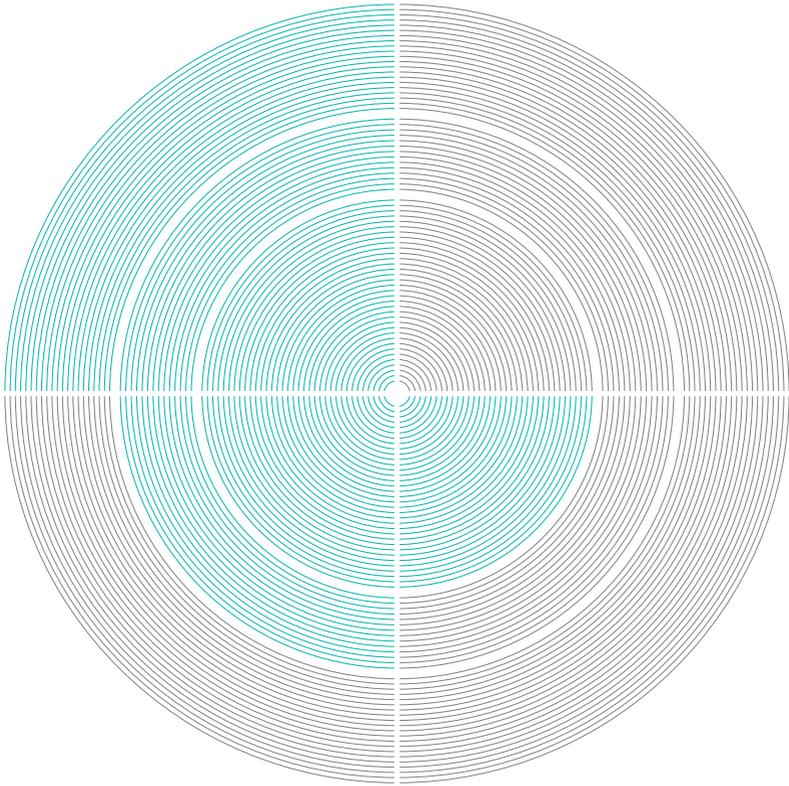


BROADCASTING— IN THE NEW IRELAND



Mapping & Envisioning
Cultural Diversity

Gavan Tittley
Aphra Kerr
Rebecca King O'Riain

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NUI MAYNOOTH
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The inward migration of the late 1990s and 2000s has changed the fabric of society in Ireland. It altered the composition of media audiences for Irish broadcasters, and raised questions as to how broadcasters discuss migration and related issues; incorporate new audiences into their programming; and deal with questions of media representation and production.

Investigating the significance of media in a changing society demands a multi-layered approach to research. This two-year research project involved research interviews and surveys with media producers in public, commercial and community radio and television; in-depth qualitative research with Nigerian, Chinese and Polish research participants nationwide; and an analysis of media policy nationally and comparatively in Europe.

Irish media channels – in all sectors – have responded to this changed social context through programming and a range of initiatives concerning multiculturalism, interculturalism, and diversity. Part 1 of this report discusses the background to these ideas in media policy, media theory and wider public debate, and provides a basis for interpreting and evaluating their use and significance in Ireland. It illustrates how these ideas must be understood as relatively open discourses shaped by their use in different contexts, rather than as set ideas or policy frameworks.

The regular media use of Nigerian, Chinese and Polish participants discussed in Part 2 integrates local, Irish national, home-country national, diasporic and transnational channels. This daily integration is facilitated and limited by a range of material factors, notably newspaper circulation, access to terrestrial Irish media, and Internet access. This integration is an ongoing process influenced by language proficiency, length of time living in Ireland, orientations towards past experiences and future horizons, and cultural capital. Integrated media use involves relational viewing and engagement, in which Irish media and other sources are compared and contrasted, and organized in relation to each other according to different needs, political readings, and pleasures.

A feature of daily, integrated media use is a fluid understanding of local/national/international media. International news featuring issues/contexts of interest is often intimately evaluated, and frequently seen as being as consequential as representations of migrants in Ireland. The presence of UK-based media in the public sphere in Ireland relativizes what is understood as Irish media. For participants from countries as relatively large and regionally complex as Nigeria, China and Poland, the national horizons of Irish news were often understood as local or parochial, and the scope of international news as being similarly limited;

Media monitoring and evaluation is more pronounced among Nigerian participants, however all focus groups discussed the assumed consequentiality of representations of migrants for their acceptance in Ireland. As well as having a responsibility to provide fair and accurate representation, many participants commented on the need for an increased plurality of sources, perspectives and foci in Irish media.

This increased plurality was discussed in relation to news, and also the spectrum of general programming available on television. This understanding of diversity contrasted with the institutional idea of diversity underpinning some public service broadcasting. Programming dealing with *multiculturalism* – though frequently not primarily aimed at migrant audiences – was often not received and interpreted as such. This understanding of diversity does not preclude the importance attached by many discussants to seeing increased *diversity* of people on Irish television.

Both mainstream Irish media and media aimed at national migrant populations in Ireland were felt not to represent the internal diversity and differences of migrant populations. Diasporic and transnational media are centrally important for many participants across the focus group streams, but not in obvious or predictable ways. News, lifestyle and fictional programming on these services are watched relationally and critically, and discussed according to a range of aesthetic, affective and political criteria.

Much *television use* has migrated to Internet platforms, almost to the same extent as *newspaper use*. This shift is a part of the pervasive importance of Internet use for many participants. This viewing and listening was integrated into a range of other multimedia and communicative practices online. However Internet use is restricted for many by cost and opportunity, and for those with the means, by widely criticized connection speeds and coverage.

RTÉ has engaged consistently with the need to develop relevant programming and institutional policies. Part 3 documents the development of policy; the shift in radio programming away from *first-wave* programmes – mainly aimed at representing migrant lives and experiences to a mainstream Irish audience – to a still evolving emphasis on integrating *diversity* into programming; the shift in television programming towards a reliance on hybrid reality formats to normalize *multiculturalism* for a national public audience

Community radio has been an important medium and space for the development of migrant-produced programming, however the quantity and scope of this programming has declined in 2009, for a variety of reasons. Community television currently offers significant possibilities for both migrant-led programming and for the integration of a broad spectrum of perspectives and voices in media production.

TV3 and TG4 regard specific policies in this area as overly rigid and potentially counter-productive, and instead argue for an idea of diversity emerging *organically* from the scope and focus of their programmes on society in Ireland. The commercial radio sector is open to ideas and initiatives, however pragmatic concerns regarding economies of scale and the relationship between investment and return has meant that few such initiatives – or radio programmes – have been developed. Exceptions to this general trend are discussed in Part 3.

International, comparative research would suggest that broadcasting in Ireland, particularly public service broadcasting, has reached a point where *first-wave* programming primarily aimed at mainstream audience understanding is no longer relevant, but where the challenge of developing more integrated approaches to programme development and media production – under the rubric of diversity – is only beginning to take shape. The overarching conclusion of this report suggests that this challenge involves a fundamental shift in considering how audiences, and the public, are composed.

The recommendations of this report discuss different aspects of this challenge by building on issues raised in the audience research. In particular, the research emphasizes the need to focus as much on the *diversity* of genres, programmes, and perspectives broadcast as the more conventional idea of diversity as involving the representation of diverse identities. This important difference in emphasis raises critical questions concerning the current shift to frameworks of diversity as they are currently understood and practiced in the different broadcast institutions.

The conclusions draw attention to the current and future importance of training and the active inclusion of minorities in programme development and production. While cognizant of the difficulties, pitfalls and political controversies surrounding such issues, research suggests a basic, if complex, relationship between the plurality of media workers and a plurality of perspectives. The recommendations aimed at broadcasters draw attention to a variety of ways that this could be done.

INTRODUCTION

Migration has profoundly altered the landscape of society in Ireland since the turn of the century. A consequence of this migration has been to change the composition of media audiences in Ireland and to diversify the public that media institutions speak to and attempt to represent. The centrality of migration as a focus of public debate over the last decade has also focused attention on how social, political and cultural questions are mediated, and the range of perspectives and opinions that contribute to this mediation. This research report has emerged from the understanding that migration has consequences for media work, but also from the understanding that those consequences are seldom agreed, often complex, and probably frequently misunderstood.

The research for this report was funded under the then Broadcasting Commission of Ireland's Media Research Funding Scheme 2007. The Broadcasting Act, 2001, formalized and expanded the research function of the Commission, setting out the important role of media research in assisting the Commission in developing policy and anticipating the scope and nature of the issues facing the broadcasting sector. (The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland was established by the Broadcasting Act 2009, which came into force at the end of September 2009. This research project was completed prior to this date). *Cultural Diversity* was flagged as a possible research theme in the 2007 call, and this two-year research project is the result. The project was designed to incorporate a number of dimensions: media policy, the perspectives of media producers, the perspectives of people who have migrated to Ireland, and comparative European research. Specifically, it set out:

- To review current programmes, policies and policy documents to produce a map of institutional understandings and editorial approaches to *cultural diversity interculturalism* and *multiculturalism* in Irish broadcasting (Irish national television channels, national radio stations, community radio and television, newly emerging digital *city channels* and local/regional commercial radio stations);
- To engage with broadcasting practitioners concerning their current thinking and planning with regard to migration and socio-cultural change, specifically in the areas of programming, editorial approaches, personnel, and perspectives on their audiences, and in relation to their particular remit, institutional approach, possibilities and constraints;
- To conduct in-depth qualitative research with Polish, Nigerian and Chinese research participants to explore their practices in relation to Irish broadcasting, their wider, transnational *media worlds*, and their reflections on current and future interests and needs;

- To critically compare these processes in Ireland with similar debates and developments in western Europe;
- To produce a report that maps out these issues, understandings and choices, and that suggests policy issues and policy possibilities of interest both to the BCI and to the Irish broadcasting sector.

The research for this project took place between November 2007 and August 2009 and was organized in three main strands. A central aim of this project was to conduct in-depth audience research with people who have migrated to Ireland, and to this end the research team conducted a series of focus-group interviews with Nigerian, Chinese and Polish research participants in different locations nationally. The research was conducted in Polish, Mandarin and English, and worked from a broad discussion of people's media worlds to more specific aspects of their engagement with Irish broadcasting. Using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods, the second strand of research engaged with media producers in radio and television in the community, public and commercial sectors. The research team discussed existing programmes and institutional practices, conducted a survey and a series of interviews, and sought to engage a diverse range of media practitioners on questions of if, how and in what ways, broadcasting in Ireland should respond to migration and social change. The third strand of research involved examining research, policy and public debate in other European countries.

The results of investigating these questions are organized into three parts. These parts can be read as a cumulative study, but also as stand-alone sections. A significant amount of concepts, debates and references are carried forward from section to section, and the three parts are informed by each other. However they can also be read as discrete studies. Part 1 provides a discussion of the ways in which media representation and mediation are argued to be of importance in a *migration society*. The prospect of this substantial theoretical wedge is, understandably, not always attractive to readers. However this does not make it extraneous, as the policies, strategies and perspectives that inform media practice are laced with theoretical concepts and ideas about such slippery terms as multiculturalism, interculturalism, diversity and integration. Sometimes this transpires to be rhetoric or general guiding ideas, less frequently a directive for what media work should do. Regardless, it is necessary to provide a conceptual and political analysis of these terms and of their normative implications and institutional adoption.

Part 2 details and analyses the results derived from nation-wide qualitative research with Nigerian, Chinese and Polish media users. The opinions and experiences discussed are not broadly generalisable to

these nationalities, still less to *migrants*, but they provide an in-depth exploration of how broadcasting in Ireland is engaged and evaluated by a diverse spectrum of people who have migrated to Ireland. They also sketch a detailed picture of the transnational connectivity which is the fabric of everyday life for many, and into which Irish broadcasting is received and integrated. Broadly, the research illustrates how Irish broadcasting is watched and evaluated relationally, *ie* integrated into a wider transnational mediascape that often shapes how Irish media is interpreted. Given the social position of many people who migrate to Ireland, media representations are carefully observed for their potential consequences, politically and socially.

Part 3 discusses policy, programmes and plans with media producers in the three spheres of broadcasting activity; 1) public service broadcasting, 2) community media, and 3) commercial services. The approach is primarily one of documenting and discussing these experiences and perspectives. While an evaluative dimension is often inevitable in analysis, the guiding aim of this part is to explore how broadcasters understand their function, their relationship to diversified audiences and their approaches to representing ethnic minority and migrant identities and issues of concern. The discussions present perspectives and questions that illustrate the complexity of this media work.

The purpose of this research is not to prescribe a series of values and responses for broadcasters to then translate into programming – no basic knowledge of how radio and television programmes work would support such an approach. The researchers involved unquestionably hold views on *multiculturalism* and on broadcasting and the fusion of the two, and these views inevitably shape the research project in fundamental ways. However simply stating those views in relation to broadcasting practice is not particularly interesting, or useful. Instead, the report attempts to chart and explore the ways in which broadcasters have developed responses to an era of significant inward migration, how these responses are grafted into programmes and policies, how these programmes are received and evaluated by people who have migrated to Ireland, and the ways in which a reading of this primary research and comparative research in Europe can suggest lines of future development.

01

WHY CULTURAL DIVERSITY? WHAT CULTURAL DIVERSITY? DEBATING MIGRATION, DIFFERENCE & THE MEDIA

Multicultural realities & responses

The politics of representation:
images & information as symbolic resources

Multiculturalism, interculturalism, diversity, integration?

Representing the lives of people who migrate: issues in media practice

INTRODUCTION – WE ARE ALL MULTICULTURAL NOW?

It is commonly asserted that, as a consequence of intensified inward migration over the last decade, Ireland is now *multicultural*, or *diverse*. It is also widely assumed that these changes have consequences for the media that variously attempt to inform, entertain, reflect, involve and investigate society in Ireland. Beyond these positions, however, common assumptions fracture rapidly. What does it mean to be multicultural, and what are the implications of this condition for political, social and cultural institutions? In particular, what is expected of differing kinds of media institutions in this new diverse reality? Who conveys these expectations, whose expectations are met, not met, and why?

Some introductory examples may open out dimensions of these questions, and introduce the purpose of and issues addressed in this Part. Reporting on the launch of RTÉ's spring/summer schedule for 2007, the weekly multicultural newspaper *Metro Éireann* noted the intense dissatisfaction expressed by some *ethnic* journalists and media producers regarding what they saw as RTÉ's limited vision for reflecting new multicultural realities in on-screen representation, and in programme production. Referencing a speech made to independent producers, it highlighted the observation made by an RTÉ spokesperson that **...an Irish audience always responds better to an Irish face on screen, or if there's an Irish angle to a story**. The article further quoted from a transcript of the speech:

We want to promote intercultural understanding using programming that is lively and attractive to an Irish audience. At some point in the future, too, we are going to have to deal with more serious issues to do with our new multiculturalism...

Quoted in *Metro Éireann* 2007

Reviewing the national broadcaster's autumn schedule for 2008, John Boland of *The Irish Independent* was similarly dissatisfied by RTÉ's attempts to represent contemporary social realities: **We'll note in passing that, in politically correct homage to our supposedly multicultural society, RTÉ (sic) has eleven series or programmes grouped under the so-vague-it's-meaningless title diversity...** (Boland 2008). Comparing these criticisms of the public service broadcaster is instructive. One accuses RTÉ of neglecting a reality, another of massaging it into existence. Both suggest that the audience is not being adequately reflected; the audience embedded in an irrevocably multicultural society, and the audience embedded in a so-called multicultural society. One resents being patronized by what it sees as inadequate forms of representation, another bristles against the imposition of irrelevant programmes in the name of *political correctness*. One criticizes the state broadcaster as an elite institution that ignores the needs of minorities; the other positions it as an elite institution that is not

particularly concerned with the needs of majorities. Both criticisms depart from radically different positions and criteria for political evaluation, but both agree on one point; the key role of the public service broadcaster as an actor in shaping shared understandings of society in Ireland.

Caught between these competing assessments, the RTÉ statement introduces a different set of issues. In these very limited snippets, it promises the promotion of intercultural understanding, an investigation of multiculturalism, and programming that reflects diversity. These terms hover between fact and value; as descriptions of society in Ireland, and as valorizations of particular kinds of responses to that society. Yet in the act of hovering, the terms throw up further ambiguities. What does it mean to speak of multiculturalism, interculturalism and diversity, and what do these entail for broadcasters and broadcasting? How do they relate to the lived realities and experiences of migrant audiences? Unfolding what they have been taken to mean in Irish broadcasting practice is one of the tasks of this report. It can be assumed for now that they imply an empirical recognition of socio-cultural change, and that recognizing this change inevitably demands some form of normative response.

In a widely cited reflection on media and communication in *multi-ethnic societies*, Charles Husband argues that a key task of media analysis is to examine what functions the media are expected to fulfill in multicultural contexts. Taking this examination seriously, he continues, demands that **...we must deliberately make explicit our political stance as individuals in a particular society** (2000:200). This introductory, contextualizing chapter brings together a variety of perspectives from Irish and international research, journalism and wider media practice to consider this question: what expectations exist concerning broadcasting in Ireland at this current conjuncture? To that end, this chapter sets out varying arguments for media engagement with new social realities of contemporary migration, dwelling and settlement. It identifies key normative questions debated in Ireland and elsewhere, and unpicks some of the complexities involved in the public discourses – multiculturalism, interculturalism, so forth – employed to respond to these questions institutionally. Finally, it discusses the incorporation and translation of these public discourses into media production and media practice. Taken as a whole, the function of this chapter is to provide an introductory exploration of questions, issues and terminology central to the primary-research based chapters that follow.

MULTICULTURAL REALITIES & RESPONSES

The deliberately polarized assessments of RTÉ schedules discussed in introduction provide some orientation towards tackling a thorny question – why? Why do migration and the new forms of living, settling, belonging and networking it involves require any adjustment, never mind response, from broadcasters? The stylized jaundice of the quote from *The Irish Independent* presupposes these questions; why should society in Ireland be approached as *multicultural*?

Multiculturalism, as will be further discussed below, always involves a relationship between description and prescription, *ie* recognition of the co-presence of people of different ethno-national backgrounds, and an assessment of what this implies for the conduct of public affairs. The *Irish Independent* quotation can be read not as dismissing a description of Ireland as multicultural, but disputing that this requires prescriptive action. This distinction and its implications are often overlooked in discussions of *new multiculturalism* in Ireland. There are many forms of political argument that contest the assumption that prescriptive acts necessarily follow from descriptive realization. In media terms, versions of these arguments are widely circulated. Doesn't the market response to audience diversity guarantee wider relevance without special policies? Shouldn't broadcasters be concerned with common conversations and integrating society as opposed to addressing difference?

Two aspects of this relationship between descriptive and prescriptive multiculturalism require consideration. The first involves the relationship between lived realities and media work in contemporary societies. As Ben Pitcher argues in *The Politics of Multiculturalism*, acknowledging the *facticity of difference* is the starting point for any analysis of **...an already-existing sociopolitical reality of which cultural difference has become a defining feature** (2009:2). He continues:

...the existence of cultural difference – whether understood in terms of race, ethnicity or religion – has become fully acknowledged as a constituent part of the societies within which we live today. In this most basic of senses, and irrespective of the extent to which it is tolerated, celebrated or condemned, multiculturalism describes the widespread recognition that we can no longer be in any doubt as to whether or not cultural difference is here to stay.

Thus facticity merely recognizes the co-presence, in a nation-state context, of people from different ethno-national backgrounds. In contemporary society in Ireland, this facticity of difference is normally taken to mean the significant increase in people who have migrated to Ireland through various pathways, from a significant range of countries

– and with varying forms of status available to them in Ireland – since the mid-1990s.¹ According to one analyst, almost 250,000 people migrated to Ireland between 1995–2000 (at least half of these were returning emigrants) (Mac Éinrí, 2001). Since then, official statistics have recorded significant general population increases that can largely be attributed to inward migration. A recent assessment by the Office of the Minister for Integration estimates that 420,000 people born outside of Ireland now live here (2008).²

This idea of the obvious *facticity of difference* is useful, but in media terms it is also misleading. On the one hand it establishes the implacable realities of lived multiculturalism as an aspect of life in Ireland. On the other, however, it suggests that facts of this kind have an independent life beyond the ways in which they are presented, and the forms through which the public get to know about them. While lived difference is a fact of social life for many people in Ireland, it is also a reality that is deeply mediated; shaped, framed and represented by media sources and channels, flows of information and opinion, images, stories and voices, headlines and sidelines, inclusions and exclusions, and so forth. Thus a basic assumption of this report is that it makes very little sense to dispute whether or not media should respond to migration and multiculturalism in particular ways, as any attempt to reflect society in Ireland over the last decade – in news, current affairs, social commentary, facilitated public discussions, and fictional representation – has been constrained to do so, explicitly or implicitly.

As Roger Silverstone notes, media have become *environmental* in many societies, etched into the grain of everyday experience in ways that suggest that simple distinctions between image and reality are not easily tenable. His argument is not one that views media audiences as powerless in the face of media influence, or that, in some form of postmodern cliché, waves farewell to any notion of *reality*. Instead, he suggests that media **... define a space that is increasingly mutually referential and reinforcing, and increasingly integrated into the fabric of everyday life**, providing a **... sense of the media as tightly and dialectically intertwined with the everyday** (2007:5). In terms of the experience of difference, his analysis recognizes the sheer volume and multiplicity of images of bodies, identities and cultures that are mediated on a continuous basis, and that provide ways of perceiving, interpreting and evaluating other people.

The rapid expansion of platforms and channels through which people can access and produce media content, in networks which transcend terrestrial terrains, implies that broadcasters in Ireland are part of extended mediascapes that represent, parse and frame difference on a daily basis. Information, images, opinions and modes of analysis continuously flow from this wider, transnational mediascape into media in Ireland (as examples below will discuss). These mediations are of enormous

consequence in how the facts of differences are understood in an era of migration in Ireland. In other words, the *facticity of difference* is already highly mediated, implying that the question for broadcasting in Ireland is not whether to respond, but the nature of that response.

If migration has impacted on everyday realities, and those everyday realities, as Silverstone argues, are tightly intertwined with forms of mediation, it follows that media work is consequential in those realities. This is ultimately where the Metro Éireann and Independent examples converge; they are political arguments for approaches to media work based on a conviction that representations have social and political impact. Even if it is usually difficult to establish what those consequences may actually be, they do not need to be fully established for broadcasters to accept the responsibility of agreed consequentiality. In societies where mediated knowledge is fully integrated into social experience, media representations of migration, migrant lives and migration societies are widely regarded as consequential – how people who migrate are framed in news and current affairs; how the complexities of their experiences are adapted and linked to social issues and social contexts in drama; how they are deemed to be *represented* by organisations and spokespeople in public debate; the ways in which their experiences are accurately portrayed or reductively communicated by dedicated *multicultural* and *intercultural* formats. The next section discusses recurring dimensions of the consequentiality of representation, and the normative questions they give rise to.

THE POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION: IMAGES & INFORMATION AS SYMBOLIC RESOURCES

Media and social theory have accumulated a century's worth of thinking on the ways in which mediated communication can be thought of as consequential – depending on theories of context and time, individual agency, the nature of communication, and so forth (cf. Nightingale & Ross 2004). However we do not need to enter into these controversies to accept that consequentiality is a social fact. In other words, most of the participants in this research are convinced that media responses to migration and migrant's lives have an important impact. As Part 2 discusses, many of the Nigerian, Chinese and Polish focus group participants actively focus on and evaluate representations that concern them, and discuss their potential consequences for daily life and longer-term visions of living and belonging in society in Ireland. As Part 3 illustrates, media producers attempt to make purposeful programmes, programmes that communicate something to audiences and that contribute particular perspectives to public debate. While these assumptions and contentions are open to

1

Using such periodisation – a necessary yet artificial dimension of research projects – should not obscure other dimensions of the facticity of difference in Ireland, both historically and in other perspectives on these questions. Discussions of our new multiculturalism can often focus on a present abstracted from history, or on difference understood solely in terms of migration and asylum-seeking. See Fanning (2009) for a consideration of these dynamics in relation to the history of and ongoing discrimination against Irish Travellers, and Ferriter (2004) for a historical perspective sensitive to intersecting questions of ethnicity, religion, class, gender, and socio-geographic position. See also Garner (2004) for a historical analysis of racism in the Irish experience before the widespread assumption of its arrival in the 1990s.

2

The extent of this migration, and the significance of it for the future of society in Ireland, is at least in part recognized in the title of the Government of Ireland's statement on integration policy, Migration Nation (2007). See Part 2.

analysis, it is the presumption of consequentiality that is important, as it is from this shared belief that discussions of responsibility – and subsequent responses – can proceed.

In societies characterized by the level of mediation previously discussed, images and information can be regarded as powerful symbolic resources that are distributed as unevenly as other resources. Thus the insistence of migrant audiences and many media producers on assuming consequentiality has much to do with the recognition that the position of migrant and ethnic minorities in modern nation-states is frequently one of unequal social, political, economic and cultural power relations. For the sake of focus in a report such as this, Simon Cottle's summary provides an overview of key issues:

The media occupy a key site and perform a crucial role in the public representation of unequal social relations and the play of cultural power. It is in and through representations, for example, that members of the media audience are variously invited to construct a sense of who we are in relation to who we are not, whether us and them, insider and outsider, colonizer and colonized, citizen and foreigner, normal and deviant, friend and foe, the west and the rest. By such means, the social interests mobilized across society are marked out from each other, differentiated and often rendered vulnerable to discrimination. At the same time, however, the media can also serve to affirm social and cultural diversity and, moreover, provide crucial spaces in and through which imposed identities or the interests of others can be resisted, challenged and changed.

It is important, particularly given the academic ring of the term *the politics of representation*, to recognize that questioning portrayals has constituted a central form of public politics for several decades. Representations of racialised identities, gender determinism, sexual norms and sexual identities, religious devotion, ableism and disabilism, class and poverty – and other dimensions of ascribed identity and social position – are politically contested by activists and pressure groups, and increasingly recognized by public policy actors as significant³ in the shaping of public policy. Furthermore, as Farrel Corcoran points out, this focus on representations of the relatively disempowered should not obscure the reciprocal relationship between these images and less frequently questioned visions of the norm, the mainstream, the reasonable, and the commonsensical:

2000:2

3

For a recent example John H McKendrick et al (2008) *The Media, Poverty and Public Opinion in the UK*.

...(a politics of representation moves) from trying to assess the accuracy of images and stereotypes by testing them against the traits deemed to adhere in the group being represented, to examining the world of the representer itself, in which the concepts of others or them are conceptually, morally and politically intertwined with concepts of us.

Recognising this inherent reciprocal determination implies that representations of migrants and migrant lives are, at some level, also a commentary on society in Ireland. Referencing the *world of the representer* draws attention to the issues raised by Metro Éireann concerning the perspectives and practices of those who shape these reflections, and the complex relationship between the backgrounds and experiences of media producers and the media work they undertake. Therefore to proceed, specific dimensions of this wider discussion of the politics of representation must be identified as particularly relevant to the current context. The following subsections draw out further issues concerning the significance of representations in contexts of unequal power and possibility.

Nick Stevenson, in his book *Cultural Citizenship, Cosmopolitan Questions* (2003), develops the idea that symbolic resources are complicit in processes of discrimination, and conversely, in contributing to social equality and subjective well-being:

Our integrity as human beings does not flow from our access to material resources, but is dependent upon processes of cultural domination (being represented as inferior), non-recognition (being excluded from the dominant imagery of one's culture) and disrespect (being continually portrayed in a negative or stereotypical way).

This summary is underpinned – like so many of the ideas and frameworks that have suffused into *migration debates* in Ireland – by ideas generated in the specific context of racial politics in the USA and in postcolonial Britain. Nevertheless they have a universal orientation that allows their translation to the specificities of contemporary Ireland.

Non-recognition: it is widely acknowledged that national media – daily newspapers, public service broadcasting – have historically played a constitutive role in the development of nation-states. In particular they have been recognized as instrumental in integrating citizens into everyday practices of national belonging, not through forced homogeneity, but through the ritual and repetitive definition of sociability, common interests, and what Michael Billig has termed the *banal nationalism* of routine practices of shared belonging and communal heritage (1995).⁴ In a discussion of national media and *boundary work*, Roger Silverstone distinguishes between what he terms centripetal and centrifugal phases

Nick Stevenson

4

Assertions of the extent of the role of media in shaping *imagined national communities* (cf Anderson 1991) may sometimes be overstated. In the Irish experience, debates about the status of the Irish language and the legitimacy of the Angelus in broadcasting suggest that core symbols and practices of the imagined community are frequently contested.

of broadcasting,⁵ In the mid to late twentieth century decades where a single public service broadcaster dominated the national media space of many western European countries (see Hallin & Mancini 2004), these services worked to reflect and shape boundaries of national and local belonging. In the centrifugal phase ushered in by, among other factors, deregulation, globalization and accelerated technological change, the integrative role of broadcasting and the national press is diluted, with the result that **...this boundary work is becoming even more significant, if not more complex and challenging** (2007:19).

Media in Ireland are now in the position of having to engage in these complex forms of boundary work. Nationally and locally defined broadcasters, operating in a mediascape where their footprints are challenged and relativized by dense flows of transnational, mediated interconnection, are required to integrate the needs and concerns of people who migrate to the already significant challenges of *reflecting the plurality of the nation, or addressing diverse audiences, or engaging the community*. The representation across forms and genres of people who migrate invites scrutiny of how their presence may be legitimated or de-legitimated, and the accuracy and complexity of the ways in which their experiences are mediated.

Non-recognition, then, is more than being rendered invisible (un-reported, un-represented, and un-reflected). It is the failure of the public space of mediation to adequately represent the people who move through and belong in the public space of society in Ireland. Non-recognition can involve the pervasive power of historically generated and often racialising images and stereotypes, though as many analysts point out, the idea of stereotyping is often too reductive to capture the fluid play of references and meanings that images can have in heavily mediated and image-literate societies (Pickering 2001, Hall 1997, Downing & Husband 2005). More frequently, non-recognition arises when the daily routines of media production fuse with the modern compulsion to categorise and insist on cultural and political boundaries, in ways that position migrants as always outside the fold, always something other.

Beyond these general theoretical observations, what is recognized as recognition⁶ is an altogether more involved, empirical question. To put it another way, what happens when minority migrant audiences do not find themselves adequately represented in media work aimed at them and about them? As the following chapters explore, *recognition* is not just about intent, it is dependent on interpretation and evaluation by audiences, and considerations of genre and media context by producers and audiences. To illustrate this, two research reports conducted in the UK with ethnic minority audiences can be used to draw out some dimensions of adequate representation. The first, *Include Me In* (1999) – researched

by Annabelle Srebreny for the Broadcasting Standards Commission – focused on research with *minority ethnic media audiences*⁷ and *minority ethnic independent media producers*. Key findings of the research with the audiences included:

- Audiences are *multiculturally aware* and experience their society as cross-culturally connected, and individuals lives as involving multiple attachments and identities. However they believe **...that even the standard descriptions of minority ethnic audiences do not do justice to the cultural mixes in which people live their lives** (1999:3) and that television portrayals lag behind social reality;
- People actively look for representations of themselves and remember them, though rarely regard them as adequate representations, for a number of reasons;

Actively looking for these representations is also driven by a desire to be seen by others, and by a hope that adequate representation will inform *White majority understanding* of social realities in contemporary Britain;

The characterization of minorities in drama and fiction is seen as being continually defined by the need to make a point or to drive a story line, resulting in *problems not people*. They argued for better representation across a range of programming, while also wanting specific minority ethnic programming that diversified representations according to needs and tastes.

A similar study, *Multicultural Television: Concepts and Reality* (Millwood Hargrave ed 2002) – commissioned by the BBC and several other media institutions – found broadly similar findings with a comparative approach to audience research. Participants in their research stressed a *general need to be seen* and linked it to feelings of belonging in British society and increased understanding between communities. Inadequate representation was broken down into:

- Tokenism;
- Negative stereotyping;
- Unrealistic and simplistic portrayals of their community;
- Negative or non-existent images of their countries or areas of origin.

As an antidote they argued for more *authenticity*, discussed in this context as a plurality of voices and perspectives, drawing portrayals in a variety of ways, and reflecting complexity in and between groups. Notwithstanding the particularities of the British socio-historical context and broadcasting institutions, broadly similar issues arise in the audience research discussed in Part 2.

It should also be noted that in these studies adequacy has very particular, and limited, dimensions. The uneven but powerful compulsion

5

In this he mirrors an influential analysis by John Ellis of British broadcasting's historical transition from a post-war era of scarcity to a contemporary era of abundance. See Ellis, John *Seeing Things* (2000).

6

Recognition is used in a general sense in this section, and it is not deliberately intended to relate to the substantial literature discussing the concept of *recognition* in debates about multiculturalism. A more specific discussion can be found later in this Part, and see also Taylor (1994) and, for critiques and discussion, Fraser and Honneth (2003) and Mills (2007).

7

Defined as *Asian, Afro-Caribbean and White/Other*, see pg 12–13 of the report for a discussion.

in contemporary societies to explain, position, evaluate (and discriminate against) people primarily in terms of their cultural backgrounds implies that attention is often primarily paid to how identities are represented through embodiment and characterization. However there is far more involved in adequate media representation of migration and migrant lives.

As Alan Grossman and Áine O'Brien argue, there is much thinking to be done concerning how media ...can adequately frame the material conditions and contingencies, motivations and transnational affiliations shaping the everyday lived realities of migrants, their families and extended communities (2007:3).

Framing these dimensions is further complicated by the inadequacy of the category *migrants* itself; powerful questions of recognition are raised by the persistent European practice of labeling multi-generational ethno-national populations as *migrant communities*. It is also a question of scale; a consideration of everyday life – around which so many identity-focused and *voice-giving* approaches congregate – cannot be separated from the national and transnational social structures and relations of power within which life is lived, and identity is negotiated (cf Browne & Onyejelem 2007). Certain approaches to media work, formats and programmes can attempt to capture these dimensions of adequacy, others not, and in others still the need does not even register.

The Complexities of Boundary Work?

The Late Late Show of October 13th 2006 featured a discussion on the cultural practices of Muslims in Ireland, inspired by media debate in Britain about an article by Jack Straw – then Foreign Secretary – in The Lancashire Telegraph describing his discomfort dealing with constituents wearing niqab. The host, Pat Kenny, introduced the show to the watching audience before and after RTE's Nine O'Clock News by saying ...tonight we ask, is it time to tell our Muslims immigrants to adapt to our ways, or go home?

This question begs further ones. Is this an issue of public relevance and concern in a changing society, or racist singling out of all Muslims, regardless of their status as immigrants and/or Irish citizens? Including our Muslims in the sometimes-controversial national conversation, or excluding them by objectifying them? Is it a brave attempt to have – as one panel participant argued, an honest conversation with the Islamic community among us, or the kind of question that The Guardian journalist Gary Younge – in a very similar context – notes has a subtext which says this is my world, you're just living in it?

Cultural Domination & Disrespect: The previous example illustrates the overlap between questions of non-recognition and disrespect. It also illustrates the complexity of these issues in a context where a language of cultural respect is a mainstream expectation. The same edition of The Late Late Show, for example, featured the Polish singer Kaya as an explicit attempt to include Polish viewers in the national audience of the show. Therefore while concerns about media representation, domination and disrespect have regularly focused on the ways in which limiting, reductive and stereotypical portrayals and images may impact on the social perception of people who migrate, what constitutes disrespect is hotly contested in the current context. Indeed, in the aftermath of what has come to be known as the *Danish Cartoons Controversy*, showing disrespect and causing offence have been widely valorized as expressions of freedom of expression and thought (cf Eide, Kunelius & Philips 2008).

This section attempts to briefly outline salient aspects of this current ambivalence through a discussion of media research in Ireland. The need to tease out conflicting understandings of respect/disrespect is relatively new; previous periods of media research would have regarded this as a frivolous luxury item. In international research, recurring issues include:

- Fairness and accuracy (particularly in news, current affairs and documentary/reportage)
- Stereotyping (notwithstanding the analytical problems with the term, it can be used to track reductive, limiting and prejudiced images, labels and associations)
- Negative/positive representations (an often overly-simplistic distinction made complex by genre, tone and context, it nevertheless recurs in public debate, pressure group strategies and audience evaluations as a key set of criteria)

Burden of representation (a criticism of the tendency for individuals to be taken as representatives of *communities* or *migrants* regardless of their individual experiences. Also a phrase used to draw attention to the way fictional minority characters are often introduced as a way to explore social issues – such as racism – rather than developed as characters in their own right)

Plurality of voices (a fundamental debate that encompasses everything from the make-up of discussion panels to assessments of diversity across seasons and schedules. Is a spectrum of migrant/minority perspectives included in programming about/aimed at them? Are they also included in programming which deals with issues of common interest/concern? How does this diversity or lack of, map onto wider questions of who is represented, socially and politically? What is the relationship between the increased participation of *minorities* in mainstream media production and the plurality of opinions and perspectives expressed

in the public sphere? What reasons are given – such as *accent* by Irish media producers – for the lack of presence of migrants/minorities in mainstream media?)

While these issues have received sustained and cross-cutting research attention in contexts with longer traditions of migration, no such corpus of research exists in Ireland. The treatment of asylum-seekers is the sole area relevant to this report where media research in Ireland has produced anything approaching a critical mass of analysis. This is in part because of the ways in which, in the mid to late 1990s, the **...hysterical response of some sections of the media to the arrival of growing numbers of asylum seekers signaled the arrival of a new political issue** (Fanning 2009:59). Thus several institutionally-sponsored reports and academic studies that provided a critical analysis of the ways in which sensationalized reporting of asylum-seekers developed, appeared between 1999–2003. As a whole, they examined how a combination of market competition, political instrumentalization and journalistic ignorance worked to construct *floods* of asylum-seekers as sources of political, economic and cultural anxiety, while working to elide the global political-humanitarian context of asylum-seeking (see Pollak 1999, Guerin, 2000; Mac Éinrí, 2001).

Nearly every study in this period focused exclusively on print media, which qualifies their relevance for this research.⁸ Nevertheless, some of the key findings are worth recalling for the sake of the general line of analysis. A study by the NCCRI and The Equality Authority in 2003 examined newspaper coverage of refugees and asylum-seekers between 1997–2002, and interpreted the trends analysed within the context of spiraling newspaper competition, particularly that between titles from expansive Irish and British conglomerates and the battle for the *tabloid* market in Ireland. Tracing dominant forms of reporting and key vocabulary over time, the study noted a cross-paper tendency towards *irresponsible and sensationalist reporting* involving labeling (*spongers*) exaggeration (*floods*) and the consistent linking of asylum-seekers to public health anxieties.⁹ The report noted a general restraint in tone and increase in informed reporting in the late 1990s, an improvement it attributes to criticism in the press from other journalists, and to *awareness-raising* initiatives by the National Union of Journalists and the bodies involved in the report.

A comparable study in 2002 – examining the national case of Ireland as part of an EU member state study on Racism and Cultural Diversity in the Mass Media 1995–2000 coordinated by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) – found broadly similar patterns. In also singling out the Independent Newspapers Group and the Mirror Group titles for specific criticism, the report quoted another widely circulated study from that period:

The response of the Irish media to the arrival of large numbers of asylum seekers in recent years has been characterized by inconsistencies, inaccuracies, exaggerations and generalization. In their search to find stories to fill a quiet news day, newspapers have on numerous occasions denigrated an entire category of vulnerable people (Cullen 1999).

The EUMC report drew attention to the general lack of knowledge among media practitioners of asylum legislation and international principles and processes, symbolized by the – perceived interchangeability of the terms *asylum-seeker*, *refugee* and *migrant*. However, in common with the NCCRI/Equality Authority report, it was cautiously optimistic in conclusion, noting the development of strong partnerships between the press and NGOs and the public positions taken by many journalists.

This era of studies produced broadly similar conclusions concerning *disrespect* in media work in Ireland and the political-economic and social reasons for it, as well as identifying routes beyond these practices for those so interested. However no comparable corpus of research exists which considers media coverage and representation of asylum-seeking and migration from 2003–4 to the present, leaving the few studies which have attempted to analyse general patterns and tendencies dependent on informed interpretation. One such discussion is provided by Harry Browne and Chinedu Onyejelem, who argue, acerbically, that **...the broadcasting environment in Ireland is more open than those of us who like to imagine ourselves in heroic resistance to hegemonic forms of cultural oppression want to imagine** (2007:190). As they point out, instances of overt hostility to migrants in broadcast material have been so rare as to become folk exhibits, and in their assessment, both the fire and the ire had vanished by 2003–4 in many of the commercial radio phone-in shows that welcomed *migration debates* with weekly pleasure. Far more common, in their view, are versions of what they term *multiculturalist persuasion of white Irish* audiences, underpinned by a liberal mission to convince the general population of the benefits of migration, and occasionally yielding to the tendency to **...patronizingly ascribe cultural vibrancy to every African woman who buys a yam on Parnell Street** (2007:191).

While generally being in sympathy with their assessment, this proliferation of forms of cultural affirmation need to be more carefully unpacked in terms of questions of domination and (dis) respect. The work of Eoin Devereux, Michael Breen and Amanda Haynes between 2004–9 concerning public attitudes to asylum-seekers and migrants, and the implications of these attitudes for media work, provides an insight into the ambivalences of cultural recognition. Working from a position convinced of the significant impact of media coverage in shaping perceptions of **...socially-distant group(s) such as immigrants** (2009:4), – particularly for people lacking direct contact or alternative sources of understandings,

8

This overwhelming focus on print media is due to a number of factors. Most of the studies note how newspaper competition was central in ratcheting up sensationalist reporting during this period, and this spectrum of competition and freedom of discourse clearly did not pertain to broadcast media in Ireland at that point. Content and discourse analysis of newspapers also provides quantifiable data relatively quickly, thus allowing studies to be fed-back into ongoing public debate. Moreover, dependence on (multiple) VCRs to organize television research, for example, also clearly mitigated against any similarly longitudinal broadcast studies.

