and telephone surveys. Written surveys are frequently used for English language proficiency, for example entrance exams to assess entry levels for English language courses. The survey questions eventually used could have been sent out in a written format but there are problems with this method in this instance due to resource implications and practicalities. It would be impossible to get around 1000 people to sit an exam. Posted written surveys can obtain a low response, with the research losing control of the sample. In addition in which language would the surveys be sent out? Sending them out in English would exclude those who cannot read English. Sending them out in a mother tongue would cause two problems. Firstly having to work extensively with translators to ensure their interpretation of the research was the same as the researchers to ensure uniformity across the different communities surveyed (this was achieved with telephone surveys through training of the researchers). Secondly if the mother tongue was an oral language how could written responses be solicited?

The methodology of telephone surveys was therefore adopted. Researchers contacted to undertake the calls would do so in the target mother tongues, and researchers with these languages were used. In order to mitigate some of the difficulties usually encountered with telephone surveys a number of steps were taken (the issue of obtaining a representative sample is discussed below). To mitigate difficulties in obtaining responses (due to people not being in or refusing to respond due to cold calling) calls were made to both work and home numbers at different times of the day. There were limited cases of people refusing to answer due to lack of available time. It was anticipated people may not want to respond if they did not know what, or who, the research was for or if the questions were personal in nature. (Language material was not generally considered personal but data solicited on who lived in the household and education and employment was more personal.) To mitigate this the researchers were generally from community organisations known to the community (the individuals themselves were well known also), and they gave substantial information regarding the purpose of the research at the beginning and could add information about the relevance of certain questions if asked. In some cases the research had been publicised through community newsletters, which lessened the element of surprise. Issues with individual linguistic groups are discussed below.
Measuring language proficiency
We examined a number of ways of categorising English, mother tongue and other language proficiency. It is important to stress that we were not looking at simplifying the categorising of people into speaking English or not. We needed to look at indicators that would demonstrate a persons' level of fluency in English, both spoken and written. Often having basic levels of English means that a person is perceived as speaking English and would not be deemed to need an interpreter, however, the basic speakers are unlikely to understand enough English to be able to effectively communicate with a doctor or social worker for example.

The Common European Framework for Reference for languages outlined a framework with language proficiency benchmarks based on ‘can do’ statements, which are objective criteria, used to describe language proficiency. They have broken down the benchmarks into three categories each of which have two tiers, meaning six divisions in all. The three categories are basic user, independent user, and proficient user.

We decided to draw on the above categories to create our own framework, which would be adaptable to an analysis of both mother tongue proficiencies and the use of English as a language learned both through classes and through the home. The European framework was not directly used for two reasons. First that it seemed much more geared to identifying levels of English (and other languages) in an educational setting rather than an analysis based on proficiencies for service access and information provision. Secondly the six categorisations were quite complex and involved gathering a precise level of information for each. With our objective being to gather information on English and mother tongue levels to examine interpreter provision and the effective use of different formats in information provision, a six division level of competency was not needed. The information can still guide ESOL provision and more precise data on individual course applicants can be obtained from entrance exams. On a much more problematic level gathering information for six divisions would involve lengthy questioning. As the option of setting exams was not plausible it would have involved lengthy telephone based questioning that would be impractical for respondents and researchers alike. It was therefore decided to develop a three category approach that was directly based on the target group. However, as the categories were roughly based on the above framework this would allow comparisons to be drawn with elsewhere. In addition, as the framework was
developed using fixed objective questions the option of reusing the methodology over time to obtain comparable data was left open.

The three categories developed, Basic level, intermediate level, and proficient level are outlined in section 1.2. They cover both written and spoken English / and other languages.

**Tasks set in questions' sheet:**
The questions were set to ascertain the above levels. For example, respondents were asked if they would be able to report problems of overcharging firstly by making a telephone complaint and subsequently by writing a formal letter. They were asked if they could follow a film in a particular language – a difficult task. Other questions were asked regarding listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. All answers were graded by researchers into three categories equivalent to the three above divisions and a person's level was determined by taking an average of this.

The questions set were designed to extract competencies from adults and **not children** (defined as under 16) who were still learning languages. Questions were therefore not asked of children (except on insistence of respondents).

**Piloting:**
The research was piloted with three communities before being finalised and the main surveys set up.

**Training:**
20 researchers were trained (ten men and ten women) in seven separate sessions. The sessions were also used to raise awareness of the language issues the report was to address and to obtain specific information on each community group in order to clarify issues that would need to be taken into account in the survey with specific linguistic communities. The training also ensured that there was uniform interpretation of the meaning of the questions in English on the research sheets when they were expressed in other languages.

**Samples:**
One of the most important factors in the research was to obtain representative samples of the study populations. The information gathered at stage 1 was the primary informant of this. For example, within the Indian community, we knew that around 67% of the community were north Indian (and likely to be Hindi-Punjabi
speakers) and 33% south Indian with other languages. We knew that a substantial proportion of the Pakistani community lived in Craigavon. We knew that there was a proportion of Mandarin speakers (and other mainland Chinese languages) among the Chinese community and that that included students/academics and a refugee population. All of these factors were taken on board when constructing the samples in order to ensure balance on these categories as well as location, class/employment, and other factors.

Databases held by community associations were used as a core for some of the samples. However, these were used with great care to ensure the representative nature of the sample. Community databases may be representative of a particular section of the community which has more contact with the community association. For example, if the community association is faith based the secular section of the community is less likely to have contact. There may also be weightings on occupation and other factors too.

When compiling the Chinese sample a number of regional and local databases were used and a ratio of 1 in 15 people were selected from lists (care was taken not to overlap). With the Chinese Chamber of Commerce database this ratio was reduced to give proportional representation to managers and owners. To ensure Chinese households in the catering sector outside community databases were included a random sample from the Yellow Pages was obtained. For Mandarin speakers, surveys were undertaken from Mandarin speakers' groups databases and a number of refugees were contacted through other information sources. The researchers were given lists selected in this way and did not control the sample. Within the Pakistani community an additional list of names of Pakistani traders was compiled, to supplement existing databases. With the Albanian speaking community there was no database and the snowballing technique was used to construct a list.

Regarding sample sizes with the Chinese community 500 people were surveyed from an estimated total of 8000. For the Indian community 250 (of 1600) were surveyed, for the Pakistani community 200 (of 700) of the Bangladeshi community 100 (of 450) and 37 (of 50-100) of Albanian speakers.

The small size and dispersed nature of communities (with the exception of the Chinese community) made it difficult to obtain a broader sample. However, the project did not see this as problematic as the objective is to examine the proportionate need
for interpreters and the general suitability of formats for effective communication. In this context, there is leeway for a margin of error without impacting on the outcomes and recommendations.

It was important to customise aspects of each community survey. This can be shown in two examples from the Albanian and Pakistani surveys. Firstly, the Albanian survey had to be snowballed. This was the first time similar work had been conducted with the population and more in depth information was often requested by respondents. In this context the researcher felt it was easier to visit homes and go over the questions rather than doing this by phone. With the Pakistani community a particular question was raised regarding Urdu. As Urdu is the national language and often the medium for education many Punjabi speakers were likely to respond that they used written Urdu for cultural reasons when this was not always the case. To mitigate this, researchers who were very aware of the issue, phrased questions in a particular manner in an attempt to avoid possible stigma. Researchers reported back however, that this remained an issue.

**Community development**
The author sees the above research as strongly linked rather than detached from the community development process. As mentioned, over 20 people from the BME sector received training in research skill in order to undertake the surveys and data collation. Many had not been involved in research before. This partnership was also an opportunity for some of the BME organisations to make telephone contact with hundreds of members of their communities. In addition to raising awareness on language rights some also used the opportunity to provide information on the activities of their organisations.

**Data collation:**
Numerous datasets were then produced on the following:

**Proficiency in English**
- Oral and written data was collated on: overall data, by gender, by generation, by age, by occupation, by ethnic group (where applicable), by geographical location
- The data was then split into mother tongue categories and the above datasets were reproduced for each

**Information was then collated on:**
Proficient and intermediate English speakers per family
Interpreter needed by proficiency in English; and interpreter supplied by proficiency in English and interpreter needed
Demographic / Migratory details: Generation by age; Generation by mother tongue; Population by geographical area; Family size; adults / children; Education levels; Employment profile

Proficiency in Mother tongues and other languages
Oral and written data was collated on: overall data, by gender, by generation, by occupation, and on number of languages spoken.

Finally data on English proficiency was cross-referenced with written mother tongue proficiency in order to work out effective communication mechanisms with the section of the population that had basic level English. Other datasets were also produced when appropriate.

Interpreter skills sessions:
As a follow up to the research the project held interpreter skills taster sessions for four linguistic communities: rural Chinese, Portuguese speakers, Sylheti speakers and Arabic speakers. The sessions were language specific and encouraged participants to take up further training and to look at undertaking interpreter work. Three additional trainers were trained for work with their linguistic communities.
Section 2

Mapping Minority Ethnic Languages in NI

2.0 Majority Ethnic and English speaking populations
2.1 South East Asian Languages
♦ Chinese Languages
♦ Other South East Asian languages including Korean, Japanese, Malaysian, Filipino languages, Thai, and others

2.2 South Asian Languages
♦ Languages of the Pakistani, Indian, Sikh, and Bangladeshi communities

2.3 Arabic speaking communities
♦ Data on the 22 Arabic speaking countries of North Africa and the Middle East

2.4 African languages
♦ Information on languages spoken by people from central and southern African origin

2.5 Central Asian Languages
♦ Information on speakers of Turkish, Farsi, Pushtu, Dari, and other languages

2.6 European languages
♦ Information on European languages including speakers of Spanish and Portuguese from Latin America

Please Note:
- Main languages refer only to English when it is a major native language in countries of origin

- There is no standard format for categorising communities or presenting information in this section. This is due to the different characteristics of linguistic and other groups which do not allow this

- There are over 70 minority ethnic languages spoken in NI!
Majority Ethnic and English speaking populations

- Majority Ethnic Languages
- Irish Travellers
- The Jewish Community
- Many Black Irish, Black British and many Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

This report concentrates on languages other than English spoken by people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Irish and other languages spoken by majority ethnic communities are therefore out of the scope of this report. Some writers have argued that those of Irish identity in NI are an ethnic minority, Irish would therefore be a minority ethnic language. The term minority ethnic language is not used in this context in this report.

The language usage of minority ethnic populations who primarily have English as a mother tongue were not surveyed and are not included in the language map. This does not apply to minority ethnic communities where English is a major medium (such as in the Philippines, India and African countries) but where many members of the community have other mother tongues. However, it does apply to many Black Irish, Black British and many Australian, New Zealand, US citizens and Canadian citizens. It also applies to the Jewish community and Irish Travellers:

The Jewish community has a long history in the north of Ireland. Numbers have fallen in recent years to around 360 people. There is a synagogue in north Belfast. In addition to English, Hebrew is used in the scripture texts and Yiddish is sometimes spoken in older family circles.

There are around 1700+ Irish Travellers living in NI. Although information provision strategies with Irish Travellers should be conducted through the medium of English it is important that such strategies are geared and customised to the specific needs of this community. There are low levels of literacy in English within the Irish Traveller community due to barriers to education. There is also an oral language known as Cant, Shelta or Gammon spoken within Irish Traveller communities. For further information refer to Kirk & Baoill (2002).
2.1 Chinese and other South East Asian languages

This section covers the following:

The Chinese community
Main Languages:
*Spoken dialects:* Cantonese, Hakka, Mandarin, Fujianese
*Written forms:* Complex, Simplified

The Philippines
Main Languages: English, Tagalog, others

Japan
Main Languages: Japanese

Korea
Main Languages: Korean

Malaysia
Main Languages: Mandarin, Malay, Tamil, others

Thailand
Main Languages: Thai

Vietnam
Main Languages: Cantonese, Vietnamese

Other South East Asian languages
In Other Words?

Top left: Map of Hong Kong
Top right: HPSS access leaflet in Complex (Traditional) Chinese
Left: Map of China
Below: Researchers who worked on the project
The Chinese community

Summary
The Chinese community in the NI is by far the largest minority ethnic community with around 8,000 people estimated to be of Chinese origin.

The majority of Chinese people originate from Hong Kong (particularly the New Territories). There are also people from Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and mainland China (People’s Republic of China). Migration largely started in the 1960s and there are many Northern Irish Chinese of second or third generation.

