

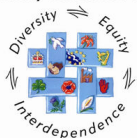
# Barriers to Access to the Arts and to Intercultural Arts Engagement as experienced by the Chinese and Indian Communities in Northern Ireland



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# INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1 This document presents the findings of a research project that set out to identify and understand the 'barriers to access' to the arts experienced by the Chinese and Indian communities resident in Northern Ireland (NI) and to Inter-cultural Arts Engagement.
- 2 The project was commissioned by Audiences Northern Ireland with funding support from the CRC/ACNI 'Interculturalism Fund'. Ultimately, the aim of the project is to provide information that could be considered a first step in the development of guidelines and a definition of local best practice for resident arts organisations that wish to engage with ethnic minority communities.
- 3 In commissioning the work, Audiences NI was aware that 'access' issues would apply both to long-established ethnic minority communities as well as to recent economic migrant communities. However, recognising the potentially more transient nature of economic migration and the multi-generational considerations existing within the longer established communities i.e. whether or not access to the arts is 'generation dependent', it was determined that the research should initially focus on the two largest ethnic groups – the Chinese and Indian communities, which themselves have seen significant development in the last few years.
- 4 In addition to a simple focus on barriers to access, Audiences NI also accepted that there was a need to examine the importance to the target communities of access to arts opportunities that might be considered as 'reinforcing of cultural identity' or, at least 'culturally relevant' to these communities.

### 1.1 Executive Summary

#### Methodology

- 1.1 An initial desk research programme examined published reports from across the UK as well as from NI. Both the desk research and subsequent focus groups served to test the conclusions from these reports and to draw out distinctive perspectives on cultural engagement that reflected the stage of development of local communities and the ways in which they are currently developing and changing.
- 1.2 Focus group research considered:
  - Issues of engagement with 'Western' culture and the existence of 'barriers to access' to the arts for the Chinese & Indian communities in NI,
  - Issues of cross-cultural engagement *and*
  - How these communities engage with the culture of their community's 'homeland'.

- 1.3 In addition to the focus on the Chinese & Indian communities, personal contact was made with the African and Muslim communities.

## Findings

- 1.4 By and large the focus groups confirmed the views arising from the desk research and reinforced the major issues identified by it. Certain commonalities exist between the two communities dependent on what might be termed a 'generational' issue – put simply, it may be said that first generation immigrants had a cultural focus oriented toward their 'homeland' as they had left it and had little or no contact on a cultural basis with the arts of the indigenous NI community. They socialised together, used satellite television to access culture and the arts from 'home' and, where resources have allowed, have shared this culture with the indigenous NI community. These groups might also face language barriers and would certainly be constrained, to some extent, by available time away from work or the family and be dependent on community by financial capacity.
- 1.5 The second generation were to all intents citizens of NI, they had grown up and been educated here and with the drive, common to both communities for children to 'better' themselves, they had been exposed to opportunities to engage with the arts which equipped them for future engagement should they choose. In many instances, particularly in the Chinese community, the drive to improve was very much focused on a professional career and careers involving the arts were not recognised as having importance. Another factor that impacts on this generation's engagement with the arts is the common focus in both communities on family. Not being able to take the children to many of the places the arts happen would immediately preclude regular or even casual engagement for many.
- 1.6 The third main identifiable group operating within both communities that needs to be considered is the growing number of economic migrants. In the case of the Chinese community it is interesting that the new economic migrants are Mandarin speakers from a professional background and with an urban experience in the PRC, Taiwan or some other area that is not Hong Kong. For the Indian community the immigrants are likely to have a similar professional background. What is common about this group, and important for the arts, is the fact that as economic migrants their focus is on moneymaking and many of them will have relatives at home to whom they send money monthly. The upshot of this is that they have other calls on their income that take precedence over attending arts events.

- 1.7 Interestingly, the arrival of this third group has brought with it a number of individuals who would have a background and training as performers who might be prepared to provide training in their arts to members of the second generation and their children.
- 1.8 The young people who participated in the focus groups represented both people who had been born here and those who had come to study here in the last few years. Irrespective of this they shared a common perspective; they liked to do the things their peers from the indigenous community did – cinema, music etc., and wanted, at the same time, to have the opportunity to access the culture of their family's home country primarily as participants.
- 1.9 Moving to look at the issue of inter-cultural engagement, the situation varied between the communities but to some extent reflected the broad divisions above; older people had a more exclusive attitude to their community's culture, the second generation wanted to reach out and share and young people were coming from a perspective where they wanted to see their community's culture represented in the broad sweep of cultural engagement in NI. For older members of the community, engagement with 'Western' arts delivered within the context of intercultural presentations (but firmly under the control of their peers and within a Chinese context) was an opportunity to enjoy and share; 'Western' arts delivered in a 'Western' context was probably not for them.
- 1.10 For the African community, there are many fundamental issues which would need to be addressed before proactive engagement in 'Western' arts can take place including what they find interesting and relevant and the contexts within which the arts are delivered. The group of young Muslims reflected many of the career issues highlighted by both the Indian and Chinese young people and exhibited the 'betterment' philosophy of engagement with instrumental or singing tuition. In considering access to the arts they discussed some of the tenets of their religion that would influence their engagement with the arts.
- 1.11 Interestingly, the groups from the Ashton Centre and An Droichead who participated in the research as representatives of the indigenous communities shared many of the same economic and social barriers to engagement with the arts – the high cost of entry, the lack of family opportunities and the lack of time available to attend given normal domestic pressures. They also highlighted one further issue, the feeling that the arts and 'posh' arts venues were not places that 'their kind' went to – this might also be interpreted as lack of experience of the arts arising from a community's historic lack of engagement.

## Recommendations

- 1.12 That a 'Forum' covering the major umbrella bodies for ethnic minority communities be formed to plan and co-ordinate engagement and to act as the interface between the arts and the communities.
- 1.13 That promotional activities aimed at these communities should be focused through CWA, MSA, ICC and the other umbrella bodies across the various ethnic communities as being the most cost effective and efficient way to reach their respective communities. However, it should also be recognised that the ability of these groups to reciprocate activity in terms of planning, management and dialogue may be limited.
- 1.14 That for maximum impact promotional opportunities are focused on places where people gather e.g. Chinese Language School, Chinese Church, ICC, Indian Youth Group etc.
- 1.15 That promotions follow on from action addressing, where possible, major issues including the scheduling of events/performances when people are likely to be able to attend, having child friendly policies and tackling the issue of cost.
- 1.16 That promotions be tied to festivals important to the communities.
- 1.17 That a central database be built up of all those within the community interested in the arts by working through the umbrella bodies to collect contact details.
- 1.18 That a programme of visits and tours of major arts venues/institutions be inaugurated for children, young people and their parents and managed through the umbrella bodies so as to build familiarity.
- 1.19 That specific artform product providers are identified as the best mechanisms for presenting contemporary arts practice emanating from ethnic community homelands and as such may be used to drive awareness, recognition and consumption but that these activities will require specific financial subvention.
- 1.20 That it be recognised that children and young people represent the most significant opportunity to develop arts engagement within both the Indian and Chinese communities and that organisations outside of school that can build on this have a particular role to play in generating long-term engagement between these communities are the arts for the future.

# BACKGROUND & TERMS OF REFERENCE

## 2. BACKGROUND & TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 2.1 Effective engagement with minority ethnic communities, organisations and individuals is both a concern and an opportunity for the arts sector in Northern Ireland today. As well as being required to present a meaningful response to the obligations of Section 75 legislation (NI Act 1998), the sector recognises that building relationships across a range of cultures, communities and identities will bring benefit in terms of social inclusion and audience development.
- 2.2 The structure of the population in Northern Ireland is changing; the census of 2001<sup>1</sup> quantified the minority ethnic population in Northern Ireland at 14,279. However, this is generally regarded as a significant under-estimation.
- 2.3 DSD figures on applications for National Insurance numbers in Northern Ireland, indicate that a total of 31,421 people from 120 different identified countries (not-UK or Republic of Ireland nationals) applied between April 2003 and end June 2005. The largest number of applications came from
- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| ○ Poland          | 6,710 applications |
| ○ Lithuania       | 3,586              |
| ○ Portugal        | 3,246              |
| ○ India           | 2,140              |
| ○ Slovakia        | 2,034              |
| ○ The Philippines | 1,230              |
| ○ China           | 1,085              |
- 2.4 At the same time, statistics collected for individuals from Eastern Europe (EU Accession States) applying for registration under the 'Worker Registration Scheme' numbered 12,335 people. The differences between these statistics on applications and registrations would suggest that only around 67% of those who applied for National Insurance numbers also registered under the WRS so it may reasonably be suggested that not all people who are required to register are actually registering. Estimates for the number of undocumented workers in Northern Ireland range (high to low) between 11,970 and 3,173 people. In light of all of the above, it does not seem unreasonable to accept the assertion made by certain minority ethnic representatives that the "non-indigenous" population of Northern Ireland is closer to 45,000 people.

<sup>1</sup> Neighbourhood Statistics (NISRA). Website: [www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk). Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO

- 2.5 At the same time, anecdotal evidence would suggest that the numbers of audience members and participants in arts events and activities coming from minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland is relatively small. As the population grows, this perceived low level of engagement would most likely continue unless something is done about it.
- 2.6 Tackling the situation requires a knowledge and understanding of the barriers that keep arts organisations and venues from being able to access this new audience/participant opportunity. Audiences NI, in its prime role of audience development, recognised this requirement and determined that it would undertake research to establish barriers to access to the arts. In consultation with the consultants the following terms of reference for this research project were established: -

**Brief:** To establish the context of the Chinese and Indian communities within Northern Ireland and outline any barriers to attendance established by previous research in Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

Research should explore the following issues:

*Language* – the fear of not being able to understand or be understood

*Nature of events* – content may be ‘at odds’ with individual and community experience and feeling of own culture and identity

Potential *general lack of interest* –relevance of the arts to these communities

*Economic issues* e.g. cost of tickets, work commitment

*Timing* of events – do schedules fit with needs of differing communities?

*Potential lack of time* – for work and economic reasons or family commitments

*Generational issues*

*Publicity & Marketing generally*

*Availability and location of venues*

Does interest vary depending upon the *nature of the arts event*?