9

Which, though it is not noted in the report, is an established form of racist trope, whereby the unfit races threaten the *race health* of the European nation. See MacMaster (2001) for the nineteenth century antecedents of this idea and its contemporary re-workings.

– they argue that the significance of media coverage lies in the power of consistent and repeated forms of representation. Summarizing their previous studies of the coverage of asylum-seekers and refugees in Irish print media, they argued that negative framings:

2009:4

...were often informed by the in-group's fears and concerns relating to the impacts of immigration on economic prosperity, crime and social integration. Within negative representations, asylum-seekers were variously depicted as a threat to public services and welfare, safety and cultural dominance of the majority population, constructing the perception of resource competition, identified as a factor on negative attitude formation.

In an article published in 2009 and drawing on interviews conducted in 2007–8, they compared these previous studies with attempts to examine contemporary beliefs in Ireland concerning migration. Despite the relative lack of public focus on asylum-seeking, they found significant misinformation concerning the numbers of people seeking asylum and their countries of origin (pg7–8). In terms of general migration, the economic utility of migrants proved to be a significant theme, with occupation and education regarded as more important than country of origin. In terms of differentiation between migrant populations, they found a tendency to concentrate on Polish people to the exclusion of others:

2009:7

The reasons given as to why the Poles have had greater success in terms of social integration stress factors such as their capacity for hard work (29.2%); their cultural similarity (13.6%); their Catholicism (10.3%) and their ability to speak English (5.8%) ... respondents who cited TV as their primary information source concerning immigrants were more likely to mention the capacity for hard work, whilst those who stated that newspapers were their primary source of information were more likely to mention cultural similarity. It is important to note that this identification of primary source does not exclude the use of and the reliance on additional sources which may be as important in shaping attitudes. These positive perceptions of the Polish reproduce media discourses that have stressed the extent to which the Poles are like the Irish.

While their conclusion – that respondent confusion maps onto a failure by mainstream Irish media to inform citizens about migration – is open to debate, it is their discussion of *positive and negative* representations that is of central importance here. Discussions concerning disrespect and representation are often reduced to the seductive if unhelpful polarity of negative/positive stereotypes/images. Most images and portrayals make limited sense without reference to narrative, genre, context and tone, and fundamentally presuppose an evaluative position, as John Downing and Charles Husband remark:

...we need to face a central policy question: are we starting from media as a series of art-forms, or from an expectation of naturalistic realism in the media, or from an expectation of correct propaganda in the media?

2005:31

In their study, Devereux et al link the ways in which the perceived cultural compatibility of Poles cannot simply be understood as a positive attitude, or as evidence of positive mediated representations. Instead it may constitute a double-bind, whereby immigrants that succeed economically and socially are seen as being as threatening as those who do not, but in a different way. In other words, both those who don't integrate, and those who integrate too well, can be perceived as posing a cultural and economic threat (2009:4–5). This insight is important as it punctures the facile argument that the work of media is to replace *negative* portrayals with *positive* ones, and also because it raises the question of how such representations would be recognized and evaluated – and by whom – in the first instance. It also complicates the assessment quoted previously concerning the general positivity of media engagement.

Therefore the complexities identified by Devereux et al need to be explained and tentatively linked to wider socio-cultural processes. In the absence of consistent media research over time, this limited speculation will involve drawing some broad, and inevitably contestable, conclusions. In Ireland, according to the UNHCR Statistical Yearbook, the figures for asylum-seekers declined dramatically from a historical peak of 12,048 in 2000 to 2,414 in 2005¹⁰ (2007:327), principally as a consequence of legal changes. It is also arguably the case that the regime of direct provision instigated by the Irish Government in 2000, the policy of asylum-seeker dispersal and the 2004 Citizenship Referendum shifted a general public focus in the early years of the decade from the *issue* of asylum-seekers¹¹ and towards a range of processes bundled under the label of *migration*. As Part 2 outlines, the accession of ten new states to the European Union extended the right of labour mobility to new populations of EU citizens. From 2004, primarily Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian migrants became an important focus of *migration* debates in Ireland, notwithstanding the presence of other large and mobile populations.

At the risk of gross exaggeration, the mid-decade period was characterized less by coverage of generalized *asylum-seekers* – into which the specificities of the political contexts and experiences of people from different nationalities seeking political sanctuary were collapsed – and more by a separating out of distinct national (and racial) populations and occupational groups. These groups were increasingly interpreted according to newer criteria of economic contribution, cultural compatibility, and legitimacy of presence,¹² and in terms of the increasingly prevalent

10

For an overview of global figures for 2008, see *Number of Asylum Seekers increases*, Ruadhán MacCormaic, *The Irish Times*, Wednesday March 25 2009

11

See Fanning (2009) for discussion of the development of direct provision and its impacts.

12

For example, media coverage in 2004–5 requires far more analysis given the juxtaposition of the 2004 Citizenship referendum and the widely mediated justification that it was necessitated by an apparent crisis in maternity services triggered by migrant (and mainly Nigerian) women – and the arrival of significant numbers of people from central and eastern Europe. See Lentin & McVeigh (2005) and Crowley, Gilmartin & Kitchin (2006) on the citizenship referendum.

discourses of multiculturalism, interculturalism and diversity discussed in the next section. This increased tendency to discuss migration – and to frame perceived conflicts arising from migration – in cultural terms, has arguably been informed by a number of developments.

Policy initiatives and public campaigns by such bodies as the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), The Equality Authority, and the platform provided by the National Action Plan Against Racism and SARI circulated a vocabulary and conceptual framework of interculturalism as a way of describing and prescribing responses to migration and socio-cultural change. While such approaches are never uniform or uncontested, they were widely adopted and incorporated by state institutions, corporations, media partners and public fora (Lentin & McVeigh 2006). A characteristic of interculturalism has been to celebrate cultural difference and to highlight the positive benefits of migration, while framing prejudice and discrimination as consequences of lack of education and personal exposure (Tittle 2004). A corollary of this has been the gradual shift away from racism and anti-racism as public ways of describing and campaigning against particular forms of discrimination, based on the widespread assumption that the *accusation* or racism is counter-productive and excessively aggressive.¹³

This discernable shift towards understanding the presence of people who migrate as objects of cultural celebration, with occasional cultural tensions bolted on, was also intertwined with another cultural shift that is equally difficult to capture; an intensified public consideration of the state of Irish culture during the period ubiquitously known as *The Celtic Tiger*. As several studies discuss, the profound globalization of the economy and what and whom that should be attributed to; the relatively rapid increase in particular forms of wealth and new forms of cultural consumption; more obviously individualized and individualistic pathways and social values; a widely mediated sense of global interest in the Irish economy and culture – and many other factors – informed intensive media exploration of *who we are now* (see Coulter & Coleman ed. 2003, Cronin et al ed. 2002, Keohane & Kuhling 2007). An obvious increase in migration and the noticeable diversification of towns and urban spaces added an important layer to the prevalent public story of a *new Ireland*.

It is possible to speculate that in this milieu, increased *cultural diversity* chimed with other influential cultural narratives and perspectives; that becoming *diverse* enhances the perceived cosmopolitanism of Ireland (Tittle 2009), or that inward migration – contrasted with traditional patterns of emigration – confirms wider senses of unprecedented national success, and attendant tolerance and generosity¹⁴ (Conway 2006). Thus when The Irish Independent – routinely singled out by research participants in this project as a source of anti-immigrant sentiment –

produced a special supplement in 2004 celebrating Ireland's new *hot* multiculturalism, it exemplified the fusion of these sentiments.

This mode of broad-stroke cultural analysis has manifest limitations, and its function here is solely to indicate that there have been notable changes in the ways in which people who migrate have been understood, constructed and discussed in Irish public discourse over the last decade or less. The celebration of yams on Parnell Street, in other words, is not only a localized version of the *samba, saris and samosas* multiculturalism criticized in the UK, Australia and Canada, but a mode of recognizing and valorizing *culture* that gained far wider currency over the last years. The specific concepts and discourses that have been widely circulated are briefly discussed in the next section.

What this discussion has attempted to outline is that recognizing *disrespect* is not as straightforward as pinpointing clearly reductive or prejudicial representations or stereotypes. The centrality of discourses of cultural identity and a concerted tendency to see migrants as belonging to and explained by *cultures* complicates the analysis. As the next section discusses, speaking about cultures is mutually valorizing – we are both special because of our differences – and superficially egalitarian; cultures are equal, and equally worthy of respect. Yet this runs the risk of amplified forms of the double-bind. The public celebration of difference can be taken as the actual over-empowerment of the different – note how often multicultural initiatives are interpreted as resource-theft from other more deserving, native causes. Frequently, the acceptance of some migrant populations is used as evidence of innate tolerance, and thus licenses denigrating other more *problematic* groups. Increasingly, the language of culture is used to advance the politics of race, by attributing the same immutable and problematic characteristics to cultural identity that were previously held to be properties of race (Gunew 2004, Pitcher 2009). A widespread aspirational rhetoric of cultural diversity may be taken as evidence of the objective reality of those aspirations.¹⁵ And as the example below illustrates, a belief that minorities are empowered through cultural prescriptions clouds assessments of how power may actually operate in *multicultural societies*.

13

See, for example, Ging and Malcolm's discussion (2004) of the mixed reactions to Amnesty International's public campaign *Leadership against racism* in 2001.

14

While not eliding how dominant the *economic argument* for migration has been in public debate in this period (Fanning 2009).

15

Or, as the sociologist Sara Ahmed puts it more forcefully: I would argue that multiculturalism is a fantasy which conceals forms of racism, violence and inequality as if the organisation/nation can now say: how can you experience racism when we are committed to diversity? (2008)

Subversive or Offensive?
Freedom of Speech or Abuse of Power?

Appearing on The Late Late Show on Friday 24th October 2008, the comedian Tommy Tiernan made a series of jokes about disability and Irish Travellers which were subsequently the subject of complaints upheld by the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (The Irish Times, 2009). In their defence, RTÉ argued:

ibid **Tiernan in a humorous way is celebrating the diversity of contemporary Ireland. We are a changed society and we can come together through laughing at each other... Irish humour is the practice of insulting people in a humorous way.**

Writing in The Irish Times the week following the show, Fintan O'Toole described the act:

O'Toole 2008 **For anyone fortunate enough to miss it, it is enough to know that most of his shtick consisted of putting on funny voices to imitate the way those stupid immigrants talk and the rest was essentially about mocking Travellers, or, as Tiernan insisted on calling them in a calculated gesture of contempt, itinerants.**

He further argued:

O'Toole 2008 **What we're seeing, I think, is the working out of the paradox that art needs boundaries. Modern stand-up, from Lenny Bruce onwards... drew its comic energy, but also its moral force, from the breaking of taboos – about sex, race, religion and politics ...as taboos crumble, however, the game changes. The energy of defiance has to be replaced with something else ...two solutions present themselves to those who can't think of anything else. One is the *I know this is not politically correct but...* attitude. This is basically a way of returning to the old, unfunny racist and sexist clichés while packaging attacks on the weak as acts of courageous defiance. It is Bernard Manning dressed up as Lenny Bruce.**

**MULTICULTURALISM, INTERCULTURALISM,
DIVERSITY & INTEGRATION?**

The Elastic Problem of Multiculturalism

Beyond the working distinction between prescriptive and descriptive senses of multiculturalism employed at the start of this chapter, no attempt has yet been made to define what is meant by these ubiquitous and often frustrating terms. However as previous sections have documented, they have become increasingly central to public understandings and institutional approaches to life in a migration society, while often being understood and used in inconsistent and contradictory ways. Nevertheless, they have become central modalities for thinking about people who have migrated to Ireland, and they are also important guiding ideas in the development of programmes and media initiatives about/for migrants and minorities, both in terms of institutional discourse and policy, and the working understandings employed by media workers.

As Ben Pitcher notes, multiculturalism is a widespread term because it **...is always in some respect to do with the organization and composition of the societies we live in** (2009:4) Therefore while it is impossible to evaluate *multiculturalism* outside of the particular philosophies, governmental and institutional frameworks and socio-political contexts within which it is practiced, Pitcher's insight suggests that it can be initially approached as a general orientation. Simply put, this orientation concerns whether or not the co-existence of people of different ethnic, national (and racialised) backgrounds within the territory of nation-states implies something for how that territory is imagined politically, and whether or not these differences should be taken as consequential for the distribution of power, opportunity and resources.

Conventionally associated with policy developments in Canada (Karim 2006), and with the work of the philosopher Will Kymlicka (1995), multiculturalism has expanded from an initial focus on the need to recognize the historical injustices perpetrated on indigenous populations, and the consequences of this treatment for their contemporary material circumstances and well-being. In a move that has obvious implications for media representation, a key dimension of this recognition is cultural; challenging the historical marginalization of indigenous cultures and securing the meaningful autonomy and citizenship of their descendents through legitimizing their belonging in and through their own cultural needs, traditions and practices. Yet the term multiculturalism – if not these precise debates – expanded and traveled to encompass debates about the recognition, in such colonial and postcolonial contexts as the UK, France, Germany and the Netherlands in the 1970s, that post-war migrant populations were not *going home*, they were *home*, and in the

process compelled everyone to rethink their assumptions of *home*.

Thus the ubiquity and fuzziness of multiculturalism is a product both of the fundamental orientation toward the nature of state and society that it proposes, and the enormous variety of ideas, criticisms, initiatives and policies it involves across many different areas of political and social life. As the philosopher Charles W Mills summarizes;

In the vast and ever increasing body of literature on the subject, numerous distinctions therefore need to be drawn. There is multiculturalism as state policy (itself varying from nation to nation) and multiculturalism as minority activist demand, multiculturalism as applied generally to the political theorization of society as a whole and multiculturalism as applied specifically to the politics of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability, and multiculturalism as excluding at least some of these, multiculturalism self-described, or hostilely described by others, as weak, strong, liberal, conservative, corporate, *managed*, critical, radical, resurgent... and the list goes on.

The national and local histories of multiculturalism are obviously beyond the scope of this brief contextualization. What is of importance in this section is sketching the connotations and conflicts associated with multiculturalism, and that shape its interpretations in Ireland. In promoting a vision of interculturalism as opposed to multiculturalism, influential agencies in Ireland – including RTÉ – are reacting against deficiencies in multiculturalism as it is understood conceptually, and to common understandings of its supposed failures in western Europe over the last decade. Interculturalism is proposed as a way of encouraging dialogue, curiosity and integration between *cultures* as a corrective to multiculturalism's propensity towards separatism and parallel cultural existences. This contemporary understanding must be located in two developments. The first is theoretical and political; the shared discontent of very different political positions with multiculturalism, for very different reasons. The second is the widespread criticism of multiculturalism as a failed form of social engineering in the aftermath of the September 11th 2001 attacks on the USA.¹⁶

2007:89

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It is of course far too simplistic to *date* criticism of multiculturalism to this marker, as several studies show these debates existed and were intensively contested in the 1990s. However it is also the case that they have intensified significantly in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the direct and indirect consequences of these for national politics in western countries. See Kundnani (2007), Tittley (2009) and Wink (2008).

Multiculturalism in Theory

The theoretical-political critiques can be broadly signaled with reference to the influential work of Charles Taylor and his discussion of multiculturalism and the politics of recognition. For Taylor (1994), meaningful selfhood depends on being recognized as being of equal dignity, but also through the recognition of particularity – of an identity that is particular to me. For Taylor, the classical liberal idea of the individual as the central modality for understanding selfhood is too thin and abstract to account for the constitutive importance of social interaction. Selfhood is shaped in contexts with broadly shared horizons of meaning, value and normality, and thus adequate philosophical and political recognition must involve the interplay of a politics of universalism and a politics of difference. This is particularly urgent in the case of people who have been historically excluded because, not in spite of, universalist aspirations. As Mills once again summarises;

Multiculturalism in this context can thus be seen as a back-handed, belated and oblique (too oblique for some) acknowledgement that the modern world has in certain respects been a global polity shaped by the fact of transnational white European domination – invasion, expropriation, settlement, slavery, colonization, the color bar, segregation, restricted immigration and citizenship – and that a political correction for this history of general Euro-hegemony is called for.

When applied to people who have been historically oppressed or *misrecognised*, multiculturalism implies recognizing the distinctiveness of their identity in ways that allow them to flourish. From this position it has been possible to think of ideas of *group rights* as central to justice, necessitating various forms of differential treatment legally, economically, politically, and of course culturally.

Ideas of multiculturalism as being based on equal respect for different cultures have been widely critiqued. For liberal critics such as Brian Barry, the recognition of cultural and group differences may be well-meaning, but has the potential to recharge the kinds of exclusivist group identities that haunted the twentieth century (2002). In Charles W Mills critique, the recognition of unique identity is confused as to the distinctiveness that is important – **...not so much that of different cultures as that of systematically differential treatment**. As a result it collapses multivalent opposition to racism and barriers to equality into a sidetrack of cultural recognition (2007:96–8). For Ghassan Hage, the politics of cultural recognition are less a sidetrack and more a smokescreen, a fantasy that celebrates a superficial recognition of diversity while distracting attention away from fundamentally unchanged relationships of power and legitimate belonging in ethnocentric nation-states (1998, 2003).

2007:90

There is of course no obvious relationship between a conceptual argument such as this one and the practice of multiculturalism, but it is certainly the case that multicultural initiatives in education (particularly with respect to languages), media (in the support of dedicated channels and in the provision of specific programming aimed at minorities within mainstream services) and community resourcing (support for organisations with ethnicity-based memberships or projects) have been broadly marked by ideas of respecting and celebrating difference as a pathway to substantive equality. As Ralph Grillo points out, the drive and scope of multicultural governance in Europe is hugely varied, shuttling between variants either strong or weak multiculturalism:

2007:987

(weak multiculturalism implies) ...cultural differences recognised (to varying extent) in the private sphere, with acculturation in many areas of life and assimilation to the local population in employment, housing, education, health and welfare (and strong multiculturalism implies) ...institutional recognition for difference in the public sphere, with special provision in language, education, health care, welfare, etc, and the organization of representation on ethnic/cultural lines.

Multiculturalism in Politics

Grillo's broad bracketing into *weak* and *strong* is important as it provides a point of entry into understanding multicultural controversies beyond the realm of philosophy and political theory. As he further observes, *...it is weak multiculturalism which has characterized practices across Europe, yet critics assume it is always in its strongest form, that is, for many critics, multiculturalism is always already unbridled* (2007:987). To put it another way, the fact of what multicultural initiatives have actually involved is not quite as important as the fact that thinking about it involves fundamental questions concerning the composition and organisation of (national) societies.

Multiculturalism has become a focus of intense controversy since 9/11, and it is blamed to varying extents for facilitating extremism, parallel societies and social dis-cohesion. An extreme – yet widely shared – vision of how that happened was provided by Fleming Rose, the Culture Editor of the Jyllands Posten, writing in Der Spiegel in the aftermath of what became known as the Danish Cartoons Controversy:

Rose

And yet the unbalanced reactions (to the cartoons) ...unmasked unpleasant realities about Europe's failed experiment with multiculturalism. It's time for the Old Continent to face facts and make some profound changes in its outlook on immigration, integration and the coming Muslim demographic surge. After decades of appeasement and political correctness, combined

with growing fear of a radical minority prepared to commit serious violence, Europe's moment of truth is here. Europe today finds itself trapped in a posture of moral relativism that is undermining its liberal values. An unholy three-cornered alliance between Middle Eastern dictators, radical imams who live in Europe and Europe's traditional left wing is establishing a politics of victimology.

While Rose's narrative is exaggerated and prejudicial, it is an analysis widely shared in western Europe to the extent that multiculturalism is seen to have undermined social cohesion by encouraging the growth of parallel communities, to have emphasized difference over commonality, and cultural particularity over social cohesion. This powerful political near-consensus has led to a widespread shift in such countries as The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany and the UK to rhetoric and policy of integration and social cohesion, and in France, to a vigorous restatement of the importance of Republicanism. It must be noted, however, that the prevalent vision of multiculturalism as a coherent project of the political left is contradicted by the widespread hostility of many left and anti-racist activists since the 1970s. For many, particularly in the UK, governmental multiculturalism was a form of containment, a way of displacing the radical demands for racial justice and equality into more affordable and less threatening forms of recognition (see Gilroy 1986). As Arun Kundnani has argued, it could also be seen as micro-colonialism in action, dispensing favour to minorities through certain *representative* groups and collapsing political, gendered, sexual, generational and other differences into the essentialising, catch-all category of the *culture* or *community* (2004, 2007).

Thus multiculturalism is uniquely unloved in bitterly opposed assessments; for some it involved over-prioritising the demands of minorities, for others it is more accurately a way of misrecognising what those demands really are. For some critics it threatened social and national cohesion by weakening shared bonds and common or national values, for others it was a con-job that secured ethnic hegemony while pretending to give ground. For some it is now time to recognise how the rights of women, the secular and sexual minorities were subsumed in a consensus on cultural recognition, for others that was always self-evidently the risk of wishing away racism through the substitution of culture and cultural identities.

A general implication of the widespread, western European repudiation of (something called) multiculturalism is that the broad shape of this analysis has influenced state agencies, NGO's and policy actors in Ireland. *Getting it right* and *learning from the experience of others* are two phrases that recur in policy literature on the socio-cultural implications of migration in Ireland. Moreover, as this quotation from an editorial by The Evening

Herald in May 2008 – occasioned by a debate about the appropriateness of Muslim headscarves in classrooms – suggests, the shape of this analysis is circulated to an important extent beyond policy circles:

The Evening Herald –
May 2008

...Muslim immigrants bring with them cultural practices and even dress codes that are totally different to our Irish way of doing things. So where do we draw the line between respecting their traditions and asking them to adapt to ours? We don't have to look very far to see that the consequences of getting this wrong could be disastrous. For 50 years the rest of Europe has followed the social policy known as *multiculturalism*, which basically means allowing separate religious communities to develop independently alongside that of their hosts. Today the evidence is overwhelming that this policy has failed. Because the countries made little or no effort to integrate their new citizens (sic), they created ghettos that became breeding grounds for violent extremists. In recent years we've seen the long-term results in the shape of race riots in France, the assassination of the controversial politician Pim Fortuyn¹⁷ in the Netherlands and the 7/7 bombings by British Muslims in London... Ireland doesn't have these problems – yet.

The Elastic Solution of Interculturalism

For this – and other – reasons, the dominant discourses of *migration management* in recent years in Ireland are interculturalism and integration. As the following quotation from a NCCRI training manual outlines, interculturalism is significantly defined against multiculturalism as a philosophy and practice of exchange, learning and interaction:

2002:6

Interculturalism suggests the acceptance not only of the principles of equality of rights, values and abilities, but also the development of policies to promote interaction, collaboration and exchange with people of different cultures, ethnicity or religion living in the same territory. Furthermore interculturalism is an approach that sees difference as something positive that can enrich a society and recognizes racism as an issue needs to be tackled to create a more inclusive society. The concept of interculturalism has replaced earlier concepts of assimilation and multiculturalism.

Interculturalism and intercultural education have established histories of practice in various fields of formal and non-formal education, including workplace training. Since 2008, as Part 3 documents, it has emerged as RTÉ philosophy of choice for its response to migration, primarily signaled by moving away from dedicated magazine-style multicultural programming to inserting *diverse* items, voices and perspectives across broadcasting output. Despite this prevalent move to interculturalism, substantive differences in multicultural and intercultural approaches

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Pim Fortuyn was murdered by a white, Dutch, self-identifying animal rights activist, however it is widely imagined that he was, like Van Gogh, murdered by a religious extremist.

can only be analysed in practice, as the difference expressed in policy is rhetorical, rather than fundamental. Both approaches prefer a vision of people as understood in terms primarily of their cultural identity, an idea which may well exclude other ways in which people prefer to understand themselves. Furthermore, both normalize the idea that the needs and demands of people who migrate are primarily to be understood culturally, an approach that frequently fails to include the persistence of systemic and political-economic forms of inequality and discrimination.

Culture, as Terry Eagleton has pointed out, has historically involved friction between senses of *making and being made* (2000:36). In education, and programming, interculturalism may encompass both a consideration of how we learn to perceive, interpret and evaluate our realities, and what it means to live within the powerful collective identities which so shape and influence those realities. And then again, it may not; as interculturalism is as capable as stereotypical multiculturalism of approaching people as having *been made* and as *living in cultures*, and thus of similarly reducing migrant and minority experience by explaining them culturally.

More controversially, perhaps, nominal ideas of multi/interculturalism are equally dependent on the understanding that race has been disproved as a spurious biological category, and that by expunging the idea of race¹⁸ and instead insisting on the equal difference of cultures and ethnicities, that the western world can transcend the aberrant horror of racism. Discrimination and prejudice can be tackled through legislation and through education. While this is undoubtedly the case, it is not the case that the idea of race can simply be replaced by the category of culture, or that racism can be reduced to prejudice on the basis of cultural difference. There is now a powerful body of work that examines race as mode of ideological perception that changes over time and in context, historically intertwining biological and cultural forms, and that continues to organise and justify domination and inequality. As Howard Winant argues:

Race is a concept that signifies and symbolizes sociopolitical conflicts and interests in reference to different types of human bodies. Although the concept of race appeals to biologically based human characteristics... selection of these particular human features for purposes of racial signification is always and necessarily a social and historical process.

2004:x

This hugely involved debate once again highlights how the guiding ideas used in broadcasting are far from straightforward categories of value-based practice. Instead they can be viewed as hyperlinks that connect debates in media work to contemporary politics and fundamental ways of constructing understandings of social life.

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See Goldberg, DT (2009), Lentin, A (2004), MacMaster, N (2001) Mills, CW (2006).

The turn to interculturalism has many interesting dimensions, but it is not as stable a set of principles and ideas as it often presented. The next section considers the co-existence of interculturalism with increasingly prevalent discourses of diversity.

Diversity is So... Diverse

In order to tease out the questions raised by Irish media institutions investment in diversity (see Part 3), it is necessary to briefly examine diversity as a normative concept and diversity as an institutional discourse. According to Yudhishtir Raj Isar, diversity has become a *normative meta-narrative* widely deployed ...with a view to supporting the right to be different of many different categories of individuals/groups placed in some way outside dominant social and cultural norms, hence including disabled people, gays and lesbians, women, as well as the poor and the elderly (2006:373).

What must be noted however, is that supporting the right to be different tells us little about either difference or rights. In other words, while Raj Isar mentions identities centrally associated with progressive and radical social politics, institutional practices of diversity vary enormously, and diversity is a fluid idea. As John Wrench has illustrated in a study of diversity policies in Nordic-based transnational corporations, institutional notions of diversity vary radically, from approaches which build significantly on existing anti-discrimination and equality legislation to approaches which merely re-brand the minimum commitments necessitated by these legislative frameworks (2004).

For the legal philosopher Davina Cooper, in her discussion of *diversity politics* in *Challenging Diversity: Rethinking Equality and the Value of Difference* (2004), diversity is best thought of as a *space* of politics. Diversity politics is not only, or even primarily, about identities, but about relations of power, inequality and social legitimacy. As she points out, the current popularity of discourses of diversity can easily elide these basic dimensions, and without a consideration of relations of power *diversity politics* can encompass such issues as fox-hunting and smokers rights.

This kind of argument shifts inquiries away from *what is diversity* to examinations of *what is and what is not diversity* in specific contexts, to who counts as diverse and why, and how regimes of diversity are institutionalized. In many cases, as Sara Ahmed has argued, diversity may be little more than a brand, appropriating *their difference as our diversity*, leading to a *politics of feeling good* through performances of diversity as an institutional value, resource and already existing good (2007). Thus in the shift from a problematic multiculturalism to a recent emphasis on diversity (which while more theoretically encompassing, in practice is often reduced to questions of cultural identity) it is an open

question as to whether diversity practices transcend multiculturalism, or merely re-brand the same fundamental assumptions and ideas (see Titley & Lentini, 2008). The final section of this Part examines the impact of these ideas on media practice.

REPRESENTING THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE WHO MIGRATE: ISSUES IN MEDIA PRACTICE

The previous section sets out some of the dimensions of contemporary modes of thinking about and *managing* difference. What relevance do they have to broadcasting and media practice?

Production – Between Society & the Studio

It is a fundamental mistake to assume that media production incorporates, in any kind of direct fashion, prevalent social and cultural discourses. The converse is also true; the professional practices of media production are not carefully sealed from influences from the society in which they operate. Analysis can easily avoid these over-determining positions, but it must be based on empirical research and production analysis in specific contexts. In Part 3 of this report, the research presented analyses these wider discourses in relation to institutional contexts, programme strategies, processes, and actual programmes in Ireland. This short concluding section to Part 1 reviews some suggestive research from other European contexts.

As Simon Cottle has argued, production analysis is important not only because it avoids an over-reliance on discussions of programmes, but also because the analysis of policy and process allows some ways into the relationship between the forms of *multicultural programming* and the wider socio-political context. Writing from the established tradition of such programming in the UK, Cottle argues that:

Political ideas of assimilation, integration, pluralism, multiculturalism and/or anti-racism can all variously inform the regulatory frameworks and cultural climates in which mainstream and minority productions can either flourish or founder...

This informing, however, is mediated through the structures, contexts and dynamics that shape media representation, and Cottle proceeds to discuss a wide range of regulatory, institutional, commercial, organizational, technological, professional, and cultural/ideological factors. Cottle's colleagues in Cardiff University have recently provided an interesting study of some of these forces in play. Examining the production of news concerning asylum and asylum-seekers, the

2000:17

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Gross, B. Moore K. & T. Threadgold (2007) *Broadcast News Coverage of Asylum: Caught between Human Rights and Public Safety*. Report can be accessed at: www.cardiff.ac.uk/jomec/research/researchgroups/racerepresentationandculturalidentity/fundedprojects/humanrights.html

report examined the ways in which coverage of asylum is shaped by a range of interlocking conceptual frameworks in the newsroom (something that is frequently missed by criticism or advocacy focusing on *positive/negative* images and *correct* terms). In their interviews with broadcast news journalists, several contributors expressed a strong feeling that *the immigration story (of the past 10–15 years) has been missed*. In particular, BBC journalists contended that a mixture of liberal orientation, political correctness and fear of being seen as *racist* had led them to underplay coverage of immigration, while tabloid newspapers led the way:

2007:48

This element of *self-suspicion* expressed by journalists that they had been somehow *too liberal-minded* or reluctant to engage with the *real* issues with which their audience were concerned emerged quite strongly in the reflections of some of the journalists we interviewed. Interestingly, this included the assertion that the story of immigration had been *missed* somehow, while the tabloids had not allowed this to happen.

In the context of public service broadcasting, it is clear that journalists may feel uneasy at being seen to be out of touch with *the public*, even if their access to public opinion is also profoundly mediated. The issue of asylum, then, is sometimes treated in relation to *immigration* and sometimes not, and the coverage of immigration is further shaped by coverage of governmental performance, terrorism, social provision, and so forth. The report – and individual journalists – discuss the dangers of over-compensatory coverage in a context where journalists reflexively produce news shaped by ongoing events, and their personal and institutional relationship to *public opinion* in a particular political climate. As the report argues:

2007:59

The shifting *connection* and *separation* of these issues, is itself a symptom of the shifting web of ideas within which asylum and immigration are constructed as meaningful objects of news at different points in time. What is maintained within this web is a conceptual *space* at the centre of the news agenda. This space can be filled either by asylum or immigration. What takes the space depends upon the particular configuration of ideas deemed newsworthy or important at the time... The different focus points and meanings of asylum and immigration are determined by a complex set of social and political relations, which extend beyond the news media and their *agendas*.

While this example is exclusively concerned with news production, it provides a detailed exploration of the ways in which always loaded issues of immigration are shaped by professional routines and approaches in a porous institutional context.

From Multiculturalism to Diversity in Broadcasting Institutions

If there is good reason to approach multicultural broadcasting as shaped, but not determined, by socio-political discourses, it is also necessary to approach it as shaped by the development and accretion of these discourses over time. The previous section examined the prevalent shift during the last decade from political frameworks of multiculturalism to diversity and integration. An Open University/CRESC study on British broadcasting policy analyses the same shift over several decades. Ben O'Loughlin's study (2006) *The operationalization of the concept cultural diversity in British television policy and governance* provides a useful comparative analysis by discussing governance and policy discourses in the BBC from the 1970s, and Channel 4 from its inception. In the 1970s and 1980s, policy debates centred upon issues of *including diverse and marginalised voices* in the *national conversation* by focusing on including a diversity of contributors and dedicated programmes, and on the politics of representation. Organised under the sign of *multiculturalism*, programming energies were directed towards *recognising, and managing different – essentialised – identities and voices*.

By the 1990s, O'Loughlin argues, the idea of cultural diversity had begun to supplant multiculturalism, and this was cemented by two wider developments: the shift towards policy initiatives on citizenship and social cohesion in the aftermath of the Cantle report into *race riots* in northern England in 2001, and the confluence of fears around migration occasioned by the *war on terror*. At the same time, frameworks of diversity were seen as congruent with governmental requirements to develop individual capacities in complex societies and competitive *knowledge economies*. Thus by the 2000s, the ...**concept of cultural diversity as a mode of thinking about identity** was informed by:

The need to have ...**plural overlapping conversations within and across the differing political, social, cultural and economic spaces within which people living in Britain are located and locate themselves.**

A shift to ...**flowing concept of cultural diversity** where ...**policy goal has been to increase the social capital of individuals in Britain as a means to ends such as democratic renewal, social cohesion, and economic productivity.**

O'Loughlin's study provides an interesting point of comparison with the discussion of RTÉ policy in Part 3, where the broadcaster has dedicated considerable energy to finding the right framework for its approach, and has thus moved through some of the shifts discussed in the UK in an accelerated and compressed fashion. This is not to suggest that there is a path-dependent route from the problems of multiculturalism to the new potentials of diversity. Instead, it points to the exchange and influence between RTÉ and other European broadcasters, particularly

through the European Broadcasting Union, but also less formally, through a reflexive sense of what is being done elsewhere.

In broadcasting, diversity has become a term and a brand of some importance. *Diversity* exists in UNESCO, and the European Broadcasting Union, as a notion which straddles two interlocking yet often conflicting meanings: cultural diversity as the sum total of differences in heritage, traditions and cultural production, where culture is predominantly understood as synonymous with the nation and significant national minority ethnicities (and where this cultural diversity is threatened by a homogenizing globalization); and diversity as a synonym/euphemism/adaptation of multiculturalism in approaches to migration and lived socio-cultural diversity.

Within European public service broadcasters, diversity is understood as a series of commitments to *diversify* across three key areas: in programming (questions of representation) in employment (depending on national frameworks and often with special emphases given the relationship between media and society) and in organizational development (training people to appreciate/learn from diversity). Diversity has also emerged in western European broadcasters as a concept designed not only to supersede *multiculturalism*, but in many instances to undo its perceived negative influences. Karina Horsti and Gunilla Hultén have analysed significant changes in the missions of Finnish (YLE) and Swedish (SVT) public service broadcasting over the last five years. In a shift they argue is congruent with general European developments, dedicated multicultural programmes in both broadcasters were terminated in favour of approaches designed to both emphasis integration while incorporating migrant and minority diversity across the schedule (see Part 3 for similar initiatives within RTÉ; 2009).

What these authors describe is similar to the developments discussed by O'Loughlin in the UK, and it captures a situation where frameworks of diversity promise not only to reconcile apparent tensions for public service broadcasters between their public mission and the realities of commercial competition, but where migrants and minorities are predominantly conceived as not only excluded but self-excluding, with consequences for *social cohesion*. Thus dominant multicultural formats are being replaced by strategies designed to develop *cross-cultural forms*, as dedicated formats are seen not only as having a limited relevance to more diversified minority audiences, but also to represent a politically unacceptable parallelism. Similarly, the focus on ethnic minority recruitment is to a significant extent being replaced by the idea of diversity as a reflexive *competence* – a way of perceiving and working that any journalist or broadcaster can cultivate.²⁰ While this shift is based on the widely discussed problem of pigeon-holing minority

journalists, it can also potentially avoid any need to think about the vexed, but important relationship between the diversity of media workers and a diversity of perspectives and approaches.

Broadcasters' Perspectives

Studies involving production analysis of multicultural programming, or exploring the perceptions and approaches of broadcasters, are surprisingly limited given then general attention paid to questions of multiculturalism. With some exceptions, these studies²¹ have been conducted in the UK, reflecting not only the lengthy history of broadcast politics in a postcolonial context, but also the relative seriousness accorded to these issues in public life in the UK²² and their ongoing, contested, relevance.²³

Andra Leurdijk (2006) has conducted qualitative research with producers in Austria, Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands and the UK, and to a lesser extent, with producers in Finland, Ireland, Italy and Sweden. The research proceeded from basic questions of understanding – how do they define multicultural programming – and their aims. Unsurprisingly, *multicultural programming* emerges as a fluid category, denoting not only *programmes dealing with minorities or multicultural themes* but frequently involving an **...educational message; In general programmes are based on the assumption that cultural diversity and multicultural society are not (yet) sufficiently or adequately represented in the programme schedules and require separate attention, special staff and dedicated time slots** (2006:27). In all but the UK and the Netherlands, multicultural programming was based around the allocation of special slots, and as the instances of Sweden and Finland discussed earlier attest, the idea of the *dedicated slot* has been discredited for a range of reasons.

Leurdijk's research features arguments that will be encountered in Part 3; that dedicated slots amount to box-ticking, limited television, and in some instances, a compromising of quality standards. When the contemporary politics of *social cohesion* are added to this picture, it gives a rounded sense as to why smaller public service broadcasters in Europe are moving away from the conventional slot-based magazine programme to various forms of *integrated* approaches. However it is too early to evaluate the significance of these approaches, particularly, as Leurdijk points out, because any form of quantitative or qualitative targets and/or indicators for such initiatives remain highly exceptional. The producers interviewed in this research work in a context where their channels must produce programmes for minority and majority audiences, and are increasingly guided by ideas of *cross-cultural appeal*. Cross-cultural appeal is a notion that combines both the aspirations of unifying public service with a sharp awareness of the competitive environment, and drives

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Horsti provides a good overview of this shift within the EBU in her article *Antiracist and multicultural discourses in European Public Service Broadcasting*, *Communication, Culture and Critique* Vol.2:3 (2009). For details of EBU work in the area of cultural diversity, including a link to their *toolkit*, check www.ebu.ch/en/union/under_banners/Cultural-Diversity_2008.php

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See for example Millwood Hargreave (2002), Sreberny (1999) and most recently, Mukti Jain Campion's research report *Cultural Diversity, Public Service Broadcasting and the National Conversation* (2005). This report is particularly significant for its detailed analysis of diversity policies at work within the BBC, and for its detailed proposals for programme development within the framework of PSB. The report can be accessed at: www.bjr.org.uk/data/2006/no1_campion

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See, for example, the Cultural Diversity Network of British broadcasters and their publicly available diversity action plans: www.culturaldiversitynetwork.co.uk/plans.php

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For a recent discussion, see Sarita Malik, *Minority Report*, Guardian CiF, Thursday 26 June 2008. www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/jun/26/bbc.raceandreligion

programme-makers to ...search for subjects of common interest or to find clever ways of presenting a subject in such a way that it appeals to viewers with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds (2006:30).

Part 3 details how RTÉ's multicultural programming is self-consciously aimed at a mainstream audience, *windows on their worlds* style programming. Given the dynamic nature of migration and settlement, such programmes have are arguably useful for a short period of time, after which the complexities of *cross-cultural appeal* becomes acute. How to avoid programming that is about ...explaining blacks and Muslims to a white audience? (2006:31). How to give sufficient detail and background to majority audiences without boring and alienating minority audiences, and those that don't easily fit these categories? Leurdijk's research participants place consistent emphasis on the importance of genre and form in shaping stories of *common interest* with sufficient entry points for different viewers.

In this context the *strong individual story* is paramount, a European trend that features strongly in the Irish programming discussed in Part 3. A focus on personalities, experiences, emotions and human stories is now regarded as the fundamental basis on which *cross-cultural* programming can be developed. Furthermore, the hybrid generic possibilities of reality television has widely validated a focus on daily life, modalities of social existence, and stories of *exceptional people*, to an extent that viewers are familiar with the idea that ...the particular stands for general social or human problems and displays something about present-day multicultural societies (2006:34). While these new conventions are widely contrasted with the overly *paternalistic and educational* approach of magazine programmes, it is not always clear that they do more than substitute a commodified, cosmopolitan *diversity* (such as ubiquitous representations of urban youth culture) for the equally flat, if less sexy, world of *multicultural programming*. Similarly, while the individual particular story may say something about wider social experiences and relations, just as easily it may not – this is a function of treatment, not merely form. In fact, at a formal level, it could be argued that the individual story works precisely by limiting or occluding the wider context. In a conclusion worth carrying over to a consideration of Irish media, Leurdijk writes:

2006:42

Multicultural programmes do not necessarily (sic) imply a specific political stance, philosophy or ideology on multicultural societies or on the issues concerning immigration and integration. However at a more abstract level, the underlying concepts do express a certain way of thinking about multiculturalism... (the early programmes) functioned as a sort of compensation for the under-representation or misrepresentation of minority perspectives in mainstream programming. In trying to gain larger audiences, stressing the

universality of human emotions and experiences became the next important strand... *multicultural* came to stand for showing incidences and locations of contact and communication between minority and majority groups, despite differences in cultural backgrounds in its latest inflections, the term *multicultural* refers to a mixture of cosmopolitan styles most visible in urban youth culture, or to subject matter that deals with cultural identity as an important field of both pleasure and anxiety in modern western societies. Of course the development and present reality of multicultural programming are not as clear-cut as this categorization suggests. Different approaches coexist over time and rarely are programmes informed by well-considered and philosophically-grounded concepts of multiculturalism.