The high proportion of people from Hong Kong means that the majority of the community (up to 80%-90%) speaks Cantonese rather than other Chinese languages such as Mandarin or Fujianese. It also means that the most commonly used written form of Chinese in Northern Ireland is the complex rather than the simplified form.

Geographical Locations in NI
There are Chinese populations in all areas of NI. The largest estimated number of people is in Belfast with 2,500. There are also large concentrations in the County Armagh area (1000) and Derry (450). In addition the following district council areas have the subsequent estimated numbers (each):
300-450: Antrim, Ards, Ballymena, Castlereagh, Coleraine, Down, Newry and Mourne, Newtonabbey, North Down
150-300 Carrickfergus, Cookstown, Fermanagh, Larne, Limavady, Lisburn, Magherafelt
50-100 Ballymoney, Moyle, Omagh, Strabane

The majority of the Hong Kong community work in the catering industry. The population from mainland China are divided largely between students/academics and refugees- many of the latter would work in catering. There are smaller numbers working in other professions such as health, IT, community projects and other areas.

The project conducted a large telephone survey of the Chinese community. The above information provided by Lee (2002) and other community informants. Recently released census data is felt to significantly undercount the Chinese community and is not referenced (see section 1.3 for further details).

* Some Hong Kong Chinese speak Hakka
* Greater Craigavon area up to 800 remainder in: Armagh, Banbridge and Dungannon areas
**Information on Chinese languages**

Whilst they are all often colloquially referred to as Chinese there are a number of separate spoken Chinese dialects that are quite different. They all share a common written language yet there are two different forms for this.

**The dialects of spoken Chinese**

There are numerous spoken dialects of Chinese including Mandarin, the most spoken language in the world with over one billion speakers. In Northern Ireland the following spoken dialects are the most common:

**Cantonese** (also called Yue or Guangdong)

The most common language in Northern Ireland with about 80%-90% of the community largely originating from Hong Kong but also Macao, Malaysia, southern China (Guangdong cities of Canton (Guangzhou) and Foshan), and some (ethnic Chinese) Vietnamese.

**Hakka** (also called Kejia)

Spoken by around 5% of mainly elderly members of the (Hong Kong) Chinese community in NI. Also spoken or understood by a proportion of Cantonese speakers.

**Mandarin** (also called Putonghua in China; Kuoyu/ Guoyu in Taiwan)

Spoken in Mainland China, Taiwan and by ethnic Chinese in Malaysia, and Singapore. Spoken by around 10% of Chinese community in NI.

**Fujianese** (Min, Fukien, Hokkien)

The Fujianese dialect is spoken in Fujian Province of Mainland China.

There are also small numbers of speakers of other Chinese languages

**The written forms of Chinese**

Written Chinese can allow speakers of very different spoken Chinese languages to communicate due to a common written language. Whilst the spoken pronunciation of the respective spoken languages may be quite different, the written characters of the language are the same. A comparison can be drawn between English, French and Spanish where the character ‘8’ is written the same in all three but is pronounced ‘eight’, ‘huit’ and ‘ocho’ respectively. There are however, currently two different written forms of ‘Chinese’ due to changes introduced by the Cultural Revolution in Mainland China:

1: Complex (or traditional) Chinese
In Other Words?

Used in **Hong Kong** and Taiwan (most common form in NI)

**2: Simplified (or modern) Chinese**
Used in **Mainland China** since the Cultural Revolution and in **Singapore** and **Malaysia**
General Language Profile of the Chinese Community

Proficiency in English (Adults)

- Only 17% of first generation Chinese are proficient in spoken English with a further 25% at an intermediate level and 58% basic
- For first generation written English 11% are proficient, with 28% intermediate and 61% basic level
- The vast majority of second generation Chinese are proficient in English. Notably a minority (around 20%) are at an intermediate level, possibly through a lack of language support in the home
- Levels of written English were slightly lower than spoken English
- There are slight differences on grounds of gender in the overall community with men having higher levels of English. 56% of women speak basic oral English compared to 46% of men. With written English this is 58% of women and 50% of men.

Left:  Fig 1: Levels of oral English: 1st Generation Chinese community
Right  Fig 2: Levels of written English: 1st Generation Chinese community

• There were clear patterns by age group with the young having much higher levels of English
• There were significant patterns on the English language profile in regards to **occupation**. Those **outside** the **catering industry** had much higher levels of English than those within, thus indicating that language is a major barrier to alternative employment.

• Regarding **geographical location in Northern Ireland** the substantial Chinese populations in both **Craigavon** and the **North West** had **significantly lower levels** of oral and written English than those elsewhere, especially **Belfast**.

• The average **household size** was **3.47 people**. Within households around 32% had no one who could speak English above a basic level and a further 26% at an intermediate level. 42% of households therefore had at least one proficient English speaker in the household.

![Fig 4: Highest level of English per household](image)

- **Basic** 32%
- **Intermediate** 26%
- **Proficient** 42%

• **Interpreter Provision**: The question was posed whether respondents would need an interpreter at the doctor. 62% of those responding said yes. However only a **small minority** of those (12%) **had ever been provided with an interpreter**.

*30% of those surveyed were in the Greater Belfast area; 30% in Greater Craigavon; 20% in the North West; 8% in Co. Antrim; 6% in North Down and 7% elsewhere.*
一个避难的地方？

北爱尔兰的寻求庇护者和难民

Robbie McVeigh 博士受难民行动团体（Refugee Action Group）委托所作的一份需要评估

本文概述了调查报告《一个避难的地方？》中提出的一些问题。这份报告调查了目前在有关政策背景下为寻求庇护者和难民所提供的待遇，并针对解决现存的需要、改善现有的待遇和使北爱尔兰真正成为一个避难之地等目标提出了一系列建议。此报告由北爱平等委员会资助完成。

Above: Translation of ‘A Place of Refuge?’ report in simplified (Modern) Chinese
Cantonese and Hakka speakers
Up to 80%-90% of the Chinese community in NI have Cantonese as a first language. Cantonese speakers live across NI and originate largely from Hong Kong but also from south China, Macao, and Malaysia. There are also a number ethnic Chinese refugees who arrived in Craigavon from Vietnam in the 1970s who are also Cantonese speakers. A major form of employment for the Cantonese speaking community is in the catering industry due to barriers to other forms of employment.

Around 5% of mainly elderly members of the Chinese community would be speakers of Hakka. Hakka speakers would tend to be of the same geographical origin as Cantonese speakers.

Cantonese Speakers

English Proficiency
- The figures for first generation Cantonese speakers were similar to the overall figure for the whole Chinese community.
- Gender: Men have slightly higher levels of fluency than women. This is likely to be due to differential access to education and employment.
- Second Generation: not all second-generation adults were proficient in English. A minority (around 25%) were at an intermediate level. This was more pronounced with written English and is likely to be due to a lack of language support in the home.

Fig 5: Cantonese speakers: English Levels by gender, overall, generation

Proficiency in Cantonese / written (Complex) Chinese
Cantonese proficiency
- First generation Cantonese speakers: almost all were proficient speakers of their mother tongue; a tiny minority were graded as intermediate.
In Other Words?

- With the **second generation**: this fell sharply with **45% being proficient**, 41% intermediate and 14% at a basic level.
- **Gender**: There were slight differences between men and women.

### Written Chinese

- Those **Cantonese speakers** who use the language in its written form use the **complex written form** of Chinese.
- Not all **first generation** Chinese used the written form of the language. A **slight majority** of 62% were proficient; a further 29% at an intermediate level; and 9% with basic written Chinese.
- Of the **second generation**, only a **tiny proportion** (5%) wrote Chinese **proficiently**, with the majority (73%) with no or basic written skills; 22% had intermediate written Chinese.
- **Gender**: There were slight differences between men and women.

![Fig 6: Levels of Spoken Cantonese and written complex Chinese by generation](image)

### Mother Tongue fluency in relation to proficiency in English

- A crucial statistic was that of Cantonese speakers who had basic levels of oral English and would be in need of language support, 46% were proficient in written Chinese, with 45% intermediate and 9% at a basic level.

![Fig 7: Cantonese / written Chinese proficiency by level of English](image)

### Speakers of other languages:

- 11% of Cantonese speakers also spoke other languages in addition to Cantonese and English. Other languages were either Mandarin or Hakka or European languages.
Hakka speakers
o Around 33% of Hakka speakers also speak another language (Mostly Cantonese but there are also a few Mandarin speakers)

Levels of English
o **Hakka** speakers have very low levels of **English**. Less than 20% speak proficient English and the figure is lower for written English. This is due to Hakka speakers being largely the elderly section of the population
o **Of first generation Hakka speakers only a few percent were proficient in English**

Proficiency in Hakka / written (Complex) Chinese
o **Hakka**: The majority of second-generation speakers were either proficient (around 65%) or intermediate speakers of Hakka, with a small number at basic level
o Hakka speakers who write Chinese use the **complex written form**

o Around 25% of all Hakka speakers had only basic written **Chinese**; this rose to around 40% in the second generation. A majority had an intermediate level with around 20% overall writing Chinese proficiently
o In written Chinese there were significant differences on **gender** grounds with a higher proportion of women at a basic level

Fig 8: Fluency in Hakka and written (Complex) Chinese by gender, generation & overall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Women</th>
<th>Written Women</th>
<th>Oral Men</th>
<th>Written Men</th>
<th>Oral 1st generation</th>
<th>Written 1st generation</th>
<th>Oral 2nd+ generation</th>
<th>Written 2nd+ generation</th>
<th>Oral Overall</th>
<th>Written Overall</th>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mother Tongue Fluency in relation to proficiency in English**

o Notably only around 20% of those who spoke **basic oral English** were proficient in written Chinese (around 25% basic and 65% intermediate). This means that written translation may not be a suitable medium for communication with this group

Fig 9: Fluency in Hakka and written (Complex Chinese) by fluency in English
Mandarin and Fujianese speakers
Mandarin and Fujianese speakers in NI would largely be from Mainland China and make up around 10-20% of the Chinese community here although numbers are increasing. The vast majority are first generation migrants and can be subdivided into two general categories. Firstly, Mandarin speaking students/academics and secondly Mandarin and Fujianese speaking refugees, many of whom may work in catering. The differences in English proficiency between these two groups are discussed below.

The simplified written form of Chinese is used in Mainland China, although Mandarin speakers from Taiwan and some other areas would use the complex form.

Mandarin Speakers
- Around 33% speak an additional language, mainly Cantonese

Proficiency in English
- Overall levels of English, particularly written are considerably higher than the overall figures for the first generation. Around half are proficient or intermediate
- Almost all are first generation
- There is little difference on gender
Proficiency in Mandarin / written (simplified) Chinese

- Almost all Mandarin speakers write (simplified) Chinese proficiently
- As all speakers write proficiently, there is no variation on levels of English usage
Fujianese Speakers
- Almost all Fujianese speakers have basic level English
- All speak Fujianese proficiently and also speak either Cantonese or Mandarin
- Almost all have intermediate written (simplified) Chinese

Language proficiency in two main Mandarin / Fujian groups

Students and Academics
There are over 300 mainly Mandarin speaking students and staff in the two Universities here. The numbers are increasing. Students and university staff themselves will tend to have intermediate to proficient English on arrival as a course or employment condition. English classes will develop skills quickly. Notably around 25% will travel with families who will not necessarily speak English and will be in need of language support. All of this group would proficiently write (simplified) Chinese

Refugees
Chinese refugees in NI generally have much lower levels of both spoken and written English than those arriving for study. In addition the unsettling experiences of being a refugee both in terms of own country experiences and experiences here (coupled with the need to engage a new range of services and proceed with a complex legal process) means there is a need for greater language support. For example, one Chinese interpreter reported that despite refugees being a small proportion of the local Chinese community in a particular area, they made up half of all interpreter appointments. Many Chinese refugees will end up working in the catering industry. Levels of written (simplified) Chinese are good for Mandarin speakers but more intermediate for Fujianese speakers. There is a need to take into account that refugees by definition will
have a very different relationship with the Chinese state than students/academics on official schemes.

**Communication structures: the Chinese community**

**Organisations:** (see appendix for contacts)

There are a number of Chinese community organisations, all of whom meet in a quarterly Chinese Forum convened by the Chinese Welfare Association (CWA), the largest of the groups. Other resourced groups include the Sai Pak (North West) project, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the independent Wah Hep Chinese Community Association in Craigavon and the Mandarin Speakers Association. There are a number of local Chinese groups from Antrim, Causeway, Mid-Ulster and elsewhere, local Chinese women’s groups and the Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA).

In addition mainstream voluntary sector groups have projects working specifically with the Chinese community.