What is the *preferred way to attend events* – in groups, as individuals, as families?

Experience of *accessing the arts in other ways* e.g. television, internet

- 2.7 Parallel to this, Audiences NI engaged with Young at Art, organisers of the Belfast Children’s Festival, who were developing a project to test a number of methods to increase involvement and awareness among families and young people from minority ethnic communities and other marginalised groups.

The intercultural work developed by the two organisations paired members of the Indian community with residents from North Belfast through New Lodge Arts and the Ashton Centre, and members of the Chinese community with South Belfast residents and the Irish language community through An Droichead Cultural Resource Centre. Participants in the focus groups were drawn from these projects and also from contacts initiated by the consultant group. (A separate report on this work is available from Young at Art [www.youngatart.co.uk](http://www.youngatart.co.uk) - see Bibliography).

### 3. THE HISTORY OF THE INDIAN AND CHINESE COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THEIR CURRENT STATUS AND SCALE

3.1 Section 2 (Background) above has provided some basic details on the changing face of the NI population. Before one can understand the nature and scale of barriers to access and how they might be tackled one needs to have some basic understanding of the communities concerned. The sections that follow will attempt to set the scene by providing some basic history of the Chinese and Indian communities in NI.

#### Chinese Community

Community Size (2001 Census <sup>2</sup> )	4,145 people
Community estimate of current population	8,000
Share of estimated 'non-indigenous' population	17.7
Average household size for a Chinese family	3.47
Application for National Insurance Numbers 2003-05	1,085

#### History

- The Chinese community began to arrive in Northern Ireland during the early 1960s, mainly from the rural area of Hong Kong. A high proportion of the Chinese resident here were born outside NI (70% born in Hong Kong). The community also contains people from Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and Mainland China (People's Republic of China).
- There has been a pattern of chain migration – once part of a family had settled in Northern Ireland, family and friends would follow and settle here too.
- Prior to the recent influx of migrant workers from Eastern Europe, the Chinese community was by far the largest minority ethnic community with 51% of the total ethnic minority population.
- The majority of the community live in the Greater Belfast Urban Area, but there are also significant numbers in Craigavon, Lisburn, Newtownabbey and North Down (see next section for map).
- The Chinese community is growing at a faster rate than the general population<sup>3</sup>.
- Entering for the purposes of employment is by far the most common reason for moving to Northern Ireland; followed by requests for study visas and as spouses of British citizens.
- The Chinese Welfare Association (CWA) claims to have witnessed a recent increase in applications for political asylum from people fleeing The People's Republic of China (PRC).

<sup>2</sup> Neighbourhood Statistics (NISRA). Website: [www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk). Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO

<sup>3</sup> Irwin and Dunn - Study of Ethnic Minorities

- Most, although not all, of the Chinese resident here are concentrated in the catering industry. The long demanding and unsociable hours associated with this industry has compounded the problem of isolation experienced by many in the Chinese Community, according to the CWA.

## Lifestyle

(Based on *Sharing the Spotlight* research [Scotland] & information direct from CWA)

- Older Chinese people tend to speak little or no English; accordingly, their patterns of socialising are strongly governed by this.
- Traditionally, Chinese men have tended to work in catering and therefore have long working hours, which leaves little time for socialising.
- More recent immigrants from the PRC have tended to be better educated, in professional employment and are, therefore, not constrained in the same way.
- Working long hours 6 days a week means Sunday is usually reserved for a special meal for the whole family, often in a Chinese restaurant.
- Chinese food is central to the culture and socialising, and the most common social activity for many older people (Sharing the Spotlight research).
- There is a strong sense of ethnic and cultural identity and parents were very concerned to ensure that future generations did not lose touch with Chinese culture, while not losing touch themselves either (using libraries to read Chinese books and newspapers, ordering magazines from Hong Kong, listening to Chinese radio stations and watching satellite television).
- With the community building around the first wave of immigrants from rural Hong Kong, the perspectives on Chinese cultural engagement are generally those associated with rural agrarian communities. As such, 'festivals' are an important part of the social calendar, particularly Chinese New Year, Dragon Boat Festival and the mid-autumn festival. Within Northern Ireland Chinese religions, festivals and traditions are observed in the Chinese community to the extent practicable in an overseas Chinese society.
- Apart from these festivals there appear to be few regular events and limited engagement with the arts.
- The recent arrivals from the PRC are said to have different, more expansive cultural perspectives arising from their different geographic origins and higher levels of education.
- The Chinese community tends to have more members in the skilled (manual) occupational class than the other ethnic groups - reflecting the influence of catering, with a greater proportion renting their homes (furnished or unfurnished). A notable employment feature is the high proportion of this community who are self-employed, with a significant number of females as well as males in this category.

## Language

(Based on *In Other Words* research and information direct from CWA)

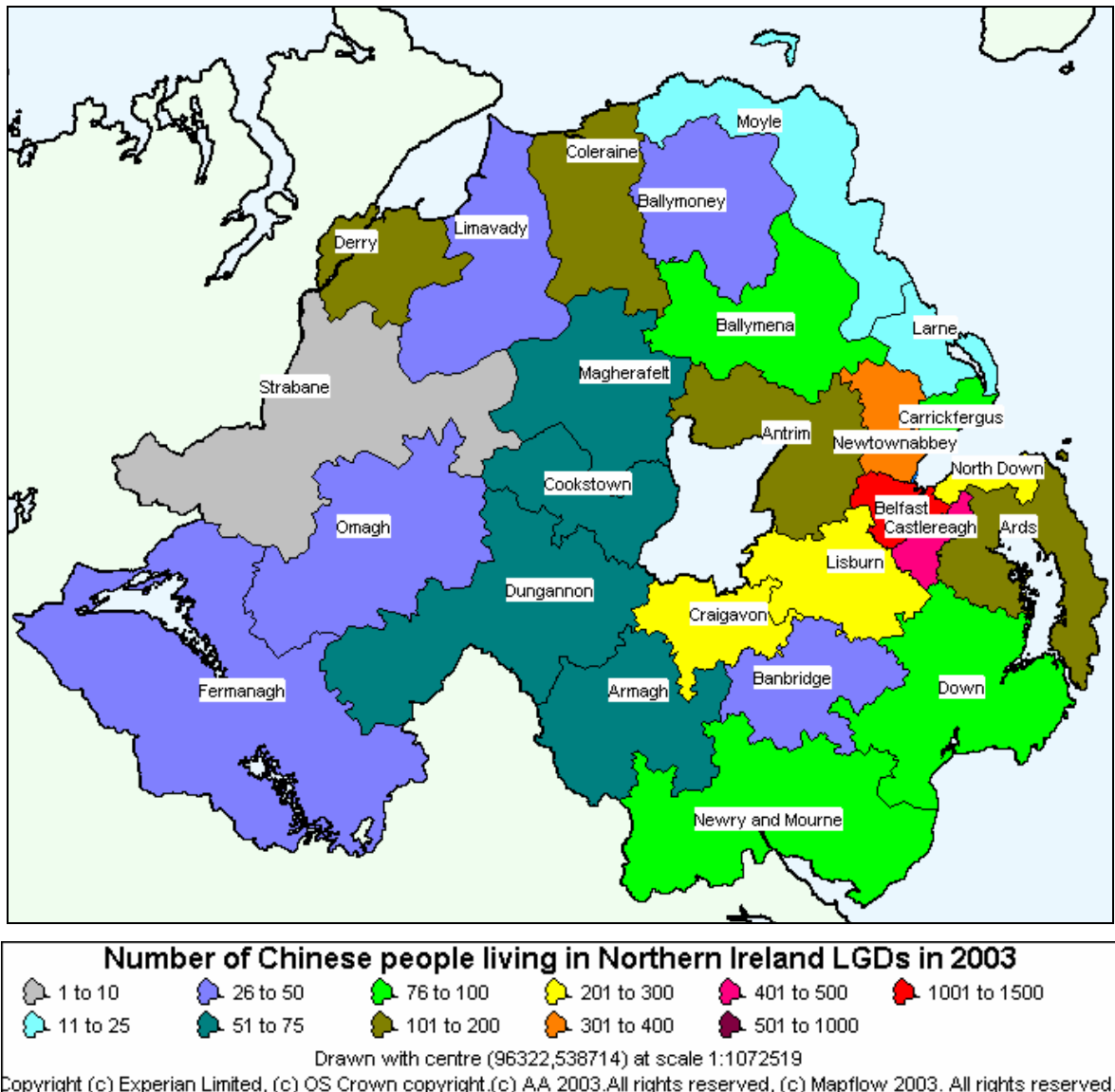
3.2 According to the CWA, language has been identified as one of the major barriers that inhibit the Chinese community from integrating with the wider NI society. Many of those who came to Northern Ireland in the 1960's had had only a few years of primary education in Hong Kong and were, as a result, illiterate in their own language on their arrival in NI. Against this background, it was, for many, very difficult to approach learning English under the auspices of a formal institution teaching English through its grammar. CWA believe that even recent arrivals, particularly those who are employed in the catering business, have had little opportunity or incentive to learn English. Chinese, therefore, remains the spoken language of the family home at all times. Against this background the following should be noted: -

- Roughly 80 – 90% of the community speak Cantonese and write the complex form, around 5% speak Hakka and around 10% speak Mandarin, both writing in the simplified form. A smaller number would speak Fujianese or other languages.
- Within the 1st generation of the Chinese community, only 17% of the community speak English at a proficient level and 11% write English at a proficient level.
- Overall, proficiency in English (spoken and written) is much higher amongst 2nd generation members of the community. They are mostly writing and speaking at a proficient level, with approximately 20% operating at an intermediate level.
- Conversely, 1st generation members are mostly proficient at speaking Chinese, while levels for 2nd generation are far lower.
- Men have slightly higher levels of proficiency in English than women, while the young also have much higher levels of proficiency in English.
- Cantonese: vast majority of 1st generation are proficient in speaking Cantonese, but only 62% are proficient at writing it. Only 45% of 2nd generation are proficient in speaking Cantonese, while only 5% write proficiently. 73% of the 2nd generation have basic or no Cantonese written skills.
- Mandarin: Around half of Mandarin speakers are proficient or at intermediate level in English (both speaking and writing). This split is due to the fact that almost all are first generation, those with proficient or intermediate English are generally students/academics, while those with basic or no English are generally refugees.
- Around 32% of the Chinese community live in households in which no one speaks English above a basic level, and a further 26% live with someone who speaks at an intermediate level. 42% had at least one proficient English speaker in the household.