Part 1 has explored the complex variety of terms and concepts that shape and guide media responses to migration and lived, cultural diversity. It has attempted to situate contemporary Irish society in relation to these wider political currents and theoretical debates, and to prepare the ground for an analysis of programming approaches in Ireland. These approaches are discussed in Part 3. Part 2 focuses on the perspectives of people who have migrated to Ireland, and on an exploration of their media worlds.

02

MEDIA WORLDS & MEDIA PRACTICES: RESEARCH WITH MIGRANT AUDIENCES

The context of migration in Ireland

Researching with migrant audiences

Media use by Polish participants

Media use by Nigerian participants

Media use by Chinese participants

THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION IN IRELAND

The rapid and significant addition of migrants to Irish society has had profound effects on society and economy in Ireland. The move from outward to inward migration has been carefully examined in Ireland in terms of its effects on the Irish economy (Barrett, Bergin & Duffy 2006), on racism in Ireland (Lentin & McVeigh, 2002, 2005) and on Irish citizenship (Crowley et al 2006). The *Celtic Tiger* economic boom stimulated migration and has profoundly shaped the demographic diversity of people now living in Ireland. The Gross Domestic Product in Ireland grew from 2% growth in 1991 to over 10% growth in 1997 (Irish Economy Overview 2006) largely through US high tech foreign direct investment in the late 1990s and some growth of indigenous industries (Ó'Riain 2004). Since 2000/01 economic growth in Ireland has been driven by domestic demand for services led by the construction sector and personal services (both of which are major employers of migrant workers) (Ó'Riain 2008). Ireland has had rapid and far-reaching social and economic change in the last 10 years after years of unemployment in the 1980s, with much of the growth (up to 3.5–3.7% of GNP growth) attributable to migrant labour (Barrett et al 2006).

In terms of migration, 1996 was a watershed year in Irish history – there were more immigrants than emigrants for the first time since the 1970s in Ireland. Famous for the *haemorrhaging* of people away from Ireland in the 1980s, the Celtic Tiger economy has brought home many of its own (1/3 of all migrants are returning migrants) and many others besides. The flow of people into the Republic of Ireland since 2000 amounts on one estimate to 750,000 people from over 200 countries in a population of 4 million. In 2002, 400,000 or 10.4 % of the total population of Ireland was born outside of Ireland. By 2006, 612,600 or 14.7% of the total population was born outside of Ireland – of which 63,000 were Polish (CSO 2006 Principal Demographic Results: 24). Not all of the migrants remain in Ireland, but it is estimated that 9–10% of the population – perhaps 400,000 people – may now be foreign born (Planning for a Changing Ireland 2006). The US, by comparison, had a population of 11.1% foreign born in 2000 (US Census 2000). For a country of Ireland's size this is a rapid and significant change.

This changing ethnic diversity in Ireland has prompted a re-imagining of what it means to be Irish in the move from a relatively homogeneous population, (although with small Jewish and Traveller populations) moving to a much more ethnically, religiously and linguistically diverse population through migration. But who are these migrants and why did they come? Almost half of these migrants (43%) are from the 10 new EU accession states with 26% from Poland, 7% from Lithuania, and 23% of immigrants from outside the EU or the USA. 54% of immigrants were aged 25–44 and

28% aged 15–24. 1 in 10 immigrants were children under the age of 15 and the Chinese was estimated to be the biggest non-EU group, at 60,000 or more (Population & Migration Estimates 2006).

It is likely that the Chinese and Polish communities are the two largest ethnic groups in Ireland with an estimated 100,000 Polish and 60,000 Chinese living in Ireland (Wang 2006; Kropiwek 2006). While some argue that these numbers are inflated, (eg according to the Quarterly National Household Survey 2006 the Polish population resident in Ireland is closer to 69,000) there seems to be agreement that these are the two of the larger groups in Ireland (Fitzgerald 2006). In the 2006 Census, the Central Statistics Office estimated that Ireland would have a population of over 4 million people with 10% of the population consisting of non-Irish nationals. So while the overall populations of Chinese and Polish immigrants may appear small, in relative terms they are not. Ireland is a small country and their impact is felt strongly as they make up an increasing part of the population.

Many of these Chinese and Polish young people who have immigrated to Ireland are between the ages of 18–30 and make crucial contributions to the Irish economy. They are both drawn into Ireland by the prospect of a booming economy, and keep this economy going through their work and consumption. Non-Irish national workers represent 8.6% of all workers and are relatively widely and evenly distributed across many sectors of work in both absolute and percentage terms (Pollack 2006), but tend to be underemployed (Barrett et al 2006) due to lack of English skills. Since the economic crash in 2008–2009, there has been some return migration, increase in unemployment, and decline in wages all of which have affected the issue of migration in Ireland. However, most of the interviews done here were conducted before the crash with only one Polish focus group conducted in early 2009.

National Profiles – Chinese in Ireland

Since the 1970s there has been a small but growing Chinese community in Ireland. Many long-term Chinese in Ireland were originally from Hong Kong and came to Ireland from England in the 1970s and 1980s. The size and diversity of the Chinese community in Ireland has increased dramatically and rapidly over the past 15 years. The 2006 Census found that 16,500 Chinese were living in Ireland in April 2006. However, many sources and community-based groups (Irish Chinese Information Centre) consider this number to be an undercount (due to language issues, density of housing in the city center, and some people not wanting to be counted) and estimate the community is closer to 40–60,000 members (Wang 2006). While the debate about the size of the community rages on, few doubt that the Chinese in Ireland have become a visible and large minority group with unique contributions and interests.

Chinese people living in Ireland currently tend to migrate from many different areas of mainland China (with large groups coming from Shenyang, Shanghai, and Beijing). They have come to Ireland as students and are relatively young and unmarried. Both men and women have come to Ireland to learn English and to better their employment opportunities. Because Chinese students have been allowed to work part time, many young Chinese can be seen in low wage service jobs (particularly in catering and service/hotel industries) in addition to their study.

Nigerians in Ireland

According to the 2006 census, 16,300 Nigerians were living in Ireland at that time, though like the comparable figures cited here, that is widely regarded to be a highly conservative figure. This figure constitutes less than 1% of the population; however it is a relative increase of 82% since the 2002 figure of 8,969. According to a report on the New Communities Sector in Ireland, Nigeria has been the destination from whence most applications from asylum have been received by the Irish state year-on-year since 2001. Education and training, work and family networks are other significant pathways to Ireland. The male/female breakdown of the 16,300 Nigerians in April 2006 was 55:45. The average age was 26.6 years, and 13% of Nigerians were in the 5–9 year old age group. 42% were single and 52% were married, and the number of married Nigerians not living with their spouse was relatively low at 8%. Roman Catholic was the main religion (26%), followed by Apostolic or Pentecostal (19%); less than 1% of Nigerians ticked the *no religion* box. They are more likely to be married with children (over 9,000 are) than the Polish and Chinese immigrants in Ireland. Nearly half (45%) of Nigerian children aged 5 to 19 indicated they could speak Irish.

Of all the groups profiled in this report, the Nigerians were by far the most urbanised, with only 4% living in rural areas at the time of the census. Small towns were also unpopular and nearly a third of all towns had no Nigerians at all. By contrast, almost a third were living in Ireland's large towns (population of 10,000 or more), with Dundalk, Drogheda, Swords and Balbriggan having the largest populations. Four in ten lived in Dublin City and suburbs. At 38% the percentage of Nigerians aged 15 or over at work in 2006 was the lowest of all groups featured, though this splits unevenly between males (50%) and females (30%). In comparison with the other nationalities profiled, a relatively high number were unemployed or looking for their first job (31%). About one in five females was looking after the home and 17% were students. The dominant industry was health and social work; one in five was working as a professional. Among the top occupations were care assistants and attendants (11%), security guards (7%), sales assistants (7%) and doctors (6%).²⁴

Poles in Ireland

The Polish community in Ireland is the second largest immigrant group in the country, surpassed only by immigrants from the UK. Data from national profiles of emigrants based on the 2006 census estimated that there were a total of 63,276 Poles in the country that year (2008:28). The population is largely young, with seven out of ten people aged between 20 and 34 years, the majority is single and males outnumber females by a 64:36 ratio. Almost 93% of those who completed the census in 2006 gave their religion as Roman Catholic and 95% selected *Any other white background* as their ethnicity. Further, a high proportion of the group is in employment (84%) with the numbers highest in construction and manufacturing followed by wholesale and retail services.

While preliminary CSO data for 2008 indicates that the country saw an overall decline in immigration with a fall back to 2005 levels, the numbers of immigrants coming from the new accession states which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, which includes Poland, remained strong.²⁵ Data provided by the CSO based on the allocation of personal public service numbers indicates that the number of arrivals from Poland continues to exceed that from any other country, with 79,700 PPSN allocations in 2007 out of a total of 215,300 (2009:3). Thus the Polish community in Ireland is the second largest immigrant group in the country and remains a strong source of immigrants, despite the downturn in the Irish economy in 2008.

RESEARCHING WITH MIGRANT AUDIENCES

This audience research was informed by a variety of aims and research principles. Given the focus of the report on broadcasting in Ireland, it was especially interested in how people who have migrated to Ireland engage with, use, discuss and interpret Irish broadcasting. However, a focus on Irish broadcasting cannot be artificially prioritized over the broader and often complex networks of transnational media and communications that characterizes what is increasingly seen as the *banal transnationalism* of everyday, and everyday migrated, life. Therefore it was decided to approach focus group discussions in terms of concentrating on people's media worlds. This perhaps fanciful term was used pragmatically by the research team to start from a point which presumed the everyday significance of environmental and personal uses of media, as well as the imbrication of different media channels, scales, platforms, formats and content in that everyday use. As it transpired, the senses of the consequentiality of media representations and media use that permeates the discussions adds another dimension to how media shape – but never determine – personal and collective worlds of experience.

The three national populations in question were chosen for a number of reasons. As the CSO statistics suggest, these are significant populations with important internal vectors of differentiation in terms of age ranges, occupations, location and mobility. However a primary reason for the significance of size of population is the relationship between population size and density and the development of national community-oriented media. To a similar extent, but in noticeably different ways, Poles, Nigerians and Chinese people have access to a media sector developed and aimed at them in Ireland. These developments are inseparable from their networks of diasporic organization and transnational connection. Given that national broadcasting is never just simply adopted or rejected in the migration location, but integrated into media practices that are as mobile and adaptive as their practitioners, the existence of these dense communication networks was of central importance to this study.

A third and final factor involves a general – and unavoidably generalized – sense of how these three populations are regarded in society in Ireland. As Part 1 discusses, Poles have been culturally placed as *good migrants*; active culturally, the size of the population and the proximity to Poland – and Polish markets and services in the UK – has led to an obvious and *vibrant* Polish presence in towns and urban centres, and as is frequently mentioned, in churches. In contrast, and regardless of the often touristic interest in such sites as the Chinese Market in Dublin's Smithfield, stereotypical images of the quietly invisible Oriental have broadly been projected onto the Chinese population in Ireland. It is also the case that Chinese organisations and groups do not seek the same kind of public status as many Polish counterparts, and neither do their media. Finally, and as Part 1 discusses, Nigerians in Ireland have been heavily associated with the *asylum anxiety* of the late 1990s/early 2000s, and with the controversial politics of the 2004 Citizenship Referendum. They have also been subject – in the views of this research team – to a persistently racialised form of public coverage. Given these three broad – and admittedly impressionistic – social positions, the ways in which research participants discuss issues of media representation are of obvious interest.

The *interpretative turn* in reception and audience studies (cf Nightingale & Ross 2004), with its insistence on examining contextual practices and the multivalent dimensions of reading positions, has had an obvious impact on research involving the media practices of migrant and ethnic minorities. The emphasis of this tradition on interpretation and active engagement has useful affinities with anti-racist insistence on the agency of minority actors. There is also a valuable overlap with the newer tradition in diasporic and transnational sociology and cultural studies that takes an ethnographic interest in how people shape their lives across borders, spaces, and contexts. Therefore this study was interested in people thinking about and through media use and what it says about their present lives, their future plans, hopes and orientations.

Media use also reflects important dimensions of domestic and living arrangements, workspace practices and dynamics, and generational and gender issues and perspectives. As a cultural practice, media use is inflected and laden with personal histories and biographical reflections, particularly for people whose lives are characterized by forced or – degrees of – voluntary mobility, by living between localities and places of significance and by personal relationships stretched and mediated in space and time. However media practices are also expressions of humour and taste, self-projection and differentiation, amusement and passing the time. Therefore the research has also been centrally conscious of Aku Aksoy and Kevin Robins' warning not to treat migrant audiences as entities always and ever motivated by their *culture* and the demands of *in-betweenness* (1999).

The primary methodology used in this study was focus groups. Conducting research with migrant audiences can be quite a sensitive issue. Many are busy working/studying, may not want to discuss certain difficulties they may have had in the migration process, and language barriers are always an issue. In order to increase the participation and validity of the research and to get as many voices into the research as possible, we used focus groups for all three groups. The focus groups were conducted by co-ethnic researchers in the primary language (Polish, Mandarin and English). The enlarged research team developed a series of key themes and aims that were reviewed periodically across focus groups. This allowed similar foci to be maintained in the groups while harnessing the potential of focus group research in the primary language. By having co-ethnic researchers fluent in the language, focus group participants were much more likely to attend, feel at ease, and speak openly and honestly about how they felt.

Ethnic Group	Total # of Groups	Total # of Participants	Dates	Locations
Chinese	5	25	2–5/2008	Dublin
Polish	7	45	3/2008–4/2009	Dublin (2), Limerick (1), Maynooth (2), Portlaoise (1) and Cork (1)
Nigerian	6	25	3/2008–11/2008	Dublin (2), Dundalk(1), Maynooth (1), Cavan (1) Waterford (1)

The above focus groups were conducted in 2008–2009

The focus group participants were recruited by snowball sampling and therefore their responses are not generalisable to the larger ethnic communities in Ireland. However, their demographic characteristics are similar to the larger communities. We conducted the focus groups roughly in areas where groups were largely represented. Therefore all the groups for the Chinese were conducted in Dublin city where the majority (66%) of Chinese reside (CSO 2008:48). According to the latest census data from the CSO, while almost one third of Poles lived in Dublin, the rest were distributed around almost every city and country in the country, the only group other than migrants from the UK to be so widely distributed geographically in Ireland (2009:28). As a result it was crucial that this project conducted its research with Poles around the country. In the end focus groups took place in Dublin (2), Limerick (1), Maynooth (2), Portlaoise (1) and Cork (1). Participants were recruited through snowball sampling and the placing of notices in local Polish shops and through Polish online sites.

All the focus groups were conducted by researchers with strong research backgrounds and experience: Weiming Liu (Chinese), Dr Krzysztof Nawratek and Asia Rutkowska (Polish), and Dr Abel Ugba (Nigerian). The Chinese and Polish researchers were native speakers who were either pursuing postgraduate study or postdoctoral research in Ireland at the time of the project. Dr Ugba is a UK-based scholar, with strong research and personal ties to the Nigerian community in Ireland. All participants signed consent forms prior to participation and the group discussions were recorded and later translated and transcribed by the researchers. The focus groups all used a core set of questions and themes but adapted them in process to the particular community being investigated. The questions used in the focus groups are attached in appendix A. The focus group participants were very helpful and engaged, and the time they took to support and participate in this research is important to acknowledge. They came from many diverse backgrounds. Again, according

to CSO data, the Polish and Chinese population in Ireland is dominated by relatively young people, with seven out of ten Polish immigrants aged between 20 and 34 years and with almost 64% male and 36% female. Over 60% were single (2009:29). Our Polish research groups are broadly in line with the overall population and included 21 females and 24 males of which almost two thirds were aged between 25 and 35 years of age. Just over half of the participants were single with a further third married. The remainder were divorced or widowed.

The Chinese ages ranged from 23–46 [average was 26.9 years of age (CSO 2008:48)] years and there were both men and women in the groups. All of the participants worked in various areas such as: health care assistants, cleaners, waiters/waitresses, language teachers, nurses, and some were studying as students. Most Chinese participants were single (the CSO (2008) found on average that 71% were single), but some were married with spouses here and at home. Some participants had been here less than a year (7 months) some as much as seven years. The Nigerians ranged in age from 26–45, with the vast majority in their 30s. Nearly half were studying and working, some are prohibited from working by their asylum status, and three women were working in the home. Over half of the respondents were educated to degree level and beyond, which is above the overall Nigerian average in Ireland. Nearly all the participants had been living in Ireland for at least 4 years, and a third of them for more than 7 years (this calculation excludes the asylum-seekers among the respondents).

Almost half of the Polish respondents were educated to degree level, which is slightly above the overall Polish immigrant population average, while a further 14 individuals educated to secondary school level. Those who were employed were almost equally divided between the service industry and the professions with almost 30% unemployed.²⁶ Eighteen of the Polish participants had been in Ireland between two and four years with the next largest group in the country for more than one year.²⁷ A smaller number (6) had been in the country for more than four years. Most of the Polish participants were sharing rented accommodation, as do 93% of Poles in Ireland (CSO 2008:28) and the numbers were almost equally divided between living with a partner, with friends or with their family. This impacted upon their media use, particularly their use of television, which in many cases had to be negotiated with others in the house. Only 5 lived alone. Most of the participants came from medium to large towns with over 50,000 inhabitants in Poland. The Chinese tended to live with friends in rented flats in the city center (the CSO found 4 out of 5 do so in Ireland 2008:48). 5 of the Nigerians were living in state-run accommodation, 4 in private residences and the rest in rented accommodation.

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This may be because the Polish research spanned the economic downturn in 2009 and the Chinese did not.

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Four years previously Poland joined the EU.

MEDIA USE BY POLISH PARTICIPANTS

Engagement with Irish Broadcasting & Other Media

Most people engaged with the media at some point during the day, either voluntarily or involuntarily. For some it was automatic either to turn on the radio, the television or the computer first thing in the morning to catch up with the news, traffic and/or e-mail. During the day there was a lot of incidental media use: background radio, picking up free or freely available newspapers and magazines, and surreptitious Internet use. In the evenings media use involved more focused and goal-directed Internet use and television for entertainment and relaxing. There was however quite a bit of variation in media use depending on length of time in the country, employment status and type, language skills, household type, education and age.

Well, I have no TV set, no radio. When I came here I have listened radio because it was in the apartment I have rented. But in apartment where I live now is no radio and I do not want to spend money and buy one, so I do not listen. However, today I have found speakers in the office so probably I will listen at work, probably French music radio.

E – FG2

In the morning Metro in a train, in the office news on gazeta.pl, during the day, in the office also gazeta.pl. On weekends TOK FM via internet, newspapers – I read only Guardian when my husband buy it. I listen Irish radio at nights. Third channel... no, Second... Two or Three? In Gaelic... RTG... here are a lot of such music... do not watch Irish TV channels, I read only Polish magazine – Wprost.

F – FG2

I listen to the radio on my way over to work, my favorite station is FM 104 {everyone bursts into laughter}, especially Strawberry Alarm Clock on account of the information regarding traffic, [and] news from the world. But I also watch TV in the morning; we turn the telly on in the morning nearly automatically. Before leaving to work, I always watch about 10 min of news from the world, 2 minutes for CNN to see what the day is gonna bring.

R – FG5

Many commented on how their media use changed once they had established themselves, got a job and found somewhere to live. However media access and use varies depending on whether one lives in the country, a town or a city. Internet access, via mobile phone, in work and in Internet cafes, is a priority for many of the respondents. It was notable that in the initial period of orientation radio is important; many listen to it in work and while commuting. Free newspapers, on trains, in work or in libraries are also useful in this initial settling in period. Access to television and Internet at home comes later, often for practical reasons.

K – FG1	At the beginning, when I came to Ireland, I have been listening radio at work because I had to... I have been not reading any newspapers, because I lived at countryside. I also have not had access to the TV, so I was forced to use other media, I have had not Internet access neither. So I used WAP protocol to have any news from Poland, just using my mobile. Later on it started to change for better. I started to have access to TV and Internet.
B – FG2	In my case my media usage is changed very much. When I came here eight years ago I only watched TV, but now I scan many newspapers, magazines... however it is connected with my job. When I came here I did not need it, but now it is just my job to know what is going on in Ireland and globally.
M – FG6	[Used to live in Dublin now in Cork] Yeah, and at the beginning I used to buy these Polish papers with advice for recent immigrants – regarding how things operate. Now I rather buy Irish newspapers as I don't have Irish TV, ²⁸ so I get to know what's going on from the newspapers only. Irish broadcast news tends to be seen as uninteresting, however the variety of different reasons for this contradict each other when taken as a whole. For some news seems too parochial and they cannot relate to prevailing news values, yet for others it is too international, too UK and US focused. This may partly be explained by the tendency of many participants to discuss news generically across radio and television:
A – FG1	I like the radio very much. I like the morning broadcast. There are always the same people, they are really amusing. Concerning Irish news, my main source is the radio. Concerning TV I watch news sometimes at the evening, but not often. I read Irish Independent sometimes at work – where it is free. Going for lunch I read sometimes if I find there anything interesting for me. I use Internet to be in touch with news from Poland, however I try to limit my contact with <i>horrors</i> , so I am not keen on government/political news, rather economic, just to know what is going on.
G – FG1	Concerning Irish news I prefer TV news anytime. However, we all know how Irish news look like so... There is nothing apart from car crashes, shootings and stabbing people in Limerick... and apart trials to put Prime Minister into the jail there is nothing interesting. I prefer to watch SKY what we have in cable, there are more interesting stuff.
M – FG1	I do not watch Irish TV because there is only stuff from UK or US what I am not interested in.

	At the beginning when I came here... it was extremely strange for me watching TV news about nothing, about the fact that someone's field was flooded. It was a great news! I was very relaxed watching that kind of news. Nobody was giving me all that political crap about flooding laptops and so on. It was so soft, gentle stuff in Irish TV. Local news was cited as important in settling into an area, however, as one of the quotes below illustrates, because national discourses of place can quickly be absorbed. Information on services, jobs and property in particular areas was useful for many, as the degree to which they think about or actively plan aspects of their lives in Ireland developed:	C – FG1
	We live here in Ireland and many topics we listen in radio or watch in TV are important for us. There is a discussion about taxes for first time home buyers and it is an issue which is important for anyone who live here. It does not matter if at the end he/she is going to buy the house or not. The same concerning taxation of cars, state's budget, health services or whatever. Of course from one side one is interested what is going on in Europe but on the other hand following Irish news is important for anyone who lives in Ireland.	B – FG1
	I personally never experienced anything like that, however these stories and opinions in media make me thinking about that... When I came to Limerick, Irish people told me that it is stab city... And it looks it is really like that – I have read in internet that it is the most dangerous city in Europe... so I start to be afraid... little bit...	E – FG3
	The disconnect in news values discussed above was a more pronounced dynamic when it came to discussions of entertainment. The exchange below from Focus Group 1 in Maynooth in 2008 is quoted at length as it illustrates a set of criteria that recurred in discussions. Irish television in general was often held to be narrow in its range of reference and acquisitions, and to lack broad European content. The discussion below links this to the educative role of broadcasting:	
		28
		There is no reception of the TV signal in the place he's living now.

E – FG3	<p>Ⓚ Exactly! There is no education in Irish TV at all!</p> <p>Ⓜ They should limit number of sitcoms... It would make Irish TV better... People would stop...</p> <p>Ⓒ Watching without any reflection...</p> <p>Ⓜ Exactly.</p> <p>Ⓚ I am interested in history. If it would be anything... I have seen several movies about Irish history and it was really interesting. But there is nothing like that in Irish TV.</p> <p>Ⓟ What I really missing in Irish TV are movies. I would like to sit down at the evening, about 8 or 9pm and watch good interesting movie. Unfortunately what I can watch are soaps or quizzes and stuff I just can not watch... OK, there are some movies from time to time, but only British or American. There is no chance to watch anything from Spain, Italy or France. In Poland it is also difficult, but sometimes it is possible. Not here.</p>	B – FG4
	<p>The presence or arrival of children into families brings a focus on available children's programming on Irish television. It was in the context of this discussion that one participant – and overall they were not alone in this – did not realize until after they got satellite that they might not get Irish channels.</p>	
M – FG6	<p>We watch British TV when it comes to cartoons, and apart from that. We have the SKY decoder, but we have British channels only, we don't have this package, and after moving to new gaf it turned out we don't receive Irish TV on indoor aerial. Maybe in a couple of months we will take some other package.</p> <p>For some watching Irish television was problematic because of the language and variety of regional accents. Most, but not all, noted that this diminished over time but that on arrival it was a problem. It was often suggested that English subtitles would help not only to understand, but also to learn the language and motivate more involvement with Irish programmes. This was the same for adults and children.</p>	
G – FG2	<p>In fact it would be even more interesting and I would prefer English subtitles than Polish.</p>	
I – FG3	<p>I am here six years and still I meet people I have problems to understand. From Donegal for example – it is shocking, I can not understand them.</p>	
		<p>I watch only Polish TV unfortunately. Unfortunately because I have a weak contact with English.</p> <p>Just when I have arrived I listened a lot Irish radio and watched BBC to improve my English. I also liked to watch news in Irish (Gaelic), because they had English subtitles – it was very handy for me.</p> <p>Dealing with Irish accents elicited mixed opinions:</p> <p>I listen. If I am in good mood I try to repeat. But in this case [I use] British and American TV more, not Irish one, as I am not very keen on the Irish accent.</p> <p>I think that at the beginning, when I came here, I was also subconsciously familiarizing myself with the accents, while watching Irish TV I was trying to distinguish various accents from the north or the south of the country... for sure it helped in becoming familiar with the accent.</p> <p>Most listened to the radio for music – not <i>disco</i> – and news. Many listened in the work place and while commuting to work and some had the opportunity to listen to Polish radio streamed via the Internet in work. Radio listeners listened to both local and national radio stations, and stations mentioned were RTÉ 1 and 2, Lyric, Newstalk, Spin, 98 fm, FM 104, Today fm, Life 95fm, Red fm etc.</p> <p>Sometimes what I have a lot of free time in the work I listen Spin South West, Limerick Life, but only if there are good songs and I have time at afternoons.</p> <p>Morning – TVN 24. I am going to work by car, switch on the radio. Phantom Lord, rock music. At work – again radio. With good music, if it is possible – Phantom, but sometimes it is out of range (in Maynooth).</p> <p>Radio 104.4 FM – very nice, each evening two guys have very nice and funny show. Some music, some quizzes. Fellows are using language easy enough for me to understand and make me laugh.</p> <p>In common with the other strands of the audience analysis, current events that impacted on the lives of the participants became central to the focus group discussions. The final Polish discussion was carried out in February 2009, and all the participants were unemployed. The respondents felt that the media was playing up the economic crisis and creating <i>fear</i> about the present and future. Some actively sought out some more optimistic content on local as well as national radio stations.</p>

I never listen to the radio in the morning. I usually turn it on in the evening when there are radio programs concerning various social issues, and how people cope in different situations. This is this station, its frequency is in its name... [can't remember], and Newstalk. There are interesting programs there and I don't have to [hear] about the crisis all the time. This news is killing me. Since my work ended a few months ago I can't listen to news about the level of unemployment and how many more people were made redundant. I try to listen to some more optimistic programs than the news.

At many points the interviewers had to clarify research assumptions about the categorisation of different broadcast media as local or national, as many participants did not recognize this distinction. As more and more local and national channels broadcast programming from elsewhere it is the programmes rather than the channels that one needs to ask about. Respondents tended to group British, Irish and American television programmes together and others watched British programmes on Polish TV.

In Ireland I am interested in local media... It is in fact funny, because by *local media* I mean British media.

Ⓟ It is a problem, cause Irish TV is brought to us through SKY. Actually SKY? Is it the name of this Scottish cable television?

Ⓡ Or NTL.

Ⓟ I think SKY. So it is difficult to know whether you watch an Irish program or... Isn't RTÉ 1 half British anyway? No, I mean entertainment after all. I think 50% of Irish entertainment is delivered from Great Britain...

Ethnic, Diasporic & Transnational Media: Polish Television

When asked about whether or not they accessed Polish TV direct via satellite there were a variety of responses, as discussions of satellite dishes raises a number of sensitive issues. Most were aware that there was an element of illegality about erecting satellite dishes to get Polish TV without paying a license fee for possession of a television set in Ireland. Some had paid their license fee and said the system was the same as in Poland. There was a marked difference between the Dublin and Maynooth groups, and the Limerick focus group (FG3), regarding their watching of Polish television via satellite. The Limerick group was predominantly composed of men working in the construction industry, and they were almost exclusively interested in Polish satellite services, and generically masculine programmes such as Top Gear, which could be accessed through the 40+ channels available on Cyfra+. However the

reasons of those who predominantly watched Polish television beyond this particular group were varied:

I do not watch Irish TV because there is nothing interesting. Having Cyfra+ or Polsat one have Discovery and other channels, there are plenty channels to watch, yet in Irish TV is almost nothing. At least for me.

G – FG3

I do not watch Irish TV because I have only Polish Polsat.

FG3

Myself... Polsat Sport... Because of volleyball and Formula 1. I mean, Irish are interested in other sports, in my opinion the hopeless ones, and I can't find anything I am interested in on Irish or British TV sport stations.

J – FG6

One family had been advised to set their Polish television to have English subtitles to help their children learn English:

Well we watch the British ones cause we have it. BBC 1 to 4. The kids watch CBeebies, and I also set Polsat in English – cause you can set the language and they don't know how to set it back to Polish. I did it with full consciousness and premeditation. This was very helpful and now there are no problems at school at all.

M – FG6

For older people however, Polish television is an environmental resource, associated at some level with creating a feeling of private belonging in the home space:

Concerning TV, because my family isn't familiar with English... It means my mom doesn't know the language at all and my husband just doesn't like it, so we have only Polish media at home. Polish TV in a cable. NTL or something...

M – FG1

Intergenerational differences within families were pronounced, and often centering on the relationship between Polish media and other flows in the home. As with research conducted elsewhere, differences in tastes and language competencies between young people and their parents, between adults and their parents and between couples emerged. Many young couples indicated that they had a parent living with them to help with childcare. This arrangement tended to emphasize Polish media in the home, though children often changed this, and questions of taste inevitably emerged between the generations. Some people noted that their shifting between mediums – television to radio, for example – was simply a question of choosing what was not in use:

B – FG3 I wake up and switch on a radio. I have almost no access to the TV because our girls are watching it all the time, since morning to evening... they watch Klan and other soaps. I have no chance to watch TV.

M – FG1 Concerning Polish media... Polish TV is at home where mostly my mom is watching it and I listen Polish Radio 1 at work, in fact all day since I come to work to the end of the day... You turn on the radio because the kids get up earlier and they turn the TV on, so it is occupied already.

Polish Media Produced in Ireland

Despite the impressive range of Polish-produced media developed since 2004, few channels played a significant role in the media-worlds of the participants. Very few had encountered the Polish TV programme Ota Polska on City Channel, and those that had felt the news was dated. Polish newspapers were available mostly in Dublin in shops and at Church; interviewees in Cork and Limerick had less access although there was mention of a Polish shop in Mallow that sold some papers from Poland. Interviewees felt that Polish newspapers produced in Ireland tended to be unprofessional and *archaic* in style. Polski Express tends to be known as the colourful one. They did carry useful basic information, especially for people new to Ireland, often the fact of their existence was appreciated by some, even if they did not actively support them. Many bought or tried to access weekly social-political magazines and children's and women's magazines.

C – FG5 I do not know, I do not read it, only scan what can I find in shops. There is nothing original – just rewriting and resuming what could be found in normal media... In childish way, by journalists who are not real journalists.

A – FG5 I follow the news but not regularly. When I go to Poland I get updated. Sometimes I buy Polityka²⁹ in the polish shop on Parnell St.

J – FG6 There are mostly reprints from Poland; there are no real articles, at least not in Nasz glos, there are not articles written here. They are mostly issues from Poland and they are mostly reprints... and when it comes to matters from Poland we know it already from the Internet websites.

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Polityka – Polish weekly socio-economic magazine.

(K) For me the standard of these papers is very poor.

(B) At least they exist. And [what] if there weren't any?

(K) If there weren't any, you can find the news on the Onet. The information published for example in the Nasz³⁰ Głos you can find on the Internet. The articles are copied down [from the Internet] word for word and they are so tinged with emotions...

(B) They are not objective.

In relation to Polish programmes on radio the consensus was different, and generally positive, in terms of style or content. However, no specific programmes were singled out for mention. Other criteria were also applied to media use, and a prevalent idea was the association between immersing oneself in Polish media and markers of integration:

Poles come here, read Polish magazines, meet only Poles and detach themselves from Irish society.

B – FG1

In general Polish media created in Ireland were not rated that highly. They were seen as unprofessional and targeting a very generalized idea of the Polish experience of Ireland. One discussant explains this with a very clear sense of the class connotations involved:

I would like to find a media which see us in our diversity. We are very diverse here. I have a feeling that I am not a target of Polish media. It is not the quality and profile which could fit me. It could be nice to have a Polish media which target not only people at a building site. I think that there are enough professionals in Ireland to be an audience for that kind of medium.

B – FG1

Q – OK, What Kind of Topics Should it Focus On?

About Poles in Ireland. About us living here. We are interesting – live here but with strong ties with Poland, we still struggling with the fact that we live here. There are culture differences – so how we deal with them?

F – FG2

However the informational demands placed on these media were also diverse, from these questions of representation, to a greater focus on Irish as well as Polish cultural events, to very fundamental requests for legal advice. There is also a rivalry between local Polish media and given the smallness of the local scene, the relationship between different Polish activities is assumed to influence coverage:

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Nasz Głos – Polish weekly magazine published in Ireland.

E – FG2 I know people who organize Polish cultural events in Ireland – and I realized that Polish Express does not inform about many of these events, because people from Polish Express are not friends of these people who organize Polish cultural events.

R – FG5 I wouldn't distinguish Polish daily life or Polish aspects of living in Ireland, after all we live in this society, I think the same things concern us as well as Irish.

It is a feature of such transnational media environments that location-specific media are seen as in competition rather than as a complement to mainstream Polish media:

G – FG1 That is what I would prefer – to have easy access to media produced in Poland, media I know, rather than to any kind of substitutes, because these media here are really substitutes of real media. So internet helps me to get what I want and what I would have no chance to get even if RTÉ would create any Polish section. It would be just worse quality, substitute programs, in my opinion.

INTERNET USE

News, Communication, Information

Internet use was pervasive for everyday tasks and for following established media outlets in Poland, including newspapers, television programmes, radio programmes and books. The ability to follow series as they are being broadcast in Poland was remarked on. In fact for many internet access to television services is in practice replacing television sets. They also receive and read e-newsletters, blogs and use websites for booking holidays and flights. They use internet banking and one or two discussed accessing pornography. Finally, they use communication programmes like gadu-gadu and Skype, particularly combined with webcams. Some keep personal profiles on social networking sites and share photographs using the internet.

G – FG1 I use internet to have access to Polish media – mainly web information portals like WP.pl

L – FG1 Yes, we listen radio via internet – Złote Przeboje, Radio Gdansk and PR 3 in my case. We also browse news portals like WP.pl and Onet.pl

I have no TV set at that moment so I watch what I can find in internet. Documentary movies mostly.

F – FG 2

I get many news and info from web blogs. Even talking about politics – there is very good web blog written by Wojciech Orliński³¹ and if someone in Polish politics is doing anything stupid he often comments it, with all references and links, so it is no problem to follow and understand the context.

E – FG2

They also use the internet to communicate with friends and family. At particular times, such as the Polish elections, they are more motivated to catch up with general news from home. Some said that they verified news they read online by calling friends and family from home. However this pervasive everyday transnationalism had limits for some, as they discussed that it was difficult to be in an English-speaking work context while listening to Polish radio via the internet. Online news may have largely supplanted their consumption of Polish newspapers, but many reflected on their preference for the physical version. While many said they would like to get Polish newspapers direct they were difficult to get in Ireland and expensive if one subscribed, thus they tended to opt for the free online versions, where available. Other than those who had become unemployed and were actively job-seeking online, no-one mentioned any Irish websites that they used regularly and one discussant felt that there were very few good sites about or from Ireland:

There is no decent webpage with the news from Ireland. I was checking the RTÉ website, but there is no rhyme or reason to it.

M – FG6

Assessments of Representations in the Media in Ireland

Interviewees stated that there is generally very little about Poland in the news apart from during major football competitions, Polish elections or at Christmas. Some did think that Poland was presented in the media as less developed than Ireland, though as the quote below illustrates, these impressions are ambiguous. Overall there was a sense of representations being monitored, and their reception among friends, work mates and others was considered, though with varying degrees of seriousness. Given the size of the Polish population in Ireland, it was argued that more in-depth programmes about aspects of life in Poland would help to educate Irish people.

In my opinion there is almost nothing about Poles in Irish media.

- Ⓕ I want to tell a story... There is a program about cooking in Irish TV. There are also similar programs in Poland. Anyway, one Irish came to Lublin, and there is an open air museum so he cooked in that place. It is, you know – 17th or 18th century village, but it was presented in Irish TV that it is contemporary Polish village. My God! Few my Irish friends watched that program...
- Ⓖ Yeah. Peasant without shoes, hens in a house...
- Ⓗ In general there is a stereotype about Poland that it is not developed country...
- Ⓐ It was Michael Palin in BBC, it was not in Irish TV.
- Ⓔ I have a friend who is a hairdresser. She told me that recently Irish client came and ask her if there is a TV in Poland and electricity... She went ballistic and wanted to cut him bald...

While many concurred that images of Poles in Ireland was generally positive, they were resigned to hearing negative news stories involving Poles, without passing judgment on the tone of the stories:

Concerning how many Poles are here, there is very little info about Poles, apart news about stabbing or Poles was driving a car, was a car accident and all are dead.

I can not see any stereotype, any clear picture of Poland or Poles. The only feature I realized is how careful Irish media are presenting these issues. They are very delicate. I think that they do not know how to talk about us.

I think there is a stereotype, but it is a very positive one, of a hardworking and honest person who employers can count on. More and more Poles hold responsible positions, they work their ways up the career ladders.

I have watched several programs on TV, on Nationwide they talk about different communities, about integration. They want to show how it works. It was a program about Dungarvan where for eight thousand people living there, one thousand are Poles. However that program was just informative – no attempt to picture Poles in any specific way. It is true, that they in general talk about Poles only if anything drastic is happening.

One discussant drew attention to the boundary practices at work in ideas of community and locality in media practices:

In the Laois Nationalist, it's local paper, they write about local community, but there's nothing about the Polish community. There is only [information] on some road blockade, some lady getting married, on somebody celebrating 25th wedding anniversary or on some cultural events in some school. But not a single word, about our community.

Conclusions

Polish local, national and international media use was influenced by length of time in Ireland, employment status, language capacities and type and location of household. Given the size of the Polish community in Ireland the Polish-oriented media scene is quite dynamic and vibrant, particularly in the larger urban areas, although participants in these groups were not frequent users of these media and were quite critical of the style and content of available newspapers and radio programmes, many preferring to access Polish media directly from home via the internet or satellite. Much of the content associated with these media was seen as out of date, too focused on Polish national news and not sufficiently engaged with local communities.

Similar critical distance was applied in their discussions of Irish media. News services were frequently regarded as too local, parochial, and narrow, and were supplemented with other English language media (eg the BBC, CNN,) and European news media to keep up to date with international news. The same held for access to a wider range of non-Anglophone films and documentaries. Thus media use was relational, and stations and programmes were in constant comparison with others, although boundaries between what was and was not considered Irish media were unclear. Cost and quality of media access were issues, particularly on arrival in the country, but even once employment and housing was secured many were critical of the quality of Irish media access and content. The variety of Irish accents on Irish media represented both a problem for users and an opportunity to familiarize oneself with the local vernacular.

Overall the response to representations of Poles in Ireland was that they were infrequent but in general rather balanced and positive. This was particularly the case in relation to the reporting of news about Poles in Ireland on RTÉ. The representation of Poles as hard working was welcome, but there was also a sense that Poles were largely seen as working in construction and service jobs rather than as professionals. Representations of Poles in other areas of employment were infrequent. Local media were held to be particularly poor at presenting stories about their local Polish community. Participants reported meeting many Irish people who knew very little about Poland, or were felt to be misinformed about the country,

and they would welcome some attempt by Irish media to educate the wider population about Poland, its history, its politics and its culture.

Informants reported much accidental and environmental media use (eg free newspapers, radio in work) in their everyday lives in Ireland, while domestic media practices tended to be more actively directed at seeking out information and entertainment directly and transnationally from Poland and other countries. The Internet is a central feature of this highly directed media use, and increasingly important as a personal practice contrasted with the negotiated, social character of television use in family or household contexts. Intergenerational differences in taste emerged, particularly in families with children and grandparents. At a general level the Irish media is seen as a resource to help during the settling in phase of moving to Ireland; for language acquisition, accent understanding and local information, and also as a resource to for local events and political and economic news that may impact on them.

MEDIA USE BY NIGERIAN PARTICIPANTS

Engagements with Irish Broadcasting & Other Media Television: RTÉ, RTÉ News & TV3

Responding to the initial invitation to describe their *media worlds*, the vast majority of respondents chose to begin by discussing RTÉ, and RTÉ news in particular, as obvious points of common focus. For many the news has become habitual; in both private residence and direct provision accommodation the 6 and 9 o'clock news often act as ritual moments – time for the news – and points of orientation in their diversified media environments. RTÉ news is seen primarily as a way of keeping up to date with current affairs, and this keeping up to date is shaped not just by a desire for news but a constantly recurring need to monitor news. *Mm* captures a widespread sentiment when he refers to the ways in which different types of news have political resonances in the lives of people intimately affected by state decisions and public opinion:

I watch either the 6 o'clock news or the 9 o'clock on RTÉ. It tells me what is happening in Ireland. This is my place today. It's where I live. May be it's where my children will live – I don't know. But I like to hear about everything that is happening – news about transport, what the government is doing or saying – especially about immigrants. You know that they are always changing their minds about us. Today they want us to stay and tomorrow they are sending us way.