**Interpreting posts:**

There are a number of salaried interpreters in Chinese languages:

- CWA have two full time community interpreters funded by the EHSSB
- Wah Hep have a full time interpreter covering the Southern Board area (funded by an southern area interagency group)
- Sai Pak have a full time interpreter (funded by the Londonderry Regeneration Initiative)

In addition there are a number of people undertaking interpreting work on a freelance basis. Much work is also done on an informal and voluntary basis. The following salaried positions also involve interpreter work:

- Barnardo’s Chinese Lay Health Project bilingual Lay Health Worker
- South and Eastern Education and Library Board Chinese Home Schools Liaison Officer

**Translated Materials:**

There have been a number of resources translated into Chinese in NI. These include leaflets by Health and Social Services bodies and other agencies as well as translation within the community sector. Most materials have been translated into the Complex form of Chinese. There are few materials in simplified Chinese.
Additional communication mechanisms:

**Reaching Cantonese / Hakka Speakers**
In addition to providing information via the activities of community groups or in places frequented by Chinese people (from the Chinese supermarkets to Post Offices):
- CWA produces a quarterly community newsletter ‘Dragon World’ sent to members of the Chinese Forum, Chinese catering establishments (approx 500), as well as a further 400 individual members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce
- A 10 minute Cantonese radio programme *Wah Yan Jee Sing* broadcast Wednesday evenings on Radio Ulster briefing the community on the latest health and social issues

**Reaching Mandarin / Fujianese speakers**

**Students and Academics:**
Written material in simplified Chinese is accessible to all. Contact could be made via the Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) and Mandarin Speakers Association (MSA). Both have e-mail networks.

**Refugees:**
Many of the Chinese community organisations above for example Sai Pak and Wah Hep will have contact with Chinese refugees in their local areas. Other organisations would also have contact with Chinese refugees such as Barnardo’s Chinese Lay Health Project, the Law Centre (NI) and NICEM.

**Craigavon Area**
The Wah Hep Chinese Community Association have opened a Chinese information centre by Brownlow health centre serving the local Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese community. The association's interpreter is based in the centre.

**Below:** the *Wah Hep* Chinese Information Centre in Craigavon
In Other Words?
Other South East Asian Languages:

The Filipino community
Estimated Numbers: 600
Languages: English, Tagalog, Ilokano, Visayan/Cebuano, Sibunno

International nurses from the Philippines have recently increased the size of the NI Filipino population. There was an existing Filipino community consisting of both a settled community (many of whom are in mixed marriages) and a student population.

Since 1999 the shortage of nurses in NI has led to the granting of work permits for several hundred nurses both in the NHS and in private nursing homes. The population as a whole is quite young and the settled population is mainly made up of women (up to 90%).

Geographical Location:
Across NI with concentrations in Belfast, Craigavon, Derry, Omagh and at a number of hospital sites.

Language Proficiency:
English: Schooling in the Philippines is generally taught through the medium of English meaning there are few in the community who would have a language barrier. Both students and migrant workers will face language requirements. In the community as a whole there are a small number of people without proficient English.

Other Languages:
The vast majority will speak other languages including Tagalog, the national language of the Philippines, and other languages from the islands including: Ilokano, Visayan, Cebuano, Sibunno.

Organisations:
There are two Filipino community organisations run on a voluntary basis:
NI Filipino Community in Action
NI Filipino Community Association
In addition Trade Unions and health and social service bodies in the nursing sector would be in contact with migrant workers.
Japanese community
Estimated Numbers: 80-100
Languages: Japanese (High Literacy)
The Japanese community is largely a young community and can be
categorised under the following headings:
50% Students both UU and QUB; some with families
25% Settled Mainly in mixed marriages and geographically spread
across NI
25% Migrant Workers Highly skilled migrant workers in local
Japanese factories mainly in Carrickfergus and North Down areas.

English Proficiency:
Students: University have language requirements for students, but
families may not speak English
Settled: Mixed profile- some would need an interpreter
Workers: Those employed tend to be men with generally high
English levels. Women tend to have less English

Community structures:
There is a Japan Society for NI mainly geared towards local people
interested in Japan and businesses. Japanese women have tended to
be involved in community activities which offers an opportunity for
communication. There are a number of people involved in
interpreting work through the University, workplaces or community
contacts.

Korean community
Estimated Numbers: 130
Languages spoken: Korean (High literacy) and English
The Korean community is a young community of mainly families
and few older people.
• 90% of the community are skilled migrant workers with
Korean companies in Ards, Craigavon, Antrim, Lisburn, Belfast
and Carickfergus. Migrant workers are often on three-year
contracts
• 10% are students in QUB

English Proficiency:
There are big differences between men and women. Men generally
have proficient English due to requirements of jobs and study.
Women have much less English although there may be a better
grasp of the written form due to the teaching of English in Korean
schools. Family members often do interpreting informally.
Community Structures: women have been involved in community
activities although there is no community organisation.
In Other Words?
Vietnamese community
Estimated Numbers: 100-150
Languages spoken: Cantonese, Vietnamese
Largely resident in the Craigavon area, the first people to arrive in NI from Vietnam in the 1970s were a group of refugees who were picked up by a ship captain from NI (McVeigh 2002:11). The refugees were ethnic Chinese and Cantonese speakers. A separate group of Vietnamese migrant workers also settled in the area in the 80s and are Vietnamese speakers.

English Proficiency:
English levels mixed with a need for language support.

Community structure:
Advice and support is provided by the Vietnamese club in Craigavon and also by the Wah Hep Chinese Community Association and Barnardo's Chinese Lay Health Project.

Malaysian community
Estimated Numbers: 140
Languages spoken: Mandarin, Cantonese, Malayo, Tamil, others
Most Malaysians are university students. The community is transient and numbers are dropping. Languages spoken depend on ethnic group in NI:
75% Ethnic Chinese Mandarin; some Cantonese speakers
20% Ethnic Malay Malay (Malayo)
5% Ethnic Indian Tamil and others

English proficiency:
English levels generally high due to university language requirements.

Community structure:
Community based around university. Also many use Belfast Islamic Centre.

Thai community
Estimated Numbers: 30-80
Languages spoken: Thai
There is a settled community of mainly women in mixed marriages as well as number of students and migrant workers.

English proficiency: Mixed, need for interpreter support.
Community structure: women involved in community activities.

Others:
In Other Words?

There are small numbers of people from Indonesia and Brunei. There are also indication of small numbers from East Timor, areas of Indochina, and elsewhere in the region.
2.2 South Asian Languages

This section covers the following:

Bangladeshi community
Main Languages: Sylheti, Bengali, English

Indian community
Main Languages:
Hindi, Punjabi, English, and Tamil, Kannada, Kanta, Malayala, Marati, Oriya, Telugu, others

Pakistani community
Main Languages:
Punjabi, Urdu, English, and Beluchi, Sindhi, Pushtu, Mirpuri

Sikh community
Main Languages: Punjabi, English

Also Sri Lanka
South Asian Languages
The following section is broken down into communities based on the current states in South Asia: Pakistan, Bangladesh, India (also with information on the Sikh community) and Sri Lanka.

It is worth noting that elderly members of the Pakistani community pointed out that whilst they are recorded as first generation Pakistani they were actually born in the then colony of India prior to independence and partition. Similarly Bangladeshi was East Pakistan until it gained independence from the latter in 1971. Most of the population would have migrated as manual or professional workers. There are also small numbers of refugees.

History has a bearing on the rich language map of the region, in which there are similarities between many north Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi languages.

Hindi and Urdu
Hindi and Urdu are the national languages of India and Pakistan respectively, although they are not spoken by the entire population in these countries.

In their spoken forms Hindi and Urdu are virtually the same language. This means speakers of Hindi and Urdu can understand almost all of each other’s languages despite differences in word order and vocabulary- with Hindi deriving most of its words from Sanskrit and Urdu containing many words from Persian and Arabic.

The written scripts however are completely different. Hindi is written from left to right in Sanskrit characters and Urdu from right to left in Perso-Arabic (or Nastaliq) script.

Above: Urdu Script
Left: Hindi Script
In Other Words?

**Urdu**
Urdu is the Pakistani national language. Urdu is the mother tongue of around 10 million Pakistanis and is a fluent second language for around 80 million more. In India around 50 million Muslims are also Urdu speakers.

Many members of Pakistani communities outside of Pakistan will speak Punjabi as the language of the home and Urdu as a second language. But for religious and cultural reasons are likely to describe themselves as Urdu speakers.

**Hindi**
Hindi is India's national language and it is one of the many languages recognised in the constitution. Whilst it is the republic’s widest spoken language it is understood by only around a third of the country's population and is centred on the north-central region of India, primarily in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

**Punjabi (also spelt Panjabi)**
Punjabi is spoken in the historic region of the Punjab now divided between India and Pakistan.

Punjabi is the first language of around 66% of the population in Pakistan. In India, as well as being the official language of the Punjab state, it is also spoken in the nearby states of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and by some in the New Delhi area. Different dialects of Punjabi are spoken in India and Pakistan.

Punjabi is most commonly an oral language. In India the written script runs from left to right and is known as Gurmukhi meaning ‘proceeding from the mouth of the Guru’. The Punjabi language is closely associated with the Sikh religion. In Pakistani Punjabi however, the language is written in the Perso-Arabic script, although most writing will in fact be done in Urdu.

**Bengali (or Bangla)**
Bengali the national language of Bangladesh. Most of the Bangladeshi community in Northern Ireland would be speakers of Sylheti. Sylheti is a largely spoken dialect of Bengali from the north-eastern Sylhet region of Bangladesh where most migration to the UK has occurred from.

**Arabic**
Arabic is the sacred language of Muslims. Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indian Muslims practicing Islam will read the Koran in Arabic.
In Other Words?

However the vast majority will read it with a translation to understand its contents. Reading Koran Arabic does not mean other material in Arabic can be read. For more information on Arabic see section 2.3.

Others

Gujarati: Gujarati is a language from the Gujarat region of India which is a widely spoken community language in Britain. There are however only a few Gujarati families in Northern Ireland.

Kutchi: There are also few Kutchi speakers in NI.

Other languages in India: There are many largely south Indian languages also spoken in NI which are listed in the section on the Indian community.

How much of each others languages people are likely to understand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hindi</th>
<th>Urdu</th>
<th>Punjabi</th>
<th>Bengali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Almost all</td>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>Almost all</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>A little</td>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>A little</td>
<td>A little</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: UN Department of Public Information; (Richards, 1996)

Above: Report in Bengali

Top left: Researchers at the Indian Community Centre

Bottom left: Researchers at the Bangladeshi Welfare Association
The Bangladeshi Community
Estimated numbers: 450-500
Main Languages: Sylheti, Bengali (also called Bangla), English
Geographical Locations:
Greater Belfast, North Down, Ards, Small numbers elsewhere

The sizable Bangladeshi community in NI have increased their visibility over the last few years. Most of the men in the community are involved in the catering business and many women work in the home. There are also a smaller number of students and professionals. The community is very young with the majority of the second generation being children.

Languages spoken: Sylheti and Bengali
The vast majority (80-85%) of the local Bangladeshi community originate from the Sylhet region and speak of Sylheti. Sylheti is a generally spoken dialect of Bengali, the Bangladeshi national language. There are a smaller number of Bengali speakers who tend to be professionals.

English Proficiency:
Overall Community:
Oral English: 19% proficient, 17% Intermediate, 64% Basic
Written English: 14% proficient, 22% Intermediate, 64% Basic
• Gender: There were only slight differences between men and women, with men having marginally higher proficiency
• The community is young and there are few second generation adults. The average household size is 3.7 adults
• Highest level per household: 33% of households would have no one in the house above basic level English
**Interpreter need and provision**

- 48% of respondents stated they would **need an interpreter** with a GP
- Only a tiny minority of the above 48% **had ever been provided** with an interpreter
- Of the 52% who did not state they needed an interpreter, 47% **had basic levels of English**
- The latter two points indicate a reliance on informal or family members interpreting

**Formal Education levels**

- 61% of the community had been educated to secondary level. 24% had received no formal education or had been educated at primary level only, with 15% reaching further or higher education. Formal education below secondary level is likely to have an impact on opportunities to learn the written forms of languages

**Mother Tongue proficiencies**

- As previously mentioned, Sylheti is generally an oral language and its written form is not commonly used. The use of the written form of standard Bengali is more common
- **Just under half** of the overall community write their mother tongue proficiently
- Amongst those with **basic English** around **half proficiently wrote** their mother tongue. The figure was similar for intermediate written English

**Community Structure:**
The Bangladeshi Welfare Association and Bangladeshi Shah Jalal Mosque currently share premises in Newtonards. Some Belfast based Bangladeshis would also use Belfast Islamic Centre. There are a few interpreters within the community.
In Other Words?