3.3 For future reference and with specific relevance to making contact with the community, it should be noted that there is a Chinese Language School, which was established by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce (N.I.) in 1983 and merged with the classes offered by the Mandarin Speaking Association (MSA) in 2001. The main objective of the school is to maintain Chinese language and culture within the younger Chinese generation.

### Geographic Distribution

3.4 From the available 2001 Census information, the geographic distribution of the Chinese community within NI appears to be as follows below: -



Source: Neighbourhood Statistics (NISRA). Website: [www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk)  
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- Although Census figures are only supposed to represent around half of the actual Chinese community, the census figures show that of those who have been counted, the majority live in Belfast, Castlereagh and Newtownabbey Local Government Districts.

**Note:** Chinese people living in Craigavon and the Northwest had significantly lower levels of oral and written English than that elsewhere, especially in Belfast.

## Representative Organisations

- 3.5 The Chinese Community is represented by the Chinese Welfare Association (Cantonese Speaking Community originating in Hong Kong - largely) and the Mandarin Speakers Association (Mandarin speaking community originating from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan etc.)

## Chinese Welfare Association

- 3.6 The Mission of the organisation is to secure the future of the Chinese community in Northern Ireland within a framework of racial equality and enable all sections of the community to fully participate in both the development of the community and the wider society by: -

- Enabling and supporting community development and developing the community infrastructure within the Chinese community
- Providing or securing services which meet the health and social needs arising out of the disadvantaged position of the Chinese community
- Enabling children and young people to realise their full potential as active citizens within both the Chinese and wider community
- Developing greater cultural awareness within both the Chinese and wider community and working towards elimination of racism and discrimination
- Securing the resources and facilities needed to achieve the core aims of the organisation

- 3.7 It does this by providing a range of services: -

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| • Welfare rights, immigration and nationality advice | • After School Club                   |
| • Professional interpreting and translation services | • English Language Classes for Adults |
| • Community Relations officer services               | • Chinese Language School             |
| • Information Technology in Chinese                  | • Youth Group – Generation Y          |
| • Cultural Awareness and anti-racism training        | • Oi Kwan Women’s Group               |
|  | • Hoi Sum Chinese Elderly Group       |

## Mandarin Speakers Association

- 3.8 MSA was established in late 2000 in response to the numbers of people arriving in Northern Ireland from Mainland China who, as academics (mainly), had needs that were perceived as different to the Chinese community already resident in NI.
- 3.9 MSA has developed an arts activity programme as an important part of its remit in response to a perceived wish to see 'aspects of the culture they grew up' with while living in Northern Ireland. The first arts project took place in 2001 and with the recruitment of a development worker in 2004, the arts became part of their annual programme of activities. MSA's aim is to present high quality arts and opportunities to participate e.g. painting classes for children.
- 3.10 Events promoted have included a craft exhibition at the Waterfront Hall (summer 2005) and participation in a Chinese New Year celebration at the Ulster Hall (2006), which featured Chinese dance, opera and a photographic exhibition. MSA also runs Mandarin language speaking classes.
- 3.11 With regard to future developments and opportunities for further arts presentations, they recognise that festivals are very much an integral part of the Chinese culture and they would like to see more of these.

## Indian Community

Community Size (2001 Census <sup>4</sup> )	1,567 people
Applications for National Insurance Numbers 2003/05	2,140

### History:

- The Indian community arrived in Northern Ireland in the 1920s and 1930s, mainly from Punjab and Gujarat
- Since then, there has been a pattern of chain migration – once part of a family had settled in Northern Ireland, family and friends would follow and settle here too.
- Many of these new arrivals started off with a career in clothing sales door-to-door, which in some instances led them to develop new retail and/or clothing manufacturing businesses, chain migration focused many in these core business areas. However, the demands of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 led to an increase in professional immigrants in the 1960s and 70s.
- Today the Indian community is, arguably, one of the most successful sections of society in Northern Ireland gauged by standard economic indicators. It has the highest proportions, among the other ethnic groups, of economically active members in the top occupational classes. It also has higher numbers with professional qualifications and a larger proportion own their homes than is generally the case. Data on household density also seems to suggest that Indians tend to live in larger homes.

### Lifestyle

(Based on Sharing the Spotlight research: Scotland)

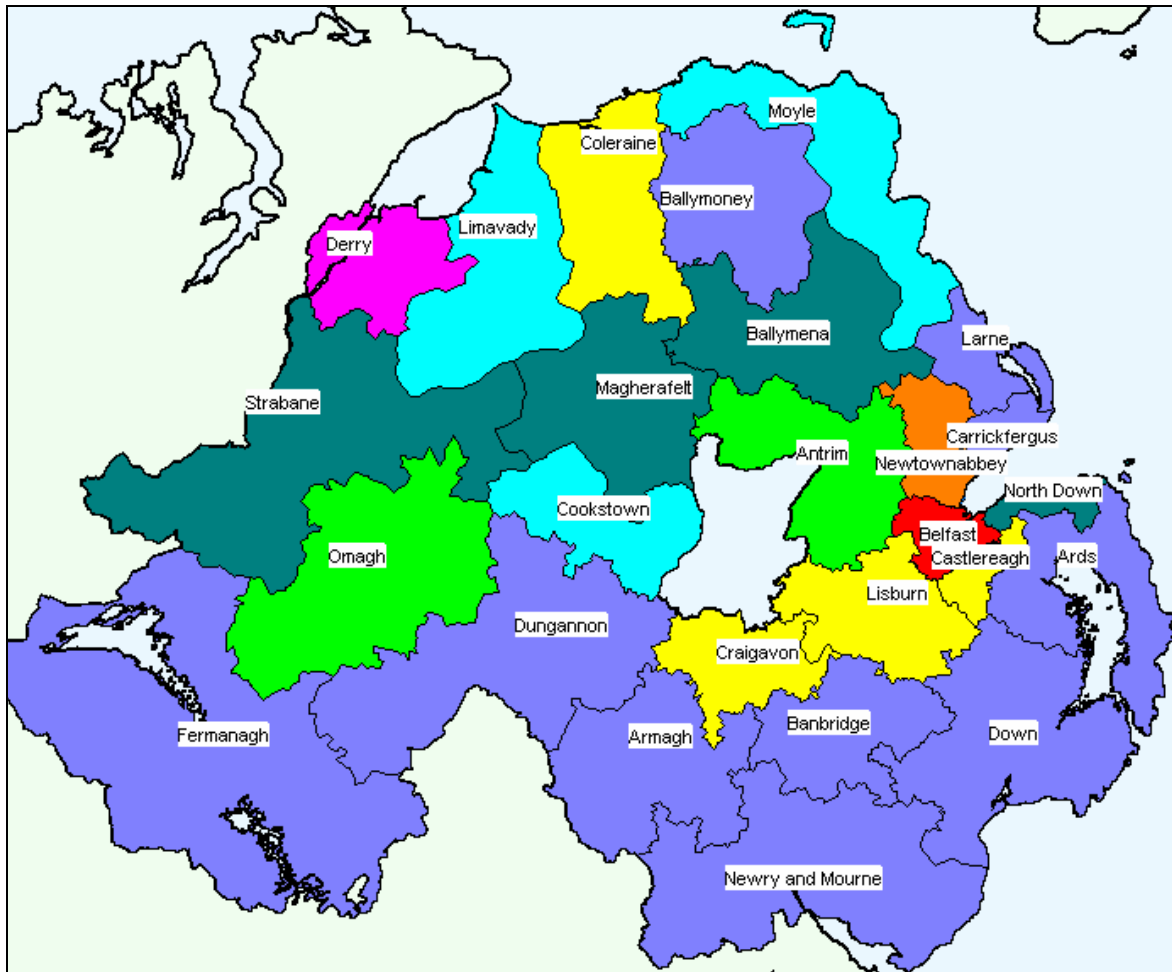
- Socialising amongst the Indian community is frequently based around the extended family and the broader ethnic and religious community.
- Weddings, visiting relatives, religious activities at Temples, and community based organisations often figure prominently in the social life of the Indian family particularly for the older members of the community (aged over 45), who socialise mainly or exclusively within their own ethnic community.
- The extended family is less central to the younger British-born generations (mostly people aged under 35). Whilst young Asian people still socialise within their community and at family events, they are also more likely than older people to go out 'as a couple' and to live in 'nuclear' rather than extended households.
- Some 29% of those in the Indian community would be in professional occupations, 24% would be students and 21% homemakers. Some 8% would be in business while 9% would now be retired (9% classified – other).

<sup>4</sup> Neighbourhood Statistics (NISRA). Website: [www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk). Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO

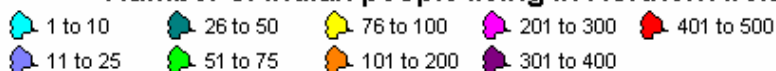
## Language (Based on In Other Words research: NI)

- The Indian community within Northern Ireland reflects the diverse range of languages across India.
- 70% of the community would be from Northern India (mainly speaking Punjabi/Hindi), 30% would be from Southern India (speaking a range of languages including Tamil, Kannada, Kanta, Malayala, Marati, Oriya and Telugu).
- Around two-thirds are Hindi/Punjabi speakers while one-third would speak the other languages mentioned above.
- 60% are proficient in both spoken and written English, while 20% would be at an intermediate level and another 20% would be at a basic level.
- There are sections (particularly amongst Punjabis, Hindis and the elderly) where little English is spoken.
- Not all Indian languages are used in their written form – e.g. Punjabi is almost always an oral language, the written form is rarely used – some of the Punjabi community may read Hindi.
- Most individuals of the 'second generation' will not read or write in any language other than English. They may speak the historic family 'Indian language' at home, but it is unlikely that it will also have been learnt in its written form. Some of the 'first generation' do not use the written form of the language either – the written forms are more common amongst southern Indian languages.
- Proficiency in English has been linked to the type of employment: professionals (90%), business/trader (45-50%)
- Men are slightly more likely to have proficient English – particularly pronounced amongst Punjabis (60% of men compared to 40% of women)

## Geography:



### Number of Indian people living in Northern Ireland LGD's in 2003



Drawn with centre (93312,539245) at scale 1:947197

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Source: Neighbourhood Statistics (NISRA). Website: [www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk)  
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- 3.12 Census figures appear to be more accurate for the Indian community than the Chinese community.
- 3.13 The Indian community is predominantly focused in the Belfast Local Government District and the Derry Local Government District.