FG3 – Mm

Some discussants relate the shape of their media use to the length of time they have been in Ireland, from those that immersed themselves in news as a mode of orientation, to a far smaller group who very gradually engaged with RTÉ (and other Irish media) over years. Personal relationships to news are discussed with striking frequency, in relation to the future as much as the past (this connection between the continuous present of news to personal reflections on being in Ireland, and future dwelling and mobility, is further discussed in relation to news from Nigeria). In many cases, the birth of Irish-born children prompted a reflection on their relationship with society in Ireland, as *Mm* continues to discuss:

So I like to follow the news. May be I will not live here forever. I cannot say that about my children. They were born here and this is their country. It doesn't matter that we face many problems and some of them don't like us or want us to stay. But we are here and my children are Irish – born in Ireland, living in Ireland. I watch RTÉ and read newspapers so I can be familiar with what is going on here. Things that are happening here affect me and my family. You cannot live in a place and not know what is happening.

FG3 – Mm

This broad commitment to monitoring news and assessing its implications is widely shared by male and female participants, and heavily pronounced among professionals – whose status is relatively secure – who regularly relate the projected consequences of news to the prospects of their individual projects, plans and aspirations. Respondents living in direct provision – whose status is temporary and prohibits paid employment – also monitor this relationship in some depth. Given this everyday politicization of experience, it is not surprising that news in general and RTÉ news in particular are subjected to scrutiny from a variety of angles. TV3 is rarely mentioned in discussions – other than as a source of movies – and TV3 news is never mentioned other than as an explicit counterpoint to RTÉ:

In connection with Ireland, every day I tune to TV3 for news and information about Ireland. I also tune to RTÉ 1. I straddle between the two. I want to know what is happening in Ireland and find out whether new immigration policies are being formulated. I need the news about Ireland to know where I am.

FG1 – Th

This central focus on the treatment of immigration issues and the representation of migrants – as well as refugees and asylum-seekers – recurs at many moments and in relation to a broad spectrum of media issues in the focus groups. As an ongoing construction of what society is and how it functions, news is of keen interest to participants whose

racialised status and often contradictory experiences of society in Ireland results in a heightened reflexivity in relation to representation:

FG2 – Mc

I watch news on RTÉ and on TV3 but I think RTÉ presents more information when they report about immigrants. TV3 only show the surface and they appear not to be interested in issues involving immigrants. If you watch the same news item on both channels, you will be surprised at how little the information presented by TV3 is. You really get the impression that they have no time for immigrants. RTÉ 1 is better and fairer.

In this context, Irish media do not exist in isolation, and discussions of Irish media are nearly always relational. Irish-produced news – and media in general – can be seen as significant points of reference in the densely networked, transnational media environments of many Nigerians in Ireland. An implication of this is that Irish media are not only contrasted and evaluated in relation to each other, but to channels, services and approaches available in this extended mediascape. News in particular is assessed comparatively, and where RTÉ and TV3 are contrasted as to their view of the national and local, a wide variety of transnational channels provides the counterpoint for international news coverage:

FG1 – Fi

I watch Al Jazeera because I believe it shows the world from a different and more comprehensive perspective. When you watch Al Jazeera you sometimes feel that it's covering a different world from the one covered by the Irish and even British media. Al Jazeera provides news from places that I didn't even know exist. I think RTÉ and the Irish media in general are very narrow in terms of the places and issues they cover.

In these comparative contributions, a range of different criteria is present. In the example above news is related to a construction of the world, and discussions of this nature centre on the scope of that world (where is covered) and its complexity (what is covered, and how). The placing of Irish news in a wider context is often shaped by biography, with daily news sourced and sorted according to place and movement, for example the BBC remained important to some discussants who had lived in the UK, as a point of contact with that *home*. RTÉ Radio One is frequently mentioned favourably, but no specific programmes are discussed. The status of RTÉ as the public service broadcaster, as well as its power and centrality in Irish society, prompts many of the discussions of news to bleed into wider political evaluations of the broadcaster.

What is seen as the absence of meaningful news coverage of Africa is a recurring topic of conversation. Discussions of the coverage and representation of Africa connect the question of the scope of the world presented by news, to the more local significance of coverage as an indicator of attitudes towards Nigerians and Africans. For *Sh*, in FG3,

coverage of Africa and African issues is an attraction for her as a viewer, a question of pleasure and interest, and also a way in which RTÉ could incorporate her as an audience member – I believe many of us would watch more news if there were more reports from Africa or about Africa. However for *Pa*, it is precisely the institutional vision of the audience currently at work that makes international news in general, and news about Africa in particular, problematic:

FG4 – Pa

They also don't report on international a whole lot. Occasionally they report on Africa because there is an issue that is currently in the news – may be political crisis in Kenya or war in Sudan but you can see there is no continuous efforts to report on these issues. They choose what they think their people might want to know about and report on them.

The category of *international* news is positional; in these discussions it is a genre of personal, translocal importance, disrupting conventional understandings of local-national-international. The significance of international news shifts across scales; it is discussed as an indicator of the *openness* of Irish society to the world out there and in here. Several contributors assess the coverage of Africa as significant for coverage of African migrants, and vice versa:

FG5 – MI

I'm not really keen on RTÉ. The station does not show enough news about immigrants or about Africa. In fact it doesn't show much about other parts of world. I watch Al Jazeera when I want news about the world. I also watch the South African station – channel 230 on Sky – for news about Africa. Sometimes I watch CNN and BBC but only sometimes.

Interestingly, this near ubiquitous criticism of *narrowness* is also made concerning some Nigerian broadcasters, and often contrasted with transnational enterprises such as CNN, Sky News and Al Jazeera, dedicated news channels with specific regional channels and services. Thus there is an implicit criticism of how international news is produced by national broadcasters, and its comparative adequacy for media audiences that live in environments of instantaneous, transnational coverage.

Television – Reflecting a Changing Society?

This question of scale also opens up another terrain of evaluation: RTÉ and media in Ireland's adequacy in a *changing society*. What migrants can and should expect from terrestrial broadcasters is hotly disputed. However, core issues emerge across focus groups concerning accuracy of reporting and representation, the responsibility to *reflect a changing society*, and the need for media institutions to more adequately reflect diversity on screen and on air.

A baseline assumption is often present that it is the responsibility of media to inform the public about immigration and migrants lives. How the broadcaster should reflect social change is disputed, for some it involves the on-screen and on-air presence of migrant minority broadcasters; an overall increase in stories and programmes of interest and relevance; a more considered view of how *migrant issues* are reported; a countervailing *positive* approach defined against the negativity and prejudice attributed to other media actors. Few of these positions are related in discussion to specific examples or instances. Vic, in FG5, articulates a general sense of this widespread and multivalent dissatisfaction:

FG5 – Vic

I don't really watch RTÉ that much because... I don't believe it reflects the changes in the Irish society. RTÉ does not reflect the cultural diversity of Ireland, so I don't believe I get much from watching it. There are many groups in this society. The Africans are there. The Asians are there and there are many others. They don't get a mention in the news or in other programmes by RTÉ.

While diversity is often understood as a question of diverse ethno-national on-air representation, it has another prevalent sense in several discussions, one that recalls the global scope and plurality of perspectives desired in international news. Reflecting *diversity* is understood not only in the sense above – of visibility and adequacy of minority representation – but also as a question of plurality of genre, sources and programmes beyond predominantly Anglo-American exports:

FG5 – Vic

And when you look at RTÉ, it has time for drama, Coronation and things like that. And the dramas are mainly western drama. We have Nollywood, Indians have Bollywood and the Chinese have their own. None of these is reflected in the dramas or soaps featured by RTÉ or TV3.

In terms of specific attempts to represent migration and change, RTÉ's multicultural programme Mono is one of very few programmes introduced in discussions, and its recurrence is probably because of its flagship role during the period in which many participants came to Ireland, as well as the fact that it had a Nigerian presenter. Recollections of Mono are ambiguous, shifting between an evaluation of it as a television programme and as a symbolic presence:

FG1 – Pe

I watched RTÉ every week when they started broadcasting Mono. After sometimes I stopped watching the programme because I didn't agree with some of its interpretations of multicultural Ireland... I probably will watch RTÉ frequently if they had programmes like Mono but at the moment RTÉ and indeed most of mainstream Irish media is very white and Irish.

Some of the complexities of *reflecting change* are captured here; for some discussants it is not just a question of reflecting multicultural Ireland, but the dimensions and aspects of the *multicultural Ireland* that are represented. Thus while *Pe*, as a viewer, disagreed with the programme's approach, its existence was important in terms of his evaluation of RTÉ. The fact that multicultural programming must be recognized as such by viewers is signaled by *Be* in her evaluation of subsequent programmes. As part 3 discusses, the predominantly magazine-style approach of Mono was replaced by a series of programmes that sought to use the hybrid generic possibilities of reality television to fuse multicultural issues with broad spectrum appeal. However her appraisal points once again to how specific – though shifting – criteria are applied to what is considered adequate representation:

FG4 – Be

When I watch Telly I look for things that are relevant to me and to my communities. I mostly watch the news and programmes relating to immigrants. But unfortunately, there are not many programmes in the Irish media that relate to immigrants. They used to have Mono on RTÉ but since they axed Mono there have not been programmes that take immigrants into consideration on RTÉ or on other stations, except for, I think, Home Away from Home. But even that is presented by a white Irish person who travels to different countries in the world interviewing people in the countries where immigrants come from.

This quote stands as an example of how the identity of television presenters is of increasing importance to this audience. The common theme of reflecting a changing Ireland is frequently related to the empirical diversity of on-air representation, though there are different interpretations as to whether seeing any *migrants*, or specifically African *talent*, represents progress. Regardless, the visibility of migrant minority presenters, particularly on programmes addressing migrants or migrant-related issues, is widely held to symbolize the possibility of success and meaningful integration, to confer symbolic recognition, and to deepen community expertise. It is also, interestingly, framed as an obligation of public service in a *changed society* by one discussant:

FG4 – Be

I believe there are immigrants who can present some of these news programmes on radio and television, especially on RTÉ. We pay TV licence and we deserve better treatment from them and better representation.

The concentration of creative professionals in one focus group, and the presence of participants with media experience and interest in two others, informed an interesting set of reflections of how media institutions need to adapt to the society around them. The importance of on-screen presence was dismissed by one discussant as cosmetic, instead arguing that the only way to combat ignorance concerning the situation of Africans and other migrants was increased involvement in programme-making, and in finding ways of *defining* their issues themselves:

FG4 – Fe

There is a tendency to substitute migrants with white Irish people who work with them. Both RTÉ and TV3 are pretty much the same. I mean migrant voices are often substituted by Irish people who work in the area. Rather than show migrants and broadcast their voices we see the faces of Irish people who work with migrants.

Radio – Commercial & Community Services

In-depth discussion of radio use was strikingly absent from the conversations. It is possible that the overwhelming concentration on television and issues of representation simply marginalized discussion of radio, given that radio is not held to be as significant a medium in relation to these questions (despite its robust importance to political debate and public life in Ireland). However very little information on radio use was offered during early, more open moments of discussion concerning personal *media worlds*. Given the prevalent interest in questions of representation and participation, there is a striking absence of community radio and television from the discussions. Every instance of radio use was discussed solely in relation to driving. The following quotations provide a sense of this:

FG1 – Me

On Radio, I tune to FM104. When I'm driving I tune to this station to listen to music and the news. It's the only radio that I listen to. I'm keen on news about Ireland. I want to know if an earthquake has erupted or whether they have asked all immigrants to leave (laughter).

FG4 – Pa

I listen to Irish radio stations but mostly when I'm driving. That is really the only time I have to listen to radio. I have two favourite stations – FM98 and Q102. I have grown used to listening to them. I'm accustomed to listening to them and I don't like changing stations.

Newspapers

While newspapers are not part of the remit of this project, it is useful to discuss some of the main findings in brief as they further illustrate themes under discussion. Very few participants buy newspapers regularly, if at all, and given the daily attention paid to online Nigerian newspapers (discussed below) consumption is in the main focused on free circulation titles, and reading national papers made available in cafes and public places. However several discussants had incorporated The Irish Times online into their daily news browsing, and that newspaper generally featured in discussions. The Irish Times was routinely described as *more liberal* in reporting migration issues than the Irish Independent, and this juxtaposition occurred with the same consistency as that between RTÉ and TV3 news. This liberalism is broadly attributed to two factors – a lack of bias and prejudice, and a greater depth and breadth of reporting, as the following two quotations suggest:

But in Ireland I've made a conscious decision not to read particular newspapers and that includes the (Irish) Independent, the Daily Mirror, and all those racist papers, just because of their racist disposition towards the immigrant community, especially the African community.

FG1 – Th

I believe they (The Irish Times) write well and they report immigrants and international news better than other Irish media. I'm not just talking about the amount of news but the way they write shows that they want to be fair.

FG3 – Mm

While the monitoring and assessment of newspapers is as concerted as that applied to television, it would be a mistake to conclude that newspaper reading is entirely defined by political engagement. One participant discussed the freedom she felt when confronted with a range of newspapers in the shop, where she could just buy a title depending on the lead story, or the front page. In similar experiences, price was the key factor, and it was noted on occasion that the depth of sports coverage in a tabloid newspaper overrode its perceived bias against immigrants. Local and regional newspapers are infrequently mentioned, but in some discussions, among keen news consumers, a limited picture of how Nigerian, Irish national and Irish local/regional newspapers are assembled into a regular practice of *keeping up to date* with overlapping contexts of personal significance emerges:

I read news from Nigeria every day. I read all of them. I read the Punch, the Guardian, Vanguard, in fact all of them. I prefer these ones but I read a lot more. I read them because I want to know what is happening. I also read local newspapers. I normally read Waterford Today because it's free. Sometimes I read Munster Express and sometimes I read Waterford News and Star. I read local newspapers so I get to know the community where I live.

Assessments of Representations in the Media in Ireland

The prevalent practice of media monitoring and assessment propelled several discussions of the ways in which Africans and other migrant groups are represented in the Irish media, and some of the perceived reasons for this. Several participants discuss the ways in which Nigerians have been framed as problematic in Ireland over at least the last decade, with several alluding to the problem of negative stereotyping:

We're blamed for every bad thing. All they talk about is immigrant this and immigrant that. It's as if Ireland didn't have problem before we came here. I'm just tired of listening to all that. They – the media – are not sincere.

This contention led to a wider debate in this focus group as to whether this propensity is specific to Irish media, or to wider problems with modes of media reporting, though this line of thought is not pursued:

I suppose the Irish media is simply doing their job. I don't want to say they are racist when they report about immigrants. Of course there are biases but that is the media for you. I don't think it's because they are Irish media or because the issue concerns immigrants. It's because they are the media. The media is biased. Full stop!

In other contributions, the idea of *bias* is given more specific dimensions. For two other contributors, stereotyping also involves what they see as the absence of *positive* reporting, for example highlighting the *achievement of Africans in Ireland*. (Ne, in FG1), sees bias as the absence of factual accuracy, a point echoed by other participants in wondering who journalists speak to or consult when writing about migrants:

I read the Irish Times. I used to read the Irish Independent. After I noticed its bias against immigrants I decided to stop reading it. I also endeavour to read other newspapers, especially when they publish news that is topical, interesting or relevant to me or to the African communities here. I'm very keen on how the media report issues involving Africans. I want to see if there are biases in the coverage or if they have omitted important facts.

In this recurring form of analysis, bias is held to involve not only an unrecognizable picture of the participants realities, but a question of news values – how Nigerians and Africans are reported. The following two quotations reference examples of where the discussants questioned the language and ranking of a news story:

The Irish media personalise news reports, mostly when they report on immigrant or ethnic minority issues. They personalise issues which is very wrong... I'll give you an example. I've read it in the newspapers where the Irish media refer to foreigners as army of poor... So this sort of thing discourages me from using the Irish media. I use Irish media as a backup – to get the additional information I need.

I say to you guys, the power of the television was used by RTÉ to maximum effect when Olaitan (A well-known Nigerian solicitor jailed by a Dublin court in summer 2007 for offences relating to human trafficking) was imprisoned. The story was the first item on the six o'clock news. That was simply mind-blowing. It was the first story on prime time news on Ireland's national television. Come on gentlemen and ladies!

The focus groups offer plentiful evidence of the involved ways in which media reports and representations are assessed, and in the majority of these cases, they are assessed on grounds that move far beyond *negative/positive* dualities and categorisations. The two quotes above represent a prevalent questioning of the ways in which Nigerians and Africans are held to be constantly marked out as different, and where difference is indexed to social problems. *By* offers a summary of what he sees as the main problem in media coverage, the boundary maintenance that automatically shapes how stories or features are constructed:

There is a home and there is a residence. There is a difference between the two. Ireland is my residence. My brother here... said Nigeria is his home. I don't know where my home is. I'm a Diasporan. I don't know where I belong. Nigeria is still not ready for anything. It's still killing its talents and forcing them to flee to other countries. Ireland does not want us. Read the newspapers and it's all there. Listen to radio or television. None of them speaks about us as members of this society. We're the permanent visitors. They create a distinction where they don't need to.

Migrant, Diasporic & Transnational Media

By's experience of transnational life, living between a home and a residence – and negotiating feelings of exclusion in both – concludes an assessment of Irish media and introduces a wider discussion of media available in Ireland. As previously noted in the range of media comparisons made by participants, the mediascape of Nigerians in Ireland is varied and multi-dimensional, and the discussions of engagements with Irish cannot be read in isolation from these wider networks and practices.

Migrant-produced Media in Ireland

When measured against the population, the range of print and online newspapers and magazines produced for Africans in Ireland is significant. While they regularly featured in focus group discussions, they weren't widely presented as central aspects of regular media use. Many participants noted that they would read papers such as *The African Voice* when they happened upon them – a parallel with Irish newspaper use – in shared public places, or when circulated in their accommodation. Discussions that explored their uses and significance further, often diverged on whether or not Nigerians should support African publications as a matter of community support:

FG6 – Fe

If we don't support ourselves, there is no way Africans can publish newspapers that will inform other Africans and inform the Irish people about us.

FG6 – By

As for newspapers published by Africans here, you mostly find the same thing you would find in mainstream newspapers. They don't really inform me about the African communities here. They don't tell me what is happening in the communities.

A number of issues raised by these quotations are amplified elsewhere. *Fe* suggests that the significance of migrant-produced media extends beyond its ethno-national audiences to its possible impact on wider public debate. Similarly, *Be*, in FG4, points out that Irish media in general do not realize that they are in competition for audiences with migrant-produced media, and that to address this audience, both media groups must *touch on issues that affect them (migrant audiences)*. In contrast to *By*, who criticizes African-produced media for their similarity to mainstream media, *Fe* in FG4 criticizes them for internalizing an inferiority complex and not questioning the marginal status they are ascribed, by reporting and commenting beyond their remit as *ethnic minority media*. Yet it is precisely the scope of this remit that some participants are keen to interpret, debate and extend. *Vi*, for example, speculates that *immigrant media* could aim to develop a transnational perspective:

I'm aware of a few media published by Africans but I'm not really sure if they are based here in Ireland or in the UK. There is *Ovations and Events*. I do know that Nigerians in Ireland patronize them. I think there is a need for media published by immigrants. It will cover those of us who are not being covered in the Irish media. I'm thinking of immigrant media that will concentrate on local events and events from the home countries. Many of us are no longer familiar with developments at home. We're sort of removed from where we come from. So I think there is room for migrant media that will cover where we are and also report where we are from.

This leads *Ed*, in the same focus group, to suggest that more diversity is needed, as there are too few outlets to cover not only the shared experiences of minority groups and communities, but also the diversity of experiences, opinions and beliefs within them.

Nigerian Newspapers

Vi's vision of the transnational possibilities of migrant-produced media hints at the wider context in which Irish-based migrant media are shaped, but his opinion that many people have lost touch with home is not widely shared in the focus groups. Online contact with Nigerian newspapers and news-sites is widespread, and the dominance of the Sky platform in many areas allows many participants access to a significant range of African and Nigerian-based and African-oriented broadcasters. Many participants discussed how they checked the newspapers online each morning, and the focus groups contained constant debates as to the varying merits of *This Day*, *Punch*, *Vanguard*, *The Guardian* and *Tribune* as newspapers and as online resources. *Yi*'s degree of news consumption, as described below, may be unusually high, but the regularity of his engagement is highly representative:

But first thing, when I wake up I go on the Internet to read Nigerian newspapers. I'm still very attached to Nigeria and I want to know what's going on at home. I've been away from Nigeria for about 12 years but I still go on the Internet to read Nigerian newspapers. Every day I log on to the Internet and read as many as five or six newspapers.

Yi's description of his reading habits mirrors the ways in which following news in Ireland involves different modalities of *being informed*. News monitoring has past, present and future orientations, and keeping informed about news in Nigeria is seen also as keeping in touch with the past and remaining prepared for any future return:

FG4 – Be

I read Nigerian newspapers. I read a lot of them on the Internet... even though I live in Europe I need to be aware of what is going on in my country. Nigeria is my country; it will always be my country, no matter how long I live outside of it. I intend to go back some day. So I keep in touch and follow developments there. I don't want to be left behind.

The material circulation of the newspapers is limited in Ireland, though a couple of people received them from friends or relatives in London, where the Nigerian newspapers are available on the day of publication. Some participants noted how the newspapers they read online were newspapers they had previously bought, and identified themselves as loyal readers. For others the transition to online news meant that newspapers were subject to general practices of browsing.

Nigerian & African Transnational Television

There is a remarkable congruency of themes of *keeping in touch* when the discussion shifts from online newspapers to the equally prevalent subject of cable, digital and satellite channels. Numerous participants refer to the importance of Sky Digital and the range of Nigerian and African channels it carries. The penetration of Sky into the Irish market is but one of many instances where the interpenetration of British media and telecommunications with audiences in Ireland has the unintended consequence of benefitting transnational migrant audiences. The channels available via Sky are regularly discussed as keeping people in contact with home, where home encompasses news from Africa and Nigeria mediated by a range of different types of channels. BEN TV – a London-based channel carrying content from African networks as well as channel-produced *multicultural programming* – is centrally cited for its news and current affairs coverage. For such a broad-ranging service BEN TV seems to be easily accepted as a *home* channel, its relevance perhaps heightened by the perceived absence of coverage of Africa on other channels:

FG5 – Es

I watch OBE or Ben TV because they give insights into events at home. I'm from there. Nigeria is my home. I'm also part of here but I'm more part of there. I've two children, born here. So I do feel that this is my place but I belong more to Nigeria than I belong here. I watch RTÉ for local news and for weather reports. The weather reports are important for me because, being

a mother, I've housework to do. I do the laundry and I want to be sure that the weather is suitable before I dry my laundry outside.

Like Ben TV, OBE is a transnational channel aimed at a central and southern African diaspora in Europe and North America, and mainly carries content provided by South African, Nigerian and Ghanaian television. My speaks for many participants when she links these channels to an affective feeling of homeliness:

I listen to OBE and Ben TV because they report things from Africa. You know it's a long time since we left home. When I see these programmes I feel at home.

FG2 – My

A few participants note that the self-consciously diasporic tone and approach of these channels also has the potential to reinforce distance and dislocation. Ai, in FG2, wonders aloud as to the relevance of news from the UK and Africa generally. Several note that the more recent availability of AIT (African Independent Television) has provided a more affective authenticity and a sense of co-temporal belonging with audiences in Nigeria:

I watch Ben-TV but since the emergence of AIT, I have not been watching Ben-TV. AIT is being aired directly from Nigeria. What I'm looking for is a station that gives me what I used to watch in Nigeria, a station that will give me what I've been missing since I left. The only thing Ben-TV does is to broadcast NTA News for one hour but AIT is beamed directly from Nigeria, so I see what they also see in Nigeria. All these diaspora events that Ben-TV broadcasts I see it on the streets everywhere.

FG6 – Yi

The comments above are all sourced from participants living in private accommodation, and thus in control – resources permitting – of shaping their viewing experiences, and consequently, their mediated practices of *home*. Ee's experience of shared resources in a state-run accommodation centre provides a very different picture, where a shared desire to watch Nigerian and African channels is subject to fragmentation along predictable lines of taste and interest:

I also listen to news from Nigeria. I listen to AIT, Ben TV and OBE on Sky cable. We also watch movies on these stations. It's a bit difficult here because sometimes you can't watch what you really want to watch. We watch TV together in the front room. We don't have cable connections in the rooms. If you have TV in the room, it will only show about three or four stations. So we all come together to watch Sky and Nigerian stations. Sometimes you want to watch Happy Larry but the other people want to watch Bisi Olatilo or watch the news on OBE. So that's what I'm talking about. It's difficult to

FG2 – Ee

watch TV when the people want to watch different programmes or station. Some of us – mostly our sisters here – prefer the movies, the Nigerian movies and music – and they normally watch that the whole evening.

Despite the prevalence of daily engagements with online news and transnational television, there was also an important minority of participants whose affective relationship with news from Nigeria is very different. While several participants above describe the ways in which *keeping in touch* with current events is a future, hope oriented practice, for others news served as an overly acute reminder of their past and their reasons for leaving Nigeria. A couple of discussants noted how they had ignored Nigerian news until they eventually felt able to engage with it in their new circumstances. Others worked in the opposite direction, deliberately tuning out after a period of time in Ireland, feeling that it was hindering their personal negotiation of settling and re-shaping their lives. A backdrop of political unrest and inequality in Nigeria prevented some participants from tuning into news online or on television, as it was too suggestive of the circumstances of family and friends, and of the uncertainties that characterized future plans for personal return or national progress:

FG6 – Fe

The main reason why I don't read the Nigerian press is because of the unfortunate things that happen there. They make you sad. It's just unfortunate that things like that still happen there and they make me sad. For that reason, I say to myself that I don't want to spoil my mood, spoil my day by reading Nigerian newspapers. So I put Nigerian news aside.

It is interesting, given the general political alertness of the group discussions, that several participants alluded to the prevalent public assumption that watching television is a modality of integration, and hence an either/or process; either Nigerian transnational or Ireland national television. As *Fe* stated eloquently in FG4, living transnationally is rarely about either/or, but a question of both/and (or, in the news discussions above, sometimes neither/nor):

FG4 – Fe

I listen to a lot of Nigerian programmes when I have the time. I read Nigerian newspapers on the Internet. It's my way of staying in touch with home. Nigeria is still home, it's my roots. It's not about going back there tomorrow or next year. I've been in Europe for over 10 years but I keep in touch with developments in Nigeria. I don't believe keeping in touch with Nigeria stops me from integrating here. I think it's a normal human practice to want to stay in touch with one's roots. I've relatives in Nigeria but it's not so much about talking to relatives, although I do that from time to time, but it's about the fact that I have a sense of belonging there even though I've been living here for a long time.

Nollywood³²

The emphasis on personal and political themes of location, belonging and representation reflects something of the challenges many Nigerians face in Ireland. Yet the centrality of these politicized reflections should not obscure the other dimensions of their media worlds. A constant point of reference in almost every focus group was *Nollywood* films, often simply referred to as *home videos*. *Nollywood* films elicit complex reactions from discussants, a complexity intensified by the sheer range of films people may have had in their minds when articulating their opinions. Some participants were quite content to insert home videos into the practice of associating almost any form of media content they could source from Nigeria with home, particularly when such content was scarce in their context:

We've a lot of Nigerian home videos here. You get the feeling that you're in touch with home after watching them. They remind me of the society I come from. In fact I sometimes forget that I am in a hostel in (location) when I am watching these Nigerian movies. I feel as if I'm back home, especially if I've been watching them for one long stretch.

FG3 – Ee

For *Sa* in FG3, home videos have become more significant with changes in her life; a gradual realization that she will probably live in Ireland permanently, and that the films provide her with a cultural resource for discussing her life with her children:

I watch Nigerian home videos. Definitely, definitely I watch them. They bring me back home. I love home videos. They make me want to go back home. They bring Nigeria closer. We're very far from home and I have been away for so many years. The home videos connect me back to the place I come from. I'm not going back now but I wish I could. You see these children, they are Irish. But they are my children. They may choose – when they are old enough – to live here. But they should know my story, where I'm from and my custom. The Nollywood videos help me to this.

FG5 – Sa

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Other viewers do not recognize their *custom* in the flow of films they encounter in Ireland, with several differentiating between films produced in English and those produced in different regions and languages, in both affective and aesthetic terms. The main criticism leveled at home videos is their quality, as *Ma* in FG5 puts it:

Nollywood is the general label given to hugely popular and cheaply made films which range across genres from romance to horror. According to Jeevan Vasagar (2006), Nigerian film production has increased dramatically since the early 1990s and is often cited as the third largest film industry in the world. *Nollywood* films are both screened on such channels as Ben TV and sold and circulated on DVD. The proximity of Dublin to London has allowed Dublin to become a significant market for *Nollywood* DVDs, but evidence for this is anecdotal rather than quantifiable.

But I also watch Nigerian videos on the Internet. It's a good ways to watch these videos. You can watch them on Nigeria.com. I watch them to know what is happening at home, especially, the Yoruba ones. They tend to have good story lines and they focus on themes that I'm familiar with. The Nollywood videos in English are not as informative. They tend not have good story lines and they are often not well acted. But the Yoruba ones, you learn from them and they remind you of the society we come from.

For some discussants the perceived aesthetic shortcomings are insurmountable, for a smaller group these reservations can be dealt with in order to support Nigerian and African cultural production. As Bo notes in FG6, the tension between the global ubiquity of home videos and their hurried production values produces an ambivalent form of pride:

That Nollywood thing, an Irish colleague of mine talked to me about watching Nigerian films. He tried to talk it down. And I said to him that is the third largest film industry in the world. Ireland doesn't produce as much. Nollywood is fine but the audio and video quality is mostly poor. If more time and money is put into it the quality will improve.

This kind of ambivalence characterizes discussions of Nollywood films; not always pleasing to the participants as viewers, they nevertheless have value as a cultural resource, and can be pressed into use in practices of home when other resources and possibilities are limited. Despite the assumption of some discussants that consumption of Nollywood films is gendered, the evidence of the focus groups does not reflect this.

Conclusion

These focus groups present a picture of media worlds intensively networked across Ireland, Nigeria, the UK and elsewhere. Individual practices with this mediascape are intimately shaped by personal experiences of dwelling in and between nations, regions and localities, and of feelings about this experience at particular moments in time and in varying familial, domestic and social contexts. Media use invariably plays many roles in the participants lives, yet there is an important focus on how media practices act as a locus of wider questions of orientation and belonging. This in part informs the fluency and thoughtfulness of the discussants reflections; everyday media choices potently remind discussants of their transnationalised lives, and these choices are important in the ways in which they navigate and re-shape their experiences.

Despite the diversity of media engagements that are discussed in this section, it is possible to make some general statements about Irish media use derived from the Nigerian focus groups as a totality.

RTÉ services are central points of reference, and due to the keenly political, reflexive approach of many participants to questions of representation, these services are subject to in-depth and critical scrutiny. Where other Irish broadcasters are mentioned, they are almost uniquely referenced as points of comparison; TV3 News in relation to RTÉ, and Newstalk juxtaposed with RTÉ Radio 1. A very limited spectrum of commercial national and local radio stations are mentioned, and radio use is confined to driving.

The question of how Nigerian, African and migrant lives and experiences are represented was of recurring importance. In general, participants did not think that media in Ireland – with noted exceptions – take seriously the importance of informed and accurate representation. Nor, from their perspective, was there much evidence that the widespread refrain that *Ireland is multicultural now* involved adequate changes, even symbolically. The multivalent nature of these criticisms can be partly explained by the presence in some focus groups of participants familiar with media issues. However beyond individual skills and aptitudes it is also likely that this spectrum of dissatisfaction is an outcome of living with the consequences of Irish media coverage of Nigerians during the last decade. Many participants informally monitor news and coverage not only because of an interest in how their lives and issues are represented, but because they are convinced of the consequentiality of media representations for everyday social life. This is particularly the case for participants who spoke of the racism they have encountered, and for those whose status is subject to uncertainty over lengthy periods of time. It is notable that most participants voiced criticism from a position invested in social life in Ireland, criticizing the everyday boundaries maintained by certain forms of media coverage, and the invisibility of forms of belonging that ranged from the license fee to informing themselves about Ireland because of their children's lives.

The different ways in which the discussants navigate their way through a thicket of media choices has implications for mainstream assumptions about catering for minorities. Multicultural programming aimed at migrant audiences must be recognized as such, and is asked to fulfill both a more symbolic, political remit while also being interesting television or radio. Recent multicultural programmes – which fused a focus on migration and cultural difference with the generic possibilities of reality television – were not recognized as *multicultural* in a meaningful sense to participants. This has implications for programming which attempts to both represent the experiences of migrants while *explaining* their lives to mainstream Irish audiences. Similarly, many participants argued that increased diversity on television was as much a question of perspective as identity, and that the range and scope of news, as well as the sourcing of programmes, was an area where *diversity* could be explored.

The measured negotiation of Irish news and media with transnational and diasporic channels demonstrates how this transnational audience lives with multiple attachments and affective connections. Nothing of these experiences is captured by either/or assumptions about media use and *integration*. These practices also suggest an audience united by certain orientations and fragmented by others, from the impact of personal experiences on news consumption to what kind of home video makes for a good night in.

MEDIA USE BY CHINESE PARTICIPANTS

Engagement with Irish Media – Print Media

There was a widespread consensus among Chinese focus group members that they, and the people they know, only read Irish newspapers if they were available for free (Metro or Herald AM). If they were lying around at work in the staff room then they might pick them up, but for the most part they did not read them with any regularity or consistency. The following exchange is indicative:

FG1 – P1	If the newspapers are not free, I don't buy them. I read Irish Independent. Our shop sells Irish Independent everyday. So I only read this newspaper. But I think... One of my colleagues is French. She is studying (or studied) journalism. From her point of view, the Irish news is very trivial and there is nothing worth reading. For the moment, the biggest news is about if the Irish... (Forgets the word)
FG1 – P4	(Reminds FG1 – P2 of the word) Taoiseach.
FG1 – P1	(Continues...) Taoiseach took a bride. (This case) has been investigated for two years and is still not finished. Other news covers stories on car accidents or murdering cases (in Ireland). There is little coverage of international news.
FG1 – P5	The country is small. There isn't much news.
FG1 – P1	The country is small.
FG1 – P4	That's right. As far as I know, we're not the only ones (who don't like the Irish news). Irish people don't read it either. There isn't much news to read. A lot of people like BBC (news).

The *country is small, there isn't much news* is a recurring motif in these audience studies, sometimes produced by differences in news values, but in the case of Chinese respondents, by the differences in scale that define national and local news. They felt that the Irish news was very locally focused, with *local* functioning also as a measure of how the value of news was evaluated by them, as one participant One participant explained: **If there is a traffic accident, it can be reported on the national news.** However another form of situated perspective criticized the news as conservative, in this instance, in relation to news coverage of China:

But I can tell you that they (the Irish editor or journalist) usually don't cover (the issues on) China because they would be protested against if they didn't satisfy (the Chinese authorities).	FG3 – P1
Irish nation is conservative. They (Irish people) don't like to interfere into the affairs of other nations.	FG3 – P4
They described their Irish colleagues as reading newspapers like the Mirror, or if their boss buys the paper it is the Irish Times or The Independent. Normally the Irish boss decides what newspaper to buy and the Chinese participants didn't have strong opinions. When asked why they read the newspaper when they did, the participants said that they read the paper for international news, to look for a house or to find jobs. We asked the participants not just about their media use, but also about the context of that use. One dimension of this was the practice of comparing their news consumption with a generalized sense of Polish practices, and their view that they did not read newspapers as frequently. This lengthy exchange draws out some of the criteria at play:	
Polish people are working here. Most of us Chinese are students.	FG1 – P1
I don't know that. There are some Polish columns on Fridays.	FG1 – P2
<i>Weiming – Are they in The Newspapers?</i>	
Yes, they are.	FG1 – P4
I think it's not fair. Although they are Polish, we are Chinese, they are working here and we (Chinese people) are studying here, we make the same contribution. But their (Irish people's) attitude towards Chinese is totally from that towards the Polish.	FG1 – P2
It must be different.	FG1 – P1

FG3 – G2	I think it's unfair.
FG3 – G1	It must be different. We're students. They're workers. It's different. (It) must be different. I feel so.
FG3 – G2	I think that we make more contribution than they (Polish people), although we're students. It's true that part of our student life is to make money. But most (of our student life) is to spend our money. So to the Irish government, we make more contribution than Polish people who are working here. After making money, they...
FG3 – G1	<p>(Interrupts G2) They pay tax.</p> <p>Of course working Chinese also pay tax, but the exchange relates media use to feeling of unequal representation in the media, and assumes that greater Polish newspaper reading is a consequence of more <i>positive</i> portrayal.</p> <p>Television</p> <p>Most participants said that they do watch TV, but as it is usually in a collective situation engaging with Irish broadcasting was rare. The predominant channels mentioned were Phoenix Cable (Hong Kong-based channel) and CCTV (Chinese Cable TV). However online webcasts from television stations were more popular than these transnational services. Watching television (sets) was a social activity by necessity, as televisions were shared with roommates and friends. Understandably viewing is affected by the dynamics of these situations:</p>
FG2 – G2	I watch TV with my friends together because the TV is placed in the sitting room. We agree on a channel first. It feels good when we sit and watch TV together. We laugh together if something is laughable. It feels good. We can share something. We watch TV as a pastime.
FG5 – G2	<p>I watch TV with friends together. We share a house. There is a child. He watches cartoon films. We watch together. The foreign cartoon films are better than the Chinese ones. I watch with him. If he doesn't understand, I interpret for him. He keeps asking, what they are saying in the films. Sometimes, I am tired of interpreting. I tell him to watch them by himself. He goes to school but don't speak much English.</p> <p>Many discussed how the cost of TV in Ireland discourages them from watching it, and the television licence surfaced here once again as an issue for people whose television watching is increasingly divorced from</p>

an actual television set, and whose television-set watching is generally divorced from terrestrial services. However such discussions were not purely instrumental, the role of television as a form of social connectivity and as a resource for living in society in Ireland is also reflected on:

Weiming – Would you buy a TV if there wasn't the TV license system?

It would be good to have a TV. (The TV would be helpful) for improving English, keeping up with news. I feel isolated when being here (in Ireland). TV would be an important type of media. A number of channels would help to watch different news and programmes. Not many people buy TV because the license is expensive.

FG4 – P1

The following exchange captures the mixed approaches of the participants to Irish broadcasting; news is here related to several themes which have surfaced in the other strands of audience research:

Weiming – Do you follow news in Ireland?

No, not really.

FG3 – P2

I always feel that (Ireland) isn't my country.

FG3 – P4

But we may need to follow (something about Ireland) once we're here, although we may not follow it thoroughly.

FG3 – P2

I'm concerned about Irish economy. The Irish economy also affects us (Chinese people) when we're here.

FG3 – P3

I also follow the (Irish) immigration regulations.

FG3 – P1

Weiming – (To P5) Do you follow the news in Ireland?

Yes, I do. There was a report on a Chinese female student who got pregnant. (She wanted to operate) induced abortion. But (she was) refused. The local (Irish) people also paid attention to such a story.

FG3 – P5

(I'm concerned about Irish) social security as well.

FG3 – P3

Yes, (I'm concerned about social security as well), for example, how many more people are murdered.

FG3 – P5

FG3 – P4	<p>Both newspapers, TV and radio cover the murdering cases. (They cover how many people are murdered somewhere and³³ appeared both in newspapers and on radio. A couple took a Taxi and got murdered by that person (the driver).</p> <p>Very few specific news or television programmes were mentioned in discussion, some said that they watched TV to improve their English and only watched sport or entertainment on TV3 or RTÉ. They described watching movies on TV just to relax.</p> <p>Some felt that Irish TV was not interesting, though without really developing criteria for their sense of interesting and <i>entertaining</i>. However in the exchange below the participants have a clear sense of their preferences, and these preferences are explicitly shaped by the constant comparison between contexts: Others simply liked Irish TV:</p>
FG2 – P3	When I was in China for two months, I didn't like (the Chinese) TV.
FG2 – P1	You're infatuated! (by the Irish TV).
FG2 – P2	That's infatuation.
FG2 – P3	That's infatuation.
	<i>Weiming – When you say you like Irish TV, do you like the indigenous TV or everything you can watch?</i>
FG2 – P4	Actually, I like the indigenous TV. I don't like BBC or others. I think Irish (indigenous) TV is good.
	<i>Weiming – Why do you like it (the indigenous TV) more? Do you find the programmes more interesting?</i>
FG2 – P4	It's not just because the programmes are interesting, but also because the programmes are scheduled well. For example, the news begins at 5.30(pm). It is broadcasted in Irish first, then in English and sign language and then in due form. After (this news), there is a drama and another news. Then there is a movie. And news again. There are two soap opera episodes in the morning.
	British television services served as another point of comparison, with accent once again cited as a barrier in broadcasting, while the greater multiculturalism and internationalism of British television was meaningful to several participants. Many surfed available channels for US programmes such as Friends and Desperate Housewives, though it was more prevalent to watch these online with subtitles. Overall participants

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P4 may have understood the story incorrectly.

seemed to have a global orientation in their viewing of Irish terrestrial and other television stations, though many speculated about having Chinese subtitles on a range of these services:

	<p>It might be a good idea to have Chinese subtitles on some programmes. If they were translated well. It would depend on how well the subtitles were translated. IF they were translated badly, Chinese people would laugh. That would be a good idea to have subtitles if they were translated well. I think more people would watch (Irish) TV.</p> <p>Many participants discussed when they did watch Irish TV they watched it at work, or to improve their English, learn about Ireland or because they enjoyed a particular programme (Eastenders on RTÉ was frequently mentioned, though one participant wondered why Irish friends laughed at it). This general picture of instrumental and semi-interested use changes when the discussions turn to how their own issues are represented in Irish programming.</p> <p><i>Weiming – Do you keep up with Irish news?</i></p> <p>No, I don't.</p> <p>No, not really unless (the Irish news) is related to immigration, visas, education policies.</p> <p>Yes, that's right. And the news which may help to find jobs (attracts my attention).</p> <p>Yes, (I would be interested in) news on immigration, visa regulations.</p> <p>I would be interested in the news concerning Chinese (immigrants).</p> <p>In common with Polish and Nigerian participants, a recurring criticism of Irish broadcasting was the perceived narrowness of its acquisitions and range of reference:</p> <p>There has been a deep impression on me since I came here (to Ireland). When I was in China, there were a lot of foreign movies, including both European movies and American movies. But in Ireland, I don't see a Chinese movie on Irish TV even once a month. Even in cinemas, there might be a Chinese or Asian movie every two or three months. Very few (Chinese or Asian movies) are available (in Ireland). The cultural exchange is unbalanced.</p>	FG5 – G3
		FG2 – P1
		FG2 – P4
		FG2 – P1
		FG2 – P3
		FG2 – P1
		FG2 – P1

Radio

Chinese participants reported listening to the radio for English practice and to hear and enjoy music of all kinds, though specific mentions of radio stations were rare to non-existent. Most reported not having listened at all or hardly to Chinatown radio. Money is a constraint for Chinese people living in Ireland; they chose free or cheaper sources of media over others, as the discussions of newspapers and licence fee has illustrated. On the other hand, computer ownership and access (at school, college, café, library and workplace as well as at home) was common and participants use the internet quite extensively for booking travel, communicating with home/China, communicating with others, and watching both Chinese and other non-Irish programs. They also use mobile phones and everyone in the focus groups owned a phone.