Left: Sylheti audiotape  Right: The Bangladeshi Islamic Centre in Newtonards
**The Indian Community**

**Estimated numbers: 1500+**

**Main Languages:** Hindi, Punjabi, English, Tamil, Kannada, Kanta, Malayala, Marati, Oriya, Telugu and others

**Locations:** Across Northern Ireland

The Indian community are one of the longest established minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland. The first major migrations took place in the 1920s and 30s but roots can be traced into the 19th Century.

**Summary**

India is a vast country which is linguistically diverse. This is reflected in the Indian community in NI.

Around 70% of the Indian community here would originate from northern central India and are generally Punjabi or Hindi speakers. There would be many 2nd and 3rd generation members of this community as well as elderly first generation.

Around 30% would be from southern India and would speak a range of other languages including Tamil, Kannada, Kanta, Malayala, Marati, Oriya and Telugu. Most migration took place in the 70s and 80s. More recently there have been migrant workers arriving to work in the fields of nursing and IT.

Most of the Indian community have English as one of their mother tongues. However, there are sections of the community, particularly within Punjabi and Hindi speakers and the elderly, where there is little English spoken. Not all Indian languages are used in their written form.

**English Proficiency:**

- There are high levels of English in the Indian community with 60% of people proficient in both spoken and written English and just under 20% at an intermediate level. Around 20% speak and write basic English.
- There are very slight differences between men and women, with men marginally more likely to have proficient English.
• 30% of the overall community are second generation, 67% first generation. 3% of the community are majority ethnic indicating mixed marriages. For first generation speakers, around 55% are proficient in English, and a further 20% intermediate. This means around 25% of first generation Indians have basic English. Of the second generation the vast majority are proficient in English with a minority (10-15%) at an intermediate level.

• Around 20% of the overall community are 56 years old and above. The elderly in general have much lower levels of proficiency in English. Less than 40% of those over 56 have proficient English. Just under 40% are at the basic level.
• There is also a correlation between English proficiency and the type of work undertaken. Over 90% of Indian professionals are proficient in English; in business and trader employment the figure is around 45-50%

• **Education levels**: 21% have been educated to primary level, 32% to secondary and 46% at third level

• **Employment profile**: 8% are in business; 29% professionals; 24% students; 21% undertake housework; 9% retired and 9% other
 Mothers tongues:

- **Numbers of languages** (excluding English): 50% of people would have one mother tongue; 37% speak two languages; 11% three languages and 3% four or more.

- Around two thirds of the community are **Hindi / Punjabi** speakers with the other **southern Indian** languages making up one third of the community.

- South Indian languages include: **Tamil, Kannada, Kanta, Malayala, Marati, Oriya, Telugu**.

- There are also speakers of **Bengali** and **Urdu** among the Indian community. There are very few speakers of **Gujarati** or **Kutchi** in Northern Ireland although there are many speakers of these languages among Indian communities in Britain.

- In addition to languages indigenous to India a number of members of the community also have learned French, Spanish and other European languages.

- For speakers of southern Indian languages a high proportion proficiently write **English** (80%+); this falls to around half with Hindi and Punjabi.

- **Gender**: there are differences between men and women with men having slightly higher levels of English across the mother tongues. The difference is much greater among Punjabi speakers where over 60% of men write English proficiently compared to just under 40% of women.

- **Generation**: as expected there are marked differences between first and second+ generation individuals. Within the second generation almost everybody is above basic level English, with the majority being proficient. For the first generation, up to 30% of Hindi-Punjabi speakers have basic written English. The figure is much lower (less than 10%) for south Indian languages.

**Fig 18: Mother Tongues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindi / Punjabi</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig 19: Written English by mother tongue**

*Figures show proficiency levels in written English.*

**Written usage of mother tongues**

- **Punjabi is almost always an oral language**. It does have a written form. However, Punjabi speakers here do not generally use this. Punjabi speakers may read some Hindi.
• **Second generation**: The vast majority of second generation Indians will not read and write any language except English. They are likely to speak an Indian language in the home; it is unlikely that it will be learned in its written form.

• There are also a proportion of the **first generation** who would not use the written form of the language:
  - With Hindi-Punjabi speakers, up to 40% of the community would have no or basic written Hindi.
  - With south Indian languages proficiency in the written form is much more common.

• There are significant differences between **men and women** in usage of the written form, men being more likely to write proficiently.

**Fig 20: Written Proficiency: Mother Tongues**

**Written mother tongue proficiency of speakers of basic English**

• **Hindi-Punjabi speakers**: of those with basic English only around 33% proficiently write Hindi. Around 25% have no or basic written Hindi with the remainder intermediate writers.

• **South Indian languages**: VERY FEW speakers of south Indian languages had basic level English only. Of those who did, most used the written form of the language proficiently.

**Fig 21: Written mother tongue fluency by English level**

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*Hindi is written Hindi but refers to section of the population who are Punjabi or Hindi speakers.*
Sri Lanka
There are a small number of people from Sri Lanka living in NI including students. The main south Indian languages in Sri Lanka are Sinhala and Tamil.

The Sikh Communities
Estimated numbers: 250
Language: Punjabi
- There are Sikh communities in both the greater Belfast and Derry areas
- As indicated the Sikh religion is closely tied with the Punjabi language
- Punjabi is largely an oral language and is a spoken family language here
For further information on Punjabi see the introduction to this section.

Greater Belfast
- There are around 200 Sikhs in the greater Belfast area, including families in Glengormley. Many of the community migrated in the late 1950s and are market traders
- Levels of English are likely to be mixed with many, particularly women, having basic English only
- The community has set up a Gudwara or Sikh temple in North Belfast

Derry
- There are around 50 Sikhs in the northwest. Many in the community are professionals
- The community have a Gudwara or Sikh temple in the Waterside

Indian community: communication structures
- The Indian Community Centre in North Belfast has a database consisting of several hundred Indian families across NI. This includes both northern and southern Indians
- The community centre has an elderly group (the section of the community least likely to use English) which meets regularly
- The community centre also has an English language newsletter

Right: Health Promotion Leaflet in Hindi
The Pakistani Community
Estimated numbers: 700
Main Languages: Punjabi, Urdu, English also Beluchi, Sindhi, Pushtu, Mirpuri.
Geographical Locations:
Most Pakistanis live in either the Greater Belfast or greater Craigavon areas although there are smaller numbers elsewhere in NI.

Migration has taken place from the 1930s and 40s from the area that on achieving independence became Pakistan. There was also considerable migration in the 1960s and 70s and in the present day. Some estimates have put the number of the Pakistanis in NI higher that 700, at around 1000 or more. An estimated two thirds of the Pakistani community in NI would be traders, with around one third health, academic and other professionals.

Summary
Urdu, Punjabi and other languages
Many members of Pakistani communities outside of Pakistan will speak Punjabi as a language of the home and Urdu as a second language. But for religious and cultural reasons are likely to describe themselves as Urdu speakers. This is often the case in NI.

Punjabi is largely an oral language. When it is written by Pakistanis it uses the same script as Urdu, not the script developed for Punjabi in India. For further details see the introduction to this section.

English is a medium for sections of education in Pakistan particularly third level disciplines which means that many first generation Pakistanis may also be native speakers of English.

Whilst small numbers of Pakistani professionals in NI would be speakers of other languages such as Bengali, Beluchi, Sindhi, Pushtu, Mirpuri in addition to English, the vast majority would be Punjabi-Urdu speakers and the following data concentrates on this group.

Fig 22: Levels of English: overall and by gender and generation
English Proficiency

- Around 50% of first generation Pakistanis are proficient in spoken English; around 25% are basic level English speakers.
- Just under 50% of first generation Pakistanis write English proficiently with around 35% having basic written English.
- Of the second generation the vast majority speak and write English proficiently; a small number would have difficulty with written English.
- There are significant differences between men and women. Over 35% of women, compared to about 25% of men, write basic English only.
- Age: There is a strong correlation between age and levels of English with younger people much more likely to speak and write English to a higher level.
- Occupation: There is a strong correlation between types of employment and English levels. Those undertaking work in the home (mainly women) have the lowest levels, followed by traders and those in business. Professionals and students have much higher levels of English.
- Geographical location: There are significant differences between the two areas of highest concentrations of the community with higher levels of English in greater Belfast than Craigavon. This is likely to be a reflection of the greater number of academics, students and professionals in Belfast.

Fig 23: Highest level of English per household

Proficient speakers per household: A highly significant statistic is that the vast majority (92%) of Pakistani households have at least one person proficient in English. This offers an explanation as to why very few in the community had requested interpreters as much interpreting work is done informally by family members. There are occasions when this would be inappropriate; see section 1.3 for further details.
Demography:

- **Household size**: the average household size was **3.75 persons**. However, families are often much larger with extended families living close by.
- **Age**: first generation Pakistanis come from all age groups. The second generation is mainly young people ranging from children to those up to 35 years old.
- **Education**: 25% of the community are educated to primary level and 34% to secondary level. 5% received no formal schooling, 7% have attended further education institutions and 29% university.

Urdu – Punjabi proficiency

- For information on Urdu and Punjabi see above and the introduction.

Spoken Punjabi and Urdu:

- Around 80% of the overall community speak Punjabi and/or Urdu. Those who did not were mainly second generation and English speakers.

![Fig 24: Urdu-Punjabi spoken by generation and overall](image)

Written Urdu:

- **56%** of the whole community wrote **no or basic Urdu**, 36% wrote **proficient Urdu** and **10% intermediate**.
- **Hardly any second generation** Pakistanis use the written form of Urdu.
- **Of first generation Pakistanis around 60% were proficient**.
- There are **higher levels** of written Urdu amongst **men** than **women**.
- There are **higher levels** of written Urdu in **Belfast** than **Craigavon**.
In Other Words?

- **Occupation**: there are significant differences regarding employment. Professionals had high levels of written Urdu with over 80% at proficient level. Those in trade, business or undertaking housework had lower levels being between 50% and 60% proficient.

![Fig 25: Fluency in written Urdu: Overall, by generation, gender and location](image)

**Written Urdu of those with Basic Written English**
- Of the section of the population who have basic written English, 31% would write **Urdu proficiently**, 13% at an intermediate level and 56% at a basic level.

![Fig: 26 Level of written Urdu for those with basic written English](image)

**Communication structures:**
In addition to Pakistani specific community associations there are also Muslim organisations with Pakistani members. Most Pakistanis are Muslims although not all would be practicing Islam.

**Pakistani community organisations:**
There are two Belfast based Pakistani community associations, which have organised Independence Day celebrations and other events.
Muslim organisations:
In addition there are a number of Muslim organisations which would have Pakistanis as a section of their membership.

Belfast: A number of Pakistanis, particularly in the University area, would use Belfast Islamic Centre. Also the Al Nisa women’s group has a large proportion of Pakistani women as members and has undertaken and organised many community and development activities.

* First Generation
Craigavon: In Craigavon the Al Nur association has a large proportion of Pakistani members. The group also employs two-part time Punjabi and Urdu interpreters funded by a number of statutory agencies.

Other: Locally based minority ethnic community groups (see appendix) will have some Pakistani members. The Northern Ireland Muslim Families Association (NIMFA) has also been recently established.

Above left: HC11 guidance in Urdu
Above right and below: Belfast based researchers in project
In Other Words?
2.3 Arabic Speaking communities

This section covers the following:
The 22 countries of north Africa and the Middle East

Arabic Speakers
Languages:
Arabic, French, many others including Tamazight, Bedawiye and Spanish

Above: Health Promotion Materials in Arabic

NB: Data here covers some north African Arabic speaking countries. For data on the rest of Africa see section 2.4
• For data on non-Arabic speaking countries in the region such as Iran see Central Asian Languages in section 2.5
In Other Words?

**About Arabic**

Arabic is one of the most widely used languages in the world and is the *Lingua Franca* of the 22 countries of north and east Africa and the Middle East. These countries are: Algeria, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Bahrain, Palestine, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen. There are also concentrations of Arabic speakers in other African countries such as Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria as well as European countries like France and Turkey.