## Indian Community Centre Activities

3.14 The Indian Community Centre (ICC) and its Temple was established as far back as 1979 in a disused Methodist Church in Carlisle Circus. It has been supported in the recent past to undertake much needed work on the building by funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Community Relations Council has supported its inter-community work. The ICC is active in facilitating the Indian community to come together to network, to celebrate Indian festivals and cultural traditions and undertakes outreach to enable the NI communities among whom its members live to get to know its cultural heritage. The ICC has an active youth group and engages in arts development activities as part of the programming of this group. ICC programming includes: -

### **Arts**

- School Outreach Programmes
- Major Indian festivals e.g. Diwali & Mela
- Bollywood Dance Classes
- Dance Exhibitions
- Visual Art
- Indian Drama
- Indian Music
- Roadshows

### **Cultural Awareness**

- Cultural Talks for Schools & Community Groups
- Sari Demonstrations
- Henna Painting
- Food Tasting
- Multi cultural Days
- Open days
- Women's Day
- Hindi Classes

### **Youth Activities**

- Mosaics
- Dance
- Visual Arts
- Drama
- Music
- Hindi classes
- Volunteering

3.15 The ICC's Arts Department has developed programmes to bring Indian arts and crafts, dance and drama, music, visual art history, geography and cookery lessons to schools within Northern Ireland and has provided cultural diversity training to local and ethnic minority women. The Centre also provides dance classes, music classes and Hindi language classes for the Indian community.

## 4. PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS AND ATTENDANCE AT ARTS EVENTS – LESSONS FROM EXISTING RESEARCH

4.1 Research undertaken across the UK (What's In A Word?, Sharing The Spotlight), backed up by research specifically in Northern Ireland (Arts Council NI and DCAL research) identifies the following factors as being barriers to attendance and participation specifically in the arts amongst the general population: -

- Cost
- Finding the time
- Location
- Venues associated along sectarian/class divides
- Poor public transport infrastructure
- Lack of information
- Unsuitable product
- Feeling uncomfortable/out of place
- Family commitments
- Lack of understanding of the arts
- Lack of participation in the arts
- Lack of appropriate venues
- Venues in which people don't feel comfortable
- Lack of choice/product
- Overall experience/customer service
- Lack of Night Time Economy/City Centre safety

4.2 The Arts Council of NI Research into the actual and perceived barriers to publicly funded arts in Northern Ireland identified time, cost and lack of transport as more of an issue in England, but family commitments were more important in Northern Ireland.

### What are the established perceived barriers to participation and attendance amongst particular segments of the population (not specific to ethnic groups)?

4.3 While generic barriers to attendance exist, specific sub-sections of society face particular barriers. As ethnic communities are not a homogenous block, some of these may be applicable to members of these communities in addition to barriers specifically related to their ethnicity. In addition, as the focus of this research is not solely on ethnic communities but on their interaction with non-ethnic community groups, barriers to attendance for the other participants must also be considered.

Disabled	Children/Young People	Community Background	Rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Attitudes</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Lack of information on facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of understanding</li> <li>• "The arts" associated with traditional art forms</li> <li>• Generation gap between what young people want and what is on offer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Not for us" perception</li> <li>• "One community" perception</li> <li>• Location of venues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Added costs</li> <li>• Not comfortable in the city</li> <li>• No one to go with</li> <li>• Lack of information</li> <li>• Isolation</li> </ul>
Families	Elderly	LGBT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of time</li> <li>• Unwelcoming venues &amp; staff</li> <li>• Lack of facilities for children</li> <li>• Lack of family events</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Lack of information/publicity</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Timing of events</li> <li>• Staff awareness of how children behave</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of transport</li> <li>• Lack of facilities (e.g. disability)</li> <li>• Lack of information</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• No-one to go with</li> <li>• Poor health.</li> <li>• "Not for us" perception</li> <li>• Literacy problems</li> <li>• Lack of opportunity</li> <li>• Isolation</li> <li>• Safety (at night)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events not reflective of LGBT culture</li> <li>• LGBT events not widely publicised</li> <li>• Staff attitudes/awareness</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Little pro-active engagement from the arts sector</li> <li>• Little understanding of the issues faced by the community</li> </ul>	

Source: Research into the actual and perceived barriers to publicly funded arts in Northern Ireland, ACNI

### What are the perceived barriers to participation and attendance in the arts amongst ethnic communities?

4.4 Many of the barriers that ethnic communities face are also faced by the rest of the population. However, 'What's In A Word?' identified a series of particular barriers that most ethnic groups are likely to experience, although it should be noted that different communities are likely to place different values on each barrier e.g. the Chinese community are generally more likely to cite cost, while Asians are most likely to cite time. (Source: Research into the actual and perceived barriers to publicly funded arts in Northern Ireland, ACNI.)

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| ○ Time/Cost            | ○ "The arts are not for us" / Feeling out of place |
| ○ Location of venue    | ○ Lack of understanding                            |
| ○ Lack of availability | ○ Cultural and social irrelevance                  |
| ○ Lack of information  | ○ Fear of the unknown                              |
| ○ Language             | ○ Current venue approach to marketing              |
| ○ Social barriers      | ○ Religious Restrictions                           |

4.5 A number of issues were also identified as being specifically relevant to young ethnic people. (It is worth noting that a large number of these issues would apply to ALL young people):

Issue	Rationale
<b>Time/Cost</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception of value: fear of spending money with no guarantee of enjoyment.</li> <li>• Long working hours.</li> <li>• Family: if not attending with children then there are childcare issues, if attending as a family the cost is multiplied accordingly.</li> <li>• Young people often have other pastimes and the arts falls completely outside their sphere of social activity with their peer group.</li> </ul>
<b>Location of venue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to and from the venue: poor public transport infrastructure, late finishes, personal safety.</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of availability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall level of mainstream arts provision.</li> <li>• Level of provision of culturally relevant product within mainstream venues.</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low level of publicity relative to other pastimes (e.g. cinema), therefore greater effort required to find out what is on.</li> <li>• Therefore, social networks are key – the more introverted the community and/or the arts organisation, the less likely the two groups are to be engaged with each other.</li> </ul>
<b>Language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prefer events in their own language or events that are easy to understand.</li> <li>• Even those with some knowledge of English have to make a concerted effort to understand.</li> <li>• Two way street: particularly excludes older people from mainstream arts, but also excludes younger people from minority ethnic arts.</li> <li>• No interpreter facilities, interpretation during a live performance could disturb the performance, practical difficulties in learning English (provision, childcare, etc.), certain languages only exist in oral form (Punjabi) while some second generation only learn the oral form (Hindi, Cantonese)</li> </ul>

<b>Social barriers:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No one to go with.</li> <li>• Negative opinions of others can influence non-attendance.</li> <li>• Gender – women more proactive and interested in the arts than men; in some communities religious and social restrictions on women can hinder attendance.</li> <li>• “What will the rest of the community think?”</li> <li>• People make decisions defined by their friends, family and community.</li> <li>• Conservative Views and Discomfort with the use of swear words and scenes of a sexual nature.</li> <li>• The audience experience: don’t want to sit and be quiet, want involvement, participation &amp; to share their experience with friends (particularly common view amongst young people).</li> </ul>
<b>Religious restrictions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When do events happen – does it conflict with the religious practices/calendar of the ethnic community?</li> <li>• What type of event is it – does it conflict with the religious practices of the ethnic community?</li> </ul>
<b>“The arts are not for us” / Feeling out of place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception that as they are not white, middle/upper class, over 35 years old and/or serious intellectuals that the arts is not for them.</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception that they lack the critical abilities to engage with these art forms.</li> <li>• Did not feel they knew how to evaluate or appreciate them (particularly classical arts).</li> <li>• Parents viewed exposing their children to the arts as integral to them continuing to appreciate the arts in later life (but some parents felt ill-equipped to make that introduction.)</li> <li>• Main problematic artforms: classical arts, theatre, and modern art.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural and social irrelevance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of interest in Western Culture – this is compounded by the “not for us” perception and having no connection to subject matter.</li> <li>• Often little or no social interaction amongst audience members in Western artforms.</li> </ul>
<b>Fear of the unknown</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Won’t know how to behave: how to react, when to clap, how to dress etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Current venue approach to marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of familiar endorsement of product</li> <li>• Many venues are not altering their marketing mix to effectively communicate with these communities.</li> </ul>

## What do ethnic communities like to do with their free time?

4.6 'What's in a Word?' lays out the various pastimes that the research highlighted as being commonplace amongst ethnic communities. These included pastimes that are not dissimilar to those of the general population: -

- Cinema
- Sports
- Relaxing
- Eating out
- Bars/Clubs

4.7 It also identified a number of common themes, some of which would be common to everyone, irrespective of origin and some more likely to present themselves amongst minority ethnic communities.

- **Awareness:** the activities highlighted are already on the individual's "leisure agenda" and therefore when there is free time these are the things which come most readily to mind.
- **Familiarity:** people know about films, restaurants and local clubs, so they can 'limit the risk' of wasting their money on something they will not enjoy.
- **Ease of organisation:** none of the activities – with the exception of sports – requires a great deal of advance planning, so people can decide on the spur of the moment what they want to do.
- **Social interaction:** all the activities involve an element of social interaction and participation – even if this is restricted to making comments about the film (for young people in particular this can be the main appeal of an evening out).
- **Friendliness:** many mentioned the importance of friendliness or feeling relaxed. Among Black African and Caribbean men in particular the possibility of exclusion due to racism was ever present but by seeking out certain venues or activities, that risk was reduced.

## Do ethnic communities want to engage with the arts?

4.8 In answer to this question, 'Sharing the Spotlight' established that there was a considerable interest in a diverse range of arts amongst the communities they interviewed in Scotland, including both mainstream and ethnic specific artforms.