Ethnic, Diaspora & Transnational Media

The participants also reported that they didn't read Chinese *ethnic* newspapers like the Shining Emerald or the Chinese News Express (now Irish Chinese News) that often. Much like their general newspaper consumption, it was opportunistic; if they happened to be in a Chinese restaurant they might pick it up, but they did not buy them or read them regularly. In common with Polish participants, they found the news in Chinese newspapers to be cut and pasted from other sources from the Internet, poorly written and edited and not worth detaining them – they could read these articles sooner and in a timelier manner on line. It was only among Nigerians that any debate took place about whether such media should be supported for reasons of loyalty. This exchange characterizes the use of Irish-based Chinese newspapers to obtain mainly practical local information:

FG3 – P3	(I read them) to look for job information.
FG3 – P2	(I read them) to know what has happened in China.
FG3 – P5	They don't have much information from back home. Ireland Chinese News hardly has anything (any information from back home).
FG3 – P1	Some (information in the Chinese newspapers) is copied from internet.
FG3 – P3	Everything (is copied from internet).

Chinese newspapers always cover foreign news. But some names are terribly translated. For example, I couldn't recognise Britney Spears name at all. I didn't know whom they were talking about. Oh, my goodness.

FG3 – P4

Like St. Patrick, it's translated as Sheng-Pa-Te-Li-Ke.

FG3 – P1

Is that true? How can it be translated like that?

FG3 – P5

Weiming – Are you interested in the news?

(in Chinese newspapers)? No. (I'm not).

FG5 – P1

The news is not updated.

FG5 – P1

(The news is) copied (from internet).

FG5 – P1

They're weekly newspapers, are they?

FG5 – P5

Shining Emerald has improved a lot. There used to many wrong spellings. The quality (of the spelling) was terrible. It has improved a lot.

FG5 – P1

Many of the Chinese participants said that they turned to the Internet for faster access to the same information, so even the informational relevance of the community newspapers was regarded as severely limited by most. For all the daily use of transnational Chinese media, it was not widely discussed in relation to links with home, and as this exchange suggests, such connectivity is ambivalent, enforcing feelings of distance as much as transcending them:

I also feel that we're isolated from our fellow countrymen when we go back home on holidays or for other reasons. There is a generation gap.

FG4 – P2

It seems that we're backward. Actually, the backwardness only means that we fail to keep up with news from back home.

FG4 – P5

I keep up with the news from back home everyday.

FG4 – P1

It still feels different to read online.

FG4 – P2

However the global mediation of China's internal politics, and the participants personal relationship to those issues, permeated their engagement with the powerful transnational channels aimed at the global Chinese population. Phoenix TV, a cable station from Hong Kong, was widely watched online and consistently described as independent and objective:

FG1 – P2	The angle of its reports is different. The angle is balanced. Our Xinhua news is also good. But it's pretty much speaks for our (Chinese) government. Phoenix TV has a lot of freedom, maybe, because (Hong Kong) was colonised by Britain. Its reports have their authenticity.
FG1 – P3	I like (Phoenix TV). But I haven't watched it much.
FG1 – P4	I haven't watched it really.
FG1 – G5	The points of view (on Phoenix TV) are neutral. Unlike the reports in China, (the Phoenix TV reports) are neutral and acute. (FG2) Chinese people want to know something about China. When they finish working, they watch Phoenix TV.
	The acuity of news about China was also amplified by general dynamics of being outside looking in, where any coverage of home takes on a magnified significance when living in a different context:
FG1 – P2	When we're abroad we are more concerned about Chinese affairs.
FG1 – P1	(When we're abroad) we're more patriotic (than we were in China). I saw a lot of Tibetans and other foreigners demonstrate yesterday. They had a <i>Free Tibet</i> banner. They also said that they would boycott the Olympic Games. I was very indignant.

Internet Use

The Chinese participants reported using a computer almost every day (far more often than TV viewing) and they used web-based chat programs on a near-daily basis. They used skype and QQ (a Chinese language based chat program on line) mainly because of the cost (free) to keep in touch with a wide variety of family and friends – in a wide variety of locations. Most possessed a personal computer; others used the plentiful Chinese internet cafes dotted around Dublin. Blogs and webcams were also frequently used in their daily communication with friends, though in obviously direct and indirect ways, as blogs were also a way of expressing themselves and representing their surroundings to others:

This (writing blog) is an indirect way (of keeping in touch with friends). People write something on their blogs. Their friends can make some comments and discuss with them.	FG2 – P3
Besides, you write something. Your friends and family can see it and make some comments. They know how you are.	FG2 – P1
(When you have a blog,) I don't have to tell the same story to everybody individually. If you write something on the blog, everybody can it.	FG2 – P3
Given the high-profile attempts of the Chinese government to restrict internet access to certain sites, conversations regularly featured a recognition of the increased access they had with Irish IP addresses both to general online content, and to specific <i>dissident</i> websites:	
It's 6park.com. It's a foreign website. But it's created by Chinese people.	FG1 – P1
That website doesn't look professional. But a lot of people browse it.	FG1 – P3
The information at that website is regularly updated. (This website) is forbidden in (the mainland of) China.	FG1 – P1
Is that because some articles are a bit to... (unacceptable by the Chinese government)?	FG1 – P5
It (6park.com) contains some news which is not seen in China.	FG1 – P2

They see the Irish digital media as less developed than Chinese digital media (they were particularly disappointed in how slow the download speed is in Ireland for web chat/webcams, TV programmes etc.) They felt that the whole process of getting access to the internet was slow and expensive. They specifically mentioned that applying to Eircom to get service and installment was slow and complicated. Some participants who have spent relatively longer periods in Ireland noted nevertheless how much the services had improved. It is worth noting that participants from bigger cities in China normally have access to internet connections that are far faster than much of rural or even suburban Ireland, but this may not be representative of all Chinese in Ireland. Some also used the internet to download movies with Chinese subtitles, use downloading tools such as Xun-lei.

Weiming – You just said that you watched movies online.
Do you watch Chinese movies or foreign movies?

FG4 – P1

I watch both. But I prefer foreign movies. First, I want to improve my English. I don't have TV (at home) and cannot learn English on TV. So watching movies (online) is a way (of improving my English). Besides, foreign movies are my favourite. I often download movies with Chinese subtitles. (English language) has a lot of slang which may not be learned by me on my own. If it appears in the movies, I can learn it. But without Chinese subtitles, I would never be able to precisely understand its (slang's) meanings. I think language needs to be understood precisely. So I think that Chinese subtitles are helpful.

Assessments of Representations of the Chinese in the Media in Ireland

Some respondents reported not watching Irish TV or reading Irish newspapers to get news about China because they felt that the reports were biased. However the perception of bias was interesting; the examples below discuss how the reports they mentioned tell the truth, but that the truth is problematic for them because of the ways in which it contributes to images of China that circulate in Ireland:

FG3 – G2

They (Irish media) only cover something bad about Chinese. What they cover may be true but their coverage about Chinese people's bad habits goes to an extreme somehow.

FG3 – G2

Their reports might be true. I remember there was an Irish or British female writer. She was in China for a long time and wrote for the Irish Times or Irish Independent. She wrote some reports. It was two or three years ago when she wrote this report. I read it and I have to say, believed that it was true. She wrote the truth about China. But I felt... It covered the real situation in China like the sanitary situations. She went to some remote areas in China. We all know that China is very backward, but I think she chose some awfully poor places. Although it was true, as a Chinese, I didn't feel good when I read it. I failed to understand why she only chose the ugliest side of China. They should cover something good. If they always wrote something bad, Irish people would have bad attitudes towards Chinese. They can also cover the good side of China. They would let more people know different aspects of China. They don't just know China's backwardness.

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It is banned in China.

Just as some participants discussed the increased access to prohibited online resources, they also noted how they had important access to Irish and International news sources were more authentic and truthful about Chinese political issues such as Tibet and Tiananmen Square. As one participant expressed it poetically, *fire cannot be wrapped in paper* – the truth will out:

In China (in the media) something may be hidden from the public. It may also be understated or exaggerated deliberately. The news is true in foreign countries.

FG3 – G2

I began to know China when I came abroad. When I was in China, I didn't know (anything about China). I lived in a specific cycle (of society). I prosperity (in China). Everything was good on the surface. When I came out (of China), I realised that China had a lot of negative aspects which I hadn't known.

FG3 – G2

Just as the US elections played an important role in some Nigerian focus groups in concentrating debates on race, the ongoing conflict in Tibet, and the protests leading up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, acted as lightning rods for discussion in some of the focus groups. While recognizing that Irish (and western) media can be more truthful, some participants were still critical of the coverage of Chinese issues.

Let's take the incident in Tibet for instance. (Sky News) didn't show how the Tibetan rebels beat Han people or burnt shops. (Sky News) only showed how the (Chinese) Communist Party suppressed and beat them (Tibetans) and how it (Chinese government) sent in (to Tibet) many armies.

FG3 – P3

They (the people who make Sky News) support Tibet to be independent. However, their reports are true. The reports are true. But they don't broadcast what we do (in China).

FG3 – P1

The reports from both sides (of Sky News and Chinese news) should be reported fairly.

FG3 – P4

I think (the Irish reports on China) are ex parte. For example, (the reports on) Fa-lun-gong³⁴ and something else. One day, I heard a patient say: I have heard that the Beijing government won't allow its citizens to come out to the streets during the Olympic Games. And (the government) will pay them (citizens to stay home). I said: It's impossible.

FG3 – P3

Chinese government wouldn't be able to afford (to pay every Chinese to stay home).

FG3 – P4

Chinese government encourages Chinese people to come out of their homes in order to boost the Chinese social spending. The rumour (about the Olympic Games) is very weird.

There was also a general feeling that China is imagined as an empty, or homogenous space, dotted with well-known cities and hotspots, but little else. Participants questioned what Irish people could learn about China through their conventional sources:

They (Irish people) don't know Chinese big cities apart from Beijing, Hong Kong and Shanghai. Actually they're not that bad already (when they only know Beijing, Hong Kong and Shanghai). Nobody knows our Chengdu City of Sichuan Province. I asked somebody if they knew Panda. I said to them that Panda came from my home city. (I said to them:) My home town is Panda's home town. They were surprised.³⁵ I said there is a big Panda nature reserve (in my home town). They (Irish people) know little about China. Besides, there are a lot of negative (Irish) reports on China. I don't think they're true.

Conclusions

Overall, the Chinese focus group participants were very open about their media use, opinions about the content of the media they use, and the context in which they use them. The respondents in these focus groups used the Internet and computers far more than they watched TV or listened to the radio (in either English or Mandarin). This is pragmatic; they can get fast up to date information via the internet, can access a wider range of programmes (even from the US/UK) in both English and Mandarin almost instantly (often before movies or TV programmes are shown in Ireland), and because they have ready access to computers and broadband service.

While participants claimed that TV and phone services were expensive, not all owned a TV (or paid the TV license), but almost all owned a computer or had easy access to one (by paying fees to college or school or by paying by use in an internet café). They clearly were happy to invest more money on the computer/internet than in television; television increasingly comes bundled in the computer for these transnational viewers. Most did not listen or even own a radio. If they did listen it was intermittently and they did not turn the radio on to hear specific programmes, or specific stations. Many found the news in Irish newspapers to be locally focused, but they used the Irish newspapers to learn about Ireland, find jobs, housing and other practical local information. There was a general dismissal of newspapers in terms of aesthetics, news values and utility, as can be seen in their discussion of Irish-based Chinese newspapers.

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She said this sentence in English.

The did not feel that the Irish print media did a good job of representing China or the Chinese, although they freely admitted that the Irish print media do a better job perhaps than the Chinese media because they are more free to print the *truth*. When they did watch Irish TV, many liked the content and used it to practice English, learn about Ireland, or for entertainment. Some found Irish media too locally focused and preferred UK/US programming. When they did pay and watch cable TV, they most often selected Phoenix TV or other Chinese programming. However, most did not do this, but preferred instead to download content and watch it on their computer. The Internet was by far the most popular form of media communication. They used the Internet to keep up with friends via blogs, email, web cameras, as well as using it to read the *news* of China and to download movies and TV programmes from abroad.

The context of Chinese media use was very collective. Most participants in the focus groups reported reading the newspaper at work or in a collective situation where several people shared a paper. Likewise, they also tended to watch TV together with house or flat mates (often of the same ethnic group). Many did not own a TV, but did own a phone or a computer. Overall, they felt that the representation of the Chinese in the Irish media was poor – especially political issues in China. Yet they freely recognized that the Irish media did a better job in some ways of covering these thorny issues than the Chinese media at home.

General Conclusions

Reading across the three streams of qualitative research reveals some general features of media use integrated into the processes of migration, dwelling in Ireland, and transnationalised life. As stated in the introduction to this Part, these findings are not generalisable to *migrants* or national populations, however they provide a sufficiently fine-grained picture of media use and media worlds to provide suggestions for future media work and policy (see the conclusions of this report). This general conclusion section focuses on broad issues, practices and perspectives common to the three strands of research.

The participants' media use is integrated across different media platforms and scales of production; local, Irish national, home country national, diasporic and transnational channels are combined in daily practices;

This daily integration is facilitated and limited by a range of material factors, notably newspaper consumption, access to terrestrial Irish media, and Internet access. For participants in direct provision and shared accommodation, media use is further shaped by the daily negotiation of shared and individual tastes and preferences;

This integration of different channels and sources is an ongoing process influenced by language proficiency, length of time living in Ireland and orientations towards past experiences and future horizons, and cultural capital. For some the expression of this cultural capital is involved in differentiating the self from wider migrant populations;

Integrated media use involves relational viewing and engagement, in which Irish media and other sources are compared and contrasted, and organized in relation to each other according to different needs, political readings, and pleasures. This is particularly the case in relation to news;

A feature of daily, integrated media use is a fluid understanding of local/national/international media, in a number of ways. International news featuring issues/contexts of interest is often intimately evaluated, and frequently seen as being as consequential as representations of migrants in Ireland. The presence of UK-based media in the public sphere in Ireland relativizes what is understood as Irish media. For participants from countries as relatively large and regionally complex as those under discussion, the national horizons of Irish news were often understood as local or parochial, and the scope of international news as being similarly limited;

Media monitoring and evaluation is more pronounced among Nigerian participants, however all focus groups discussed the assumed consequentiality of representations of migrants for their acceptance in Ireland;

As well as having a responsibility to provide fair and accurate representation, many participants commented on the need for an increased plurality of sources, perspectives and foci in Irish media. This increased plurality was discussed in relation to news, and also the spectrum of general programming available on television;

This understanding of diversity contrasted with the institutional idea of diversity underpinning some public service broadcasting. Programming dealing with *multiculturalism* – though frequently not primarily aimed at migrant audiences – was often not received and interpreted as such;

This more involved understanding of diversity does not preclude the importance attached by many discussants to seeing increased *diversity* on Irish television, though a wide range of opinions were expressed as to the actual significance of such developments;

Community of origin and interest media produced in Ireland were widely subject to the same critique as mainstream media concerning the scope of their coverage and their relevance to the participants social lives;

Both mainstream Irish media and media aimed at national migrant populations in Ireland were felt not to represent the internal diversity and differences of migrant populations;

Diasporic and transnational media are centrally important for many participants across the focus group streams, but not in obvious or predictable ways. News, lifestyle and fictional programming on these services are watched relationally and critically, and discussed according to a range of aesthetic, affective and political criteria;

Television tended to dominate discussions, however radio use appears to be an unremarkable and hence unremarked upon aspect of everyday, environmental media use;

Much *television use* has migrated to Internet platforms, almost to the same extent as *newspaper use*. This shift is a part of the pervasive importance of Internet use for many participants. This viewing and listening was integrated into a range of other multimedia and communicative practices online. However Internet use is restricted for many by cost and opportunity, and for those with the means, by widely criticized connection speeds and coverage.

03

BROADCASTING RESPONSES

Public service broadcasting

Community media

Commercial broadcasting services

Situating RTÉ – Public Service Broadcasting & the *Challenge of Diversity*

As Andra Leurdijk notes in her review of multicultural broadcasting in Europe, most public service broadcasters have assumed a responsibility for extending their remit to specific forms of programmes, services or policy for minority audiences (2006). This extension is related both to the historical remit to represent and be accessible to the whole population of their territory, and to the adaptation of the concomitant responsibility to minority audiences to include audiences defined – however ambiguously – by their ethno-national identities. As her research – discussed in Part 1 – illustrates, these commitments demand a constant reevaluation and adaptation of approaches to programming and the strategies of producers. The pressures of competition and technological change; a consistent focus on the legitimacy of both public service broadcasting per se and its specific services for minorities; the sociological, generational and political complexity of minority populations (and their internal diversity as audience members); and the influence of wider political discourses concerning multiculturalism and integration in the 2000s, have meant that visions and strategies of *multicultural programming* have changed rapidly and significantly.

For all this flux, an additional source of tension for public service broadcasters is the expectation that they can and should manage to reflect the diversity and increased complexity of *fragmented audiences* – in other words, that they can continue to mediate a unifying vision of the public and public life in a context where the shape, scope and engagement of the public is a matter of debate (Higgins 2008). As Hallin and Mancini noted in the early years of this decade, public service broadcasting retains on average between 30% and 50% of audience share in western Europe, and many broadcasters retain a powerful affective status and influence in contexts where commercial competition and globalization are still relatively new processes (2004:42–44). As a general observation then, the historical, integrative role of public service broadcasting derived from an era of scarcity may be increasingly difficult in an era of abundance (see Ellis 2000) but evidence suggests that aspects of this role are still widely expected. Certainly, public service broadcasters interviewed for this chapter still identify with a vision of public service that has a unifying, integrative social mission.

The conventional public service broadcasting mission of engaging a national public while paying special attention to *minority* linguistic, religious, regional and cultural needs and interests, is the starting point for thinking about mediating changes in that public as a consequence of migration. Part 1 quoted Arun Kundnani's description of media as ...[layers of public space that extend and connect with geographical space](#). As a consequence of this overlay, demographic and cultural shifts in that territorial space must be reflected in media space as public space. The question, of course, is how, and this is not only an issue of how mediated representation grapples with the complexities of social life. Public space is not neutral – it is implicitly understood as national. In this space, the legitimacy of the presence, and the degree of belonging of migrants and other minorities, is frequently questioned. It is predominantly – but not exclusively – questioned by those who are themselves free to assume an unquestioned legitimacy and belonging on the basis of nationality, citizenship, or race. Therefore public service broadcasters, in attempting to mediate this changed public space, are inevitably involved in negotiating this politics of boundaries and legitimacies.

This is one of the reasons why multicultural programming assumes a significant burden of different aims, aims that are time and context-bound, and that are inevitably pregnant with contradictions and tensions. Public service broadcasting has tended to adopt aims which are adapted from their core mission – to *open and broaden minds* – and which cohere with wider public rhetoric and policy – to *celebrate diversity* and to *promote integration*. Shaped by the need to maintain mainstream audiences while representing migrant and minority presence, programming often attempts to combine a broad educative function for the established majority with a desire to communicate directly to migrant audiences. *First contact* programming may fulfill a contextual function, but it quickly throws up irreconcilable tensions:

How to develop programmes specifically aimed at the needs and interests of migrants and minorities as against the double-edged accusation of *ghetto programming*? (ie that this both restricts the migrant representation to limited amounts and forms of programming, and that it encourages multicultural separatism)

How to *open the minds* of the established mainstream audience without *closing the eyes* of the migrants (broadly) represented?

How can programming aimed at mainstream audiences provide *windows on their worlds* without producing limited and sometimes tokenistic, celebratory content?

Can programmes aimed at introducing and explaining migrants and minorities to a *national public* ever begin to do justice to the diversity of experiences, perspectives and opinions of people who migrate?

Can multicultural programming ever escape the charge of worthiness and liberal proselytizing?

Does multicultural programming unwittingly confirm ethno-national boundaries by fixating on difference?

How can multicultural programming produce sufficiently different perspectives to do justice to the complexities of migration and migrant lives, while guarding against the perception that it is favouring minorities?

This set of issues is an important reason for the general shift in European public service broadcasting towards more elastic discourses of diversity, and these ideas and practices are discussed in the final chapter on comparative perspectives. In the following sections, the rapid acceleration of RTÉ programming from conventional forms of multicultural broadcasting to a new, and as yet unsettled, emphasis on diversity will be considered. RTÉ have very publicly embraced the idea that their public service remit must include not only serving new minority audiences, but also adapting the historical role of the public service broadcaster (PSB) as an integrative agent to the context of contemporary society in Ireland. This has involved RTÉ's strategies accelerating through the stages of envisioning and programming that have evolved in other European PSBs over a far longer period of time. A significant dimension of this in both radio and television is the jettisoning of multicultural magazine formats – or so called *niche programmes* – for a transversal emphasis on diversity and the integration of relevant perspectives, issues and voices into hybrid formats and mainstream programmes.

This acceleration displays a commitment to reflect on the adequacy of programming to social realities, and to avoid tokenism and programming so driven by normative visions that they are undermined by an *aura of persuasion* (Browne & Onyejelem 2007). This accelerated engagement has also generated a dominant vocabulary for branding RTÉ productions as *diversity* or *intercultural*, without necessarily communicating a coherent sense of what these ideas mean institutionally and how they are processed and activated. While such expectations may be misplaced given the size of the institution and the dynamics of its internal structures, it is nevertheless the case that these initiatives contain tensions and contradictions that cannot be explained solely by the natural run of different approaches and practices.

Taken as a whole, across radio and television, this report suggests that RTÉ programming now faces the same set of complex choices concerning the relevance and direction of *diversity* programming and policy as other PSBs in Europe. They have reached this juncture at a moment when prolonged economic crisis in Ireland has resulted in the retraction of resourcing for intercultural/integration issues, and a palpable shift in

public discourse away from discussions of migration and its impact on the future of society in Ireland. This implies that the immediate future shape of policy and programming strategies in RTÉ are of significant public importance. This chapter proceeds by discussing RTÉ institutional policy, and then relevant radio and television programming in turn. It concludes with an assessment of the current brand idea of diversity.

RTÉ Policy – Beyond Multiculturalism

The Broadcasting Authority (Amendment Act 1976) places RTÉ under an obligation to **...be responsive to the interests and concerns of the whole community and ensure that programmes reflect the varied elements which make up the culture of the people of the whole island of Ireland.** The Broadcasting Act 2001 states that RTÉ must:

...provide a comprehensive range of programmes in the Irish and English language that reflects the cultural diversity of the whole island of Ireland and include, both on radio and television ...programmes that entertain, inform, educate, provide coverage of sporting, religious activities and cater for the expectations of the community generally as well as members of the community with special or minority interests and which, in every case, respect human dignity.

These two articles are regularly cited as the basis on which the diversity shaped by migration is to be integrated into pre-existing visions of the varied elements that co-exist in society in Ireland. As the last section discusses, what is and what is not seen as diversity is a key issue in manifesting these ideals. These articles are also related in the corporate literature to the principles of expectation set out in 2004's Public Service Charter:

Public service remit: RTÉ, as the national public service broadcaster, shall reflect the democratic, social and cultural values of Irish society and the need to preserve media pluralism/RTÉ shall, at all times, strive to reflect fairly and equally the regional, cultural and political diversity of Ireland and its peoples/No editorial or programming bias shall be shown in terms of gender, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or membership of a minority community.

Taken together, these articles and principles constitute a consistent articulation of one of public service broadcasting's enduring characteristics and tensions; that universality of service be complemented by particularity in the representation of and service provided to minority interests, variously defined. Following the introduction of the Charter in 2004, RTÉ committed to publishing an annual reflection on its *guiding*

principles in relation to the Charter's provisions. From 2006, this annual statement of guiding principles was absorbed into an annual report on *corporate responsibility*. Taken as a series over time, these reports show the increasing centrality of interculturalism and diversity to RTÉ's statements of principle and policy, and also to its corporate image. They also give a limited if interesting sense of how different themes, aims and indicators are positioned and adapted over time.

The first such report, RTÉ's Guiding Principles – Implementing the Public Service Charter (November 2004) does not yet make explicit reference to Ireland as a migration society, but statements of intent and action concerning the specific needs of minorities and the value of *diversity* are prominent. In the elaboration of its role as a PSB (pg10) the established goal of regional diversity is related to the goal of social cohesion: **...provide programming that recognizes regional interests and cultural diversity including language and music, and encourages understanding and tolerance.** In the section outlining the Broadcaster's goals for 2004–2007, goals are juxtaposed with specific actions for different output divisions. In News and Current Affairs, the goal of *holding and attracting new audiences* is related to the need to produce *output of interest for minority groups* by **ensuring minority groups and their interests are reflected in the News and Current affairs programming agenda** (pg15). Under the goal of working to **project Ireland's cultural heritage the sub-goal of celebrating diversity is related to a specific set of reviews concerning the relevance and responsiveness of news coverage and formats** (pg17).

Radio's goal of *celebrating diversity* is specified as *broadcasting the cultural expression of new communities in Ireland* and specifically included in the goal of *output of interest for minority groups*. When the same exercise is conducted for television, a more detailed set of actions is documented. The aim to *produce output of interest for minority groups* is based on a (a) review of diversity programmes pursued by other broadcasters (b) promotion of diversity and multicultural policy to include the issue of recruitment from minority groups and (c) an ongoing review of RTÉ Television's diversity programming output (pg19). Interestingly, the goal of *projecting Ireland's cultural heritage* includes a dynamic sense of projection through **developing a strategy for reflecting diversity consistently in our output** (pg20).

In the 2005 review, no new goals in this theme are added, and the existing goals and their actions are updated. The production of output of interest to minority groups in News and Current Affairs is noted as an ongoing target where progress is recorded as **News and Current Affairs programming provides ongoing coverage of issues relating to and or involving ethnic minority groups** (pg8). The specific Television actions concerning *output of interest for minority groups* involve noting the development of

Section 28(2)(a)

Public Service Charter

new programmes (such as No Place Like Home), the presentation of a *diversity policy review* to the Audience Council in 2005²⁶ and the ongoing consideration of a *ethnic minority media training scheme* modeled on an initiative by the Finnish public service broadcaster, YLE. In the Radio evaluation, the range of series that appeared in 2005 – and discussed below – are cited.

The 2006 document does not replicate this same general template for stating and tracking goals, and specific commitments to *diversity goals* are entirely absent. This general shift can be explained by the absorption of the *statement of principles* into a broader Strategic Corporate Plan 2006–2010 and the production of an annual Corporate Responsibility Report. The first such report, in 2006, introduces the idea of *public interest tests* and lists several of relevance:

2006:6

Schedules that include programming for minority groups and interests/programming that recognizes regional interests and cultural diversity/programming that encourages understanding and tolerance.

The approach of publicly declaring measurable targets is replaced by a narrative of general aspirations and completed actions (programmes, support for the Media and Multicultural Awards) and an adaptation of the programming mission to **...hope our programmes will help to explain difference and promote greater understanding between the communities that make up society** (2006:14).

The 2007 report marks a return to more specific articulations of intent as well as aspiration. A new report section, *Looking Forward* features an extended discussion of RTÉ and Interculturalism and the first explicit links drawn between broadcasting legislation, the public service remit, and the needs and interests of people who are *dual or non-Irish in nationality*. Framed by the prevalent narrative of a rapid shift from a society of emigration to one of immigration, the section links the rapidity of this change to social and political challenges, and the power of media to play **...both a decisive and responsible role in determining attitudes and levels of understanding between communities and cultures** (2007:52). Specifically, for RTÉ, this means committing to combating *racism and racial discrimination* and to *reflecting cultural diversity in Ireland*. Following a list of new and ongoing programming, the report signals specific programming and policy approaches, including an **...emphasis on integrating non-Irish nationals and intercultural themes and viewpoints into mainstream programming as ultimately the challenge over time is not... to produce more niche programming but rather more fully reflect the society and people we exist to serve, in all that we broadcast and in our staff profile** (2007:53).

To that end a commitment to interculturalism in corporate policy is described with a commitment to publishing a comprehensive action plan on interculturalism by the end of 2008:

RTÉ will be inclusive and respectful of the cultural difference and richness that exist within the population of Ireland. It will provide the diversity of output necessary to present an understanding of the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the country's inhabitants, foster an understanding and appropriate valuing of different cultures and create a sense of cultural cohesion within our society. RTÉ recognizes that its workforce must reflect the diversity of Irish society and will promote the involvement and employment of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The 2008 report recalls this commitment to publishing an action plan, and describes a process of internal research and discussion culminating in a *cross IBD intercultural group* report being presented to the Director General in May 2008, with recommendations subsequently discussed at a *Corporate Editorial Board meeting* in July 2008. However this overview of ideas and process cannot be understood as *publishing a comprehensive action plan on interculturalism* as signaled in 2007. The chapter relates how internal discussions considered **who and what do we mean when we talk about intercultural diversity and how RTÉ currently represents cultural and ethnic diversity across its services** (2008:38). In citing (a) output (b) staff development/training and (c) recruitment as core pillars of policy among other European PSBs, the document notes the different strategies other institutions have deployed in these areas, particularly in the area of recruitment. It concludes that **...just as different country's experiences of immigration are different, there is no obvious template of best practice to follow in developing a comprehensive intercultural strategy** (2008:38). The need for changes in attitudes, leadership at all levels and a *willingness to embrace and value diversity* is signaled, with the qualification that

While programme-makers were, for the most part, well disposed to having greater diversity on-air and on-screen, there was a real difficulty, given the relatively recent nature of Ireland's immigration, in finding new voices from minority ethnic and cultural groups who have the necessary skills and confidence to contribute on a broad range of issues... the same challenge exists in relation to recruitment.

As a result of the report, two relevant objectives are set for 2008/9 (pg44): Senior management in Television, Radio and Current Affairs will agree specific, realistic and measurable targets with managers, editors and programme makers for ethnic and multicultural representation in all or parts of their respective output areas by end Q4 2008;

2007:53

26 (cont)

Diversity in the context of disability access did not appear in the commitments for 2007 because RTÉ will be fully compliant. Last year, RTÉ concentrated on accessibility and this year the emphasis would be on Interculturalism. In March 2008 the AC agreed to informally monitor Diversity programming in the output, and requested an update on the Interculturalism policy statement presented in 2007 (it seems the title of the document changed in the interim). A written update on the policy was welcomed at the meeting in May 2008 as excellent and challenging. A presentation was then made at the September 2008 meeting, presenting a 10-point action plan to be further elaborated in the 2008 Corporate Responsibility Report. See www.rte.ie/about/audience_communique.html

2008:38

26

RTÉ has developed a series of internal discussion documents and memos between 2004-8 that have influenced the direction of policy, and presumably programming. A document on *multiculturalism in RTÉ* was presented to the AC in November 2004, and subsequent minutes in May 2005 welcomed the report's main points while requesting that the title be changed to mention diversity. The theme was not discussed again until Sept 2006 when under AOB a request was made to *revisit the theme of diversity and the fact that this means more than just race*. This request was addressed by Bride Rosney, Director of Communications, in February 2007, when she noted that *diversity had been raised at the last meeting. She wished to update the Council on RTÉ's position in this regard. She stated she was dealing specifically with RTÉ's corporate commitments.* (cont)

RTÉ is to provide intercultural awareness training for all new staff (as part of staff induction training) and identify where intercultural training can be integrated into existing IBD training programmes by Q4 2009.

Discussion

RTÉ has very publicly committed to developing relevant forms of policy, and given the recurring prominence of diversity and interculturalism in its corporate literature, it has decided to foreground this as a key dimension of its contemporary identity and brand. A reading of the different documents and statements available suggests a prolonged internal discussion of sporadic intensity, and a sustained reflection on which precise terminology and headline categories best represents RTÉ's analysis of socio-cultural change, and its mediation of it. Reflections on this in interview noted that the sequential development of these policy documents can broadly be seen as one prolonged process, shaped by the complexity of the issues, the often divergent opinions of different managers and departments, and the desire to promise meaningfully while being cautious about what is promised. It is also evident that the assessment produced by this research report is one that to some extent mirrors RTÉ evaluations; that it has progressed rapidly through the general stages of programming and policy evident over longer periods in other European PSB, and that it views its current challenge as finding ways of integrating *diversity* across programmes and into the working practices of different business and editorial units.

The corporate literature presents highly ambitious aspirations that mirror the tensions in public service broadcasting's engagements with migration societies. It seeks to play a role in educating and shaping attitudes, in fostering understanding between communities, including an *appropriate valuing* of other cultures by the established mainstream, while adequately reflecting diversity across its different services. The integrative role of PSB is expressed in the contemporary discourse of social cohesion. Given these aspirations, it is notable that the most recent document notes fundamental discussions concerning *who and what do we mean when we talk about intercultural diversity* but it does not go into detail about the substance of those discussions, and their conclusions. Without a more specific sense of the working institutional understandings, it is difficult to evaluate how and when *diversity is being integrated*, and to speculate as to the relationship between these understandings and their incorporation into programme making.

The objective to agree *specific, realistic and measurable targets* for *ethnic and multicultural representation* in output across all programming areas is one full of promise and ambiguity. Targets for representation suggests a quantitative set of measures, however the general tenor of the

policy is one that is aware of the qualitative significance of representations. Given the level of generality at which this information is made public, there is no sense of how such issues as sourcing, panel composition, samples of public opinion, and so forth, are to be developed. There is also no indication of how *realistic* such targets are regarded to be in different divisions, where very different attitudes to these questions may be present. This takes on specific dimensions in News and Current Affairs, areas where this report's audience research suggests migrant and minority viewers pay special attention to how issues pertaining to migration, the labour market, law and general public attitudes are mediated. Interviews in RTÉ consistently emphasized not only the independence of the different internal Divisions, but also the limited purchase of diversity policy in News and Current Affairs. News values of independence and objectivity are often taken as inimical to *special forms of representation*, and the pressurized routines of news gathering are often structurally impervious to the extra work involved in systematic changes in sourcing and interviewing.

The shift in RTÉ reporting formats over the last 5 years has resulted in significant disjunctures in the ways in which aims are expressed, goals are set for those aims, and measurable actions are publicly expressed for those goals. Despite this, it is possible to see how thinking and action has evolved in all but one of the three core pillars noted by the 2008 report and implicit in the 2004 and 2005 documents; the difficult question of recruitment. While earlier reports discussed research into the feasibility of training schemes, in the 2008 report, mention of the different strategies employed by European PSBs is not followed by any further discussion as to whether or not RTÉ is developing such a strategy, or if it plans to do so. Given the recognition of output/training/recruitment as core pillars, and the commitment to key actions in the first two, the third is conspicuous by its absence in this document.

The argument that finding new voices is a substantive problem is not one reflected back by other parts of this research (though the discussion of Mono – below – illustrates some of the possibilities and difficulties). This report features several *voices* who have experience of covering a range of issues in English, and who have been sourced by RTÉ on several occasions. It is also evident that community and migrant-produced media involve a significant amount of people with media experience in Ireland, accrued before their arrival in Ireland. Similarly, media and journalism courses at certificate and degree level have witnessed a significant increase in applications and course completions by people who have migrated to Ireland. The Forum on Migration and Communications (FOMACS), in the Dublin Institute of Technology, showcases and networks a significant spectrum of migrant media producers working across a range of platforms, genres and subjects.³⁷ The issue at stake

may not only be broadening the range of contributors, but broadening the ways in which those contributions are evaluated.

Radio: First Ventures

While Radio One began to noticeably produce migration-related programming in 2005–6, in 2000 RTÉ Radio established a service called Radio One World that broadcast from Monday – Friday for two hours every evening on Medium Wave 2FM 612kHz & 1278kHz. According to information taken from its now defunct website by a contemporary blog, the service was based in Cork and programmes aimed to:

Provide programming for the Algerian, Bosnian, Romanian, Polish, Nigerian, Indian, Chinese and Vietnamese communities. The new service includes news from abroad and from Ireland, in the various languages required, English lessons for those new to the language, and arts programming from RTÉ's main channels. Based in our studios in Cork the service features recorded inserts from international broadcasters such as BBC, Deutsche Welle and Swedish Radio, via ISDN and satellite. Locally produced material comes from reporters within the various communities, reflecting some 50,000 non Irish born people who will benefit from the service.³⁸

Little is now known or recorded about this service, and it ceased broadcasting after less than two years. In 2003 Radio One began broadcasting Different Voices, produced by Marcus Connaughton, who was a producer on the Radio One World service. The second series was presented by a Cameroonian broadcaster, Guy Bertrand Nimpa, and the 12 programmes covered some form of cultural event or item of interest for different ethnic and national communities, focusing on music, cultural expression and traditions, and on personal experiences of settlement in Ireland. Three programmes took a slightly different approach; examining the daily life of refugees, examining diversity education in primary schools, and a first programme – in December 2004 – examining the lives of *new communities* from EU accession countries.

The widely mediated and debated arrival of people from the EU Accession States in 2004 prompted renewed attention to the importance of some form of multicultural broadcasting in 2005. Over summer 2005, two series were aired; Breaking Bread, a six-part series of 30 minute programmes presented and produced by Fiona Kelly, interviewed families from Lithuania, China, Poland, Russia and Nigeria in various locations in Ireland. A longer series, the thirteen-part A New Ireland, was broadly similar, talking with a variety of nationalities about their route-ways to Ireland and lives here, while moving through a wider variety of social, sporting, domestic and religious contexts. Both programmes can be

regarded as varieties on first contact multicultural programming, where programmes both *reflect the new diversity* while providing established mainstream audiences with a window onto the world of people who have migrated. The recurring domestic focus – inviting listeners into their homes – is indicative of this kind of approach. A 2006 series, Muslims in Ireland, was one of several across the radio sectors to *explore the lives of Muslims in Ireland and their views of events unfolding worldwide*.

This genre of multicultural broadcasting must be considered in its context. It is often widely criticized as a genre for lumping all migrants into celebratory categories of new *diversity*, for confusing the fact of coverage with the goal of inclusion, and if not conducted sensitively, of objectifying people's lives. Thus it cannot, and should not, be seen in terms of integrating diversity across the broadcast output. Instead its aim relates to the idea of promoting understanding and communication between communities, or more specifically, educating a mainstream Irish audience about different ethnic and national communities, and some dimensions of their experiences. In this context, it is an obvious form of first wave programming, usually focusing on individual stories over any sustained investigation of political and socio-economic context, and answering a majority need for information (and perhaps reassurance). Working from an assumption that broadcasting must counter public prejudice, the programming works from a premise of hearing the human voices behind the headlines. The question, then, is how subsequent programming develops from this conventional point of departure.

From Spectrum to Diversity

Spectrum took over from Different Voices as RTÉ's regularly scheduled flagship multicultural programme, however the scope of its interests broadened considerably from Different Voices diet of music, events and cultural initiatives. Broadcast from 2005 until late 2008, and retired in early 2009, Spectrum was initially presented by Melanie Verwoerd and subsequently by Zbyszek Zalinski. The programme had a central place in RTÉ's descriptions of its intercultural commitments and elucidation of its role. As the 2006 RTÉ CR report stated, **Spectrum... tries to provide the basis for an understanding and welcoming Ireland reflecting the increasingly diverse nature of Ireland today. We hope our programmes will help to explain difference and promote greater understanding between the communities that make up our society.** The 2007 report similarly outlined a role in reflecting and explaining a changing Ireland, primarily to its mainstream Irish listenership: **Spectrum investigates Ireland's response to its changing ethnic and cultural make-up. Through debate, comment and analysis of the international context, Spectrum explores how Ireland is coping with its new multiculturalism.**

Medium Wave 2FM
612kHz & 1278kHz

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www.lists.redbrick.dcu.ie/pipermail/announce-oneworld/200-April/000009/

In an interview with Metro Éireann in early 2009, Ana Leddy discussed the decision to end Spectrum and to instead create a new role as Diversity Coordinator for the show's presenter, Zbyszek Zalinski. Spectrum was described as a ...**launchpad to introduce new ethnic communities to RTÉ Radio One and its audience, and now that Ireland's new communities have become a more established part of Irish society, multicultural concerns, questions and news stories will be integrated into the mainstream daytime schedule when there is a much larger audience listening to radio than at evening on the weekend.**

Accordingly, [Zalinski] will be responsible for the development of a database of contacts and spokespeople representing Ireland's various ethnic communities and ensuring that those voices are heard on daytime radio, said the national broadcaster. **He will also be expected to monitor the level and tone of coverage of multicultural questions.**³⁹

In a discussion of the programme, Zbyszek Zalinski is very much in agreement with this assessment of Spectrum's function and the need to move on from dedicated programming to a broader focus on diversity across programme output. As he noted, Spectrum wasn't really a programme for migrant communities, providing specific informational services, news, or access to broadcasting in native languages:

This is not the programme that is going to tell you how to get a visa extended or something like that. I thought it was more a programme that would be a bridge between me as a representative of a migrant community, or communities, and the native Irish who live here and who grew up here and to show them what these communities are all about. What are the problems, what are the issues, but also to celebrate those communities and to show the culture, obviously the events, to perhaps invite them to some of those events, highlight things that are happening, play a bit of music, have a bit of fun, have a good mix as well of hot issues. Let's say like unemployment or racism or housing or whatever these issues might be, the more hardcore issues. But also have a few musicians in studio, talk about films or plays that would be coming from those countries to here, previous festivals. A few things like that, to have a good mixture of things but also to stay topical.