Arabic is a *Lingua Franca* and many other languages are spoken by both the populations of the above countries and as Arabic speaking communities abroad including NI. In addition Arabic culture is highly heterogeneous and popular views depicting Arab culture as monolithic are wide of the mark. However, the existence of a common language (albeit in many differing dialects and forms) does allow Arabic speaking communities in NI a certain linguistic homogeneity.

Whilst many Arabic speakers are of Arab ethnic origin there are also many other ethnic groups both within Arabic speaking countries and communities. Arabic is also the language of Islam. However it is important to note that not all Arabic speakers are Muslims and also that not all Muslims are Arabic speakers. Information on the languages of south Asian Muslims is included in section 2.2.

**Colloquial dialects of Arabic**

Arabic consists of diverse colloquial dialects across different parts of the Arabic speaking world. The forms of Arabic spoken are as diverse as the national origins of Arabic speakers. In addition to different forms used across countries there are also differences within social and geographical groups within countries. Arabic can be broken down into two main varieties, comprising a dozen important dialects:

**Eastern Arabic** (*Mashreq*) in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Sudan, Chad and part of Libya;

**Western Arabic** (*Maghreb*) in Morocco, Mauritania, Algeria, Tunisia, and part of Libya.

Intercommunication is best achieved through **Modern Standard Arabic** which is closer to classical or Koranic Arabic. Arabic is
written from right to left. The script is also used in other languages including Persian, Pashto, Urdu, and Sindhi.

**Arabic Speaking Communities (ASC) in NI**

**Estimated Numbers: 1000-1500**

**Locations:**
- Most (up to 66%) in **Belfast** also increasing numbers in Greater **Craigavon** and in **Ballymena**
- There are smaller numbers across NI including Enniskillen, Omagh, Derry, Coleraine, Carrickfergus, Jordanstown

**ASC Summary:**
After the Chinese languages, Arabic is probably currently the second most used minority ethnic language in NI. However, although there has been a number of health promotion and other materials translated into Arabic in recent years, Arabic has been largely invisible.

The number of Arabic speakers in NI is growing. Communities are generally young. The largest number of people live in Belfast and consist mainly of students, academics, health professionals and business people. In Craigavon there are increasing numbers of Arabic speakers, with health practitioners and others. In Ballymena there are Sudanese and other Arabic speakers. There are also a number of refugees in NI from Arabic speaking countries. Arabic is also spoken by some majority ethnic Irish and British Muslims.

**Summary of Language usage:**

**English:**
- The likelihood of proficiency or otherwise in English largely depends on the country of origin. Eastern ASC generally have higher levels of written and spoken English than western ASC where more French is spoken
- **Occupation and gender** also influence English levels. Professionals (mainly men) are likely to be proficient in English, yet this is less likely among their spouses and in other professions

**Arabic:**
- A majority would use the written form
- The simplified form of Arabic: **Modern Standard Arabic** (MSA) is understood by most ASC in NI
However, there are some speakers of western Arabic in NI from North African nations such as Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia who would have difficulties in fully understanding MSA. Many from these countries would understand French.

The following two sections give the national origin and estimated numbers of ASC in NI including some information on other languages spoken in addition to Arabic, and in the case of western ASC, French. The following figures are rough estimates compiled by Alouane (2002). Further research would be needed to collate more specific data.

**Western Arabic speakers**
Not all western Arabic speakers would be able to understand MSA. Levels of English can vary and there will be many basic level users of English among the first generation. French is also widely known among many western Arabic speakers.

**Algeria:** 200+ Community mainly male and first generation. Around 40% would speak Tamazight. Many would speak French

**Egypt:** 215+ Includes some second and third generation. Community about 75% male and includes many health professionals

**Morocco:** 100 Around 25% would also speak Tamazight. Many would also speak French

**Tunisia:** 30+ Mainly men including some second generation. Many would also speak French

**Libya:** 65+ Includes some second generation

**Sudan:** 125-150 75% men, some second and third generation

In addition there are also a handful of people from Mauritania and undetermined small numbers from countries including: Chad, Djibouti, and Somalia.

**Eastern Arabic speakers**
Speakers of Eastern Arabic dialects will be able to understand written and spoken Modern Standard Arabic.

**Palestine:** 150+ Mainly students. Most Palestinians would be citizens of Jordan or other countries
In Other Words?

**Iraq:** 100 Including some second generation  
**The Lebanon:** 40+ Mainly first generation. Some French speakers  
**Syria:** 30 Including some second generation  
**Oman:** 20+ Including some second and third generation  
**Saudi Arabia:** 20+ Transient community with many students

In addition there are also around 20 people from the **United Arab Emirates**, small numbers from **Bahrain, Jordan and Yemen** and undetermined small numbers from Kuwait, Qatar and Israel. Some Arabic speakers from the Gulf are a transitory population.

**Communication Network:**
Arabic speakers make up a considerable proportion of a number of Muslim organisations in NI. Many Arabic speakers, particularly in the University area of Belfast will use the Belfast Islamic Centre (BIC). In addition the *Al Nisa* women’s group organises community and development activities with Muslim women including Arabic speakers. There is also the recently formed Northern Ireland Muslim Families Association (NIMFA). The *Al Nur* association is set up Craigavon where there are a growing proportion of Arabic speakers. ASC are also in contact with other minority ethnic community organisations and projects (for example, the Ethnic Minority Project at Ballymena Community Forum). In addition many Arabic speakers are resident in University or health service accommodation such as the Broadway towers.

Below: Report ‘A Place of Refuge’ in Arabic
In Other Words?
2.4 African languages

Languages spoken: English, Swahili, French and Yoruba, Xhosa, Hausa, Sohosa, Ewe, Edo, Mina, Grushi, Ga, Twi, Creole and many more.

Nb: Arabic speakers:
- Arabic speakers including those from the Arabic speaking countries of north and east Africa are dealt with separately in section 2.3
**African Languages:**
Africa is linguistically rich and diverse. For example in just one country, Nigeria, an estimated total of 515 languages are spoken. It is not uncommon for people to speak four or more languages. This linguistic diversity is also present in African populations worldwide including in Northern Ireland.

The figure generally given for the African community in Northern Ireland is 1600, however more recent estimates have put the figure at around 2000. The community is geographically spread out with Africans in all parts of NI and particular concentrations in the greater Belfast area. The African community in NI is largely young, although there are some elderly family members. In addition to settled populations there are many African students and migrant workers in a number of professions. Recently there have been internationally recruited nurses from southern African countries. There are also a number of refugees.

**English Usage**
The vast majority of Africans are English speakers and do not have a language barrier in terms of accessing services. English speaking Africans are also likely to speak a number of other languages.

There are a small number of elderly Africans who would not speak English and would be speakers of Xhosa and other languages.

In addition, those from countries where **French** or **Portuguese** is a major lingua franca may not be proficient speakers of English.

For Arabic speakers refer to section 2.3.

**Communication Network:**
The Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre (NIACC) in Belfast has a database reaching around 200 mainly English and Swahili speakers. NIACC also have a newsletter.

Organisations working with Portuguese speaking migrant workers would be points of contact for Portuguese speaking Africans.

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* Source: UN Public Department of Information
Information on **Linguas Francas**

**Swahili**
Swahili speakers resident in NI are mainly from Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, and Somalia. Swahili is generally a spoken language except in Tanzania. Most Swahili speakers would also be proficient English speakers although there may be small numbers, particularly women, who are not.

**English**
As outlined most Africans speak English proficiently. For Africans in NI who originate from countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, South Africa and Zimbabwe the following other languages are also often spoken: Yoruba, Xhosa, Hausa, Sohosa, Ewe, Evo, Mina, Grushi, Ga, Twi and others. These languages are mainly oral although there would be some use in the written form. Not all fluent English speakers would have proficient written English levels may be different across genders.

**French**
There are at least 60-100 people from French speaking African countries living in NI. Other (mainly oral) languages spoken by this group would include Gernia, Fulani, Katuai, Twareg, Mende, and Creole. Levels of English in this group are mixed, with some people requiring interpreters to access services.

**Portuguese**
There are increasing numbers of Portuguese speaking migrant workers in NI further details are given in section 2.6. An estimated 10% of this population (Soares 2002) would originate from the former African Portuguese colonies of Mozambique, Angola and Cabo Verde. Along with a small settled population the number of African Portuguese speakers could number up to 100. This population would speak a number of other African languages and would not all be fluent speakers of Portuguese or use the written form. There are likely to be mixed abilities in English among Portuguese speaking Africans with the majority needing to use an interpreter to access services.
This section covers the languages of Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan and other central Asian countries.

This section covers the following:

**Persian / Iranian community**
Main Languages: Farsi (Persian)

**Afghani community**
Main Languages: Southern Pushtu, Eastern Farsi (Dari)

**Turkish community**
Main Languages: Turkish

Also: small numbers of Kurds and people from the former Soviet central Asian republics
Iranian / Persian community
Estimated Numbers: 300-350
Languages spoken: Farsi (Persian) High literacy

Many in the Persian community, particularly those of Bahá’í faith, arrived following the Islamic revolution in 1979 and settled across NI. More recently there have been a number of students, academics and refugees arriving from Iran to NI who are largely residing close to the major academic centres. More recent Farsi speaking migrants will be Muslims or secular as well as Bahá’ís.

English Proficiency:
Of those that migrated in the late 70s, many now have proficient English. A small number of these people as well as more recent arrivals, particularly women, would need an interpreter.

Community Structures:
There are a number of Bahá’í associations. A newsletter and the Persian cultural centre reach many of the Bahá’í Persian speakers (n.b. not all members of the Bahá’í faith are from Persia).

Afghani community
Estimated Numbers: 100-150
Languages spoken: Southern Pashto, Dari (Eastern Farsi)
The Afghani community in NI is geographically dispersed. The community are mainly refugees and are often composed of large families. Many members of the community will have a language barrier.

Turkish community
Estimated Numbers: 40-50
Languages spoken: Turkish
There are an estimated 40 to 50 Turkish people in NI in employment or study. English levels vary. This number may be increased by migrant workers.

Others:
There are small numbers of other populations from central Asia in NI. This would include a small number of Kurdish people, speakers of Kurdish and other languages depending on national origin (Iranian, Iraqi or Turkish). In addition there are small numbers from the central Asian former Soviet republics such as Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and others in NI for political refuge or other reasons. A number of languages are spoken by this group including Russian.
In Other Words?

Top Left: Citizens Advice Bureau card in Portuguese
Right: Romanian HPSS audiotape
Centre: Fire safety leaflet in Portuguese
Bottom: Report ‘A Place of Refuge?’ in Albanian and Russian

Em caso de incêndio;
SAIA
FIQUE FORA
LIGUE PARA 999

Se o serviço de bombeiro não está funcionando como normalmente, isso não deverá afetar o que você deve fazer. Saia de casa e ligue para 999 não tente apagar o fogo você mesmo.

A Place of Refuge? Një vend strehë?
Azil Kërkuet dhe Refugiatët në Irlandhë së Veriut
Një vlerësim nevojash nga Dr Robbie McVeigh
E porositur nga Grupi Aktiv për Refugiatët

Убежище? A Place of Refuge?
Ситуация с лицами, ищущими убежища,
и беженцами в Северной Ирландии

Анализ потребностей, выполненный доктором Робби МакВейем
по заказу «Группы по отстаиванию прав беженцев» («Refugee Action Group»)
2.6 European Languages and Latin America

This section covers the following:

Portuguese speakers

Albanian speakers

Russian speakers

Also:

Spanish speakers  (inc. Latin Americans)

French speakers

And populations from the following national origins:
The Netherlands, Romania, Poland, Italy, Germany, Scandinavian countries, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Hungary, Greece, Czech republic, Slovak republic, Bulgaria and others
Portuguese speakers
Estimated Numbers: 1000+
Languages spoken: Portuguese

Portuguese-speaking migrant workers
Locations: Dungannon, Craigavon / Portadown, and other areas including Coalisland, Antrim, Co. Antrim including Ballymena and Coleraine.

There have been a large number of Portuguese-speaking migrant workers in NI over recent years mostly employed in meat processing factories. Recent estimates have put numbers higher than 1000. And Portuguese speakers constitute an estimated 10% of the population in Dungannon.

Demography
The majority of the Portuguese speaking population are young men although there are increasingly families settling here.

Ethnic origin
The majority of the population are ethnically Portuguese although a proportion (around 10%) would be Portuguese citizens from other ethnic backgrounds such as African speaking Portuguese countries and East Timor. For more information on Portuguese speaking Africans (Mozambique, Angola, Cabo Verde) see section 2.4.