4.9 Older (1st generation) people within minority ethnic communities were primarily interested in their own ethnic culture and its traditional artforms (often directly linked to the culture's traditions or to religion). However, younger people tended to be interested in ethnic culture and mainstream culture (which some view as an expression of a dual identity) and often in non-traditional artforms.

4.10 Sharing the Spotlight went on to define various perceived benefits of attending the arts for minority ethnic communities including a chance:

- To relax
- To be refreshed
- To be stimulated, empowered and enriched.
- To connect with one's roots.
- To learn about one's culture.
- To pass on cultural knowledge from one generation to the next.
- To meet others from a similar minority ethnic background.
- To cultivating a sense of pride in ethnic identity.
- To maintain links with culture and traditions.
- To raise self-esteem amongst children and to enable them to "operate from a position of cultural strength" in a society which was often perceived as racist.

## 5. COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES ARISING FROM FIELD RESEARCH

- 5.1 In order to verify, update and expand on the desk research, the consultants carried out a series of key informant interviews with organisations representing the two target communities and a number of focus groups involving family representatives and young people. The focus group participants were to be drawn from young people and the parents of those participating in a programme of events developed and delivered by Young at Art. This proved very successful as a means of accessing the Indian community. Assembling a group to represent Chinese families, however, proved to be difficult due to an apparent reluctance to engage with the Young at Art programme.
- 5.2 The consultants, with the help of the Mandarin Speakers Association and the Principal of the Chinese Language School, were, however, able to successfully schedule an additional group session. Securing participation within the Chinese young people's focus group also proved difficult but the consultants are content that the information gleaned from the two people who made themselves available was representative of the community.
- 5.3 In addition a focus group was carried out with a group of young people from the Muslim Families Association, at their request.
- 5.4 The information arising from these various groups has been summarised below.

### Indian Community

- 5.5 The Indian Community has had access to arts activities and has promoted Indian culture through the presence of the Indian Community Centre and their outreach personnel for some years. A number of committed individuals are well known within the wider community and contribute to the cultural landscape through involvement in festivals, conferences and as spokespersons. Recent projects have included the organisation of Diwali in the Waterworks in North Belfast and the Mela in Botanic Gardens, Belfast. These events have proven to be extremely popular and have accessed significant numbers of participants from the 'majority' communities. Individuals from the Indian community have taken part in the New Belfast Community Arts Initiative's cultural diversity celebration in the Ulster Hall and at a recent conference on community festivals at the Waterfront Hall.

*"Diwali brought locals into contact with the Indian Community Centre, some for the first time."*

*"ICC has arts contacts with local schools."*

*"Mela was very busy; it brought people from the Indian community in the Republic to Belfast."*

5.6 The Indian community also organises youth activities and recently initiated a drama project ('Bombay to Belfast' with Tinderbox Theatre Company) and took part in drumming workshops (part of the Young at Art festival). Young dancers and musicians often take part in cultural diversity events and there has been participation in music and filmmaking projects.

5.7 The older members of the Indian Community (i.e. those who have been in Northern Ireland for over 40 years) are mainly interested in their own culture – albeit one that is as they remember it not as it is in India today. All would subscribe to satellite television channels (e.g. ZeeTV) which broadcast in their own language, and watch DVDs produced for an Indian audience. They attend 'live' Indian cultural events if their visit is facilitated by the Indian Community Centre. However, even then the activity will only attract a substantial audience if it is appropriate to the roots of the majority of Indian community members resident in NI i.e. Punjabi in origin.

*"Members of the Indian community who are long established have been too busy working; they have not broadened their horizons."*

*"First generation migrants brought an Indian culture that is now 30 years old. India itself has moved on." "The Indian community finds it necessary but difficult to keep up to date."*

*"Indian classical arts probably won't get an audience. The programme of Bangra music ICC put on was very well attended; Bangra is the main musical form of the Punjab."*

*"If they had the interest back in India or if they were educated to the subject (they would have maintained an interest in the arts)."*

5.8 Younger (2nd generation onwards) members of the Indian community are more interested in the arts in general; both from their own cultural heritage and those from the European traditions. However, family pressures limit the time that parents have to attend arts events.

*"The second generation have learnt and experienced Northern Ireland as part of the community."*

*"The arts can open up 'windows on the world'; it is good for children to learn how to play the piano while others learn how to play traditional Indian music."*

*"Indian families are very much in contact with some form of the arts; this is carried over into the second generation. It's common for kids to get music lessons (probably 1 in 5) outside of school. The issue is creating the interest in the children; parents want children to get involved in new things. Peace has facilitated this."*

- 5.9 Migrant workers, of whom there are many, may be interested but are preoccupied by issues related to long working hours and the need to conserve income in order to either settle in Northern Ireland (or somewhere else outside of India) or send money home.

*"Migrant workers are restricted by their working hours, and they are also here to make money not spend it. There is also the cost of having to save the money to travel back and forward between India and Northern Ireland. Migrant workers will only get involved with the (Indian) community at its lowest cost (opportunity) and for a 'cultural connection'. If they decide to settle here they will become freer to get involved in general community things."*

- 5.10 There is a move towards a rediscovery of the Indian arts heritage on the part of the 2nd and 3rd generation. There is a particular interest in learning Indian dance and the playing of Indian musical instruments but the lack of specialist teachers of Indian music in Northern Ireland is curtailing the building up of skills in this area. Students of secondary school age taking part in a focus group felt that in relation to the learning of musical instruments, their specific cultural needs and desires were not taken into account by their schools.

*"The issue of teachers not being available prevents more than a few workshops being developed for Indian arts."*

*"Maintaining the language is very important to keep the cultural connection."*

- 5.11 It was felt that, as with the wider community, there is a minority interested in attending arts events. Shows at the Lyric Theatre and Grand Opera House, for example, were perceived as being suited to the needs of 'educated' people. Also there was a suggestion that Indian theatre relates little to western theatre in that western subtlety is replaced in Indian drama by explanation so the experience does not translate well for many.

*"The expectation is that they won't enjoy it so they don't go because they don't have a different experience."*

*"Indian drama does not leave anything to the imagination, it is expressed; that does not fit well with where the arts in the west are i.e. there is a basic cultural difference between expectation and delivery between the producer and receiver."*

5.12 The occasional showing of Hindi films at QFT was welcomed but it was felt that many of these would already have been seen by the Indian community on DVD and that as the Indian community is well dispersed across Northern Ireland, many would not travel to Belfast to see them. Indian 'arthouse' movies are regarded as a very specialist interest; 'Bollywood' productions are much more popular.

*"The older community stick with DVDs, they do not attend the cinema."*

*"The spread of the community and the availability of DVDs have reduced the audience opportunity for QFT."*

*"QFT has suggested bringing in 'art movies' but they are at the bottom of everyone list."*

**Note:** QFT's perspective on this issue is that the market has changed with access to satellite TV and DVDs since they started to show Hindi films. However, they point out that, even at the outset, the extent of subsidisation for these films was excessive due to the lack of availability of prints and the fact that the UK distributor has a ready market at high prices.

They resumed the showing of Indian films in support of the Mela and had a very successful event, as there was considerable promotion by the ICC. Showings have continued since then, but financial results are very poor and with the availability of satellite and DVD's it is getting harder to justify the showings because of poor attendance. QFT believes it needs the ICC to champion this activity as well as making suggestions on which films to programme and to help promote attendance as a family occasion. QFT would like to grow the audience as it believes there is potential but it acknowledges that it is, at present, not reaching that potential.

**Belfast Festival at Queens** acknowledges that attracting an audience to attend outside of mainstream western arts events is a major problem that is compounded by the Festival's financial predicament. Festival would be keen to bring in more events for the Indian and other ethnic communities (they see this as an important role for Festival as they would like to promote BFQ as an opportunity for celebration to ethnic communities – as both audience and participant) but cannot afford so to do unless the relevant ethnic community can generate an audience.

They also recognise that with the rise in live arts programming all year round, the place for ethnic arts for Festival is at the cutting edge (as with general arts promotions), which is even less likely to attract an audience. Accordingly, ethnic opportunities may be better represented by outreach and workshop events.

**Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival (CQAF)** see their engagement with ethnic minorities as unsatisfactory at present and attribute this to a lack of resources to make the contacts, a lack of connections and a strategy for on-going engagement that might build a perspective of 'genuine interest' that could lead to audience development and a lack of knowledge to develop programming that will appeal to the Indian community.

The Festival's ethnic audience development activity this year has been limited to making contact with the ICC concerning a show by the 'Bollywood Brass Band' which they felt should appeal directly to the community. However, up take was relatively poor, which they believe may have to do with the authenticity of the product.

Information from their database would suggest that over the years there has been little audience uptake from the Indian community of their general programming (although this has however been bigger than up-take by the Chinese community).

5.13 Members of the Indian Youth Group (not part of the ICC) point out a number of other issues: -

- They do not know how many young people there are in the community and they have very little contact.
- They have to recognise that their parents are security conscious, particularly with the rise in ethnic violence.
- Young people from the Indian community, by and large, do the same things as Western young people.
- Money and age can be a barrier to engagement with western arts as for other young people from the majority community.
- Few young people would attend films at QFT – they go to the mainstream cinema regularly, however.

5.14 Summary: -

#### **Barriers to attending the Arts for the Indian community**

- Cost
- Location
- Degree of Communication / PR / Advertising
- Nature of Content
- Feeling that 'it's not for me'
- Educational background

#### **Need to Address**

- Resourcing of 'taster' sessions
- Anti-clash event diary
- Helping people to move outside their 'comfort' zones

## Chinese Community

5.15 The Chinese community in NI has traditionally been from rural and agrarian parts of Hong Kong and are Cantonese speaking. More recently, there has been an influx of better-educated, professional (often academic) Mandarin speakers from Mainland China. These two communities are represented by different organisations – the Chinese Welfare Association, representing the Cantonese community and the Mandarin Speakers Association representing the others.