While Spectrum was a classic bridging programme, aiming to give a window into minority worlds assumed to be frequently misunderstood and misrepresented, it did have extensive contacts with community groups and networks who suggested activities and possible features, and also, sporadically, received feedback from migrant listeners. It ranged widely over different types of features, moving from a more concerted focus on *burning topics* concerning asylum-seekers and the very public politics of immigration in the context of the show's first season to a linking of Irish features to wider issues internationally and thematically. Thus as Zbyszek

interprets it, Spectrum never had an *agenda*, but was shaped by a reading of the Irish context, its contacts, and importantly, by the ideas and priorities of a production team that changed over time, allowing... *other topics, other strands of the whole immigration or migration narrative (to) become more visible.* During 2008 – a period in which RTE's entire intercultural strategy was being reviewed – it was decided that;

...a niche programme like that perhaps is ghettoising those issues a bit too much. That it could be good to mainstream those diversity issues, to mainstream those voices, to feature those kinds of topics and issues that were featured on Spectrum on mainstream programmes, daytime programmes. Also to use contributors, or to maybe try find contributors to feature as panelists and guests on mainstream programmes.

To achieve this, Zbyszek was appointed Diversity Coordinator with responsibility for monitoring diversity output on radio and for coming up with items that can be integrated into a range of programming. An important dimension of this, he argues, is that he is also working as part of the team on Drivetime on Radio 1, contributing to *mainstream* features, which means that **I'm also a part of the fabric of RTÉ Radio 1 and the sound of RTÉ Radio 1. Which means that somebody with a foreign accent, somebody with a foreign name, becomes just a part of the furniture or a part of the tapestry of the sound there.** As discussed elsewhere in this report, diversity takes on a different shape in different institutional settings and understandings, sometimes involving the consideration and interplay of a range of non-mainstream positions and experiences, and sometimes functioning as a synonym for multiculturalism. In Zbyszek's remit, diversity involves **...making sure we represent all the communities that make up Ireland. He cites recent features on the Gay Pride Festival, on educational innovations for the visually impaired and people with Down's Syndrome, and a Drivetime item on problems in Muslims schools in Ireland** as evidence of the way in which the new remit has worked to integrate Spectrum's focus on multiculturalism into a wider vision of diversity, and in turn, to stitch diversity into the mainstream agenda of scheduled broadcasts.

In general, his new role involves researching items of interest for programme inclusion, suggesting approaches and contacts to producers that contact him, and monitoring the *diversity output* of Radio One. Monitoring is dependent on responsible producers alerting him to the relevance of recent broadcasts, and the material is logged in a record of programmes, duration, guests, issues, items and keywords. In common with similar roles in other institutions (see chapter 6) the editorial separation of the newsroom means that news output is not included in the scope of the diversity role. The monitoring approach currently works without formal or informal targets, as Zbyszek explains:

No, there aren't any targets around diversity. But I think we've been doing pretty well. It has to be natural as well. It has to sound natural. It has to happen organically and it's a long process but there's very strong commitment from the management here to really prioritise it. I have tremendous back up from my management and they do strongly believe in that. They help me in any way they can and everybody here is very helpful.

As he points out, such monitoring can only be the start of a process which must aim to convince migrants that the *national broadcaster is open towards them* and that they are interested in what is happening to them, and reflecting that. Thus broadcast initiatives are part of an ongoing conversation and must constantly develop to keep pace with the different ways in which migration and settlement impact, and the ways in which people who migrate experience society in Ireland:

It's very important for us to find new voices, to engage with those communities and to keep this conversation going. It cannot stop and I don't think it will. I think it will be an ongoing conversation and it's an evolving process because the nature of migration and the nature of this phenomenon is very fluid. It changes. People migrate. People move. People move cities. People move countries. They change their relationship with the host nation. At first you feel a bit like a visitor. I blended in gradually into the Irish society myself. When you come in as an immigrant you feel a bit like what am I doing here? how do I do this?, what is this all about?, how do I navigate my relationship with this country and this society? ...You become much more comfortable being an immigrant in a country. I will never say that I'm Irish. I am 110% Polish living in Ireland, but this is my home right now. I think every immigrant has to resolve this dichotomy, or even trichotomy or whatever you call it, in their own head. Who are you? What are you doing? Where are you? What is your home country?

In the current context, Zbyszek notes the tendency to imagine that *migrants are going home* and that any related initiatives are thus redundant. As he notes, *We are a diverse society and we are going to stay a diverse society* and both programming and editorial approaches need to reflect that. Thus diversity-work is necessary but challenging. It runs the risk, in integrating all minority experiences under the one umbrella, of foregrounding some at the inevitable expense of others. However as Zbyszek points out, looking out for the good stories is always one way of guarding against such pitfalls.

Television: Primary Colours – Mono

Since the early 2000s, *multicultural programming* has been shaped by the programme department Cláracha Gaeilge, Multiculture and Education. Since 2005, much of this programming has been broadcast under the *super-strand* – or programme category – of Diversity. RTÉ television's approach has paralleled that of radio in broadcasting a *flagship* multicultural programme with regularity since the early 2000s, beginning with the multicultural magazine programme Mono. These series have been commissioned from independent production companies, and the format, focus and style of programming have changed significantly over time. When Mairéad Ní Nuadháin took over as commissioning editor for Cláracha Gaeilge (Irish language programming) she asked for a strand of multicultural programming to be added to the department's work.

Mono was the first series produced by this new arrangement, and Kairos Communications made 4 out of 5 series between 2002–2006. Mono followed a magazine format for all but its last series, normally including three features in its 26min slot. Each series comprised of 12–13 episodes. It was presented for three seasons by Shalini Sinha and Bisi Adigun, with these presenters joined by Kusi Okamura in series 3. Mairéad reflects that Mono was a series that had a number of guiding ideas, and a central one was familiarizing a mainstream Irish audience with the factuality of multiculturalism in Ireland:

My thinking never was to make a programme for the multicultural audience. My thinking was originally... to make a programme for the wider audience. In those years we were really introducing the Irish audience to the idea that now you are a multicultural society. This is the way it's going to be. These are people who are living in Ireland, who have interesting stories. Their children are going to have Irish accents. They're not going to go away. And I tried to steer away from stories and programmes about refugees. I tried not to cover things that were problematic, although I'm sure we did from time to time, because I never wanted the programme itself to become a stereotype.

A format that attracts a broad mainstream audience is not just an educative goal, it is also broadcasting pragmatism, and Mairéad and other contributors were in agreement that the role of RTÉ was not, and is not, to cater in particular cultural or linguistic terms for *niche* migrant audiences. However a central goal of Mono was professional development, in front and behind the camera, and Anne O'Brien of Kairos Communications notes that

I think what I admired about it was its agenda which was very clear from the start that it was to be a training ground for people to try and get into the industry and that became more explicit in the second year. We had an internship essentially for somebody who was from an ethnic minority or who was black and Irish to train with us, and the whole agenda was that those people would then move on into mainstream programming. I think that was massively important.

The series was positioned not only as an initial reflection of a multicultural Ireland, but as a vehicle that could develop presenters who would subsequently move into fronting other programmes, and a production crew that could do similarly. As Anne recalls, the desire to avoid a conventional Irish production team, in order to involve minority background producers that could contribute knowledge, perspective, stories and contacts, meant that the presenters also played a role in shaping the programme. Nevertheless, Anne reflects that it took the programme some time during series 1 to develop an approach that departed from a *very classic Irish way of looking at new communities*:

I think we were looking at them instead of giving them the airspace to bring stories to the screen. So it was all about how black and ethnic minorities coming to Ireland was affecting the majority Irish audience rather than what it evolved into later, that is, what was going on within ethnic minority communities.

From Mairéad's perspective as commissioning editor, it made sense for the programme to leave politicized issues of asylum-seeking and migrant rights to News and Current Affairs. A format that could relate good, attractive stories, often the stories of individuals, was important at that juncture. However *attractive* stories did not mean simplistically positive. Early episodes tackled challenging material such as examining the mistreatment of migrant workers, experiences of torture, and the imprisonment of *drug mules* in Mountjoy. As Anne recalls, the remit was broad, with the sole stipulation that the pieces came from ethnic minority communities. The development of a story involved several overlapping phases:

What happened at the research phase is somebody would say let's do a piece on someone who has converted to Islam, and we'd end up going to the Imam in the Mosque, and we'd say listen we're doing this piece on conversion, is there anyone who has converted to Islam? He might say I have two, and I'd ask to come and meet them. At that point we'd talk to people, get their stories and get a sense of will it work on camera, would they be comfortable doing these angles on their stories, and for a five minute piece you'd do three or four set-ups to sustain a bit of (visual) movement.

In its fourth series Mono moved away from the magazine format to a half-hour documentary approach, a shift that reflected wider industry dissatisfaction with the dated style of magazine programming. As Anne points out, sustaining 13 × 30 min documentaries is a brave and demanding undertaking, and the approach of Mono at this point presages the successful focus of *Meet the Neighbours* (discussed below). It also potentially set Mono up as a victim of its own ambition, as such an approach is difficult to sustain over time. Mairéad also notes that during this period she began to question whether a different format could deliver a wider audience to the multicultural slot. However commissioning a replacement was complicated by an initial lack of possibilities – multicultural food and music programmes were proposed by pitching companies second-guessing what the audience of the slot would go for, and arguably driven to conservatism by the competition for the commission.

As Mairéad discusses it, she is not against celebratory and positive approaches per se: *African A-List*, a documentary produced for Africa Day 2009 and fronted by Irish reality television personality Lucia Evans, covered African celebrity culture as a deliberate anecdote to standard coverage of conflict and disaster. This strategy is an established – and widely criticized – approach, but it is also the idea that underlies the 2009 campaign by the Africa Centre in Dublin – *Africa also smiles*. However Mairéad points out that stock and reactive approaches to representation have dominated most approaches, including that of RTÉ:

People thought diversity, ethnicity, equals problems, equals refugees. So it has to be about people who have... there's a racism problem if they're black. If they are of ethnic origin – obviously we have to write in a racism line. We must have somebody who's here illegally. Obviously they are ethnic, so they can't be here legally. I used to say about television drama; why can't you just have a sweetshop owner or a doctor in the series. So I was really happy to see in *The Clinic* that there was a very very middle class black character... I just thought, that's a really positive outcome, her storyline is not predicated on her ethnicity. It took years.⁴⁰

Reality Formats & the Realities of Diversity

The pendulum swing between *negative* portrayals determined to signal the prejudices and barriers faced by migrants, and *positive* representations equally determined to project their normality is an inevitable product of few-to-many broadcasting aiming to communicate the right messages to as large an audience as possible. Recent shifts in television programming have offered ways that are regarded by some producers as bypassing this polarizing dynamic, if not of transcending it altogether.

The increased importance of reality-formats to RTÉ mainstream

The character in question is Dr Grace Sefate. The rest of the quotation refers to the RTÉ soap opera *Fair City*, where several *asylum and migrant* storylines have been developed over the last decade. For a discussion of the genesis of the character Ashti, see Connolly et al (2002) Report on the Forum on Media and Interculturalism: www.comms.dcu.ie/interculturalism/report/finaldraft.htm. For a discussion of *Fair City* and socio-cultural representation, see Sheehan, Helena (2007).

programming has influenced the approach to multicultural programming, and the ways in which *diversity* can be stitched into the unquestioned and unremarkable fabric of mediated social reality. Debates about competition-based reality formats, and what they say about production values and audience sensibilities, often obscure the more profound changes that have been wrought. As Jonathan Bignell argues (2006), it makes little sense to think of *reality television* as a genre, but rather as a term for a wider shift in orientation towards the role and function of television. Reality formats have developed in societies characterized by increased complexity and diversity, where life-paths are increasingly flexibilised and non-linear, and where every area of life – from health, to parenting, relationships, and so forth – is subject to endless speculation about the correct approach and the *right values*. In this milieu, observational and quasi-participatory formats offer some possibilities for curiosity, comparison and self-reflection.

Therefore, as Mairéad points out, RTÉ programmes such as *The Health Squad* and *Baby on Board* can unobtrusively include migrants and ethnic minorities as people focused on personal and domestic issues, rather than as ciphers burdened by messages they have to convey. Most particularly, the future-seeking series *21st Century Child* took the implications of migration and settlement as a central principle in sourcing families for the programme, *otherwise the programme wouldn't reflect Ireland in the future*. However reality formats are ambiguous, and also allow a problematic spectrum of programming to pass as *diversity* simply because of the presence of something foreign – such as *The Turkish Wives Club*. Or, as Mairéad noted, *worthy* programmes with a development or social improvement theme may nominally feature important issues while being structured around the *latest great Irish effort somewhere*. Similarly, the unobtrusive inclusion of *diversity* in reality formats can be as depoliticizing as it can be normalizing, bypassing rather than tackling questions of minority and migrant inclusion and involvement in media work. There is also the risk, as Anne points out, that this form of *mainstreaming* dissipates the expertise in multicultural programming accumulated in previous productions and projects.

No Place Like Home was broadcast between 2006–8 over three series of 8, 10 and 9 programmes. Presented by Bob Kelly, the format involved Kelly *bumping into the new Irish* and asking *why did you come to Ireland and what have you left behind?* The programme then explores the person's life in Ireland while Kelly travels to meet their friends and family. Mairéad argues that it:

Was a really good vehicle. We visited a huge range of countries, so it was a mix of travel and multicultural. Some people found fault with it because they thought it was too travel oriented and it was too focused on what you could

do and what you could see in the countries the people came from. And that was true to some extent, but it actually got a good audience in its slot and that for me was positive. Also... by showing the back lives and back stories of immigrants it told something that television hadn't previously. In *Mono* the stories were here, so you had maybe neurosurgeons from Pakistan making galvanised gates or something in Ballyhaunis. Whereas in *No Place Like Home*, you took somebody like a Mongolian doorkeeper in *Temple Bar*, who just looks like every other bouncer. Bob goes back to Mongolia and finds out that his family are Olympic wrestlers, a certain amount about what Mongolia is like, and why they hate being called Chinese.

The ambiguous assessments referred to can be viewed in a number of ways. The criticism of the programme as a travel show in disguise surfaced in one of the Nigerian focus groups discussed in part 2. In this assessment a much-vaunted commitment to multiculturalism programming is merely being lacquered on a clever format designed to maximise audiences. However, as these discussions illustrate, that is precisely the starting point for an assessment – what can a format explicitly designed to maximise audiences achieve as a *multicultural* programme? Reality/observational formats thrive through generic hybridity, that is, through blending elements of programme genres previously thought of as distinct. The blending of travel show with *window on their world* multicultural television can be read in two ways. The addition of the travel element – and the touristic viewing it may encourage – serves to, at best, distract attention from what a flagship multicultural programme should be attempting to do. At worst it is just another form of exoticisation of migrants.

As against this, the format can be seen as less about travel and more about mobility and immobility. In very many of the stories featured, there is a stark, unavoidable contrast between the ease with which Bob Kelly can access the other home, and the statutory, financial and employment barriers participants face in organising annual visits, at best. At the end of each episode Kelly would bring back video messages from family and friends, and the re-mediation of this hugely prevalent form of migrant communication (even in an era of instant messaging and webcams) served as an unsettling reminder of how the politics of mobility and immobility shape lives and relationships. To some extent also, the programme served as an anecdote to the stereotype of the biography-less migrant, and it represented something of the transnational connections and spatial relationships that are lost in programmes fixated on the localised experience of migrants in Ireland (and their impact on Ireland). Perhaps also these analyses depend very much on the experience and contexts featured – the travel show element is always more likely to dominate on a trip to Finnish Lapland, the power relations of mobility and movement are inevitably more pronounced in the experience of sub-Saharan Africans in Ireland.

No Place Like Home was sponsored by Western Union, a form of sponsorship that, as Mairéad notes, had an impact in RTÉ on the status of multicultural programming and the potential importance of migrant audiences. Looking to attract an audience of people transferring remittances and savings, the sponsorship was based on the assumption that a substantial non-EU migrant population⁴¹ was actually watching the programme:

So then they (management) started to take notice and think *maybe there's a reason to take numbers* (referring to targeted migrant audience research). They're big. Suddenly we are talking about 10% of the population. Now I know that's including people from the UK as well. But there was a point where people woke up and thought the numbers are big, they are people who are paying their licence fee, they're spending money in the country.

The moral claim of the licence fee to adequate representation is noted on several occasions in the audience focus groups. In RTÉ's mixed model this claim is supplemented by the realisation of a new kind of audience.⁴²

The Power of Portraits – Meet the Neighbours

The 4-part documentary series Meet the Neighbours was broadcast in May and June 2009, and co-produced by Loosehorse and Scratch Films. The neighbours in question congregate in Balbriggan, Co. Dublin, the hometown of the documentary director Liam McGrath. The series is described on the RTÉ website:

Balbriggan was once a sleepy fishing village. But in the space of less than five years, its population increased by over 50% and many of newly arrived residents have come from foreign shores. No town in Ireland has seen a greater percentage population increase between the last two censuses than the ethnically diverse town of Balbriggan in North County Dublin. Meet The Neighbours gets to know the people and lives behind this story – creating a snapshot of a moment in time in Ireland's multicultural journey, entering the human lives of migrants who have settled in Balbriggan as well as the lives of the native Irish that they have decided to live amongst.

The relatively rapid diversification of Balbriggan has attracted much attention in public debates on migration in Ireland, from controversies over schooling, to anxieties about *ghettoisation* and to racist YouTube videos promising future Balbriggan civil wars.⁴³ In interview, prior to its broadcast, Mairéad alludes to this sensationalism as one dimension of the programme:

It will be a portrait of a town that has hit the headlines for sometimes the wrong reasons in Ireland. I hope it will be a nice gentle, but intimate portrait of this very, very multicultural town. It could be a very important programme in the future, the kind of programme that in twenty years time you go the archives and you say God, look what Balbriggan was like in 2008.

Meet the Neighbours follows three to four different people per episode for a short period of time in spring 2009, filming them in different contexts, observing work, hobbies and local interaction. As a documentary series it is another formal departure for multicultural programming, however the focus on a specific place also shifts the ways in which *migrants* are understood and represented. If a criticism of previous programmes has been the tendency to gather an enormous range of identities, status positions and experiences into the category *migrants*, and to then represent them to an Irish audience, Meet the Neighbours carefully and quietly articulates stories that should mark a definitive break with broad-stroke multicultural programming. Like the BBC's 2008 series Meet the Immigrants, the series is interested in telling the stories of people whose actual lives challenge the calcified public images of migrants and refugees. However Meet the Neighbours quiet observational style avoids the sometimes obvious didacticism at work in the BBC programmes. As Mairéad contends, a keen awareness of the different dimensions of story-telling is at work in the series. Commenting on the story eventually featured – in a slightly different form – in programme 2, of a Balbriggan born prawn fisherman, she says:

In this programme it's little portraits. So there's a portrait of a fisherman, and the fisherman (I remember this because I saw a rough cut) the fisherman starts off as really being from Balbriggan stock and he's shelling prawns and there's a mate beside him. He starts giving out about immigrants. He's not terribly acid about it or anything. Of course the guy beside him is Latvian, and then it transpires later in the story that his own mother was Czech. He doesn't see any irony in that. He just tells it himself, and there's no commentary, there's no reporter saying and wait till you hear where he came from.

Thus good documentary work is capable of capturing not only the limited dimensions of how speech represents the involved fabric of people's lives, but also how assumed boundaries are less fixed in practice than is often articulated. Yet of course, that they are articulated as fixed is also important. The series' spectrum of migrant experiences is given a cohesive focus by locating them in place and observing the different ways in which they are embedded in it. And by featuring the stories of people born in Balbriggan, Irish people who have moved there, international relationships

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The availability on Eurozone inter-bank transfer (IBAN) means that Western Union services are less utilized by EU citizens in Ireland.

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During this period a limited degree of audience research of ethnic minority and migrant participants was conducted by RTÉ. The data is not publicly available.

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The YouTube video entitled *Balbriggan Civil War* was removed at some point in spring 2009.

The changes in emphasis within the slot parameters can be seen from commissioning round documents. In 2006 the call from Cláracha Gaeilge, Multiculture and Education was ...for a series to fill the Mono slot pre-watershed on RTÉ 1. This could again be a documentary series showing the diversity of stories in Ireland's new communities. However, we would welcome new ideas and new formats...ethnic food and ethnic music are already catered for in existing programming... We also welcome new faces to the screen. In 2007 the ongoing series No Place Like Home meant that the proposal call was restricted to programme development opportunities: We are looking for strong - but not magazine - formats which will play in prime-time slots. The potential formats should be accessible, entertaining and engaging, and should strive to engage as broad an audience as possible. Multiculture or education should not be the over-riding message of these programmes; instead the programmes should find ways of exploring these issues which will engage and stimulate the audience. The 2008 round emphasized moving beyond first wave approaches and developing generic possibilities; stories should move beyond stereotypical portrayals of ethnicity in simple cultural terms and should show Ireland's diversity as a normal part of life. The proposals should be a development on our previous output in this area and ideally include some new on-screen talent. Ideas based on food and music alone are too narrow in focus and are only acceptable if part of a wider context. (cont)

which have been formed there, it subtly throws up a cloud of questions concerning how belonging is thought about, and where belonging is thought about, in a migration society.

Conclusion

This discussion of programming commissioned and developed by RTÉ Cláracha Gaeilge, Multiculture and Education has traced a path from necessary if conventional first-entry multicultural magazine programmes, through the rich, if contested possibilities of hybrid formats, to the multi-valent possibilities of responsive and thoughtful documentary. While this can be seen as a form of programme evolution, it is not destined to proceed in a linear way. It would be a mistake to read this as inexorably moving from broad-stroke celebration and investigation to programmes that increasingly examine and unsettle assumptions about who fits where, and how, in society in Ireland. Documentary series such as Meet the Neighbours tend to be unique. Multicultural programming continues to work on the basis of a defined slot and the parameters this presents for programming.⁴⁴ And every programme is shaped by the need to appeal to broad audiences and to primarily address mainstream expectations on these issues.

The significant *evolutionary* question of how more minority and migrant producers will be integrated into RTÉ programme-making is an open question. There are three areas in which this is an important discussion – (a) in opening up the ways in which dedicated multicultural programming is made (b) in contributing knowledge, experience and context to the integration of *diversity perspectives* across categories of programming (and in making this approach meaningful) and (c) in moving into areas of programming that have nothing to do with multicultural or intercultural remits. Mono represented an interesting attempt to stimulate all three of these priorities; however, with the exception of shorter programmes, the subsequent formats and ventures have not featured migrant or minority presenters. In several interviews the fear of audience reactions to *different accents* has recurred as an RTÉ article of faith – and contrasts in interesting ways with the sustained commentary on accents in the audience research.

Equally importantly, but far less considered, is the impact of the independent production process on media worker diversity. Research in the UK has indicated that professional route-ways through independent production companies are structurally restricted to middle-class entrants who can more regularly call on financial and other forms of support while establishing themselves. Research is also beginning to emerge on the interplay between independent production, free-lance work and equal opportunity policies, and the career prospects of British ethnic minorities (Holgate & McKay 2009). This topic is considered in the conclusion to the report.

The Futures of RTÉ Diversity

While RTÉ has launched an, as yet, unspecified policy on interculturalism, the brand image and rhetoric of diversity has been used with some consistency, and not only as a programme super-strand, over the last three years. This section examines some of the issues raised by the category and rhetoric of diversity. It draws on some of the conceptual and political discussions of diversity featured in Part 1.

During the week of April 7–14 2008, RTÉ broadcast a series of programmes *celebrating diversity* as part of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, and used the occasion to re-launch a Diversity Programming strand. This initiative is at least the second time in which *diversity* has been employed to organize programming which relates to Ireland as a *migration nation* and which simultaneously forges links with programming areas that can be understood as of minority interest. In 2005 RTÉ's new diversity super-strand was designed to include avowedly multicultural programmes, programmes previously categorized as *regional affairs*, and religious programming, based less on a normative idea of diversity than on a pragmatic re-organisation. Despite not involving any reduction in religious programming, the move was roundly criticized and perceived as *down-shifting*. Diversity, according to Bishop Joseph Duffy, is a *miscellaneous category* that, as John Cooney observed in The Irish Independent, combines religion with various minority interests as a sub-division of what marketing managers describe as *diversity television*. The protests of the Catholic Church were publicly supported by the Church of Ireland, and Jewish and Muslim representative groups, and religious programming was re-instated as a separate department.

While nothing more than an institutional footnote, this incident illustrates the ways in which *diversity*, in taking the place of other categories, identities and languages, creates constant ambivalence. Beyond the pragmatic logic of the re-categorisation of religious programming, it could be understood as denoting a process of diversification beyond the implicit boundaries of ethnic majority/minority interests, in keeping with the public service charter's obligation to *reflect the full range and diversity of cultures within Ireland*. Thus at some level the notion of diversity was an attempt by the broadcaster to recognize a reality of accelerated migration and to respond, and to be seen to respond to it. It is precisely this that courted the Bishop's displeasure: to become *diversity* is to become, very obviously, a minority. Beyond sensitivities about falling church attendances, to become *diversity* is to cease to be *that which is not diversity*. Where there is diversity, there is always that which is not diversity. This incident, in drawing out the implicit boundaries at play in perceptions of how programming is valued, illustrates some of the limitations of diversity as a concept, if not a brand. Despite diversity's suggestion of diffusion and de-centeredness, it has, as an extension of liberal multiculturalism,

We recognise that there may be a development period and a talent search and we welcome submissions which have a development phase. Previous series in this slot appealed to the wider audience while still bringing stories from our new immigrant communities to the screen. We will be looking for a similar broad appeal in any new submission and will especially welcome ideas that bring new perspectives from genres other than factual documentary or magazine.

a constitutive ethno-national centre, unquestioned and assumed, which non-normative diversity is organized around.

RTÉ's operationalisation of *diversity* as a value and perspective is congruent with the approach of wider international institutions, and broadcasters, as discussed in Part 1. It is also evident that its thinking on diversity is shaped by formal and informal influences from a range of overlapping and sometimes divergent institutional discourses. The current shape of RTÉ's approach can be contingently assembled from the website, programming and documentation circulated during April 2008 during Intercultural Week.

Website and public awareness: the website launched for the awareness week acts as a statement of public commitment – *RTÉ celebrates diversity 365 days a year, RTÉ supporting interculturalism* – as a brand, a campaign site and as a portal for reclassifying different streams of programming under the category of *diversity*. It clearly employs *diversity* as a synonym for *cultural diversity*. The website also acts as a network node by providing a quite extensive set of links to NGOs and migrant-led organisations. It includes a calendar of events that also provides the only interactive possibility on the site (to inform of events by email). The aim of updating and maintaining this site as an active resource following the 2008 campaign week has not been sustained.

Programming: the diversity initiative for Intercultural week brought together a range of programming streams from television and radio. Specific programmes were produced for the week, with a key emphasis on magazine-style perspectives on migrant lives and experiences around Ireland in Seoige and O'Shea, and Nationwide. These programmes were combined with then existing, dedicated *multicultural* programmes such as No Place Like Home and Spectrum, and radio programmes sourced from the EBU. The third stream of programmes involves a re-categorisation of mainstream current affairs programmes deemed relevant either to migrant communities or to the majority audience, such as George Lee in China and Who's Afraid of Islam? (though both of these programmes also featured segments about Chinese and Muslim people in Ireland). On the website, despite the adoption of *diversity*, it is used interchangeably with *multiculturalism* and *interculturalism*, perhaps reflecting the ongoing debate within RTÉ on what these terms mean in institutional practice. Diversity as a category is a clear attempt to engage with migration and migrants, yet the categorisation of the programmes often entails a focus on all foreigners in Ireland. This is understandable in programming terms, however it complicates further the implicit understanding that diversity is a compensatory category organized around people who are seen as diverse. In other words, diversity is not empirical, it is discursive, and English and Swedish people in Ireland are not often expected or made to embody diversity.

Institutional structures: diversity policies are central to RTÉ's employment procedures and a definition of diversity which mirrors the Irish Equality Authority's definition is featured prominently on the website. This definition of institutional respect for diversity is explicitly linked to programming approaches:

The aim of the diversity policy is to create a work environment free of discrimination, particularly on grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race, class or membership of the traveller community. As a public service broadcaster RTÉ is committed to serve all sections of society in our programming and related activities, in attitudes portrayed on air and in our publications.

Conclusion

The turn to diversity in organisations, and the special dimensions of this in broadcasting organisations, recalls the genre of questions asked by Ahmed (2007) and Tittle & Lentin (2008), among others: *to what do we appeal when we appeal to diversity? Why celebrate diversity, and what is being celebrated?* RTÉ's recent turn to diversity is a public statement and political commitment to a *migration nation*; however the dimensions of this turn are still ambivalent. Some diversity programming is capable of intertwining stories and perspectives that give a notion of diversity, and the experience of multiple levels and forms of change, some substance. Others however maybe regarded as sailing close to what Ghassan Hage (2000) terms a celebratory *middle class multiculturalism* that configures diversity as a form of collective cultural capital (their difference is our diversity) and that situates discrimination as a product of too little exposure to diversity, and stubborn individual/audience ignorance and prejudice.

It would seem that – formally and informally – RTÉ's diversity approach is being shaped by the different policy regimes discussed in Part 1, where there is a constant crossover and slippage between *diversity* and *cultural diversity*. An anti-discrimination understanding is visible in employment practices, and this impacts on how the role of programming is presented. The diversity super-strand is congruent with the *social capital* understanding dominant in, for example, the BBC, SVT and the EBU. Finally, diversity as an encompassing programme category can be currently understood – despite diversity often being deployed to avoid the controversies that surround *multiculturalism* – as being primarily a multiculturalist logic of recognising and celebrating difference, with an emerging sense of the limitations of this transient approach.

The recent move to appoint a Diversity Coordinator in Radio, but not in any other IBD, raises questions for the future as to the place and meaning of diversity work within the new cross-division initiative on interculturalism.

TG4 – Telifis na Gaeilge

TG4 – Telifis na Gaeilge – has been in existence since late 1996 and became an independent statutory entity, independent of RTÉ on 1 April 2007. It is a public service broadcaster regulated by the BAI and as such must produce a public service broadcasting statement. This current draft of this statement states that the station should provide a range of programmes:

Primarily in The Irish language;

- That reflect the cultural diversity of the whole island of Ireland;
- That entertain, inform and educate;
- That provide coverage of sporting, religious and cultural activities;
- Of news and current affairs, primarily in the Irish language;
- That provide coverage of proceedings in the Houses of the Oireachtas and the European Parliament.⁴⁵

Thus, as with RTÉ, the focus of the station is on serving society in Ireland through a similar reference to whole island cultural diversity. TG4's public service statement (pg 4) complements this by stating that they must: **Have regard to the need for the formation of public awareness and understanding of the values and traditions of countries other than the State, including in particular, those of other EU Member States.** The challenge for TG4 is to develop the contemporary demands of these commitments primarily through the medium of the Irish language. TG4 sees itself as a broadcasting and Internet service that provides Irish language programming and emphasises regional and non-metropolitan perspectives. While the channel is a mainstream, national service, its slogan *Súil eile* suggests it aims to provide alternative perspectives, and their location in the West of Ireland contributes, in their opinion, to their ability to provide these alternative perspectives on society in Ireland. For example, the 2008 annual report restates their desire to cover regional news stories and issues not covered by other national news outlets (2008:6). Their remit includes broadcasting to Northern Ireland, and the new web service is centrally aimed at providing access to their programming through TG4 beo (live) for audiences living outside Ireland.⁴⁶

TG4 acquires, produces and commissions programming. In interview, Pádraic Ó Ciardha, Deputy Chief Executive, reflected on two particular series in relation to how the channel's programmes aim to educate and entertain their audience through *examining other cultures*. The documentary series *Fíorscéal* – which regularly engages with what it calls *non-Anglophone* perspectives on global issues – featured individual life stories from Europe that were made in Spanish, French, German and

Italian, and were re-voiced into Irish. The second is a TG4 commission called *Ceol Chuairt*, where a well known Irish musician travels to trace the links between Irish music and music in different parts of the world.

Beyond the parameters of the public service broadcasting statement, and TG4's general commitment to a diversity of perspectives, there are no official documents or action plans specifically addressing cultural diversity and multiculturalism. The perspective elaborated in interview argues that a constant attention to TG4's mission will allow an *organic* reflection of contemporary society to emerge without recourse to special initiatives:

Our programming if it's being true to Ireland it has to reflect cultural diversity and again, without sounding too grandiose about it, that's how we try and do it, rather than having policies and delivering lectures.

What exactly is meant by this idea of organic emergence is detailed with reference to TG4's flagship soap opera, *Ros na Rún*: Early on, *Ros na Rún* which is our soap opera, they ran a storyline which was about, a coloured guy in it, that was actually based on real life. He, the coloured guy in it, he has been adopted and brought up through Irish so he was Irish speaking.

In common with other broadcasters, little or no feedback has been received through current audience research methods as to the needs and interests of migrant audiences:

No there is no great change in terms of cultural diversity in terms of what our audiences are saying now than what they were saying fifteen or seventeen years ago when we came on air.

The station has been instrumental in founding the World Indigenous Broadcasters Television Network to link to other minority language and indigenous culture broadcasters, for example in New Zealand and in Canada.⁴⁷ The station is also a participant in the annual Celtic Media Festival and is part of the European Broadcasting Union and in particular SIRCON, which is an offshoot of the EBU for smaller regional broadcasters. These organisations are opportunities to meet with other *cultural minority broadcasters* and share experiences. When asked what these organisations did in terms of cultural diversity the main activities, apart from conferences and competitions, were in relation to programme exchange and some programme making. However programme exchange is not always a ready-made answer to diversification:

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Public Service Statement. Available at www.tg4.ie/bearla/corp/psb/ accessed 13th Oct. 2009. pg 3

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www.tg4.tv programmes are available for 35 days after they are shown on air, and as long as they are not geo-blocked by other countries where the rights are owned by other broadcasters.

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www.witbn.org

n the original research design of this project, it was initially decided to exclusively concentrate on commercial and public service broadcasting. The reasons for this were partly pragmatic – to manage the scope of the research – but this pragmatism was based on an assumption that community radio had so much experience in this field that researching it may be extraneous. While this assumption was based on admiration for community radio's work, the research team realized that omitting the sector may, whatever their intentions, have come across as dismissive. Furthermore, it would have had the unintended consequence of confirming the widespread assumption that the media sectors cannot, despite their

2003:6–7

different missions, orientations and practices, learn something from each other. In particular, it ran the risk of confirming the even more widespread assumption that other sectors have nothing to learn from community media. Therefore it was decided that community media should be integrated into the study. This note on changing research methodology is also therefore a qualification; this discussion does not pretend to be an exhaustive or even sufficiently wide-ranging discussion of community radio programming over the timeframe of the research. Instead, it tries to capture some of the programmes, strategies and debates current in community media concerning migration, broadcasting and cultural diversity, through interviews, focus groups, and desk research.

You have to be careful though... TV directors go off to conferences and say this is fantastic, we must all swap programmes tomorrow but when you get the tape back and you actually put it up on air you own audience can wear a certain amount of it, but not too much of it. Its a question of, – it sounds like xenophobia and its not – modern audiences and even if kids change forms and platforms and go from webs to this and that, they are very conservative and they like their staid formulas. Too much innovation, whilst they plead for it... they actually don't want it.

The position and experience of TG4 led Pádraic to reflect on the ambiguities of specialist or community-oriented programming on national broadcasters. An awareness that the development of TG4 has led to less Irish language programming on RTÉ led to a discussion of *ghettoising* and that developing similar programming/channels for other minority interests ran a similar danger. Policy commitments may be similarly counter-productive. Any potential cultural diversity unit, it was argued, should be located outside Dublin and not attempt to develop programming that was *well intentioned* but really about *outsiders looking in*. Further obligations with regard to cultural diversity and public service broadcasting might incur costs that a station of TG4's focus and scale could not afford:

Of the 500, 900, 12,000 TV stations in Europe there's only one Irish language one. It should do what it does, as best it can, reflecting the mores and issues, aspirations and news of its audiences, real and imagined. To labour it with additional obligations – so much parliamentary broadcasting, so much gender ecology and that, may be well intentioned, but may make the already precarious nature of what its trying to do, even more difficult. We would see cultural diversity at the core of what we do. We'd like to think that because a lot of people who are making the programmes for us are themselves culturally diverse. In other words that they stand out from their own communities by virtue of their attachment to the language.

COMMUNITY MEDIA

Community Radio⁴⁸

The development of community radio in Ireland within the wider context of the community and voluntary sector – and through the activism of groups specifically engaged in anti-poverty work, combating social exclusion and community arts – is well-documented at this point (Day 2003, Farren 2007). Given this context, and the commitment of community radio both to media access for geographically located communities, and political solidarity with marginalized communities of interest or descent, the extent

of engagement with people who migrate and migrant groups is extensive and sustained. Within this spectrum, it is also possible to observe a broad range of programme formats, styles and justifications, and to interpret programming and initiatives as emerging from committed anti-racist practice, multicultural celebration, and a difference-blind access for all approach.

The AMARC Community Radio Charter for Europe places particular emphasis on the need for radio to reflect the diversity of *cultures and traditions* that constitute local life, and how this can be fostered through freedom of expression and active participation. Anchored in the over-arching principle of *the right to communicate*, article 5 of the charter states that community radio should **provide a right of access to minority and marginalized groups and promote and protect cultural and linguistic diversity**. The BCI Policy on Community Radio Broadcasting locates community radio as one of three pillars of broadcasting in Ireland, distinct in its relationship to geographical communities or communities of interest, and one where broadcasting output is inseparable from its developmental goals and processes. In reflecting on the democratic structures of community radio and different understandings of and strategies for community development, a research report commissioned by the Community Radio Forum in 2003 offered the following summary:

Although community radio stations are functionally radio broadcasters, the radio-broadcasting element of community radio should be seen as a medium rather than end in itself. This is in contrast with mainstream radio broadcasters, at national and local level, which are predominantly concerned with public broadcasting alone or as for profit commercial entities. As the foregoing suggests, radio broadcasting for community radio stations is more akin to a means toward ends which generally aim to provide the stimulus to development efforts within localities. These efforts are based on aims and principles, which seek to use radio to enhance participation, combat poverty and disadvantage. This understanding of the role of community radio posits the sector akin to a wide variety of non profit community and voluntary initiatives, projects and organisations which aim to promote socio-economic inclusion and equality within defined geographic and/or communities of interest.

It follows from this – and it is an overlap regularly noted in interview and discussions for this report – that migrant and minority individuals, groups and populations are doubly included in the target groups of community radio; as local inhabitants with equal right of access, and as disadvantaged groups with a particular interest in the countervailing possibilities of *finding a voice* through community media. The Community Radio Forum report noted that many stations specifically cited **ethnic minorities, asylum-seekers and refugees** as a social group targeted

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for specific forms of engagement. According to the summary, typical activities included **training, programmes directed towards ethnic minorities in cultural terms, programmes aimed at providing information about minorities through interview** with the rationale to **promote cultural diversity, foster integration in communities and raise awareness of minority cultures** (2003:15). The report also notes that this target group was less likely to be of relevance to radio stations in rural areas; however, at the time of this report, that picture has changed significantly.

The following sections cut into the programming aims, approaches and formats current in community radio. It departs from the observation that community radio currently plays a role that is becoming increasingly vexed in commercial and public media-access and meaningful participation in media production.

Programmes – A Survey Discussion

The right of access provided by community radio to prospective programme-makers does two things. It undermines the current preoccupation in other media sectors as to the benefits of one type of *intercultural* programme over another, by allowing programme-makers to shape a format with some sense of the interests and needs of their local listenership. It does this in a context where – given the diversity of community interests potentially accommodated in a radio schedule – the prevalent anxiety over *ghetto programming* makes little or no sense. Moreover, the multiplicity of migrant-produced programmes scheduled by the larger community radio stations at any one time since at least 2005–6 means that different kinds of programmes rub alongside each other; from native-language broadcasts (which have evolved to bilingual programmes in some instances), minority community information bulletins; to music and cultural event shows; to programmes explicitly aiming to debate *multiculturalism*, a *New Ireland*, *interculturalism*, and so forth.

In commenting on the overlapping and divergent ways in which community radio stations engage in community development, the Community Radio Forum report analysed a *variegated continuum* of approaches:

At one end, we see the more process oriented community development, which has a clear focus on disadvantaged groups, participation, social exclusion and empowerment. At the other end are community stations that can be seen as being closer to the provision of a local service to the community, and the development of a sense of community. The reality is that not all the stations fit easily into one model or the other and they can differ from time to time and issue to issue.