English Proficiency
Soares (2002) found that around 80% of Portuguese migrant workers would speak and write only basic level English. Indicating the need for the provision of interpreters and translated materials.

Portuguese and other languages:
Ethnically Portuguese migrant workers would have high levels of literacy in Portuguese. In addition some will have worked elsewhere in Europe and will have some knowledge of other languages such as French, Spanish, German.

Ethnically African Portuguese workers are likely to speak Portuguese as one of their languages along with others (see section 2.4).

Communication networks:
A community structure within the Portuguese population is currently at early stages. In Dungannon the South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP) has set up a Portuguese Forum,
and a Portuguese centre with a part time bilingual worker. Portuguese people would also be in contact with other organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureaux in this area. In addition the Ballymena Ethnic Minorities Community Project has contact with Portuguese people in the locality. Additional areas for information provision would include workplaces (possibly via Trade Unions) and particular cafés in the Craigavon, Portadown and Dungannon areas.

**Brazilians**
**Estimated numbers: 40+**
**Locations: All over NI**

There are around 40 or more Brazilians living in NI either settled here or as students and academics.

**English Proficiency**
There is likely to be reasonably high levels of English within the community, however, a significant proportion may need an interpreter to access services.

**Portuguese**
Brazilian Portuguese does differ from that of Portugal but speakers from both areas understand each other. Brazilians may speak other languages.

**Community network:**
Many members of the Brazilian community are in contact informally and are also in contact with the Latin American community group *Latinoamérica Unida* which produces a regular newsletter.

**Other Portuguese speakers:**
There is a smaller number of Portuguese speakers from Portugal and Africa who predate the migrant worker population.

**Below: The Portuguese Centre in Dungannon**
In Other Words?
In Other Words?

**Albanian speakers**  
**Estimated Numbers: 50-100**  
**Location:** Greater Belfast

The majority of Albanian speakers in NI are Kosovar refugees although there are also smaller numbers from Albania and Macedonia. Migration has taken place in recent years. A survey was conducted by the project of Albanian speakers.

**English Proficiency**
- ♦ Like many recent migrant communities from countries where levels of English depend on time here
- ♦ The vast majority (over 80%) spoke and wrote basic level English only
- ♦ There was little difference between men and women or on national origin

![Fig 27: Albanian Overall levels of English](image1)
![Fig 28: Age by generation](image2)

**Demography**
- ♦ **Age:** The community is young (mainly families with young children and few elderly people)
- ♦ **Occupation:** only a minority of the community are employed, with many studying or undertaking housework (Most asylum seekers are not allowed to work)

**Albanian and other languages**
There is high literacy with written Albanian. Some of the community have lived in other countries and also speak languages such as Italian and Greek, some Kosovans would also have been taught Serbian.

**Communication network:**
Many of the families are in contact with each other and key individuals can reach the community.
Russian speakers
Estimated Numbers: 60+
Locations: Belfast, Down, Dungannon and elsewhere
As well as Russian speakers from Russia there are also people from the other national origins such as Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, and the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. In particular there are an increasing number of Lithuanian migrant workers.

English proficiency
Mixed. Settled community has largely good English, but there would be a need for interpreter provision particularly with asylum seekers and some migrant workers.

Russian and other languages
Russian speakers are likely to be highly literate. Other languages such as Lithuanian and Moldavian would be spoken by those of particular national origins, depending on ethnic group.

Communication network:
There is no formal communications structure.

Spanish Speakers
Latin Americans
Estimated numbers: 200
Locations: all over NI, students at Universities
There are Spanish speakers from across Latin America living in NI. There are higher numbers from Colombia and Argentina but there are also people from: Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, El Salvador, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Honduras, Cuba, and Venezuela. There are also around 40+ Brazilians in NI who are Portuguese speakers. Many Latin Americans are settled, including many mixed marriages. There is also a significant student population.

English Proficiency
Research has demonstrated that (Holder & Lanao 2000) over half the community would need an interpreter to access services.

Spanish and other languages:
Latin American Spanish differs little from country to country and is also easily understood by people from Spain. There are high levels of literacy. Some Latin Americans will have lived in other countries and have learned other languages. Some would speak indigenous languages such as Quechua and Aymara.
Communication network:
The Latin American community group *Latinoamérica Unida* has a community database and regular newsletter.

**Spain**
In addition to Latin Americans there is also a Spanish population in NI. As well as large numbers of students, there is a settled population. It is difficult to determine numbers but they are likely to be in the hundreds with mixed English levels.

**French speakers**
It is difficult to determine the number of French people in NI although estimates have ranged up to several thousand. There are also a number of people from Quebec and Belgium. English levels are likely to differ with many fluent speakers but some needing interpreters. There are also many Africans and North African Arabic speakers who speak French. For further details see sections 2.4 and 2.3 respectively.

**The Netherlands**
Estimated population: 750
Languages: Dutch / Flemish
The Dutch consulate has estimated there are 750 people from the Netherlands in NI. Levels of fluency in English are very high.

Communication network:
A NI Dutch Club *Nederlandse Vereniging in Nood Ierland* has been established.

**Italians**
Languages: Italian
Numbers are difficult to estimate. There is an established community along with more recently arrived migrant workers in the Co. Antrim area.

**Others**
There are hundreds of other Europeans resident in NI as students, migrant workers, refugees or otherwise settled. Some populations such as Germans and Scandinavians generally have very high levels of English while others would have mixed levels of English. The above data on Albanian speakers may be a good guide for other refugee and recent migrant worker communities.

Numbers are difficult to determine. All the following would have between a dozen and 50+ people although some groups would be much larger.
Populations and languages:
Romania (Romanian); Poland (Polish); Basque Country (Basque, Spanish/French); Catalonia (Catalan, Spanish); Serbia (Serbian); Croatia (Croat); Bosnia (Bosnian); Roma (Romani, Romanian, Hungarian, other); Hungary (Hungarian); Greece (Greek); Czech Republic (Czech); Bulgaria (Bulgarian).
3.1 Recommendations

Summary

Research

- Given the changing nature of BME populations the importance of periodic repetition of this research is crucial to the planning of service delivery. NISRA should take a lead role in this.
- The use of the same methodology will ensure comparability.
- There is no one-size-fits-all approach to this type of research and methods must be community specific.
- This action research is not divorced from the community development process but rather an integral part of it.

Information provision

- The task of effective information provision is highly complex as there is heterogeneity both across and within BME populations in NI.
- Choosing the correct format for multilingual resources is essential, given the range of languages and the fact that some are used in their oral form.
- As important is the dissemination of materials. Imagination needs to be shown in customising dissemination techniques as not all BME populations are communities and are often dispersed.
- There is a need for largely centralised co-ordination of multilingual resources within statutory agencies. In HPSS this should be done at Board level with the CRIS centre taking a lead role. In other statutory agencies equality units should take on this role.
- Strategies need to be inclusive of those with special needs.

Interpreter provision

- There is a need for interpreter provision in a broad range of languages.
- Salaried interpreters should always be employed where there is demand. HSS Boards should take the lead in this. DE should also extend the Home School Liaison Officer service.
- There need for a public sector interpreter service in which HPSS should take the lead.
- There is a need for awareness raising regarding interpreters both within public sector providers and BME populations.

General

- Initiatives need to be set within a rights based framework.
- Minority ethnic languages can also be languages of choice and there is a need for initiatives to this respect. DE should co-
ordinate this within its sector and **DCAL** should co-ordinate other initiatives

**Research**

**Repetition**

The make up of BME populations in NI is constantly changing:
- Through migration new populations are emerging, e.g. a few years ago there were only several dozen Portuguese speakers; now the estimated figure is over 1000
- More established BME communities are increasingly second and third generation also changing their language profile

**Given this, the importance of periodic repetition of this research to update the language map is crucial to the planning of service delivery:**
- A major survey should be conducted around 3-5 years from this research
- Updates on emerging communities need to be carried out more frequently
- Using the same methodology will ensure comparability over time
- **NISRA** should take overall responsibility for this in resourced partnership with the BME sector, where the community specific knowledge lies

**Community specific methodology**

There is a need to recognise that there is no one-size-fits-all approach and that methods must be community specific. Whilst the same methodology needs to be applied as much as possible, within such a diverse study population applying the same rules to everyone may not necessarily achieve this. It is necessary to adapt techniques for specific communities to take into account language and cultural specific issues namely:
- There is need for in-depth questioning in the case of largely oral languages not necessary when languages are almost always written
- There are also cultural or political factors that needed to be taken into account. For example, Urdu being national language of Pakistan, many Punjabi-speaking Pakistanis will describe themselves as Urdu speakers for religious and cultural reasons
- In a number of languages there is a potential stigma attached to not using the written form. To mitigate this researchers need to ask and phrase questions in such a way that was sensitive to these issues
- The researchers are key to this as they inform the research of such factors and then conduct the surveys taking these contexts into consideration.

Techniques used to draw-up and weight representative samples need to be adapted for different groups:
- Snowballing is needed when there is no community structure
- For groups with community structures: when combined community databases did not reflect the overall make up of the community, weighting criteria along with other methods (e.g. the selection of Chinese catering outlets from the *Yellow Pages*) need to be applied
- The dispersed nature of community groups makes for a very difficult research population. However, the fact that planning provision needs only general recommendations allows for a margin of error
- Changing from the telephone surveys to face-to-face questioning may also be needed with some populations

**Research as community development**

*Action research, such as this current project, should be seen as an integral part, rather than divorced from, the community development process:*

- Within this project 29 people from the BME sector were trained and worked on the study. Many of the researchers had not undertaken research work previously. The surveys involved the harnessing of otherwise dormant language skills and information on community specific factors likely to influence respondents
- The training sessions and consultation sessions with informants were also used as an opportunity to raise awareness on language rights and the legislative framework
- The telephone surveys themselves, which reached hundreds of households, not only raised awareness on the language issue but after survey questions were completed were also used by some community associations to provide information on their activities. It was an opportunity for groups to have the resources to telephone a large section of their community
- The follow-up activity of interpreter skills taster sessions allowed the project to address, as well as highlight, areas of need and develop the interpreter infrastructure

**Research within the sector should not be seen as an abstract and isolated information-gathering tool but rather as a technique not only to gather much needed data but to resource and capacity build the BME sector.**
In Other Words?

-Future research in the sector should develop and harness the skills of the researchers involved in this and other research projects within the sector
Information provision
If BME communities are to have the same level of access to information as the majority ethnic population, a number of factors must be considered when designing specific initiatives.

Overall: a Complex picture
The task of effective information provision is highly complex as there is diversity both across and within BME communities in NI:
- Across: as there are dozens of different BME groups in NI
- Within: as there is often more than one language spoken
- Within: there are often variations on fluency in English and the use or not of the written form of the language within sections of the population. This is on factors of gender, age/generation, occupation, migratory situation and geographical location
This means there is a need to customise strategies for the groups or sub-groups information is targeted at.

In terms of prioritisation the size of the community is not necessarily the best determinate of the need for specific information as:
- A particular population may be larger than another yet the number of people who are not fluent in English may actually be greater than in the numerically larger population
- A section of a population (for example refugees or migrant workers) may have a greater need for specific information on particular issues
- There may be concentrations of a particular linguistic population in a specific locality
There is a need to consult and research with the BME sector as part of the process of effectively communicating information:
- The initial consultation stage of deciding if there is a need and demand for the information should be seen as crucial to the process
- It should be determined if the target group need information in English or in another language. Yet even if the information is to be in English it may still need to be customised to the specific issues of a BME community
- The resources detailing the process of the effective production of information referenced in section 3.2 should be utilised in this process
- The BME sector need to be resourced for work relating to both the preparation and dissemination of materials

Format
Choosing the correct format for multilingual resources is essential. There are a number of different options for doing this:
- Written translations of leaflets, booklets, inserts, flyers and other materials
- Audio tapes, videos and CD ROMs in minority ethnic languages
- Information seminars/talks in minority ethnic languages or in English with interpreters present

In deciding on format, the first question to ask is whether the language in question is used by a significant proportion of the target group in its written form. If it is not, non-written formats should be used.

The publishing of written leaflets in bilingual form with the English alongside the target language has a number of benefits:
- As demonstrated in this research many of those not fluent in English will read some English. Bilingual materials assist in the process of learning English and conceptualising the subject matter in English
- Bilingual leaflets are also good for English-speaking practitioners, as they can always be sure of the details of leaflets given out
- Given the range of languages identified, it is essential that translations always contain the name of the target language

Extra research should be considered before undertaking the translation of long documents (e.g. consultation documents) to ensure there is demand for such long material; an executive summary may well be more accessible.