## Cantonese Speakers - Chinese Welfare Association (CWA)

5.16 The membership of the CWA consists mostly of people who came to Northern Ireland from the rural areas of Hong Kong in the 1960s and 70s. For this generation, there are a number of issues that relate to their propensity to attend arts events including:

- Language barriers.
- Social class / background – coming from rural, agrarian communities their exposure to the arts (primarily Chinese) at home in Hong Kong would have been very limited.
- Educational background – limited education would be the norm for this generation and would have impacted on the individual in much the same way as social/class background (above).
- Marginalisation, particularly within the catering trade in NI leads to mixing within the Chinese community and not with local communities; suffer harassment from certain members of the indigenous community so not much opportunity for a sense of belonging to build up.
- A general lack of exposure to Western culture is the norm; they see this culture as very alien to them.
- They would see arts events as catering for the 'majority' communities in Northern Ireland but not for them.

5.17 For the first generation, it is necessary to provide what people 'like' and to this end; the CWA has been trying to bring Chinese arts and entertainment to Northern Ireland for a number of years. These opportunities would be organised in association with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and to coincide with a major festival e.g. Chinese New Year. They might include bringing popular singers from Hong Kong and Chinese dance but have also included Irish and salsa dancing.

- 5.18 Within a context where the event is first and foremost Chinese and where it is controlled and contextualised by a compère speaking Cantonese, the experience is that the audience has been quite prepared to engage with western arts. By contrast, where this overt identification with the community has not been evident and the arts have been presented as western, experience would suggest that the community would not engage with the presentation.

*"If the event is especially for them and a mix of Chinese and western arts they will engage with the western arts."*

*"It should be recognised that western culture needs to be explained to a Chinese audience."*

- 5.19 It should also be acknowledged that if an event were considered too 'high brow' the community simply would not attend.

*"The Chinese Chamber of Commerce celebrations for the last Chinese New Year included a Peking Opera performance but this was too highbrow for some of the audience."*

- 5.20 It also has to be recognised that Chinese people love to socialise and to be within a family-oriented environment. After they marry it is traditional that they take their children out with them when they attend dinners and events. Accordingly, this attitude will restrict attendance at western arts events which are generally not geared towards family audiences or mean that engagement with the show must take second place to the opportunity to socialise.

*"Putting on entertainment can sometimes be seen as getting in the way; you have to keep things (performances) short."*

- 5.21 The second generation of Chinese are not encouraged by their parents to take part in the arts or to follow careers in the sector. Instead, they are expected to study (e.g. accounting, business, marketing etc).

*"Parents need to be educated in relation to the benefits of working in the arts e.g. through the schools, CWA's Youth Group and After-school Club."*

*"Young people need to have their eyes opened to the opportunities the arts offers."*

*"Some 60%-70% of second generation Chinese are now in mainstream jobs, with only a small minority in the family business. They are like other young people in NI; if there is no history of arts attendance in the family there will be little inclination to go along – it's still a class issue."*

5.22 Where young people are interested in the arts, it has been pointed out that there is little promotion of 'what's on' to the Chinese community and so little encouragement to attend. Cinema is said to be very popular with young Chinese, as are the sort of things that all young people do regardless of ethnic background, but attending arts events is difficult if there is no available information. Potential opportunities for promotional outreach singled out were the CWA, the Chinese Church and the Chinese language school.

*"In Hong Kong I loved to attend orchestral concerts, but since I came here I have not seen any thing to tell me where to go (to attend a concert)."*

*"Cinema is very popular; also some go to gigs and do their own thing – some parents have concerns about certain parts of Belfast."*

5.23 To tackle these issues the CWA believes that there is a need for the implementation of a cultural strategy for the Chinese community with e.g., a part-time coordinator who will develop the interest in cultural activities on behalf of and with the community.

5.24 There is some intercultural performance activity starting to happen between traditional Chinese musicians and traditional Irish. The Chinese Youth Group (CWA) works across various communities; it depends on the programme how often it meets and what it does e.g. from learning to make films to 10-pin bowling. The development of arts/cultural activities for Chinese youth is restricted by the availability of tutors and leaders.

5.25 As far as participation in Chinese arts is concerned, there is a general lack of tutors, which restricts the development opportunity. The situation has improved; there is a Chinese harp tutor with 2 students and a researcher at the University of Ulster who can tutor 'Chinese guitar'. There was also a dance group for a while (this may be resurrected through another tutor) and there are some Ti Chi classes in addition to the 3 Lion Dance groups that perform for the community.

*"Chinese festivals are very important for the community and a way for young Chinese to integrate with their culture; festivals and family are the big (community) connection. Developing festivals needs resources; (the community) will get together if the money is available. We are trying to grow festivals – Chinese New Year, the Dragon Boat Festival and the Autumn festival."*

5.26 Many households have satellite TV facilities and there is a fan base for Chinese 'soaps' from Hong Kong amongst the first generation.

5.27 NICEM (Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities) points out that many of the experiences of the community in NI are similar to those in GB where progress in developing engagement with the arts has also been limited. NICEM see the arts as a rights issue but of lower importance than many other issues they have to deal with for the community. They see engagement with language as a precursor to any Chinese cultural / arts development and the need to get the second and third generations to engage. They also point out that there are few role models and not enough focus on doing things for their own children.

*"They find it easier to reach out to the local community than back to their own."*

5.28 The key issues may be summarised as follows: -

### **Barriers to attending the arts for the Chinese community**

- Time – most people work 6 days a week (not Mondays) and most work in the evenings
- Lack of family-oriented arts activities and time-tabling
- Language
- Content (must be relevant to Chinese community)
- General lack of interest and exposure to western arts
- Money is not regarded by some as a significant issue

### **Communication possibilities**

- Via umbrella bodies, youth groups and church. An up-to-date emailing list would be good.

**Note: QFT** have had little contact with the Chinese community. They screened a film for Chinese New Year, have offered some educational screenings and martial arts films from Hong Kong but the general view was that most of the films already existed in the community on DVD. Lack of participation was identified as resulting from timing issues and long working hours. QFT would consider looking at screening times to suit the community day off (Monday night) and making discounts available but they do not believe they could guarantee a Chinese film every Monday night.

**CQAF** see the Chinese community as more fragmented and difficult to access and less visible at Festival events than other ethnic communities.

## Mandarin Speakers (MSA)

5.29 MSA was established in late 2000 in response to the numbers of people arriving in Northern Ireland from Mainland China. It was felt that the Chinese Welfare Association (CWA) addressed the needs of those who had arrived from Hong Kong and the New Territories and whose interests were mainly within the area of business. Those arriving from Mainland China are mainly academics and research fellows and their needs are different. Members of MSA growing up in Mainland China have had an intense experience of their own culture and wish to see aspects of this while living in Northern Ireland. MSA is an 'umbrella group' for NICEM; originally they were welfare focused but they have developed an arts activity programme as an important part of the organisation's remit.

*"Part of the need from members is the opportunity to see their own culture. This is also a way to promote the Mandarin speaking community to the rest of NI."*

5.30 MSA estimates that there are about 200 families from Mainland China living in Northern Ireland, the eldest adult being about 50 years and the eldest children 16 years. Most MSA members live in the Greater Belfast area and work in either QUB or UU (Jordanstown campus).

5.31 Although their first arts project happened in 2001, it was not until 2004 they had funding for a development worker and were able to organise an annual arts programme (ACNI supported). They aim to present high quality arts 'rather than more folksy' presentations. They have organised painting classes for children, a craft exhibition at the Waterfront Hall for 2 weeks in the summer of 2005 and a major Chinese New Year event in the Ulster Hall (2006), which featured Chinese dance and opera (supported by the British Council) and a photographic exhibition from the Chinese Embassy.

5.32 The community served by MSA places significant emphasis on education and on extracurricular arts activities such as music, singing and dance.

*"Parents like to send their children to arts events rather than go themselves – there is a huge emphasis within the community on education of all forms. Parents are focused on their children."*

5.33 Members are interested in the Chinese State Circus, the Ulster Orchestra and music events including opera. It is felt that there is not an interest in drama. Cinema going is very popular with students but this can depend upon whom they live with e.g. if they are living in student houses alongside Westerners they may be more inclined to attend western arts events. Many members watch Phoenix TV.

*"Cinema is important (as it helps) to build language ability for students."*

*"Music based things sell, theatre does not, (there is) a language and background issue."*

- 5.34 The community runs a Sunday Mandarin language speaking class. There is a feeling that there would be benefit in talking to the parents about the benefits of the arts and the opportunities available both for attendance at events and for participation in workshops etc and that it might be possible for arts organisations to make presentations at the end of these Sunday sessions.
- 5.35 Parents attending a focus group following the Sunday language class indicated that, as families, they are significantly influenced by what their children would like to see and do. They go to Disney movies, Harry Potter, etc. If they go to the theatre it is to pantomimes or musicals. They would like to see children-friendly matinee shows across the performing arts and pointed out that in Hong Kong and Malaysia, society is much more child-friendly than in Northern Ireland.
- 5.36 Those parents who are from Mainland China are more inclined to encourage their children to take music classes and become involved in e.g. school orchestras. However, they would really like to see tuition in Chinese traditional instruments. Irish dancing is popular with this community and some children also study ballet. The opportunity to learn Chinese traditional dance would be highly valued. However, the learning of Chinese instruments or Chinese dance is curtailed by the lack of specialist teachers resident in Northern Ireland.
- 5.37 Celebratory festivals are very much an integral part of the Chinese culture and they would like to see more of these. The Chinese New Year festival is well established but it is felt that there is much potential to develop others such as the Dragon and Lantern festivals.
- 5.38 Most families have satellite TV and tend to watch a lot of children's programmes, which helps the children with their language learning.

### Attending Events

- 5.39 For adults, there may be a difficulty over language. For all of those involved in the catering industry, it is not possible to attend events on weeknights. During the day at weekends might be possible as would daytime during weekdays. However, children would be at school during weekdays.

- 5.40 As with the Cantonese speaking community, finding tutors for arts activities is difficult.

*"Event attendance is hit and miss; the print exhibition worked well because of its location and marketing and Chinese New Year achieved a good turn-out for the main event but workshops and seminars found it hard to attract participation. It's easier to get a turn-out in Belfast than Londonderry"*

### Communication

- 5.41 It is thought that promotion of events would be best done through the Chinese Welfare Association, Mandarin Speakers Association and relevant organisations in Craigavon and Derry. Leaflets in Asian supermarkets and libraries and schools would also be welcomed. The Chinese Church attracts many young people and could be a good contact point for this group.
- 5.42 In summary many of the key issues are the same as for the Cantonese speaking community considerations (positive and negative) include: -
- Logistical issues – work; the expenses of family life; language
  - Limited engagement with western arts
  - Music is the main opportunity
  - Role of the Embassy to support arts presentations e.g. tours of Chinese arts.