This continuum has some value as an initial way of organizing a discussion of programme approaches. Most of community radio stations have facilitated programmes aimed at nationally-defined communities, and frequently in their native languages. These programmes build capacity and participation, yet are primarily broadcast as local services. Polish and (Mandarin) Chinese programmes have been most prominent, and while there is a notable decrease in this form of programming over the last number of years,⁴⁹ this needs to be explained by a number of factors – including the evolution of particular programmes and the programme-makers interests – and not solely in terms of the mobility of those involved. Even allowing for this, native-language and national community of interest programming is still evident in summer/autumn 2009 schedules, for example Polska Tygodniowska on Near FM, Polisz Athlone on Athlone FM, and the significant range of programme on the community of interest station Dublin City FM which is discussed below.

It is noticeable that many national-community oriented programmes are now broadcast bilingually (while varying hugely in their balance and approach in practice), such as RosFM's Brazilian Beat (a music and discussion show) Dundalk FM's The Craic with China. There are obvious practical reasons for this, and bilingual shows are eager to communicate to the *community within the community* as well as the listening community as a whole. However it also displays the way in which programmes, in various ways, may move along a continuum from providing a local service to a specific local listenership and projecting or (re) developing that programme as a contribution to some form of normative goal – *interculturalism*, *integration*, and so forth.

This is evident in the prevalent range of music programmes – particularly – *world music* shows – that project a programme identity as being committed to *multiculturalism* and for *minority audiences* while existing comfortably within the music schedule of the station. Within these programmes, of course, different levels of projection and overt political commitment exist; from letting the *music speak for itself* to linking musical items to a calendar of special events, and so forth. Similarly – and as the discussion of African Scene (below) details – programmes such as Dundalk FM's Straight Talk Africa are likely to take on increased dimensions as *intercultural* programming, due to being broadcast in English, and as a consequence of the specific social and political issues that impact on the lives of Africans in Ireland.

A final category of programmes and initiatives involves those that can be understood as consciously striving to contribute to public understanding and public debate on questions of immigration. In common with other genres, dedicated multicultural/*intercultural* discussion programmes have begun to evaporate, and it requires further analysis

This section is not based on a systematic monitoring of schedules over time, though the schedules have been checked frequently during 2009 and discussed in a majority of cases with station managers or volunteers in the stations. On the basis of this kind of informal survey, it seems that at least 5 native language programmes (in Mandarin Chinese, Russian and Polish) have ceased during 2009, and at least 3 national/ethnic community discussion shows produced and presented by people from these communities. In conversations and email exchanges, the recurring reason for this was the relationship of the programme to particular individuals rather than specific community groups and organisations, implying that when the programme-makers moved/lost interest/had a change in their working conditions, the programmes ceased. This is far from unusual in community radio, however it raises the issue of whether specific forms of outreach are possible or necessary in smaller community radio stations (from where the majority of the programmes have ceased).

as to how and why the community radio sector has mirrored public broadcasting in this regard. Are these programmes simply subject to the same exigencies as the minority community-oriented programmes discussed above? Or is there similarly a general sense that these kinds of formats belong to a particular period of time in society in Ireland, and that for whatever reason, there is no longer a need to dwell explicitly on immigration, dwelling and interaction? Nevertheless several programmes of this nature still exist, and are promoted in the scheduling as ongoing explorations of socio-cultural change. Dundalk FM broadcasts Global Village, and RosFM replaced Across the Divide (discussed below) with Global Affairs, described on the website as catering for:

Our many ethnic minorities residing within Roscommon town. Presenters from various ethnic groups [ie Brazilian community etc] present one hour of world music and chat, including features such as interviews with various contributors and discussions on global issues. The featured ethnic group have the opportunity to share the experiences and customs of their homeland and also promote and maintain their own culture and identity via RosFm. The broadcast is both English and the language of the featured ethnic group.

As this description suggests, even within the genre of *multi-cultural programming* of this type, there are a wide variety of different approaches and emphases depending on the programme's relation to local community groups, perceived relationships between migrant and ethnic minority groups, the relationship between forms of – broadly speaking – political discussion and cultural celebration, and so forth. These issues are explored in the two programmes discussed at length below.⁵⁰ A common strategy in many stations has been to develop special programmes and broadcasts around event days; Europe Day, for example, has been an opportunity for some stations without a critical mass of migrant listeners to integrate features about/for and even by eastern European and Baltic states nationals. NEAR FM has a detailed calendar of such events, and has scheduled special programming for Africa Day since 1995 – with this day taking on amplified anti-racist significance during the *asylum anxiety* politics of the late 1990s.⁵¹ Currently they schedule special programming and events for International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, UN Refugee Day, Africa Day, and the anniversary of Kristallnacht.

NEAR FM's approach is far more marked by an explicit politics of anti-racism than any other community radio station, and this is understood both within a broader politics of social justice, anti-discrimination and social inclusion in Ireland, and the station's developed focus on issues of development and global justice. More recent programme initiatives have also featured interesting ways of working through what interculturalism

means for programme making. The seven-part series *Novel Interculturalism*, broadcast in Spring 2009, engaged Coolock library reader's group in discussions of novels from Nigeria, China, Latin America, Poland, Romania, *the Islamic World* and Ireland with a discussion leader from the national context in question. Each hour-long programme dealt with two novels, and the focus on literary works of different genres and styles plays with the conventional way in which representatives are asked to discuss their *national culture*. NEAR FM, and Dublin South FM with Dublin City 103.2FM, have both accessed Sound and Vision funding to make documentary series exploring the lives of ethnic minorities in Ireland; NEAR broadcast a two-part *Islam in Ireland* in early 2009, which is available as a podcast on its website.⁵² Dublin South FM and Dublin City co-broadcast a 13-episode series *Little India in Ireland* between March and June of 2009.⁵³

PROGRAMME STRATEGIES – TWO DISCUSSIONS

Across the Divide

Irena Cvetkovic developed *Across the Divide* as a volunteer at RosFM with support from the Sound and Vision scheme, first broadcasting in November 2006. Described as a **one hour documentary aimed at Foreign Communities and Irish people who want to know and learn more about their fellow citizens**, the programme featured guests from different backgrounds and built coverage of national traditions around a studio discussion with them. As Irena recalls, the significant presence of Brazilian migrants in the Roscommon area meant that Brazil was an obvious and attractive point of departure, with subsequent programmes featuring people from Poland, Bosnia, Nigeria and Ireland. Furthermore, the approach of basing each programme on the national background of a chosen guest was also a convenient point for departure for attempting to develop what she sees as a form of *intercultural programming*. Each programme ended with an experienced storyteller narrating a folktale or poem from the guest's heritage, a regular feature which also allowed the programme to end on an *up note*.

When Athlone FM was awarded a temporary broadcast licence, Irena began working at the station and brought *Across the Divide* with her, maintaining much the same format and approach. In 2008 the programme was nominated for a MAMA award in the *broadcast media* section, and it continues to broadcast online while Athlone FM applies for a full broadcasting licence. Irena explains that the approach of the programme has been to predominantly invite *guests from other countries*, but to focus on both their experience of living here while educating audiences about their national backgrounds. This has been increasingly complemented by including Irish guests who have lived and worked for significant periods

For a series of this substance it is to be hoped that it is made available as a podcast. The series was discussed in an article in *Metro Éireann* that interviewed the series' co-producer Sudhansh Verma. The interview details how the show took one year to produce, and interviewed Indians living all over the state. The interview is at pains to position Indians in Ireland in terms of their significant contribution to the Irish economy and the implications of this for the current economic context: *From our extensive research into the Indian community during our year-long production of this series, it's quite clear that Indians who come to Ireland, whether to work for a company or set up their own business or whatever, most often succeed beyond all measure, he said. What unites all the Indian entrepreneurs interviewed in the series is hard work, discipline and a steely determination to succeed. This is also true for the majority of Indians working for companies in Ireland. Verma added: In the series, we not only uncover the experiences of Indian employees in Ireland, but just as importantly – especially in the midst of our current recession – we also turn the spotlight on those many intrepid Indian entrepreneurs in Ireland who've successfully set up their own businesses here and helped to create enterprise and employment. He said many contributors strongly recommended that all Indians and foreign nationals make it a personal duty to help energise the Irish economy and create more enterprise. New radio series to lift the lid on lives of Dublin's Indians, Metro Éireann, Thursday March 12 2009.*

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www.rosfm.ie/tuesday.htm (accessed 19 September 2009)

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For a brief discussion of this see the NEAR FM chapter in Rosemary Day (ed) (2007) *Bicycle Highway: Celebrating Community Radio in Ireland*.

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www.nearfm.ie/podcast/index.php?id=515

elsewhere, either to reflect on their experiences, or to provide information and context on issues in the news (for example on Zimbabwe during the elections in 2008). As an interviewer, Irina is keen to move beyond an obvious focus purely on national differences and to open up a sense of the other divides which exist, ie the diversity and differences in the experiences of people who have migrated to Ireland, within and beyond national groups. As Irina notes, including more Irish guests with experiences relevant to the themes of the show also increases the listenership, which has knock-on benefits for other episodes.

Irina argues that the programme is unabashedly educational, not only striving to bring different kinds of voices to the airwaves, but preparing the programme so that she can provide precise information on the different contexts and traditions. This, she argues, is a key dimension of interculturalism, opening people's minds by providing connections to other cultures in a variety of ways. *Across the Divide* has developed an extensive network of formal and informal contacts with community groups and individuals. As Irina points out, it isn't hard to find people of different nationalities, what is important is finding out about their stories, and the kinds of issues and conversations their stories are likely to evoke. In this vein, informal contacts sustain the programme as much as formal relationships with community groups, important though these are.

Irina's experience of moving to Ireland and her status as an *insider-outsider* is a key dimension of the show's tone and approach, and in her opinion, of the willingness of guests to open up about their lives on the programme. As she puts it, they may actually have experiences and attitudes that are *poles apart* from hers, but the shared experience of *being different* is an important factor. Irina argues that this is especially important when the programme tackles serious cultural differences and political-economic issues that impact on the lives of the guests. The programme does not have a *politics*, as such an explicit approach would not fit with the needs of guests in many instances. The freedom people feel to speak about these issues on air is influenced by their status in Ireland, and *local radio is local* – guests generally don't feel particularly free to criticize political developments or attitudes they may have encountered. However she notes that the programme follows any changes in migration and labour-related laws closely, as these are of keen interest to the listenership. It has also been the case that asylum-seekers have been prepared to come on the show and discuss their frustration at being denied the chance to work and integrate into society in Ireland.

The national attention paid to the programme, and the obvious networks of local contacts in which it is involved, have led to the programme, and Irina, being approached with increasing frequency as a source for stories by national broadcasters. This has happened with some frequency

as mainstream news looks to cover the experiences of migrants in the economic crisis of 2008–9, and of majority attitudes to them. One thing she is always keen to stress is that resulting stories should steer clear of sensationalism, or of looking for straightforward conflicts where they don't exist. As to the future, Irina sees *Across the Divide* as of increasing importance in a political climate where many are keen to emphasise that *they are going home*, and in a broadcasting context where similar, dedicated programmes are being stood down. She is now also involved in producing the programme which is broadcast after *Across the Divide* on Saturday evenings, *Polisz Athlone*, a programme of Polish music, news from Poland, and news and features of interest to Polish people in the Athlone area.

African Scene

Katie Moylan (2009) has conducted an in-depth study of the Dublin City/Anna Livia FM⁵⁴ programme *African Scene*, and this section primarily summarises her findings and analysis. The programme has been broadcast since March 2005. At the time of Moylan's study in mid-2006, the programme was presented by Olatunji *TJ* Idowu and Lizelle Joseph, and is now presented by three presenters named on the website as *Vincent, Priscilla and Ife*. As Moylan notes, [the broadcast space carved out at Anna Livia FM... \(has been\) historically committed to migrant produced programming](#), with shows in 2006 including *The Russian Show*, *Chinatown Radio* (in Mandarin) *African Scene* (in English) *The Korean Show* (in Korean) and four Polish interest and Polish language programmes. In 2009, Dublin City FM lists *ethnic programming* as one of its six areas of interest on its homepage, and the current list of programmes includes surviving programmes *African Scene*, *The Korean Show*, *Polish 120H* and *The Russian Show*. These programmes have been joined by *Bollywood Masala* (a movie programme focusing on the Indian film industry); *The Russian Language Show* (chat and music for the Russian speaking community); and *Bridging the Gaps* (a broad-ranging intercultural discussion programme described as having an *when East meets West* angle).

As Moylan notes, this consistent range of programming over time demonstrates a real commitment to the idea of integrating different ethnically-defined communities into a Dublin broadcast community, and is one of the most significant sources of native-language programming in the state. *African Scene* is broadcast on Thursday evenings, and mainly consists of live studio debate between presenters and callers. The mission of the show is currently described as follows:

[Tune into African Scene with Vincent, Priscilla and Ife on Thursdays at 8:30pm to hear Africans in Dublin debate the issues that affect them](#). The programme serves as a source of education, information and

encouragement to Africans in the city. The show also features some of the best African music. African Scene bridges the gap between the African community and the people of Dublin. The programme won a Media Multicultural Award (MAMA Awards) in 2006 – for aiding integration and promoting multiculturalism in Ireland.⁵⁵

In common with many of the programmes discussed in this report, African Scene has built up an important network of formal and informal contacts from which news and contributors can be sourced. As Moylan notes, the stories covered over the 11-week period of her involvement with the programme could not easily be classified as of interest solely to an African audience. While these stories were in the majority, coverage of events in Ireland, for example, potentially appealed to a wider audience, and a **programme about community initiatives for migrant communities in Dublin could potentially appeal to the broader migrant community in Dublin** (2009:115). An implication of this analysis is to render problematic the assumption that *ethnic programmes* can be categorised as *multicultural narrowcasting*, as opposed to *intercultural programmes* that encourage exchange and interaction. The strategies of producers, and the habits of audiences, are rarely so neatly delineated. As Moylan notes, different programmes combined different modes of address to potentially mixed audiences, and she examines how the inclusion of a newspaper review section:

2009:116

Became a springboard for critique and debate over representations of migrant communities in the mainstream public sphere. In the context of migrant produced programmes in Dublin community radio, African Scene has a greater potential reach than non-English language programmes and regularly addresses issues relevant to the larger migrant community as well as those of specifically African interest.

In common with other programmes analysed here, the recognition of some degree of shared migrant experience is highlighted as a dimension of the programme that allows it to connect with wider migrant audiences, as one presenter stated in interview:

2009:116

We see ourselves all as immigrants, so whether we're black, whether we're white, whether we're Polish, at this moment in time in Ireland we are all under the same blanket, regardless of the colour of our skin or our nationality.

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www.dublincityfm.ie/programmes/ethnic/african-scene/ (accessed September 14 2009).

Moylan discusses how this approach, and the regular feature of the newspaper review, allowed the programme to consistently criticize national newspapers impoverished representation of migrants and migrant communities. These discussions may then serve as the basis for discussions of experiences of racism, and approaches to dealing with it (2009:122).

Why Should Community Radio Engage with a Multicultural Society?

At the annual Community Radio Féile hosted by Craol, and held in Claremorris in April 2008, a discussion group was conducted on the basis of several key questions with volunteers and staff from a number of radio stations. The aim of the discussion was to work from an evaluation of how different stations were involving migrant communities to a discussion of what community radio could do and why. Central to the discussions was an ongoing questioning of how various understandings of difference relate to the core work of community radio.

The initial question proposed by the facilitator – why should community radio engage with a multicultural society – was swiftly reversed to ask a related, and equally provocative, question; why should multicultural society engage with community radio? This question and its reversal involved two main strands of thought. With regard to the first question, it was regarded as being central to community radio's mission – to serve the whole community regardless of who they are, and to give everyone a voice and meaningful access. As one participant noted, *the reality is we live in a multicultural society, and our ethos is recognition of everyone in the community regardless*. However most participants were in doubt that the core mission of access was amplified by the need to take a stand and act as a countervailing force to the neglect of minority voices, and the absence of minority participation, in the commercial media sector. Some of these statements of purpose included:

- To open people's minds and educate them to appreciate different cultures, thus bringing down barriers;
- To challenge our own – majority community – conceptions and misconceptions;
- A duty to decrease prejudice, fear and racism through a promotion of understanding and knowledge;
- To encourage communities within the community to interact and educate themselves about each other;
- To make programmes that give the disempowered some power back.

Despite general agreement with these aspirations, several critical and dissenting points are worth noting. The reversal of the question noted above suggested not only the idea that community radio must work through outreach and facilitation to be relevant to its listening/producing base. It was also a caution against *becoming seduced by a vision of ourselves as saviours* of marginalized communities and becoming gate-keepers of what is good for them – programming for and by minorities must emerge from their needs and wants. As one participant put it, there is a danger that *we are calling the shots, controlling the debate, keeping people in their*

box (of culture). An example of this tendency was linked to the widespread use of the term *New Irish*; what if people don't want to be *the New Irish* and prefer to define themselves in other ways? However others saw a power in the term; *It means hearing their accents, showing the lives they have built here*. Still others wondered what these discussions meant for how community radio engaged with Irish Travellers; it was argued that there is a danger in assuming that racism arrives with migrants, and that the experience of Travellers is important in dispelling that myth.

This kind of observation kindled a discussion of how day-to-day production work necessarily involves working understandings and assumptions, but that sometimes these assumptions are not adequate to the pace at which issues in society change. For some this was a key issue, and there was some discussion of how producers needed to become more conscious of how *canny* racism had become, disguised in such loaded terms as *non-national*. For others these concerns were somewhat tangential to the process of making sure people had access to making the kinds of programmes they found important.

There was a wide diversity of perspectives on what different stations do in the name of multicultural or intercultural programming. One discussion centred on whether any content that featured foreign voices or issues could be classified as multicultural, or whether this involved programming that was specifically interested in or developed by migrants in relatively disempowered social and political positions. As one participant noted, *it doesn't make sense if a discussion of Russian literature is counted as multiculturalism* – however as against this it was argued that broadcasting as Gaeilge could be classified as multicultural by some native born Irish people, and that this kind of shift in perspective was rarely discussed. The example of The Angelus at 6.00 on RTÉ radio and television was given as an example; an irrelevance to some, the intrusion of religion into public space for others, it was also argued that it constitutes a kind of ritual heritage for older generations that should be respected within any kind of multicultural ethos.

The discussion turned to approaches to programming, and while many participants noted that they had or used to have programmes by/for migrants, that the programmes were harder to sustain. The life exigencies of many of the presenters – most obviously their regional or national mobility as migrant workers – meant that programmes *left* with them. On this topic a very fundamental point was raised in relation to working with asylum-seekers, refugees and those rendered vulnerable by their status or negative experiences of life in Ireland. It was noted that building trust with people who often did not trust media – as a result of misrepresentation – was crucial, and that community media needed to work to build this trust despite its assumptions of how it may be benevolently regarded.

As some people argued, the approach and content of programmes is up to the community members who make them, but that there was a debate to be had about whether stations should encourage a more *intercultural* approach. This was defined as a *space of interaction and sharing* within programmes and within the stations themselves. It was also suggested that a *wider idea of multiculturalism* needed to encompass sexual identities and other *diversity* factors, both to be more representative, and to avoid the pitfalls of trapping people in narrow boxes.

Several other questions were slated for debate in the workshop, but not sufficiently discussed to allow a summary of perspectives. However reproducing them here gives a sense of the kinds of issues raised:

- Can a majority Irish person present a multicultural show?
- When is airing anti-immigration/migrant views balance/freedom of speech, and when is it giving a platform?
- Do single faith/language/ethnic community programmes lead to ghetto radio?

Conclusion

Community radio's ethos, regardless of differences in context and approach, remains crucial to any vision of media space reflecting the diversity of voices, perspectives and opinions that exist in society in Ireland. This brief study has examined how both the general right of access, and different ways of encouraging and facilitating minority access, have allowed an impressive spectrum of programmes to be developed across community stations. It is also clear that community radio activists are committed to the role their stations can play in providing both local community services and programmes aiming to create space for debate and reflection on *a new Ireland*. In this arena, the paucity of programming in other broadcasting sectors, and the increased ability to podcast and network programming beyond catchment and broadcast areas, suggests that community radio stations can provide a flow of programming to migrant audiences. This flow has more in common with their wider transnational media flows than with their consumption of media in Ireland.

Nevertheless, there seems to be an evaporation of programming that, while explicable, runs the risk of being understood in terms of the prevalent assumption that *they've gone home* and that dedicated programming is out-moded, or divisive. How – and whether – this can be countered by outreach strategies shaped by the resources of stations and the demographics of the community is a matter for consideration by stations themselves. In the mid-term, the development by Craol of digital programme-sharing systems has the potential to allow the documentaries and special series which have been produced to be shared more widely.

Community Television

Community television in Ireland pre-dates the high-profile launch of Dublin Community Television (DCTV) in 2008 and Cork Community Television (CCTV) in 2009, however the development of these platforms has significantly increased the presence and importance of community media in Ireland.⁵⁶ The potential of community television for the media participation and involvement of people who migrate is important, and this section tracks and discusses how that potential is currently being realized.

DCTV broadcasts on Chorus NTL 802, and an increasing range of programmes are available through its website. CCTV is a close neighbour on channel 803, and its web TV and web programme archives are currently in development. Both stations are not-for-profit, advertising free services which are run as democratic co-operatives, with membership open to individuals and groups and organisations. Both stations are run on comparatively tiny budgets, with financing drawn from – and independence maintained through – membership fees, support from city bodies in Dublin and Cork, and programming funding from the Sound and Vision Fund. In common with community radio in Ireland, community television has developed a very particular ethos and approach to programming, reflecting their philosophy of communication as a right and as a process of community empowerment. While both channels are available in many counties outside Dublin and Cork, their approach is one embedded in the communities of their respective cities, supporting and training individuals and groups to make programming of relevance to their communities.

Empowerment has become a ambiguous term, regularly declared as an organisational aim yet rarely substantiated, and claimed by a vast spectrum of services, consultancies, organisations and groups in an era of flexibilisation and self-manangement (Elliot & Lemert 2006). Community television in Ireland has arguably reclaimed the idea of empowerment as a collective process and situated it in the countervailing possibilities of community media. This countervailing approach has several dimensions. Both community stations are explicitly committed to social justice and equality, and encourage politically critical programming that gives voice to opinions, experiences, causes and ideologies rarely articulated in mainstream media. However this encouragement is not didactic, as it is precisely gate-keeping functions and hierarchical programme-making strategies that community television aims to counter-balance. Pluralism is encouraged by facilitating access to transmission, training and production equipment for as wide a range of individuals and groups as possible, and by providing advice and support in their programming decisions, approaches and practices.

Neither channel takes an editorial line on programme content other than to monitor compliance with statutory codes and standards, and to

debate whether certain approaches reflect the values of the cooperative. Community television often defines itself as a *bottom-up* form of public service, complementing but also challenging the prevailing approach to public service broadcasting organized through traditional institutions. Ciarán Murray – DCTV secretary – described how an approach based on the *right to be seen and heard* should be seen as a challenge to prevailing approaches and broadcasting values, and not as a marginal initiative:

DCTV does not see its role as a gatekeeper for what the community wants to broadcast, but rather as a facilitator of as diverse a range of programmes as possible. DCTV will broadcast a wide range of programme types, some unusual, some familiar. Some content – magazine shows or current affairs – will be of a format that is recognizable to viewers of mainstream television, but with the crucial difference that, rather than a camera crew swooping in for an hour, instead the people whom the stories are about will own the programme. They will decide which aspects of their localities and their lives will be featured and they decide how their stories are told, right down to camera angle, editing, narration and graphics. Some content is of a kind that no other broadcaster in Ireland will air, whether because it's considered too local in focus or because it takes an anti neo-liberal stance or because it's of minority interest, such as certain sports. Even books seem to be regarded by other broadcasters as too much of a minority interest. DCTV is planning a book programme that we will air in prime time. Currently no Irish TV station has a book programme – at any hour. Radical in the context of the Irish media isn't very radical at all.

This section examines the programming relevant to this report that has been produced during 2008–9 on DCTV.⁵⁷ According to Ciarán Moore, ideas for programmes about migration and migrants were plentiful at pitch sessions DCTV ran for Sound and Vision funding ideas, yet in the main it was difficult to see who the programme was being made for and in what ways it empowered the people who were – and herein lay the problem – the subjects of the proposal. Furthermore, programmes exploring experiences of people who have moved to Ireland were plentiful elsewhere. From this first *wave of ideas from Irish people who wanted to make programmes about migrants* one idea was developed and secured funding from Sound and Vision, and that was the 2008 series *A Taste of Home*. The programme fused two established approaches to *multicultural television*. On one level a cookery programme that worked its way through various cuisines, it functioned by asking a migrant family or household to invite Irish people over for dinner, and to involve them in the shopping for and preparation of the meal. Afghan, Chinese, Polish, Nigerian and Romanian hosts invite the cameras and guests into their home, and in carefully edited sequences, introduce their own daily life, stories of

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Province 5 Television (P5TV) has been broadcasting in Navan since 1991. Ballyfermot television (BCA TV) broadcast from 1974 until 1996. For a history of the station see *BCA TV: The Story of Ballyfermot Television* by David Connolly www.cmn.ie/cmnsitenew/track-ark/tol_html/paa.html

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As CCTV began broadcasting at the end of May 2009 it was not possible to include it in the fieldwork for this report.

movement and settlement, and scattered impressions of life and work in society in Ireland. There are no external voice-overs, and the presence of an interviewer is rare.

As Ciarán explains it, the conventional approach of the programme should be seen as a form of *first contact* programming – the kind of series which needed to be produced as a first foray into the area of representing migrant experiences and communities. A Taste of Home is weighted more as an observational documentary than as a cookery programme, and the conventional *first contact* approach of providing a window onto different domestic worlds is skillfully handled through interspersed reflections, the differing perspectives of family members and co-habiting friends, and visual montages of family photos and mementos.⁵⁸ The hosts are living in various different suburbs in Dublin and north Kildare, and visiting dinner guests are sourced through work contacts, school friends of children, the neighbourhood. For some the choice of guests is obvious and easy, for others more difficult. Both in discussions of this choice, and in other dimensions of the programme, there is an easy fluency to the ways in which the hosts relate what they are doing in the programme to the wider public discourse of integration and their supposed responsibilities. Anca from Romania, for example, is enthusiastic about the possibilities of what she calls *integration through food*. Sływia from Poland, on the other hand, remarks dryly that while she would like to say that she hopes people *will get to know something about our life through the programme* that this would be hypocritical. If she really believed it, she would invite Irish people around when the cameras weren't rolling.

DCTV's second series in this field is very different, and for a number of reasons. In June 2008 the BCI, in cooperation with the field of community television in Ireland, launched a special programme scheme called *Community in a Studio*, aimed at supporting twelve community groups to develop studio-based formats of relevance to their work and their members. These groups included the Ethnic Minority Forum (EMF) and the Islamic Cultural Centre, and in the course of the training and development period for the project, they combined their efforts – under the banner of the EMF – into a programme called *The Insight* which broadcast three episodes between May and July 2009. The development of this programme took nearly a year, from training, to the production of a concept, treatments and budgets to the eventual recording of the programmes in late spring/early summer 2009. And as Ciarán points out, this kind of process is the core of community television; the development of self-sustaining programmes by community groups. The Insight, then, is not DCTV doing a *programme on migration*, but a programme on migration-related issues shaped by the importance of exploring these issues and experiences to the member group involved. Thus programming is not commissioned by

policy decisions to cover issues or topics, but by the priorities brought to the screen through outreach and facilitation.

The Insight is presented by Fadwa Smew, directed by Ibrahim Alsagheir, and produced by Bashir Lasceabai, and is described as a **...a program presented to give an understanding on the day to day lives of members from the ethnic minorities in Ireland. The series will deal with their goals for the future, achievements from the past and their views on living in Ireland.**

The production team has previous experience or education in media and journalism, and work with core technical support and general advice from DCTV. This relationship is shaped by the idea that **...as far as possible all of the editorial and all of the core decisions are with the community groups and we provide technicians...we provide people who remove any barriers in production but they do everything else.** However Ciarán is clear about the implicit tensions that exist between what he sees as authentic community development processes and the exigencies of television production, and between ensuring editorial control for groups while ensuring the production of content for broadcast. As he explains:

One of our problems is we constantly have this conflict between the community development process and the empowerment process and agenda that we have and the demands of getting product. You know, we're funded to make television. We, to an extent, have a big beast of a broadcaster there that we have to keep feeding with material. So, you know, if you were doing this on the community development side you make a piece, you would then invite the group in for a screening, then you'd have a facilitated discussion about it, then you'd do another quarter of it of it on the basis of that feedback and everybody would go away and have a think and come back. You could end up in this very, very long expensive process to court a half hour discussion programme. The standard TV version is you ignore all of that and you say right I've got a director and there's that person, they've made the decision, and you are signing a release saying I am the raw material that the director is going to turn into a programme. That is why a lot of people feel that television is disempowering. It comes in and it takes from you and it goes away with stuff, and it always mediates. What community television in general is about is trying to change that.

In this context, the relationship between DCTV and the community group is crucial, and attention is paid to how it is developed over time and between programmes. In the case of the Ethnic Minority Forum, the production team makes decisions, consults and gets feedback from DCTV, and also consults with their platform on thematic issues. This kind of practice involves developing the possibility for production decisions to be made through necessary delegations of responsibility while also

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A Taste of Home was devised and produced by Bernadine Carraher & Sean O' Siochru, directed by Claire Dix and edited by Emmet Reddy. It is worth noting that the Afghan family the Shafaqs were subsequently featured in episode 3 of RTÉ's Meet the Neighbours (first broadcast 29 May 2009)

reflecting on the ways in which the programme reflects the needs and interests of the community group. One of the issues on which the EMF team received important feedback was in shaping the nature of the studio-discussion. From early in the production there was a desire to avoid a stilted, formulaic approach to discussions with migrant or ethnic minority guests, the kind of approach which *looks as though you've done a survey rather than a chatshow reacting to people*. In watching the first three episodes of *The Insight*, it is clear how much work is done between programmes on sharpening the focus and on adjusting it to the particular character and style of the guests. The three episodes to date have been based around – broadly – ethnically-defined communities, from *Arabs* in programme 1 to *Asians* in programme 2 and *Africans* in the final installment to date.

The first programme introduces the general format and approach of bringing in different guests to talk about their experience of life in Ireland. Inevitably it has a pilot feel, casting around for its voice and tone. Each interview proceeds through a fairly set list of background questions, a rigidity, Ciarán notes, shaped not only by novelty and nerves but by the need for the production team to stick to the treatment that had been accepted by the BCI. A consequence of this is the recurring disconnect between the assumptions underlying the questions, and the far more messy, complex stories and opinions of the guests. While the flow of questions focuses on **...how did you get to Ireland, how do you find it, how do you get on with Irish people, many of the young people interviewed in first programme are young Irish Muslims of various national backgrounds, and are therefore somewhat unreceptive to questions about whether or not they would like to return home. Most are also naturally integrated into school and peer groups, youth scenes and sports clubs, and while they respond to questions about how they get on with Irish people**, there is a sense in which they are compelled to speak through the programme's assumptions about the current integration agenda, rather than representing their experiences in their own terms.

In programme two, significant changes have been made to the set, to the frequency and quality of externally recorded inserts, and to the title graphics. Greater responsiveness in the interviews is evident, but it presents a further catch. As Ciarán notes, the fund through which the programme was made does not allow for current affairs broadcasting, and this includes also unplanned conversational turns into areas that can be deemed as *current affairs*. Yet – and as the audience chapter in this report discusses – the lives of people who migrate are frequently politicized and impacted by decisions, policies and political debates set squarely in the realm of current affairs.⁵⁹ Therefore – and without providing specific details here – some of the guests in programme two

who were effected by changes in the work permit scheme could not discuss this, as even a tangential reference to current legislation can breach the terms of compliance. This tension between the actualities of people's lives and the categorical division of programming into discrete areas of interest has implications for the editorial relationship between DCTV and a community group, but is also produced creative solutions. As Ciarán describes it:

One of the things we did around the studio programmes, we formed a contract with those groups where we said look, we are going to facilitate you making your programme. This is not us coming in as TV makers using you to do some interviews and then we cut the interesting stuff out... if you feel that you have a group in and that you want to have that (political or current affairs discussion), we have to make a 29 minute programme for Sound & Vision under the terms of this Agreement, which is Sound & Vision criteria. There's nothing that says we have to stop filming at that point. So what we have done on two occasions is we have continued the conversations. We've called cut and then the presenter turned around and said I just want to return to that issue.

Episode three, which focuses on the *African community*, ranged across discussions of moving and settling, experiences of racism, adapting rap to an Irish context, the work of the Africa Centre, and the campaigns of Patrick Mphoso (Independent) and Tendai Madondo (Greens) in the 2009 local elections. While the exact future of the programme is unclear at the time of writing, it is clear that programme is self-sustaining, and as Ciarán points out, it can be made at any point if the programme-team and the community want to, at minimum cost. In his view, the next step for the programme-makers is not only the future of *The Insight*, but potentially to make programmes about other things. Furthermore, there is a need to constantly evolve the programme formats and approaches to do increased justice to the diversity of experiences that are inevitably constrained by any one approach. When it comes to reflecting on the audience for the show, DCTV generally rejects the legitimacy of focusing on viewing figures as a measurement – and implicit indicator of success – for their programming. However, as Ciarán points out, people want to make programmes to communicate with somebody, and community television is particularly keen that programmes are accessible to the communities reflected in them. The positioning of the channel on the Chorus-NTL platform is important for both access and status, but the decision to make contact available online increases the ways in which the programmes can be distributed to their audiences, particularly through social networking sites. In the case of *The Insight*, Ciarán notes that Facebook in particular has been important in circulating the programme.

If the two series so far have made good use of conventional multicultural formats, there is also a need to further integrate people into programmes and programme-making beyond the restrictions of the frameworks of multicultural programming, where **...you're going in and you're talking to people about their ethnicity so you're just identifying them in that way and it's limiting them by saying this is what you're about.** Yet the potential strength of this approach to programming is that it can allow people to identify and represent themselves in such ways when it is important, and then to do otherwise when it is not important, or simply when other things are. This can involve a multiplicity of approaches at any one time – depending on the input of member groups rather than policy – rather than expecting each new series to be an improvement on the first, thus burdening it with all kinds of representational politics. As Ciarán points out, representing the diversity of a city means thinking seriously about its linguistic diversity as well. In other words, while the prevailing public service logic – one shared by some community radio stations – is to move away from native language broadcasts, DCTV is in principle ready to facilitate them, and to subtitle them for wider engagement.

COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING SERVICES

Radio

The BCI currently licences twenty-nine commercial radio services; the national station Today FM, the *quasi-national* station Newstalk, and four regional commercial services – Beat FM, Spin South West, iRadio North West, iRadio North East, and 4FM. The rest of the licences are held by local commercial services,⁶⁰ a sector which has undergone significant expansion in the last 5–7 years. In conducting research in the commercial radio sector, it was expected that the local stations were most likely to have engaged in a variety of programmes and initiatives, both because of their responsiveness to local audiences and issues, and the so-called *business case for diversity* – the potential of migrant audiences as new audiences, and therefore for new streams of advertising or sponsorship. As the research below documents these assumptions were false; even stations located in areas with significant migrant populations did not engage in deliberate strategies to target these audiences, and where programmes and services were developed, they tend to have been short-lived and dependent on slim resources and the exigencies of personal contacts. This section details the research conducted with the commercial sector, and proceeds from an overview of questionnaire data to an in-depth discussion of Newstalk's Global Village – currently the sole example of a dedicated scheduled programme in a national radio service.

In 2008, 28 licensed stations were contacted by email and follow-up contact by post, email and phone in relation to a survey questionnaire.

The questionnaire aimed to generate a comparative overview of programme series and formats, any forms of policy development or reflected institutional practices, thinking on or practice in relation to training and staffing, and the perceived relevance of thinking about *cultural diversity* and migrant audiences for the radio stations. Given the general absence of such programmes and initiatives – and the satisfactory return of responses discussing this absence – only one follow-up interview was conducted (Newstalk, discussed below).⁶¹ Surveys were distributed both by postal mail and electronic mail and 15/28 were returned giving a return rate of 51.7% – a highly satisfactory return rate for survey data research (Schutt 2006:237). The survey respondents were from a diverse range of locations throughout Ireland (Donegal, Kerry, Waterford, Dublin, Midlands, Galway, Kildare, Clare, Kilkenny, Wicklow, Wexford). 12 were local/independent radio stations, 1 regional, 1 national/independent and 1 special interest. Most stations employed on average about 20 people full time (the largest was 62 and the smallest was 15) and had about 15 people part time working in/for the station. Of those working full time, only 4 stations had more than one nationality working for them. If they did have more than one nationality employed, they were working as part-time workers or in the sales/marketing department.

A limited selection of programming was mentioned in the questionnaires. Most stations did not broadcast any regularly scheduled programmes – either full programmes or regular features/segments – presented by or in any way aimed specifically at migrant communities. Further desk research located more programmes which either commenced following the completion of the questionnaire, or which are broadcast by stations that did not return the questionnaire. Below is a list of these programmes and services by category, excluding *world music shows*:

Scheduled Regular Programming by/for Migrant Communities

KCLR 96 Fm schedules *The Rainbow* on Tuesdays, presented by Ade Oke. The show aims to **provide a forum for considered debate about the changing face of Ireland and promotes respect for all cultures and offers practical advice to those moving into the area.** Interviewed by Focus: Action for Global Justice in 2006, in following his receipt of a MAMA award for the show, Ake explained the approach of the show:

Where two cultures meet, learning has to take place...my programme is a medium for cultural exchange and understanding because, where problems arise between communities, it's mostly because of a lack of information and knowledge.

Midlands 103FM has a weekly discussion programme entitled *Respecting Difference* hosted by Rotimi Adebari (Mayor of Portlaoise).

O'Halloran 2006

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See appendix B for a copy of the survey instrument.

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See www.bci.ie/licensed_operators/local_radio.html for a full list.

Newstalk's Global Village (discussed in detail below). Irregular, themed or one-off programming by/for migrant communities (* denotes a programme funded through the Sound and Vision scheme. Highland Radio: Voice of Africa, a one-hour programme broadcast on bank holidays (though no information is provided as to how frequently this occurs). Beat 102–103 FM produced *Romancing Paddy Polski**: a short humorous documentary series examining romance between – predominantly – Irish men and Russian and Polish women. East Coast FM produced a programme aimed at the Chinese Community for 6 months in 2007 (no title provided or located) and a 10-minute Polish/English bilingual programme twice-weekly until this year. WLR FM produced a four-part documentary series *Islam in Ireland** broadcast in July 2006. According to the Waterford News⁶² the series ...includes interviews with Irish converts, Muslim women and children, religious leaders and ordinary Muslims who talk about their practices and beliefs, their views on suicide bombings and about what it's like to be a Muslim living in Ireland.

Ocean FM broadcast a MAMA-award winning series *Voices of the Globe** between June and October 2007. The programme was described by the Association of Independent Radio Producers of Ireland (AIRPI) as a series that ...presented the lives of those living and working in Globe House, a direct provision centre in Sligo for over 200 asylum seekers from 40 different countries. The series highlighted the human realities behind the statistics and using local radio as a medium, breaks down barriers into what it is really like to be an asylum seeker living in Globe House in Sligo.

Particular Services for Migrant Communities

Midlands 103: broadcasts road safety messages in 8 languages during the Christmas period. Several aspects of this limited range of production are noteworthy. The regularly scheduled shows on KCLR and Midlands have sustained classic multicultural discussion/magazine programmes for several series, and both are presented by locally resident African men. In common with many such programmes across the radio sectors, the programme titles signal a conventional *getting to know each other* approach, and as the quote from Ade Oke suggests, they are shaped by an explicit assumption of multicultural difference and the role of the media in facilitating dialogue and exchange. However it would be interesting to track how the programmes have developed over time, because, as noted elsewhere in the report, this mode of initial remit tends to either shift and broaden, or have limited shelf-life.

Both WLR and Ocean have accessed BCI funds to produce high-quality documentary series. Though hugely different in subject-matter and tone, both series allowed people to talk at length about their lives and experiences, an approach that quickly transcends the framework of

multicultural discussion programmes relatively quickly (while allowing for differences here in format and editing, etc). Beyond that, some stations provided fragmentary evidence concerning short-lived or abortive programme initiatives, in several instances mentioning the fact that presenters/potential presenters had left the area (a problem discussed at more length in relation to community radio). Many stations noted that while they had no specific programmes for/by migrant communities, that they addressed issues of migration and its impact both nationally and locally through their news and current affairs programmes as they came up in the news. Below is a sample of such responses:

Our news would regularly run stories about these issues and they are discussed from time to time as part of our talk show, Beat Breakfast,	Beat 102-103
In our news department we did a number of features on the foreign national centres based in Mayo as inserts into the news bulletins...	Midwest Radio
The subject arises from time to time in news programmes and The Last Word.	Today FM
Only in the context of general speech/news programming .	Country Mix 106.8
It has been covered as an issue at various times on our current affairs and talk programmes.	KCLR 96 FM
Discussions/debates on current affairs and news programmes.	Highland Radio

It is self-evident that this inclusion in news and current affairs programmes says nothing per se about the nature and tone of the stories, or the relationship between news routines and practices and wider considerations of migrant audiences as part of the listenership. It is also noteworthy, and arguably an issue where commercial needs and audience assessment are most acute, that a tiny minority of stations broadcast content in languages other than Irish and English. One station, KCLR 96 FM, ...did broadcast a series of programmes on learning Polish aimed at helping native Irish learn some basic phrases in Polish to enable them to communicate with the many Polish people living in the area. This was the only example of this type of programming in the entire sample of responsive stations, and given its duration of ten minutes, it suggests that any sense of the possible attraction to (often potentially substantial) Polish audiences was off-set by the assumption that regular listeners or station-surfers would be alienated. Many stations noted that any programmes that had been developed were often pursued on the back of the suggestions or ideas of local contacts of the regular station staff. Only one station, WLR

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www.archives.tcm.ie/waterfordnews/2006/06/30/story22290.asp

responded that it had any institutional policies or guidelines concerning *cultural diversity*, however these were not specified.