Dissemination

As important as choosing the correct format, is the method chosen to disseminate materials. This must also be customised to ensure effective use of resources:
- With larger communities and populations (in geographical areas) who access a particular service, multilingual materials can be available through practitioners or on display at the point of contact. This is specific to the service in question e.g. leaflets could be a GPs surgery, Social Security Office or school, or alternatively held by Social Worker, Health Visitor or Home Schools Liaison Officer.
- Leaflets can also be left at other places frequented by the target group such as workplaces or community centre.

In many cases there is a need to proactively target information:
- Strategies must take into account that not all BME populations are in communities and are often dispersed
Imagination needs to be shown to develop techniques. This includes using BME organisations as distribution points. There are a number of factors to take into account when sending materials to BME organisations:

- Sending material can be positive in cases where organisations can display leaflets, particularly if a drop in or community gatherings are held in the building.
- However, care must be taken not to ‘dump’ boxes of leaflets on community groups without resourcing, as they may not have the human or material resources to distribute such materials among their membership.

More imaginative and proactive approaches can be taken to target materials such as:

- **Use of community newsletters:** Adverts could be taken out or payments made for leaflets to be inserted. This is an efficient way of reaching a particular group which is also beneficial to the community association in resourcing the newsletter.

- **Use of community databases:** A mailing could be resourced in order to reach the community, an efficient method also beneficial to both.

- The use of own language radio broadcasts when available or other media used by a community should also be considered.

- Materials can be displayed in places frequented by particular communities such as Asian supermarkets, cafés, workplaces and places of worship.

In using community organisations, thought must be given to which sections of the community the group covers:

- Some organisations will tend towards particular language groups in their community.

- Organisations that are faith based are unlikely to be frequented by the secular sections of the community and some places of worship, such as mosques, may be male orientated.

Methods need to ensure that the other sections of the community are also reached. Resourcing of the sector will also improve capacity.

Many of the same resourcing factors are just as relevant in the dissemination of information via seminars and talks:

- The selection of topic, preparation of talks, timing and logistical arrangements are very much part of the task. The use of existing meetings and events is helpful in achieving this.

- The work of getting the word around and ensuring attendance is often the most time consuming. It is often taken for granted that community associations can undertake this on a voluntary basis. This work needs to be resourced and such initiatives need to budget in the costs for a bilingual worker to do a
ring around or disseminate information to ensure the greatest number of people possible are aware of the event.

Centralised co-ordination
The large number of languages indicates the need for centralised stocking of resources to ensure access and limit overlap:
- Within the HPSS a resource library needs to be established in each board area to co-ordinate materials. The existing CRIS resource centre in the EHSSB area (which is a good model for this) should take a lead role at a NI level in sourcing materials from outside NI for other board areas
- Within other statutory agencies including NIHE, SSA, Department of Education, Inland Revenue, a centralised multilingual resource point should be set up under the auspices of the equality unit of each organisation

Special needs
- Strategies need to be inclusive of those with visual impairments or learning difficulties present within the BME population as well as in the broader population.

Community specific recommendations:
Whilst this report covers the communities surveyed for languages there is also a need for specific communication strategies for English-speaking BME groups including Irish Travellers.

South East Asian languages: Chinese languages
- There is a need for provision in written Chinese, as only 11% of the community are proficient in written English
- The Chinese community is diverse. Different strategies will be needed for different sections of the community due to the different Chinese languages spoken and also generation/age, occupation and geographical location etc

Cantonese speakers
- Written translated materials in complex Chinese are effective for a significant section of Cantonese speakers who are not fluent in English (of those with basic level English, 45% read complex Chinese proficiently, 45% at an intermediate level. Meaning non-written formats are also needed)
- Translated materials should be considered for first generation Cantonese speakers as only a minority of the second generation would write Chinese. Materials for Chinese young people are therefore best done in English. Translations are more effective with older sections of the population.
**Hakka speakers**
-The vast majority of first generation Hakka speakers require language support. Only 20% read and write (complex) Chinese proficiently with a majority reading at intermediate level. While written complex Chinese materials (produced for Cantonese speakers) would reach some Hakka speakers, support would be more effective through non-written formats.

**Mandarin speakers**
-Significant numbers require materials in languages other than English.
-The best format is written simplified Chinese translations, which almost all the community can read and write.

**Fujianese speakers**
-The majority need non-English materials.
-Non-written formats would be required for most although some would be assisted by written translations into simplified Chinese.

**Dissemination:** The community organisations listed in section 2.1 have extensive databases. Newsletters and the Cantonese radio programme can also be used. For Mandarin and Fujian speakers different strategies are needed for the student/academic population than for the refugee population, working with the respective groups mentioned in section 2.1.

**Other South East Asian languages**
**The Philippines:** Information can be provided to the community through the medium of English. If a specific publication was produced for the community, for example for international nurses, consideration should be given to an introduction in Tagalog to demonstrate inclusion. In terms of dissemination there are two community associations and migrant workers could be reached through workplaces or unions.

**Japanese and Korean:** Information can be provided to most of the community in English. Materials geared at women should be provided in written Japanese and Korean respectively.

**Malaysian and Vietnamese:** Many can be reached through English. Others can be reached through Chinese languages (Cantonese and Mandarin) with a combination of written and oral formats. Dissemination for Malaysians can be achieved via QUB/UU or the Belfast Islamic Centre. Craigavon groups are in contact with the Vietnamese community.

**Others:** As communities grow there may be a demand for materials in Thai or Indonesian. Currently relating information through an interpreter is likely to be more practical.

**South Asian languages:**
**Bangladeshi community**
Language support needed as 64% of Bangladeshis have basic level written English and only 33% of households have someone proficient in English.

Of the section of the community with basic level English written Bengali translations will not be accessible to the majority and the use of audiotapes in Sylheti and information seminars is preferable.

Dissemination and seminars can be undertaken through the groups mentioned, such as the Bangladeshi Welfare Association.

**Indian community (including Sikhs)**

Most of the Indian community speak English proficiently. Those who do not are concentrated among the elderly and Hindi-Punjabi speakers.

Of those who have basic level English only 33% read Hindi proficiently. This means translation into Hindi would only assist this proportion. Other methods to reach the other 67% are audiotapes in Punjabi and seminars through Punjabi and English. This would also be accessible for Sikhs.

Most speakers of south Indian languages can be reached through English. Information could otherwise be relayed by a resourced interpreter.

The Indian Community Centre has an elderly group which could be contacted as one method of dissemination along with other community associations and relevant places mentioned in section 2.2. Relationships should be build with Sikh community groups.

**Pakistani community**

Whilst many Pakistanis are proficient in English around 35% of first generation Pakistanis have only basic level written English.

General information can be accessible to most Pakistani households in English as 92% of households have at least one person proficient in English.

Specific non-English language materials should therefore be produced particularly when targeting information at women, the elderly, and those employed in trading and housework who are less likely to speak English.

Written materials in Urdu will only reach a section of the community (33% of those with basic English, and especially women and traders). Information seminars and audiotapes in Punjabi-Urdu should also be undertaken.

Dissemination can be assisted through organisations listed in section 2.2.

**Arabic speakers**

Whilst many Arabic speakers are proficient in English there is a need for provision of non-English materials among the growing community.
- Written Modern Standard Arabic materials are the primary format for this. Materials in French will also be suitable for some western Arabic speakers
- Dissemination can be assisted through the organisations listed in section 2.3 and through places of study

**Africans**
- The vast majority of the African community can have information provided in the medium of English. Leaflets, audiotapes and information seminars need therefore to be arranged for the community
- For those not fluent in English a number of different languages are present and could be reached through resourcing an interpreter

**Central Asians**
- **Persians/Iranians**: Written materials in Farsi can reach the section of the community not fluent in English
- **Afghans**: There is a need for language support for many Afghans which can be achieved through both written Pashtu and Farsi and oral resources
- **Turkish**: Written materials in Turkish are accessible to non-English speakers
- **Others**: there may be others who require support in other languages

**Europeans**
- There are many languages spoken by Europeans and many people require language support. This is especially the case in southern, central and eastern Europeans. It is less the case with northern Europeans (the Netherlands, Germany, Scandinavia)
- Almost all those not fluent in English can be reached by written translations into native languages. This includes: Portuguese, Albanian, Russian, Spanish, French, Romanian, Polish, Italian, Croat, Serb, Bosnian, Hungarian, Greek, Czech, Bulgarian and others. Materials geared at Roma and other indigenous communities may need to be in audio format
- Dissemination with the substantial Portuguese speaking migrant workers (for which there is currently an urgent need for information) or other groups can be facilitated via the organisations listed at the respective languages in section 2.6. However, many other European languages do not have community associations

**Interpreter provision**
In this report a total of **76 languages** are listed and there are many others spoken. There is a need for interpreter provision in many of
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these languages to prevent language barriers in service access. This can be addressed through the employment of salaried interpreters or provision of sessional interpreters. The use of these terms in this section is defined as the following:

-Salaried Interpreters: An interpreter employed by an organisation on a part time or full time basis. This includes Community Interpreters (such as those employed by CWA) or, where specified, bilingual workers with interpreter duties (such as the Home Schools Liaison Officers employed by SEELB or the development worker employed by STEP)

-Sessional Interpreters: An interpreter operating on a freelance basis who is contracted in to undertake specific interpreter assignments on an hourly rate or case by case basis

Employment of Salaried Interpreters

It is strongly recommended by this report that in language groups and geographical areas where there is sufficient demand, salaried interpreters should always be employed. Sessional interpreters should be used for lesser-used languages and in geographical areas where there are small numbers. Reasons for this include the following:

-Professional development and quality control: the skills of the interpreter will be enhanced through regular work and opportunities to undertake further training in work time. In addition standards are guaranteed, and the employer can set confidentiality, and provide support and advice to the interpreter

-Capacity building: Salaried posts will make interpreting a more attractive profession due to the security of regular work. This will attract more people to undertake interpreting and interpreter training

-Advocacy and Community Development: Community Interpreters are in an ideal position to be involved in general advocacy and other community development work (providing this is part of the post from the beginning). This would include interpreting for the community at information seminars.

-Value for money: salaried interpreters are also more cost effective to the service provider than sessional fees paid on a regular basis

Salaried interpreters further issues:

- The interpreters must be gender specific for many communities
- Consultation with target communities is essential in the establishment of such salaried posts
- Awareness raising of the right to an interpreter could change the level of demand for usage rapidly and mean interpreters employed on a sessional basis would be needed as salaried posts
-As the arrival of Portuguese migrant workers into the Dungannon and other areas has shown the above picture can change rapidly. There may therefore be the need for further salaried posts in addition to those recommended below

**Funding of interpreters:** (see also community specific recommendations)

- The funding of salaried interpreters needs to be mainstream and provided by statutory agencies on a sustainable basis
- Salaried interpreters will work across the HPSS and other agencies including SSA (Social Security Agency), NIHE (NI Housing Executive) and other services. Funding on an interagency basis can be complex and this report recommends that HPSS takes the lead role at each board level for the resourcing of salaried interpreter posts. The agencies mentioned, and others, should then be allowed to buy into this service by paying the board for use of the interpreter
  - Within the education sector the employment of bilingual Home Schools Liaison Officers should be extended
  - If interpreters are to be sited in outside organisations

**Employment and siting of interpreters:**

There has been debate on whether such posts are better based in and/or employed by the BME sector or statutory agencies. There are arguments on both sides including:
- If there is not resourced and developed structures within the BME sector organisations the group may not have the capacity to line mange the project as the amount of work involved should not be taken on a voluntary basis
- Posts within the BME sector are closer to the community and may be contacted and used more by the community
- If there is conflict within a community this can also cause difficulties
- Employment of an interpreter may assist in the development of sustainable organisational structures for a community organisation

This research recommends that decisions are taken on who is to be the employer of an interpreter and where they are to be based in consultation with stakeholders, taking the above and other factors in to account.

In addition it is important to point out that there is clearly the scope and demand for interpreters to be employed by both sectors and hence provide choice to service users and practitioners alike.

**Interpreter Service:**
This research identifies that there is a need for interpreters in a huge range of languages and it also identified a lack of interpreter provision and a lack of trained interpreters. **This research therefore strongly recommends the establishment of a public sector interpreter service for NI along the lines of those in existence GB.** This service would need to tackle many aspects of provision including: a centralised public sector interpreter register, setting up sessional and salaried interpreter appointments, planning and establishing training, establishing insurance, quality control assurance, monitoring and evaluation and crucially planning for future trends.