### African Community

- 5.43 A representative of the community expressed the view that the way in which the arts are presented in Western culture presents fundamental difficulties for the African community. For them, social and community gatherings are very much part of their way of life and the type of social 'rituals' they are accustomed to do not exist in NI. Because of the need to sort out their working status when they get to Northern Ireland, they are preoccupied by the 'necessities of life' and it is too difficult and time consuming for them to create the type of structures for cultural delivery that they would be familiar and comfortable with. This, alongside the fundamental mismatch between western arts and African cultural experience leads to little engagement with western arts.
- 5.44 The predominant popular culture that brings people together is music and dance based e.g. hip-hop and R & B. Cinema going to Hollywood blockbusters is not that popular but it is felt that exposure to film coming out of Africa might be.

- 5.45 The African community is very diverse, some coming from rural backgrounds and some from urban. Their past experience of living within a European context may have been limited and for some it will be their first such experience. This sets up issues around the degree to which they feel comfortable within such a society at many different levels, let alone the arts. It is felt that there is a need to initiate 'conversations' with members of the African community in relation to how they might wish to participate in the arts and that this might be done, in the first instance, through interested individuals and umbrella groups.

### Muslim Community

- 5.46 Members of the Muslim community come to Northern Ireland from many different countries. About half their numbers come from Pakistan and the remainder from the Middle East, Mauritius etc. There is currently a community of around 3,000 Muslims, the majority of whom live in Belfast with significant numbers in Coleraine, Derry and Lurgan.
- 5.47 There is a tendency to look upon the arts as a luxury with the emphasis in people's lives being work and business, family and faith. They subscribe to satellite TV so obtain information on the wider Muslim and Islamic culture in that way.
- 5.48 Although children and young people are exposed to the arts during school and may attend theatre related to their courses for example, there is no great desire to continue this post-secondary school. Most young people (and their parents) are educationally and professionally ambitious which influences their career choice and, generally, takes them into demanding work schedules with little time to think about attending arts events.
- 5.49 Issues of morality around content and presentation of the arts enter into the choice of whether or not to attend events and it is felt that providers might address this. Family-oriented performances and activities are preferred. Arabic films are regarded as a genre that would be attractive to this community.

*'Some of the Muslim community might consider music is forbidden – glorifying a lifestyle that the community is taught against, this leads to issues. Mixed dancing is not permitted. Muslims are taught to consider two issues; morality and beauty – the question of morality comes first.'*

- 5.50 For young people there is an age group issue with some art forms – mainly the visual arts. Also there is an issue of publicity, 'finding out what's on' and being able to make choices within the requirements of faith.

*"Visual arts – you don't see young people in art galleries, there's an age group issue."*

*"The arts are not publicised enough, they don't reach out to young people. Cinema offers a choice."*

*"The arts are not 'top of mind' so (you) can't be spontaneous."*

- 5.51 It is felt that the Muslim community themselves might now look at what involvement in the arts might mean for them from the point of view of career opportunity and attendance at more events.
- 5.52 The view was expressed that 'if the community was in better shape' it would be able to bring forward its own cultural opportunities. However, as it is small and from very mixed cultural backgrounds there is little opportunity to do this.

### Local Communities engaging with the Young at Art Programme

- 5.53 Many interesting parallels were presented by those members of the local community attending as part of the partnerships organised by Young at Art from the Ashton Centre and An Droichead. Major barriers to participation highlighted were: -
- Cost
  - Location – places they are not familiar with; doesn't happen in their areas and have problems going into certain communities.
  - Lack of childcare provision and fitting in with children's routines; logistics of going out without children.
  - Preference is to do things with the children.
  - Communications/advertising – not knowing things were on until they had finished, advertising not reaching their communities.
  - The social/class barrier that said 'the arts are not for the likes of you or me'; need to identify with their peers – which the arts would not do.
  - Expectation that the money would be wasted as the event would not be enjoyable – due to lack of familiarity.
  - Reliance on recommendations.
  - Need for material geared for families that will entertain both children and adults.
  - Women do the planning with everybody in mind and might choose not to try something new if they thought that not everyone would enjoy it.
  - Perspectives on entertainment – the arts and entertainment are not seen as the same thing.
  - The arts has to go to the community not the other way around i.e. increase the accessibility connecting through schools and community centres etc.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The general perspective arising from the research is that the primary targets for engagement should be second and subsequent generation members of the Indian and Chinese (Cantonese) communities and more recent Mandarin speaking immigrants from mainland China who because of their educational attainment and positions within universities may be easily reached.
- 6.2 It has to be recognised that certain of the barriers to attendance and/or participation will be very difficult to break down e.g. making the time available to fit with performances/event schedules, focus on doing things as a family, having spare cash (for some), the general recognition issue for western arts as being relevant or at least something that might be of interest or entertain, lack of career 'worth' attached to the arts.
- 6.3 The arts community should acknowledge that the main ethnic minority communities would like to see more being done to support engagement within their own community with arts and entertainment opportunities that reinforce their cultural background.
- 6.4 The fact that many parents from within the communities will encourage their children to get involved in playing an instrument as a part of their education should also be recognised as an opportunity to reach out to these communities.
- 6.5 It might usefully be acknowledged that young people born and/or brought up here will be just the same as their counterparts within the majority community with the same general interests in film and music and the same marginal engagement with theatre, visits to art galleries etc. The arts are not 'front of mind' for members of ethnic minority communities. Also, given the many racist incidents recently, it may not be possible to spontaneously decide to attend an arts event, if only because parents are very cautious about where (e.g. parts of Belfast) their young people go.
- 6.6 It should also be acknowledged that these communities are outside of many of the standard networks that exist for promotion, particularly 'word of mouth' – given the low level of attendance that characterises these communities.
- 6.7 Tackling these issues successfully will not happen overnight, a concerted period of contact with the community will be required to take their advice, build awareness and recognition, reach out to help meet their needs for community affirming arts projects and build up networks. The consultants would recommend that: -

## A Forum

A 'Forum' be established that recognises that its function is to: -

- open the way to communications between the arts and the ethnic minority communities represented on the Forum;
- provide a means of researching what arts activities these communities might be interested in seeing/participating in;
- start to examine ways in which the arts might address the practical barriers to attendance;
- look for ways that the arts can engage with the communities on their terms e.g. participation in their events and festivals, taking the arts outside the constraints of existing venues and into the venues that serve these communities;
- where venues cannot be changed, creating events and programmes that will appeal to specific communities and then having the community representative organisation 'sell' the event / programme to the community;
- inform these communities of the financial barriers to arts development outside of the norm;
- engage in a constructive way, not impose demands for response and leadership on the groups that they cannot meet.

It is also recommended that: -

- the Forum recognises that its existence could allow ethnic minority communities to connect with mainstream arts organisations with funding and credibility and that this connection will itself enable the member organisations from such communities to build networks and credibility with those organisations involved in providing arts funding so as to better make their case for support.
- the members of the Forum based within the majority community recognise that their engagement with ethnic minorities through the Forum will assist them in meeting their Section 75 obligations.

## Engagement & Participation

- Promotional activities aimed at these communities should be focused through CWA, MSA, ICC and the other umbrella bodies across the various ethnic communities as being the most cost effective and efficient way to reach members of these communities.
- However, it should also be recognised that the ability of these groups to reciprocate activity in terms of planning, management and dialogue may be limited and will vary quite considerably between different organisations. A lack of dedicated staff posts for any form of 'cultural activity' can lead to difficulties and frustrations in both the planning and delivery stages of a project.

- Promotional opportunities that are likely to have the most success will include promotions in places where people gather e.g. Chinese Language School, Chinese Church, Indian Youth Group etc.
- Promotions have a value only if they can be taken up, which in the case of the main communities in question will include dealing with issues of scheduling events/performances when people are likely to be able to attend, having child friendly policies and tackling the issue of cost.
- Promotions might usefully be tied to festivals important to the communities.
- A central database might be built up of all those within the community interested in the arts by working through the umbrella bodies to collect contact details (it should be noted that, in the first instance at least, this is likely to produce a result that does not match the cost of the data collection – given the relevance and credibility issues known to exist).
- A programme of visits and tours of major arts venues/institutions might be inaugurated for children, young people and their parents and managed through the umbrella bodies so as to build familiarity.
- That specific artform product providers are identified as the best mechanisms for presenting contemporary arts practice emanating from ethnic community homelands and as such may be used to drive awareness, recognition and consumption. At present, QFT for regular world cinema/Bollywood programming and the major festivals BFQ & CQAF for their ethnically diverse artist rosters are obvious examples but that these activities will almost certainly require specific financial subvention.
- Children and young people represent the most significant opportunity to develop arts engagement within both the Indian and Chinese communities.
- Organisations outside of school that can build on this such as the Ulster Youth Orchestra, Youth Lyric etc., have a particular role to play in generating long-term engagement between these communities and the arts in the future.
- In terms of targeting children and family audiences and marrying this approach with the provision of indigenous artistic product, Young at Art currently appear best placed to deliver this option.