In response to a question concerning specific audience research with nationality or ethnicity in mind, the stations that responded to this question in detail noted that while they normally work with the JNLR figures, some research along these lines would be useful. Several stations expressed interest in increasing programming in *cultural diversity* provided that there was sufficient interest to support listener numbers and justify the cost of such a programme. An indicative response of this nature was provided by South-East Radio:

South-East

We are a small station catering to as broad an audience as possible within our TSA. Whist we hope all nationalities and ethnic groups within our community will find something of interest we think their numbers are too small to warrant special services. In this day of digital delivery we would also expect that they have easily available specialist programmes available providing, for example, info from their area or in their own language, etc.

This quote captures some of the central issues preventing further development of programming by/for migrant communities in this sector. The perceived cost/benefit ratio between either targeted research and subsequent programming, or dedicated programming and its potential audience, are not regarded as worthwhile. While there is no direct mapping of the audience research in Part 2 onto the broadcast areas of local stations, it is hard to disagree with this conclusion on the basis of the audience findings in this report (even allowing for the non-generalisable nature of the qualitative research, and the lack of an exact fit between the location of the focus groups and many of the radio stations in question). In the lives of the majority of those who participated in the research, radio functions very much as an environmental resource in the work place or while driving. Given the listening needs and preferences of those contexts, there would not appear to be (limited) evidence of a burgeoning demand for specific programmes. However it is worth speculating whether current thinking on *integrating diverse perspectives across programming* – as opposed to developing *niche* programmes – provides possibilities in this sector. Given the willingness signalled by the stations in their responses to try new approaches or programmes on culturally diverse topics, or for a culturally diverse listenership, a meaningful attempt to chart what diversity programming would mean in their services may be worthwhile (this is already in operation to a limited extent in the very many world music programmes noted but excluded from discussion in this section).

Case Study – Global Village on Newstalk

Global Village went on air in early 2008 and is broadcast on Saturday evenings. Described on its website as **Ireland's only intercultural programme on mainstream radio it is hosted by a proud out and diverse migrant, Dil (who)... explores topical issues through the eyes of the 188 nationalities that are now part of our new Irish society**. Dil Wickremasinghe has been living in Ireland for many years, having grown up between Italy and Sri Lanka. In common with many media workers in migrant media initiatives, but a rarity in mainstream services, Dil had professional media experience, having worked for several years in the national radio service of Sri Lanka, presenting and producing shows. In Ireland she developed a show called *New Horizons* for the west Dublin community radio station Phoenix FM, which ran for two years. According to Dil, *Global Village* came about because of Newstalk's desire to develop a *multicultural programme*, and having heard of her work through NGO contacts, she was approached to develop the programme. Thus Newstalk launched a mainstream multicultural programme just as other national and local broadcasters jettisoned the format as unfeasible, unneeded, or unwanted by audiences.

Dil's work in diversity training and equality activism meant that she had no difficulty developing a more specific idea of the generic slot possibility offered by Newstalk. Dil situates the approach of the programme in the widely circulated narrative of Ireland learning from the mistakes of other European countries and opting for an intercultural, rather than multicultural approach. While, as Part 1 discusses, it is often difficult to find substance in this near ubiquitous distinction, *Global Village* has translated a clear vision of interculturalism into a programme strategy which combines concentrated political discussions of the problems and barriers facing migrants in society in Ireland with an approach that has led to significant increases in listenership figures. As Dil explains it, the philosophy of the programme is to focus on commonality as much as differences, which are often focused on excessively in programmes eager to give migrants a possibility to represent their *difference*.

The basis of that commonality is not just shared humanity, but the shared experience of society in Ireland. Given the timing of the show's launch, and the sporadic public and political attempts to blame migrants for soaring unemployment rates, Dil argues that the economic crisis and subsequent political unrest has been a key moment for migrants to express their opinions as people with a stake in public affairs and public opinion:

If you looked into the mind of a migrant 95% of what they're thinking is the same as you or me, the problems of this country, how they effect them, what the government is doing... it's not like Irish and migrants have different sets of problems, at the moment they are very similar. Though migrants may have more on top.

Dil cites two examples from recent programmes (2009) that illustrate the show's integration of perspectives, while paying attention to the ways in which the experience of being placed as a *migrant* in society in Ireland can inform these perspectives. When the Ryan report (on institutional abuse) was published, a programme-length discussion allowed a range of contributors and texters/emailers/callers to both express their feelings and views on the crushing testimonies of victims of this abuse, while also opening up something of a discussion on the prevalence of child abuse in other places and contexts. Similarly, when the ongoing legal affairs of Pamelalzevbekhai gained significant media attention in April 2009, the programme interrogated wildly differing Irish and Nigerian perspectives on the case and the wider issues it involves. To say that support or criticism did not break down along national lines would be an understatement.

Like many Newstalk shows, Global Village listeners are encouraged to text in views on subjects under discussion. While some might question the impact of the form of text messages on the tone and content of public debate, Dil notes that the flow of text messages has added particular dimensions to the programme. Recalling that she was warned by her producer to brace herself for exaggerated, incendiary and unabashedly racist sentiments, Dil realized quickly that acting as a conduit for the messages was a more interesting strategy than reacting as she would in life outside the studio, as a campaigning activist. Dil allows the rawness of many messages to implicitly challenge mainstream assumptions: **People in Ireland think that racism doesn't exist, that we have no problems with migrants, and here they can hear what people are texting in, word for word.** Yet, in the main, the immediate and vociferous rebuttals come from Irish listeners distancing themselves from what has been expressed.

This implicit strategy of making apparently marginal attitudes audible to a national audience extends to the choice of current affairs issues that are discussed. In picking up on stories that have been under-discussed in other news programmes, or by amplifying their significance for and impact on people who have migrated, the show has begun to expand the possibilities of what is conventionally expected from a *multicultural* programme. Dil cites the example of their coverage of children of asylum-seekers and migrant unaccompanied minors that have disappeared from institutional care. A crucial story that has received comparatively little media attention, the parallel she draws quietly conjures up the silence of race in public perceptions and news values: If you close your eyes we can all picture Madeline McCann, yet what

about these anonymous children, why don't we care where they are? Metro Éireann has been increasingly important to the show in providing stories that can be discussed or followed-up, thus creating a small but significant connection between *mainstream* and *minority* media.

Dil's persona and biography have been fundamentally etched into the image and style of the show in ways that support its general approach. As she explains, while most interviewers act as detached, professional voices, required to keep the attention on the views of their interviewees, reflecting on her experiences has been central to the programme. These reflections are not intended to put her on a pedestal as a public *migrant voice*, but instead to encourage the diversity and dissonances of migrant opinions and experiences to be expressed. Her experiences as a migrant who has lived in and between different countries, cultures and linguistic groups, as a lesbian and equality activist, as someone deeply satisfied with her life in Ireland, and so forth, allow her to draw out this multiplicity of perspectives. As has been noted previously, many programmes in this genre rapidly seek to adapt and expand their scope and remit, and in Dil's vision the programme may develop their approach into a wider focus on equality issues – while retaining the attention to migrant perspectives. This, she argues, would be the natural development for a show fundamentally preoccupied with the question of equality – **it's about anyone who doesn't fit the norm.**

Given its focus, the show has been accused of bias, of **only telling one side** – an opinion based on a refusal to accept the very premise of the show, that opinions and perspectives cannot be neatly divided into equally neat and sealed *cultures* or *communities*. As Dil notes: **I'm a migrant, have lived all over, I'm a lesbian, how many stereotypes does this break? There are so many different experiences among those that consider here home. There is this general lack of awareness, Irish people paint us with the same brush, we're either here to work, work, work and send money home, or have no loyalty to Ireland, and that may be true for some but for many this is home now.** More pertinently, she argues, this is the sole national show dedicated to topical issues through the eyes of many nationalities midst hundreds of weekly broadcast hours based on mainstream perspectives.

In reflecting on the wider media environment in Ireland, Dil does not underestimate the importance of more faces and voices being included in mainstream services, both in dedicated, thematic programmes and also in a variety of programme categories. This she notes, is not as difficult as it seems, it just involved including people in discussion shows, on panels, discussions where they are not restricted to discussing their cultural difference but included in public conversations on issues such as health care. Researchers have a key role to play in this regard by broadening their database of contacts and sources.

Dedicated Multicultural Radio?

There have been several attempts to develop dedicated *multicultural* stations, primarily in Dublin. This section does not attempt to evaluate the merits or otherwise of these applications and initiatives, but rather to give a sense of the different ways in which such a service could be conceived of. In 2004, the applications for two available Dublin radio licences involved explicitly *multicultural* proposals. Metro Éireann led a consortium that lodged an application for a commercial radio licence for the Dublin area. They proposed a station – Global 94.9FM – blending music, arts, news and information for a target audience of not only *non-Irish nationals* but also Irish nationals defined by their growing appreciation of cultural diversity. The proposed ethos of the service is not only one of service to particular listenerships, but of a mission to increase *an understanding of difference among all communities in Dublin*. The application also argues that existing radio stations are not recognizing the implications of a diversified listenership for their services, and argues for the importance of standard formats of news, arts coverage and discussion constantly informed by the perspectives of a broad diversity of contributors. It also points out that many migrants and refugees in Ireland have arrived with media skills and experiences, and that this *vast array of knowledge and skills* is an asset in Dublin that is being wasted.

The other application, Fáilte FM, applied for the licence on an explicitly political commitment to campaigning against racism and developing a service guided by the belief that *...true multi-cultural ownership representing all the ethnic and immigrant communities is the only one that can deliver an authentic multi-cultural programme service*. The station proposed to balance between programming in a variety of languages, and programmes made and chosen for their specific importance to a variety of communities, and a desire to appeal to a wider Dublin listenership. The proposal aimed to develop in phases, moving from an incubation period with NEAR FM before establishing itself as an independent service. The management structure was to be composed of representatives from campaigning NGOs and community and solidarity groups. Neither application was successful, with the BCI's Chief Executive, Michael O'Keefe commenting that:

The Commission would like to thank the two applicant groups for the interest shown in this licensing process. Unfortunately, the applications received were not considered to be of a sufficient standard to be awarded a licence. However, the Commission remains committed to providing increased diversity and choice for listeners and we will re-visit the potential for this type of service once again in the future.⁶³

In 2006 the Swords/Balbriggan based station Sunrise 94.9 FM broadcast on a temporary licence for 15 weekends from March, and garnered

quite a degree of media attention for its unprecedented range of multi-lingual programming. Most recently, an internet radio station BabylonRadio.com has begun netcasting as a **New Non-Irish-National Community Radio station that celebrates cultures and promotes integration**. The website combines multi-lingual chat rooms and information on living and working in Ireland with a schedule of one-hour radio programmes ranging across musical genres and contexts, and one (irregularly scheduled) panel discussion programme called Wavelength which *...brings to light political and social issues of interest to all residents of Ireland with a special focus on international affairs*.⁶⁴ Despite the failure of previous applications, there is still interest among several groups and networks to develop a dedicated *multicultural* service.⁶⁵

TELEVISION

TV3

Ben Frow, Head of Programming, and David McMunn, Director of Government, Regulatory and Legal Affairs, discussed how they felt a *responsibility* rather than a need to represent diversity. While not bound to a public service remit, TV3 had a responsibility to reflect society in Ireland, and engaging with contemporary change is good for the image of the company and the comprehensiveness of its programming. Allowing diversity to be reflected *organically* in its schedule of programming was argued to be something that a commercial broadcaster can do by knowing its audience, and knowing what they like. In a recurring comparison to RTÉ, particularly RTÉ 2, they noted that *...we much better reflect a diverse Ireland... the diversity in the country than RTÉ do*. Both contributors stressed the need to view diversity in the context of the diversity possible in the broadcasting sector, and argued that any discussion of TV3 – and indeed broadcasting in Ireland – needed to recognise the distortions caused by a single public broadcaster accounting for nearly 80% of available revenue for television in Ireland (between the contribution of the licence fee and advertising/sponsorship revenue).

Perhaps because it is seen to emerge naturally from the diversity of programmes scheduled, rather than any specific policy or editorial decisions, the idea of diversity shaped in discussion was quite encompassing. Diversity emerges across Irish-made and imported programming, and the juxtaposition of this in scheduling was seen as important:

You need to look at our programming right across the board. If you look at Ireland AM, ok, the majority of people are white but we always do fashion, and there is generally a black girl in there somewhere. They do all kinds of different cooking as well. Then you look at something like Midday, when we have a range guests on each day and you do get a great range of cultural

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See www.radiowaves.fm/news/2004/September.html (accessed 28 Aug 2009)

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www.babylonradio.com/index.php?browse=presenter (accessed Sept 18 2009)

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While interviews were conducted with such groups it was agreed that it is not appropriate to profile their initiatives at this stage in the development.

diversity but you know not every day. Most importantly everyday we have Oprah, Black, followed by Ellen, Lesbian you know and you know, they tick a box. It's not conscious they just happen to be fantastic programmes presented by the best people in their genre.

Thus the representation of diversity is mainly a product of scheduling, and this is an approach that, it was argued, yields a vision of diversity that is far broader than simply race, ethnicity and culture:

If we look very quickly (through the schedule) Xpose, black presenter, Friends – all white middle class, Coronation Street, Emmerdale generally middle class white or working class whatever they are there's a couple of you know, there's a black girl in the factory. Then you look at Nothing to Declare, it's Australian they'll always be multicultural in there somewhere, because there's usually someone, an illegal immigrant coming in. I'm not sure if that's positive representation but it is all the same. The Apprentice followed by You're Fired – interesting they're all white, they're all from Ireland, except one person whose from England. There aren't any disabled people in it.

Diversity in the schedule works, it was argued, because it doesn't compromise programme-making by making tokenistic decisions, an approach which risks programme investment, patronises viewers, and puts those featured in a compromising position. This approach was described as organic, involving the consciousness of producers, an awareness of where particular stories may fit, or where they would feel *shoe-horned*. For example, it was argued that repeat format programming, particularly reality or observational formats focusing on some aspect of everyday life, would have no excuse not to feature a proper representation of the different people that now make up that everyday public. Furthermore, in long-running television series, *diversity* was likely to simply *come up*, particularly in lifestyle programming. The appointment of Sean Munsanje to front the programme Xpose was discussed as an example of how diversity emerges organically – he was voted for by viewers rather than appointed by the station. Imposing any kind of quotas in a commercial environment would be counter-productive, as it would encourage time and cash-pressurised producers to look for ways around rigid expectations. However, programmes like Diary of a Debutante, they argued, illustrated how TV3s increased commitment to domestically produced programming inevitably reflected and addressed the diversity of contemporary society.⁶⁶

As a commercial broadcaster, Frow argued, TV3 needs to be aware of its right to make whatever decisions it needs to make to secure and maintain viewers. However this did not mean that the station's decisions were not also motivated by other concerns; a campaign against the deportation of a young Nigerian man on Ireland AM, its involvement in the 2004

Broadcasters Against Racism, and a series dealing with the experiences of the *forgotten Irish* in Britain were cited. It was also discussed that the influence of CanWest on TV3 during its period of ownership created a consciousness of diversity issues among management that was influenced by the Canadian emphasis on multiculturalism in broadcasting.

The discussants made a strong argument for trusting in the audience's tastes as a way of ensuring meaningful, non-tokenistic diversity. Viewers, it was argued, know and want good television, and editorial compromise in the service of *box-ticking* interferes in that relationship:

I think the vast majority of people just watch telly. I don't sit and watch a program going, has he got a black person in it, has he got a disabled person in it, has he got a gay person in it, has he got a North/South person in it, is this a fair representation, this program. I wouldn't watch a program like that, I get into the story I don't sit there and go well they haven't done this, they haven't got that, or they haven't got the other. I don't watch telly like that and I don't think most the majority of people do either so.

City Channel

The Dublin-based City Channel was an early and innovative channel for migrant-oriented programming. City Channel Dublin came on air in 2005, and in 2006 began broadcasting *Oto Polska*, a weekly news digest provided by the international unit of *Telewizja Polska*. This was subsequently complemented by the magazine programme *Polska Extra*. Presented by Izabela Chudzicka, *Polska Extra* featured issues of interest to Poles living in Dublin, and was framed as a form of lifestyle programming aimed at another niche group in Dublin's increasingly cosmopolitan milieu. Indeed, across a range of programmes, City Channel was keen to develop programmes for *minorities* uncatered for in Irish broadcasting, while framing this as attention to niche audiences rather than any form of *worthy* multicultural programming. *Oto Polska Extra* was joined in the schedule, at various times between 2006 and 2008 by *African Eye* – a programme for *Ireland's west-African community* and *A Free to Express, for the gay community*. In 2006, the station replicated the Polish news and magazine format for Filipino audiences, with a six-month run for *TV Patrol* (news and current affairs from the Philippines) and *TV Patrol Extra* (a programme detailing local events, and so forth). *African Eye* and *Oto Polska Extra* ended their runs in mid-2008, partly as a consequence of the need to develop more regional programming for the expanded City Channel services – in Galway, and Channel South – and arguably because of the difficulties of sustaining such formats over extended periods of time. *Oto Polska* ended in early 2009 due to the cancellation of the news digest service in Warsaw.

CONCLUSION – BROADCASTING & CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN A PERIOD OF CRISIS

Broadcasting & cultural diversity in a period of crisis

Questions, suggestions & possibilities

CONCLUSION – BROADCASTING & CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN A PERIOD OF CRISIS

This research project was devised in a context where inward migration was widely seen as transforming society in Ireland. It has been completed during a period of political-economic crisis where net emigration has increased for the first time since 1995.⁶⁷ In this context, the prevalent and often intense public debates concerning migration, the place of people who migrate in society in Ireland, and the implications of migration for institutions – including broadcasting institutions – have dissipated. *They're going home* – the return migration or labour mobility of predominantly Polish and Baltic states EU nationals has become something of a leitmotif for the passing of migration as an issue, or at least, as a priority focus in a situation of dire political-economic crisis. Similarly, the idea that the social, political, economic and cultural transformations wrought by migration require institutional responses has been undermined by the closure or significant cuts experienced by a range of agencies and large, corporate NGOs working in the field of equality, migrants rights and interculturalism.⁶⁸ Whatever the debates about the relative merits of their approaches, the severity, simultaneity and scope of the cuts also signal an official down-scaling of migration and settlement as a political and social policy issue.

To take these developments as accumulatively suggesting that migration is no longer an issue would be to compound the problems of framing migration as an issue in the first place. The term has always been a blunt instrument for understanding the relationship of labour mobility to scales of economic activity, for conceptualizing the presence of people who migrate in and across a system of nation-states, and for understanding the multiple forms of connection and mobility between places that often characterize the lives of those who migrate. Thus it is more accurate, as Bryan Fanning writes in *New Guests of the Irish Nation* (2009), to think about Ireland entering an *uncertain phase of cultural-economic nation-building*. What Fanning is describing is a shift away from *migration debates* predicated on a (problematic) vision of Ireland as a largely homogenous society experiencing unprecedented inward movement, and that requires new forms of institutional response to deal with this infusion of difference. Instead, Fanning's conceptualization recognizes the varieties of ways in which people who migrate have settled and dwelt in Ireland, and the ways in which the statuses available to them have eased, hindered or prohibited this. Migration cannot be properly considered without a wider discussion of citizenship, the changing nature of the nation-state, and citizen and *non-citizens* relationship to it. The issue then, he argues, is to find ways of binding all who live in Ireland to shared futures in *their diverse nation-state*.

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First net emigration since 1995, Jason Michael, *The Irish Times*, Tuesday Sep 22, 2009.

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Migrant bodies funding slashed, Ruadhán McCormaic, *The Irish Times*, Wednesday Oct 15 2008.

The over-arching conclusion of this report is that a similar shift of perspective is required in discussing broadcasting in a diversified society. If this report appears at a moment when migration has faded as a topic du jour, it is also published at a moment when broadcasting responses have reached, or are reaching, the natural limits of *first-wave* approaches to diversity and multiculturalism. What we have loosely termed *first-wave* programming – offering reassuring windows onto the worlds of people who migrate, discussions focusing on *our new diversity*, and features celebrating the importance of difference – have largely been stood down. This is for a number of reasons, from changes in the circumstances of community media producers, to a sense that such approaches are dated and limiting, to pragmatic decisions to consolidate popular programming in a downturn. Thus the challenge facing broadcasting is a sectoral version of the national one suggested by Fanning.

What, then, will future waves of programming look and sound like? How can diverse audiences be bound to programmes that do justice to the issues that impact on them? How can scheduling move towards reflective approaches to meaningful diversity in and across programme categories and content? How can the prevailing focus on culture and cultural identities be broadened to adequately represent the complexities of migrant lives and lived multiculturalism? And how can public and commercial media address the need to source and develop more media content from ethnic and migrant minorities, while avoiding the pitfalls of tokenism, pigeonholing and superficial celebration faced in other national contexts?

This research project sought to investigate the responses of broadcasters in Ireland to the new audiences and new issues in representation and participation forged by migration. This concluding section draws attention to particular findings, and the questions, policy issues and future possibilities suggested by them.

Conceptualizing the Now & Future Audience

The research conducted with Nigerian, Chinese and Polish participants does not provide generalisable, quantitative findings that fit the dominant paradigms of market research employed in the media industry. Instead, the qualitative research conducted provides a detailed and multi-dimensional exploration of how people understand and organize their media worlds, and this exploration provides much of value for Irish broadcasters to consider.

Relational Media Use: Contrary to the prevalent stereotype of migrant audiences encountered in research discussions with media practitioners, media users rarely if ever exist in *media ghettos*, exclusively seeking out *home* services and programmes. Instead, this research details the complex everyday media worlds constructed by research

participants, where channels, sources and programmes across different media, and from different contexts, are integrated in practice. Irish, diasporic and transnational media are engaged, critically assessed, and often watched and used relationally. These relations and uses change over time, and are frequently shaped by the life course of people's migration and settlement. Assessments of and relationships with diasporic and transnational services are every bit as involved, ambiguous and reflective as those articulated concerning Irish media. This range of shifting and integrated choices and practices is congruent with the broad outlines of perceived changes in contemporary media audiences and users. Where it differs, for people who migrate, is in the frequently heightened political and affective significance of their choices.

Relational Assessment: A consequence of this relational media use is that Irish media are integrated into and evaluated in broad networks of transnational media possibilities. Some participants went as far as to suggest that Irish media producers needed to regard themselves as in competition with transnational media for the attention of these audiences. While news and current affairs was the central recurring relational reference, the research shows how a range of stylistic, aesthetic, political and affective criteria, derived from this extended media world, are used to assess Irish media.

Central & Peripheral: Irish media are of both central and peripheral concern, and sometimes the same channels can be both simultaneously. In general, the national centrality of RTÉ guarantees that it is an important focal point for many migrant research participants: as a daily routine, as a known-in-common referent, and as a focus of criticism. While radio is marginal in many of the research discussions, this is probably informed by the environmental taken-for-grantedness of radio and the fact that radio is rarely brought into discussions about representation. Local newspapers are routinely regarded as important sources of information and orientation.

A Stake in Public Service Broadcasting: The terrestrial dominance and socio-cultural importance of RTÉ television ensured that its services in general, and representations of migrants in particular, were of central concern. In particular, discussions of the consequentiality of media representations focused on RTÉ. The public service broadcaster was held to have an important, educative role to play in accurately representing the lives and contexts of people who migrate. The discussions concerning RTÉ, and the legitimacy that comes with paying a licence fee, indicate how some audience perceptions have also shifted from *first-wave* expectations to a more demanding vision of what broadcasting in a diverse society involves.

Dedicated Multicultural Broadcasting: RTÉ's dedicated *multicultural* and *diversity* programmes have been primarily aimed at mainstream Irish audiences, and it is interesting that recognition of this intent is widely noted by research participants. Some discussions hint at a distinction between the symbolic importance of these programmes – their role in public recognition – and a lack of interest in them as viewers. However it must also be noted that some viewers did not – or would not – recognize recent multicultural programmes as such, preferring to classify them according to other generic aspects of their approach. This finding points to the difficulty of making dedicated *multicultural* programming that is of broad mainstream and specific migrant audience interest. It also indicates that such programming must be recognized and accepted by viewers as multicultural programming, and that this may have a future impact on what formats are devised and how programmes are made (if it is intended to more actively include migrant/minority audiences in the projected audience).

The scope of diversity: institutionally, diversity policy is commonly understood to involve diversifying on-air representation and sourcing, and to diversify involvement in production and editorial decision-making. In this study, diversity was consistently related to the scope of news and current affairs coverage, and to the diversity of genre, programmes, series and perspectives mediated for the audience. The practice of relational viewing implies that Irish news and current affairs is evaluated in terms of other news sources, while the prevalence of informal media monitoring suggests that international news about home contexts is watched as a form of local news. Across focus groups strands, the scope of news and current affairs was perceived to be limited, and that in particular it could pay more attention to the degree and nature of home context coverage. It is well established in the sociology of journalism that international news coverage is shaped by national priorities and perspectives. What this research suggests is that the nature of those national perspectives has shifted. Similarly, diversity in programming was related to genre, source and perspectives, and in particular the dominant Anglo-American and Anglophone orientation of television in Ireland was remarked upon and criticized.

Consequentiality & Media Monitoring: The ambivalence of these audiences towards conventional multicultural approaches, as well as their practical redefinition of *diversity*, does not imply that basic issues in the politics of representation were absent. Across groups there was a common assumption that media representations are consequential for the socio-political climate, and often for their day-to-day lives. In particular, Nigerian participants regularly discussed their media *monitoring* and what they saw as the role played by media coverage over the last decade

in informing negative and prejudicial attitudes towards them. Thus questions of fairness, accuracy, and diversity of sources and perspectives were mentioned as recurring issues and persistent viewing/reading/listening criteria.

On-Air Diversity: For all the complexities it brings – tokenism, exoticisation, pigeonholing – the identities and backgrounds of on-air presenters was deemed important. At a basic representational level, the increased diversity of society in Ireland implies a need for an increased on-air diversity. While participants differed concerning the symbolic and practical implications of such changes, it was felt that Irish media have disimproved in this regard over the last years, and that this is an important issue of future concern.

Internal Diversity: Another recurring issue pointing to future challenges for broadcasting in a diverse society is the *first-wave* tendency to envision people who migrate as living bounded in national/ethnic communities (and this criticism was addressed to Irish, community of interest/origin media, and diasporic services). In other words, audience desire to see the authenticity of the lives represented involves many vectors of identity, context and experience, and this desire for increased complexity involves unavoidable, increased complexity for broadcasters.

QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS & POSSIBILITIES

This summary of audience research suggests a number of key issues in the transition from initial forms of multicultural broadcasting to more integrated approaches shaped for a diversified society.

In terms of the institutional understandings, guiding ideas, programmes and policies developed by broadcasters, and discussed in this report, these include:

- ① **The need to continue with relevant forms of programming despite the perceived shift away from migration as an issue.**

As the discussion of programmes across media and channels makes clear, the last year has marked a drift away from various forms of dedicated multicultural programmes, particularly in all radio sectors. The discussions contained in this report detail the editorial and practical reasons for this shift. It is also clearly the case that *first contact* and *window on their world* programmes are no longer of relevance to most audiences. However the very many people who remain in Ireland have representational needs as well as more generalisable needs as audience members wishing to be informed, challenged, distracted or amused. It is also the case that broadcast media retains a responsibility to encourage and facilitate discussion on social change and the changed make-up of society in Ireland. Specifically:

A. Community radio stations in Ireland could consider how local outreach and increased involvement with community groups could support a more sustainable approach to multicultural broadcasting, during a period when many dedicated programmes have been stood down. Craol, the community radio forum, could also consider the support and expertise it could provide to smaller and less-resourced stations in this regard. Given the work being done in community television in Dublin and Cork, there is real scope for increased development and cooperation with radio stations in these regions.

B. Commercial radio – with some exceptions – has expressed a general interest in engaging migrant audiences, while making the calculation that investing significant resources in market research or programme development would not be recouped given the size of the audience in question. Our research suggests that commercial radio – both local and national – is a basic environmental media source in the car and the workplace for many people who migrate. While it is clear that their interest in music and desire to be distracted is similar to mainstream audiences, it nevertheless remains the case that there is scope for innovative thinking here, particularly for local radio. Informational needs, music diversity and having a say on local topics are clear points of interest to emerge from the research for consideration by local commercial broadcasters.

C. Television broadcasters could reflect on the adequacy of primarily representing diversity through its *organic* appearance in reality-based formats. While it can be argued that there is a powerful, normalizing drive to such approaches, it has also been argued that the individualizing focus flattens out many of the social and political challenges faced by people who migrate. Moreover, organic development is always a product of editorial decision-making, and the affinity between lived diversity and the subjects and approaches of reality formats should not prevent focused forms of editorial action in other areas of broadcast output.

② **The need to pay attention to basic questions of accuracy, fairness and the spectrum of mediated perspectives while working through the implications of internal diversity, and the desire for diversities of genre, language, and programming.**

While the over-arching conclusion of this report is the need to think through the needs and interests of diversified audiences in a diverse society, it is crucial to note that this developmental work is based on maintaining a consistent commitment to the accuracy and truthfulness of media representations and perspectives. This has implications for:

A. News & Current Affairs: news and current affairs are often not considered in discussions of *multiculturalism* and *diversity*, as news is considered – and is often institutionally organized – as a separate realm

governed by objective and professional news values. However as Part 1 discusses in relation to UK research, these professional practices are not insulated from wider social trends and attitudes. More research is needed in Ireland on broadcast news and attitudes to migration and migrants, as all existing research is based on print sources. News and current affairs institutions may want to consider the spectrum of sources, contributors and spokespeople they routinely engage, and may want to make an active effort to work with migrant journalists and commentators working in the community and *ethnic media* spheres. This is further discussed in relation to training and recruitment (below). They may also productively examine their coverage of the national/regional issues of interest to people from these nations/regions resident in Ireland. The question here is not one of relativization or *sugar-coating* but instead a question of breadth and depth of coverage.

B. Institutional Practices of Diversity: Both RTÉ and TV3 (and to a lesser extent TG4) employ discourses of diversity to explain and organize their treatment of these issues. However the two approaches are widely divergent. For the public service broadcaster, the partial move to a policy and practice of diversity is explained in terms of the limitations of dedicated multicultural programming (indeed explained, after the termination of Spectrum, in precisely the terms of the conclusion of this report). Thus the future challenge would seem to be to develop this policy in terms of the degree, scope and dimensions of content. It must also remain alert to the ways in which incorporating a range of issues under the rubric of diversity can lead to reduced coverage, *turn-taking*, and – like reality television approaches to diversity – a diminished appreciation of specific contexts and questions of social power and position. In the case of TV3, the argument that diversity emerges organically from the desire of commercial broadcasters to cater for existing audience diversity has yet to be tested empirically. This approach runs the manifest risk of *head-counting* anything regarded as beyond the norm of an imagined Irish audience as manifest diversity, regardless of the source and the nature of the content.

C. Institutional Practices of Diversity continued: RTÉ has invested significant energy in reflecting on and developing multicultural/intercultural/diversity policies. However it is not clear what these policies mean across the institution, and to what extent action in relation to the *three pillars* of programming, training and recruitment is aspirational or binding. It may also be the case that the range of terms and concepts developed as part of a fruitful institutional reflection require public clarification and consolidation.

D. On-air diversification is an issue of importance to many participants in the audience research. RTÉ has taken the lead in this regard, though it was noted in the research that television programmes subsequent to

Mono have not involved migrant/minority presentation. As discussed in many areas of this report, on-air *diversity* is a controversial issue, open to criticism as *window-dressing* and tokenism from a range of different political positions. However there is a real force to the point made in the audience research that a diversified society needs a basic level of diversified *representation*.

E. The research conducted with DCTV suggests that the parameters of Sound and Vision funding concerning political content may demand artificial divisions of issues and content into *political* and *non-political*. This has implications for how migrants and minorities make programmes on issues of relevance and interest to their communities.

F. Programme Sourcing: it is not the place of this report to speculate on the business of programme acquisition. However it is certainly the case that the prevalent understanding of diversity among research participants as meaning diverse programmes, genres and perspectives is one that can be pragmatically addressed. In particular, the experience of people from Poland and the Baltic states, with access to many stations from many countries, and in many languages, suggests that there is something to explore in widening the national and linguistic bases for acquisitions, as is common practice beyond the Anglophone world. It should be noted that Section 154 of the Broadcasting Act 2009 provides for changes to the Broadcasting Funding scheme, which (subject to EU approval at the time of writing) can fund programmes that **...raise public awareness and understanding of global issues impacting on the State and countries other than the State.**

G. Given the importance attached to diversity of programming, and the general allergy of Irish media to sourcing programmes beyond the Anglophone world, increased support for subtitling such imports could be considered.

H. Online & Multimedia Possibilities: while the future of digital television is unclear (and therefore its obvious possibilities in this realm cannot be meaningfully discussed) it is clear that broadcasters websites present an unexplored opportunity for increased contact, input and potentially targeted services for migrant audiences. This possibility, and the paucity of existing sites, is specifically commented upon in our audience research. This research details the centrality of internet and online sources for many of the research participants. It also demonstrates how many can and do access these websites while not having/affording broadcast television access. The general development of online content, as well as further exploration of the potential of specific forms of online content and services, will be of future importance. Given the perceived lack of good websites by broadcasters, a scheme to support better digital distribution of programming through online services could be considered.

③ The need to develop migrant/minority media expertise and engage with existing expertise in making the idea of diversity across content and in institutions meaningful.

A. As Part 1 discusses, relating diverse production personnel to diversified content and perspectives is an involved process, and a controversial one. Comparative research shows how people can end up trapped in a limited role, representing all *minorities* because of assumptions about their background, professionally hamstrung by assumptions about special treatment, and journalistically compromised by assumptions about what values, politics and constituencies they should *represent*. However these problems have emerged elsewhere as part of a process of diversification, and there is no reason why knowledge of these pitfalls cannot be incorporated into future initiatives among larger Irish broadcasters. It is currently fashionable in western Europe to regard diversity as a professional orientation, as a form of reflexivity to questions of difference that any professional can develop, regardless of their background or experience. This is undoubtedly true, to some extent, however it could be contended that good journalism and creative media work have always involved this kind of attention to different perspectives and experiences.

B. What is important is that this shift towards *diversity as a competence* is a complementary dimension of, rather than surrogate for, the complicated business of engaging people of different backgrounds in media work (a point which can be extended to everyone defined as *diverse*). The fact that experience and background can become a limitation does not mean that experience and background are not crucial in shaping and influencing the coverage of migration issues and the representation of the lives and contexts of migrants in Ireland. It is also the case that they are important in pluralizing the range of perspectives brought to bear on wider social, political, economic and cultural issues. Undoubtedly, the flexibility and precariousness of media work, and competition for employment and professional advancement, further complicate the already difficult issues surrounding anything that can be perceived as favouritism. However the following points are of relevance:

C. Dedicated *multicultural* and *diversity* programming requires that a significant proportion of those involved in production have lived experience of the issues involved, not just a professional competence. Recognition and action on this basis should also involve the recognition that this is a gateway to wider media work for talented individuals.

D. Accent, confidence and a lack of professional experience/competence, are regularly cited by industry professionals as barriers to entry for migrant media producers. However in the course of this research the research team has encountered a wide range of competent

media workers active in radio, as print journalists, and as radio/television programme producers. Without encouraging any *strip-mining* from community and *ethnic minority* media sectors, it is clear that a more proactive engagement with these sectors could support developing a wider base of contributing professionals.

E. This existing pool of talent is already frequently contacted by mainstream media as sources for stories and background information. It is therefore quite possible to extend this engagement as a way of diversifying the perspectives included in panel discussions, the elaboration of stories, debate of particular and general issues, and so forth. Within existing systems or practices of taking interns, specific approaches to migrant and minority media workers could be considered, and the linguistic and network benefits of this for media channels should not be neglected.

F. Broadcasters could explore relationships with third-level media, journalism and communications programmes as a way both of sourcing new talent, and also as a way of developing training. The BAI could support increased cooperation between third-level training programmes and the media in training and development on cultural diversity issues.

G. Other existing training schemes – FÁS Screen Training Ireland, Film Base – and professional associations and representative bodies – IFTN, IBEC's audiovisual federation divisions – could consider how specific support can be offered to emerging migrant/minority media workers, and how this support could benefit all media sectors.

H. Given the relative evaporation of migrant-made programming in the community radio sector, the BAI could consider how this programme-making could be supported through the Sound and Vision fund.

I. More generally, it was suggested by some media industry professionals that some Sound and Vision funding could be earmarked for programming in this field, or, equally as importantly, for programming that involves migrant/minority media workers in the production team and process. It goes without saying that any such initiative would need to be developed with a view to avoiding tokenism and solely instrumental inclusions, however it was argued to be necessary as a counter-measure to an increasing reliance on ideas of organic diversity (as discussed in Part 3).

J. The BAI could consider giving specific attention to the views and needs of minority/migrant audiences in the development, consultation and consolidation of its codes and guidelines.

APPENDIX A

Research Questionnaire for Commercial Local, Regional, Quasi-National and National Radio Stations Survey of Irish Commercial Radio Stations on Broadcasting & Cultural Diversity 2008–2009

Respondent Code

We are carrying out a survey as part of a project on Cultural Diversity and Irish Broadcasting for the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland. A central aim of this research is to discuss with broadcasters whether, as a result of immigration, they have needed to respond to cultural diversity issues, or feel the need to do so in the future.

It would be of great assistance to us if you could fill out this short survey and return it to us in the enclosed envelope. It should take less than 30 minutes to complete. All the information collected will be treated in the strictest of confidence and no individuals or stations will be identified in the final project report on the basis of the information provided here. The information will be used to help develop new policies and initiatives relating to Cultural Diversity in Irish Broadcasting, both radio and television.

If you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact Dr Aphra Kerr, aphra.kerr@nuim.ie, or 01 7086140 or Dr Gavan Titley, gavan.titley@nuim.ie, or 01 708 at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

Please return this questionnaire to us either by post to the Centre for Media Studies, NUI Maynooth, Co. Kildare, or by email to gavan.titley@nuim.ie by Friday January 9th 2009.

A – LOCATION AND ORGANISATION

What is the name of your radio station?

Where is your radio station primarily located?

If you have offices based elsewhere please provide the following information.

What type of commercial radio station are you?

Please enter an X opposite one.

How long has your station been in operation?

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
QUASI-NATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/>
REGIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/>
LOCAL INDEPENDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPECIAL INTEREST	<input type="checkbox"/>

B – DEMOGRAPHIC & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please do not leave a blank. If you employ none of the following groups please write none.

How many full time employees do you have?
Contracts over 365 days or more.

How many freelancers do you have?
Incl. contracts of 364 days or less and pro rata contributors.
Please specify in the terms your station employs.

How many people do you employ in the following occupational and demographic categories? FT = full-time, FL = freelance

OCCUPATION	MALES	FEMALES	NATIONALITIES	TOTAL
PROGRAMME PRESENTATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PROGRAMME RESEARCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PROGRAMME PRODUCTION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STUDIO MANAGEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SALES/MARKETING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AUDIENCE RESEARCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SENIOR EDITORIAL/ COMMISSIONING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OTHER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C – PROGRAMMING

Please give as much programming detail as possible. Please write no or none in the relevant sections rather than leave blank

Do you broadcast regular full programmes specifically aimed at migrant communities in your area?

Do you broadcast regular programme sections aimed at migrant communities in your area?

Have you, in the last three years, broadcast any special interest or one-off programming aimed specifically at migrant communities in your area?

Have you, in the last three years, broadcast any programming addressing migration and its impact (a) nationally and (b) in your local/regional area?

Do you feature, in any of the programme categories used above, broadcasting in any language other than English and Irish?

D – INSTITUTIONAL POLICY/GUIDELINES

Do you have an institutional policy or guidelines on cultural diversity in any of the following areas:

AREA	YES	NO
PROGRAMMING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PRODUCTION TRAINING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EDITORIAL/HOUSE STYLE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMPLOYMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HUMAN RESOURCES/ MANAGEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OTHER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered no to all of the areas above, please proceed to the next section.

(a) If you answered yes to any of the areas above, please state when the policy was introduced

(b) If you answered yes to any of the areas above, please outline the nature, motivation and scope of the policy

(c) In your opinion, how effective has this policy/these policies been?

E – AUDIENCE RESEARCH & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Do you conduct any form of audience research?
Please place an X beside Yes or No

YES NO

(a) If yes, please detail the nature and scope of the audience research

If you answered yes to question 1 please continue with question 2. If not please continue with question 3.

Does this audience research take account in any way of ethnicity and/or nationality?

YES NO

If yes, please detail how these factors are taken into account.

Would audience research which includes information on ethnicity and nationality be useful to your station? Please explain your answer.

Does your station have formal and/or informal links with migrant media sources? If yes, please provide details.

Does your station have formal and/or informal links with NGOs/ community groups involving migrants and cultural diversity issues? If yes, please provide details.

Does your station feature advertising/sponsorship/promotions aimed specifically at migrant communities? If yes please provide details.

F – CONCLUDING DETAILS

Would you, or a colleague, be willing to partake in a follow-up research interview?

If yes please place an X by the best option for you:

(A) BY PHONE	<input type="checkbox"/>
(B) IN PERSON	<input type="checkbox"/>
(C) EITHER	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is your precise role(s) in the station?
(this information is for our records, not for public disclosure)

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