- As across GB, this is **clearly a government service** for which full responsibility should be taken by the devolved institutions  
- The level of flexibility and planning required along with all of the above factors mean this service would best sit within a **public service ethos and not privatised within profit-making or voluntary sector**

- To ensure the service is correctly resourced and sustainable, the best-suited format is a **mainstreamed public sector agency** for what is clearly an essential government service that is currently absent  
- This model can allow sustainable planning and adequate resourcing that experiences elsewhere, for example in the south of Ireland, illustrate is otherwise absent  
- The **HPSS** has the biggest demand for interpreters and **should take responsibility for this service.** Other services such as SSA, NIHE and others should 'buy' into the service on a case-by-case basis or by service level agreements  
- The current HPSS **More Than Words** Regional Interpreter Service Project provides a potential foundation for this. Long term planning on building on such a project is required from an initial stage

Planning training and provision levels is not a question of the numbers game (i.e. population size) but should be assessed on a needs basis in relation to patterns of fluency in English and other factors, **for example:**

- A large established community where levels of English are quite high, such as the Indian community, may only need a few trained sessional interpreters  
- A much smaller population, such as Mandarin speaking refugees, may require full-time interpreter posts due to lack of English and refugees having to interact with a range of new services
Community Specific Recommendations:
With increasing uptake and increased migration, demand for interpreter services will rise, hence provision may be needed in addition to that recommended below:

South East Asian languages
Chinese languages: Cantonese/Hakka and Mandarin / Fujianese
- The current salaried posts in the EHSSB and SHSSB areas need to be maintained and possibly extended
- There is a need for mainstreamed funding for posts to cover the NHSSB and WHSSB areas
- The bilingual Home Schools Liaison Officer service for the Chinese community in the SEELB area needs to be extended to other areas
- There is a need for additional cover by sessional interpreters in Chinese languages especially in rural areas. Demand currently outweighs supply with community development workers often having to divert their own work.

Japanese: Whilst there is already provision the training of a small number of Japanese women as interpreters would be beneficial.

Korean: There is a need to train a small number of Korean women as interpreters.

Other: There is a need for a small number of interpreters in Thai, and other languages possibly including Vietnamese, Filipino languages, Indonesian and Laotian. Some interpreters may speak several of these languages which will be beneficial.

South Asian languages
Bangladeshi community (Bengali/Sylheti)
- There is a need for a community interpreter post in the EHSSB area
- The SEELB Home Schools Liaison Officer for the Bangladeshi community needs to be maintained and the possibility extended
- There is a need to develop a pool of trained sessional Sylheti/Bengali interpreters

Indian community (Punjabi/Hindi and south Indian languages)
- There is existing provision but more trained sessional interpreters are needed. Most work will be with Punjabi-Hindi speakers, yet there is also a need for sessional interpreters for a range of south Indian languages.

Pakistani (Urdu-Punjabi/others)
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- There is a need to continue the existing Urdu-Punjabi salaried interpreter in the SHSSB area
- Dialogue should be opened regarding a Home Schools Liaison Officer for the community in the SHSSB and BELB/SEELB areas
- There is a pool of interpreters but more need to be trained

**Arabic speakers**
- There is a need for salaried posts in both the SHSSB area and also another to cover the EHSSB / NHSSB area
- Dialogue should be opened regarding a Home Schools Liaison Officer for Arabic Speakers
- There is also a need for sessional interpreter training in Arabic but also in the other languages spoken across the Arabic-speaking world. This can be determined in consultation and by country of origin demand

**African languages**
- There is a need for a small number of interpreters in different African languages

**Central Asian**
- There is a need for interpreter provision in Farsi, Pushtu, Eastern Dari and Turkish. There is some existing provision but training for further interpreters is needed

**European**
- There is a need for salaried community interpreters or bilingual workers in Portuguese in the SHSSB (Dungannon area and possibly elsewhere) area
- Dialogue should be opened regarding a Home Schools Liaison Officer for Portuguese speakers
- There is a need for interpreter provision in a large number of European languages including Portuguese, French, Albanian, Russian, Spanish, Romanian, Polish, Italian, Croat, Serb, Bosnian, Hungarian, Greek, Czech, Bulgarian and others. There is some existing provision in many of these languages yet more trained interpreters are needed.

**Awareness raising and training**
The non-maximum uptake of interpreter services may be a reflection of the need to raise awareness on rights and structures rather than a lack of need for the services such a clear need has been demonstrated by this research.

Awareness raising would need to highlight that the usage of family members as interpreters is often inappropriate for the reasons
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outlined in section 1. Refer to other recommendations below for further details.
Other recommendations:
A rights based framework

Need for practitioner awareness raising on the need for an interpreter
- Only 12% of Chinese people who said they needed an interpreter were provided with one. This figure was even lower in the Bangladeshi community.
- This suggests a lack of awareness among practitioners in relation to the need for an interpreter, the service users' right to an interpreter and the processes of obtaining an interpreter.
- It indicates there is still a culture of 'charity' and not rights regarding interpreters and that language skills are still undervalued.
- Non-provision in the case of the communities above may indicate the practitioner using family members or friends to do the job as this was not the case with Albanian speakers surveyed (who were almost always provided interpreters due to the absence of family members or friends with enough English to be asked to interpret).

There is a need for practitioner staff training / awareness raising on these issues.

Need for awareness raising within BME communities
- The corresponding English levels of those surveyed who stated they did not need an interpreter indicated that many in fact did.
- This suggests there is either a miscomprehension of the interpreter's role or stigma, or reluctance to use an interpreter.

There is a need for awareness raising with BME communities on the role of an interpreter and the right to request one.

Need for clarity of rights
The Bill of Rights for NI should unambiguously clarify the right to have an interpreter provided for access to public services.

Languages of choice
- Whilst the research focused on languages of need (i.e. those not fluent in English accessing services) many informants also stressed the importance of minority ethnic languages as languages of choice.
- The importance of not divorcing language from other issues such as culture and bilingualism was emphasised.
- It is essential that public provision also sees BME languages as languages of choice.
- In this context there is encouragement for bilingualism and the teaching of BME languages through schooling provision co-ordinated by the DE.
DCAL (Linguistic Diversity Branch) should co-ordinate other initiatives promoting minority ethnic languages as languages of choice.

3.2 Useful Resources

Developing multilingual materials
MCRC has produced a booklet entitled *Recommended Guidelines for Multilingual Materials* that outlines issues to take into account when producing materials. The publication is available from MCRC's website. EHSSB are currently drawing up a resource on effective information provision entitled: *Cracking the Information Barrier by Standard Setting - the Five Cs of information provision*.

Sourcing Multilingual materials
There are a number of other statutory and voluntary organisations in NI that have produced multilingual materials in BME languages. This includes HSS Trusts, other government agencies, and NI and UK based voluntary sector agencies. For UK based bodies it is often possible to download or order resources via the Internet. An example of this is the publications section of the Department of Health in London on www.doh.gov.uk. It is beyond the scope of this report to produce a list of such materials in NI. However, it is worth mentioning that within the HPSS sector the Communication, Resource and Information Centre (CRIS) based within the EHSSB building has a range of health promotion and other multilingual resources. Outside the EHSSB area other Board area Health Promotion Resource Services also have materials.

Interpreting
The joint ECNI / DHSSPS *Racial Equality in Health Good Practice Guide* (2003) contains information on the role of the interpreter; the dangers of using untrained/unskilled interpreters; where to access an interpreter; what a professional can expect from an interpreter; interpreters responsibilities; interpreters rights; how to work with an interpreter and other areas including a list of BME organisations which provide interpreters. This is available from the Equality Commission and can be downloaded from their website.

Lee and Baillie (2002) have produced *Guidelines for Use and a Code of Practice* for Chinese Welfare Association interpreters that contains information on how to work with an interpreter for practitioners, as well as guidelines for interpreters themselves. The Scottish Translation, Interpreting and Communication forum (2003) have also produced Good Practice Guidelines.

General:
McPeake and Johnstones (2002) the literature review of translation, interpreting and communication support in the Scottish Public sector contains a wealth of useful information.

**Reports on minority ethnic language issues in NI**
The Linguistic Diversity Branch of DCAL have produced the following reports on minority ethnic language issues:


**Dunn, Seamus, Dawson, Helen and Morgan, Valerie** (2002b) *Establishing the Demand for Services and Activities in Minority Ethnic Languages* (Belfast: DCAL)

**Education:**
In the area of English language support the following reports has been produced:


Leong (2002) produced a report commissioned by EGSA and the Basic Skills Unit of DEL entitled *ESOL Interpreting the Way Forward* details issues surrounding effective ESOL provision. The report is available on the Internet.

**Bilingualism**
A section of the Holder & Lanao (2002) report *Mid Ulster: Other Voices* published by MCRC (available from the internet) details issues regarding bilingualism. This section was prepared along with the SEELB and references other reports.

**Irish Travellers**
A resource entitled Travellers and their language has been published:
3.3 Useful Contacts

Statutory:

**Equality Commission for Northern Ireland** [www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)
Equality House, 7-9 Shaftsbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DP; 028 90500600

**Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission** [www.nihrc.org](http://www.nihrc.org)
Temple Court, 39 North Street, Belfast, BT1 1NA; 028 90243987

**DCAL: Linguistic Diversity Branch** [www.dcalni.gov.uk](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk)
Interpoint, 20-24 York Street, Belfast, BT15 1AQ; 028 90258825

**OFMDFM: Race Equality Unit** [www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk](http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk)
Room E3.19, Castle Buildings, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3SR

**Health Promotion Agency for NI** [www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk)
18 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast, BT2 8HS; 028 90311611

**Communication, Resource and Information Service (CRIS)**
Champion House, 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS; 028 9032313

Non-Governmental Organisations (with premises):

**Al Nisa Islamic Women's Group**
C/o 46 Mount Eden Park, Belfast, BT9 6RB;

**Al Nur association**
Brownlow Health Centre, 1 Legahory, Craigavon, BT65 5BE;

**Barnardo's Chinese Lay Health Project**
100 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 6SG; 028 90668766

**Bangladeshi Welfare Association**
24 Greenwell Street, Newtonards, BT23 7LN;

**Belfast Islamic Centre**
38 Wellington Park, Belfast, BT9 6DN; 028 90664465

**Chinese Welfare Association**
133-135 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HQ; 028 90288277

**Ethnic Minorities Project Ballymena Community Forum**
Glendun Drive, Ballymena, BT43 6SR; 028 256501032

**Indian Community Centre**
86 Clifton Street, Belfast, BT13 1AB; 028 90249746

**Mandarin Speakers Association**
9 Stranmillis Road, Belfast, BT9; 028 90687793

**Multi-Cultural Resource Centre NI** [www.mcrc-ni.org](http://www.mcrc-ni.org)
9 Lower Crescent; Belfast; BT7 1NR; 028 90244639

**Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre**
12 Upper Crescent, Belfast, BT7 1NT; 028 90238742
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities  www.nicem.org.uk
3rd Floor, Ascot House, 24-31 Shaftsbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DB, 90238645

Sai Pak Chinese Community Project
45a Clooney Terrace, Waterside, L'Derry, BT47 6PA; 028 71288858

South Tyrone Empowerment Programme
www.steporganisation.org.uk
Dungannon Business Park, 2 Coalisland Road, Dungannon; 028 8772 9002

Traveller Movement (NI)
30 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1FY; 028 90202727

Wah Hep Chinese Community Association
Brownlow Health Centre, 1 Legahory, Brownlow, Craigavon, BT65 5BE, 38347162

Other groups without premises:
• There are a number of local Chinese community associations contactable through the Chinese forum c/o CWA
• There are a community associations for single communities such as: NI Filipino Community Association, NI Filipino Community in Action, Pakistani Community Association, NI Pakistani Association, Craigavon Vietnamese Club, Dutch Club, Japan Society of NI, La Societa Italiana
• There are cross identity groups such as Latinoamérica Unida, and NI Committee for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (NICRAS)
• There are a number of faith based groups such as Belfast Bahai Community, Belfast Hebrew Congregation and NI Muslim Family Association (NIMFA), Sikh Cultural Centre
• There are locally based groups across NI including: Mid-Ulster International Group, Omagh Ethnic Support Group, North West Ethnic Community Association and Women of the World (Fermanagh)
• There are campaigning groups such as All Cultures Together in Education (ACTE), and the Refugee Action Group

Many of the above groups can be contacted through NICEM or MCRC.
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