# Appendix

## Bibliography

2001 Census data, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO.

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Ethnic Minorities in Northern Ireland, Irwin, G. & Dunn, S/Coleraine: Centre for the Study of Conflict, University of Ulster, 1996

In Other Words? Mapping minority ethnic languages in Northern Ireland, Daniel Holder/Multi-Cultural Resource Centre, 2003

Our People, Our Times: A history of Northern Ireland's cultural diversity, Maureen Mackin/Northern Ireland Museums Council, 2004

Research into the actual and perceived barriers to publicly funded arts in Northern Ireland, Deloitte/Arts Council of Northern Ireland, 2005

Sharing The Spotlight, Increasing access and participation in the arts by Scotland's minority ethnic communities, G Netto et al/Scottish Arts Council, 2003

The East:West Report, Findings of an initiative to reduce barriers to the arts for families, children and young people within minority ethnic and marginalised communities, Young At Art, 2006

What's In A Word? Ethnic minorities and the arts, Helen Jermyn and Phil Desai/Arts Council England, 2000

## Chinese Community – Representative Organisations

### Representative organisations in Northern Ireland:

Chinese Welfare Association	133-135 University Street Belfast, BT7 1HQ CEO: Anna Manwah Lo 028 9028 8277
Mandarin Speakers Association	9 Stranmillis Road, Belfast. BT9 5AF Chairperson: Monica Yang 028 9068 7793
Oi Kwan (Belfast) Chinese Women's Group	100 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 6AG
Oi Yin Bangor Chinese Women's Group	C/O 1 Lord Wardens Park, Bangor, BT19 7ZW Chairperson: Frances Wong
Oi Wah Chinese Womens' Group	3 Clanbrassil Avenue, Gilford Road, Portadown, BT63 5XX Chairperson: Irene Cheung
Chinese Chamber Of Commerce (NI)	17 Eblana Street, Belfast, BT7 1LD 028 9028 8222
North West Chinese Community Association	C/O Church Trust 94a Duke Street Derry BT47 6DQ
Belfast Chinese Church	Lorne Street, Belfast, BT9 7DU 028 9028 8880 (manned during church activities)
Barnardos Chinese Lay Health Project	100 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 6AG 02890 668766 Contact - Una Goan
Wah Hep Chinese Community Association	Brownlow Health Centre I Legahory Craigavon, BT65 5BE 02838 341143 Contact: Paul Yam
Sai Pak Chinese Community Group	44 Clooney Terrace Derry BT47 6AP 028 71288858
Mid Ulster Chinese Community Association	C/O CWA
Antrim Chinese Community Association	C/O CWA
Causeway Chinese Welfare	C/O 1 Mussenden Grange Articlave Coleraine BT51 4US Contact: Michelle Lyons

## Indian Community Representative Organisations

### Representative organisations in Northern Ireland:

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Sikh Community	C/O Fairview Way, Carnmoney, BT36 6TX 028 9075 2353 Vice Chairperson: Mr Amar Singh
Sikh Women & Children's Association (NI)	163 Cavehill Road, Belfast, BT15 5BN 028 9037 1069 Chairperson: Mrs Kulwant Singh
Sikh Community Project	163 Cavehill Road, Belfast, BT15 5NB 028 9028 4400
Indian Community Centre The N.I. Hindu Cultural Centre and Temple	86 Clifton Street, Belfast. BT13 1AB 028 9024 9746
The Northern Ireland Sikh Cultural & Community Centre	1 Simpson's Brae, Waterside, Londonderry BT47 1DL 028 7134 3523
The Hare Krishna Temple	140 Upper Dunmurry Lane, Belfast, BT17 0HE 028 9062 0530

## Other Communities

### Other Communities

Al-Nisa Association NI	C/O 46 Mount Eden Park, Belfast, BT9 6RB 028 9022813 Chairperson: Mrs A. S. Khan
Northern Ireland Muslim Family Association	4 Thornhill Manor, Belfast BT17 9RB 07768 028072 Chairman: Dr Mamoun Mobayod
Belfast Islamic Centre	38 Wellington Park, Belfast, BT9 6DN 028 9066 4465
Al-Nur Craigavon Asian Association	Rm G65, Brownlow Health Centre, 1 Legahory, Craigavon, BT65 5BE Contacts: Maria Qureshi & Rukhsar Ali
N.I African Cultural Centre	12 Upper Crescent, Belfast. BT7 1NT 028 9023 8742
Bangladeshi Welfare Association	24 Greenwell Street, Newtownards, BT23 7LN 028 9181 0566 Contact: Mr. Abdul Rob
The Northern Ireland Pakistani Cultural Association	C/O 8 Braniel Park, Belfast. BT5 7JL 028 9083 6704
NI Filipino Association	C/O 33 Castle Rise Tandragee, BT62 2NE
NI Filipino Community in Action	C/O Glenannan Park, Killyclogher, Omagh, BT79 7XZ
NICEM (Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities)	Ascot House, 24-31 Shaftsbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7BD 028 9023 8645 CEO: Patrick Yu OBE
The Multicultural Resource Centre	9 Lower Crescent, Belfast, BT7 1NR 028 9024 4639

## Population by age range and ethnic group

	All persons	White	Irish Traveller	Mixed	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Other Asian	Black Caribbean	Black African	Other Black	Chinese	Other ethnic group
<b>All persons</b>	1,685,322	1,670,988	1,744	3,317	1,558	681	268	210	265	528	373	4,100	1290
<b>0 to 4</b>	115,251	113,752	162	640	108	74	52	7	10	51	26	254	115
<b>5 to 9</b>	123,064	121,646	154	520	103	85	31	12	9	41	30	343	90
<b>10 to 14</b>	132,660	131,269	195	496	70	70	24	21	18	47	20	373	57
<b>15</b>	27,120	26,844	40	94	27	6	3	6	3	9	3	79	6
<b>16 to 17</b>	53,437	52,951	71	166	35	18	0	9	3	15	6	149	14
<b>18 to 19</b>	48,668	48,234	60	120	16	15	9	3	7	15	9	150	30
<b>20 to 24</b>	109,361	108,162	162	209	83	37	22	12	19	38	63	442	112
<b>25 to 34</b>	242,242	239,535	244	421	342	133	55	62	61	116	104	822	347
<b>35 to 44</b>	246,977	244,720	203	314	240	107	32	48	71	96	37	810	299
<b>45 to 59</b>	289,611	288,036	224	180	318	61	25	24	28	58	32	471	154
<b>60 to 64</b>	73,599	73,231	65	54	95	30	6	3	6	15	12	66	16
<b>65 to 74</b>	123,210	122,739	79	57	87	33	6	3	21	21	28	107	29
<b>75 to 84</b>	76,828	76,620	64	40	31	9	3	0	6	6	0	28	21
<b>85 and over</b>	23,294	23,249	21	6	3	3	0	0	3	0	3	6	0

Ethnic Group	Northern Ireland
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>1,685,267</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>1,670,988</b>
<b>Irish Traveller</b>	<b>1,710</b>
<b>Mixed</b>	<b>3,319</b>
<b>Indian</b>	<b>1,567</b>
<b>Pakistani</b>	<b>666</b>
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>Other Asian</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>Black Caribbean</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>Black African</b>	<b>494</b>
<b>Other Black</b>	<b>387</b>
<b>Chinese</b>	<b>4,145</b>
<b>Other Ethnic Group</b>	<b>1,290</b>

Country of Birth	2001
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1,534,268</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>61,609</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>16,772</b>
<b>Wales</b>	<b>3,008</b>
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>	<b>39,051</b>
<b>Other EU Countries</b>	<b>10,355</b>
<b>Elsewhere</b>	<b>20,204</b>

Source: Neighbourhood Statistics (NISRA). Website: [www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk)  
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## Chinese, Indian & Muslim Community Festivals

Event	Date (2006)
Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh (Sikh)	January 5th
Eid al Adha - Festival of Sacrifice (Muslim)*	January 10th
Makar Sankrant - New Beginning (Hindu)	January 14th
Chinese New Year (Year of the Dog)	January 29th
Al Hijra - New Year 1427AH (Muslim)*	January 31st
Lantern Festival (1st full moon - Chinese)	February 12th
Mahasivratri - Great Shiva Night (Hindu)	February 26th
Sikh New Year Chet 538	March 14th
Holi - Spring Festival (Hindu)	March 14th
Ching Ming - Ancestral Day (Chinese)	April 5th
Shri Rama Navami (Hindu)	April 6th
Mawlid-un-Nabi (Muhammad's Birthday - Muslim)*	April 11th
Vaisakhi (birth of Sikh Nation)	April 14th
Buddha's Birthday	May 5th
Tuen Ng - Patriot Day (Chinese)	May 31st
Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji (Sikh)	June 16th
Raksha Bandhan - Humanity Day (Hindu)	August 4th
Yu Lan - All Souls' Day (Chinese)	August 8th
Lailat-UI-Bara'h - Forgiveness Day (Muslim)*	September 9th
Ramadan - Month of Fasting starts (Muslim)*	September 24th
Mid-Autumn Festival (Chinese)	October 6th
Confucius' Birthday (Chinese)	October 18th
Deepavali - Festival of lights (Hindu)	October 21st
Vikram New Year (v s 2063 Hindu)	October 22nd
Eid al Fitr-end of Fasting Month (Muslim)*	October 24th
Chung Yeung - Family Remembrance Day (Chinese)	October 30th
Birth of Guru Nanak (Sikh)	November 5th
Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Sikh)	November 24th
Harvest Festival (Chinese)	December 22nd
Eid al Adha - Festival of Sacrifice (Muslim)*	December 31st

## Major Chinese Festivals (with dates for 2007)

Lunar Month	Festival	Lunar Dates	Western Dates	
			2006	2007
First Moon	Chinese New Year	Day 1	29 Jan	18 Feb
	Birthday of Che Kung	Day 2	30 Jan	19 Feb
	Spring Lantern Festival	Day 15	12 Feb	4 Mar
Third Moon	Ching Ming Festival	#	5 Apr	5 Apr
	Birthday of Tin Hau	Day 23	20 Apr	9 May
Fourth Moon	Cheung Chau Bun Festival	Day 8	5 May	24 May
	Birthday of Lord Buddha	Day 8	5 May	24 May
	Birthday of Tam Kung	Day 8	5 May	24 May
Fifth Moon	Dragon Boat Festival	Day 5	31 May	19 Jun
Sixth Moon	Birthday of Kwan Tai	Day 24	19 Jul	6 Aug
Seventh Moon	Seven Sisters Festival	Day 7	31 Jul	19 Aug
	Yue Laan (Hungry Ghost) Festival	Day 15	8 Aug	26 Aug
Eighth Moon	Mid-Autumn Festival	Day 15	6 Oct	25 Sep
	Monkey God Festival	Day 16	7 Oct	26 Sep
	Birthday of Confucius	Day 27	18 Oct	7 Oct
Ninth Moon	Chung Yeung Festival	Day 9	30 Oct	19 Oct
Eleventh Moon	Dong Zhi (Winter Solstice) Festival	/	22 Dec	22 Dec

# No lunar date. Follows Winter Solstice by 105 days.