



# **THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN**

**ON THE BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC  
PEOPLE IN THE NORTH WEST OF  
NORTHERN IRELAND**

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June 2014**



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This project is supported by OFMDFM

## SUMMARY OF OUR FINDINGS

- Northern Ireland's Black and Minority Ethnic community in the North West is a young population with 72% of respondents under 35.
- In terms of country of birth, nationality and language most of our respondents were Polish reflecting the findings of the 2011 Census and administrative sources for the Black and Minority Ethnic population in the North West.
- There was a clear pattern of in-migration post 2004, peaking in 2006 then dropping until a rise in numbers again in 2011 and 2012.
- Respondents coming from 23 different countries and speak 26 different languages. Despite efforts to publicise the questionnaire we no representation from African and African-Caribbean communities that stood at 423 people in these areas in the 2011 Census.
- Black and Minority communities include many families with 66% of respondents married, in a civil partnership or living with a partner and more than half responsible for adult or child dependents.
- A majority of respondents see their future in Northern Ireland with three quarters saying they planned to stay here.
- 40% respondents said accessing housing, benefits, health, and education services were the main challenge they face at the minute.
- The Black and Minority population is educated and skilled (with 40% first degree and 25% master degree and/or PhD) with many people seeking to increase these skills further. However, it appears that many skills are being underutilised as respondents are disproportionately represented in elementary positions in their main and their second jobs although they make an economic contribution in Northern Ireland across a number of sectors.
- Looking for work was a key reason for coming to Northern Ireland and a large majority of our respondents are in employment, with a significant proportion having second job. When respondents were asked what they would do if they lost their job the most common response was to look for a new job (85%).
- In spite of this economic activity we can see that unemployment is an issue for our respondents with the level of unemployment among our respondents at 34% being higher than averages in North West council

areas. (NI average in 2013: 5.4%, Coleraine: 5%, Derry: 8.6%, Strabane: 7.7% and Limavady: 6.9%)<sup>1</sup>

- 64% of those who are unemployed have been out of work for less than one year and 68% of respondents highlighted unemployment as the main challenge they are facing due to a lack of job opportunities.
- 41% of respondents said the recession had made them worry about losing their job whilst a quarter felt their hours of work had been reduced because of the recession since 2009 and 34% said their loss of employment was caused by the economic downturn. The issue of poverty is the main challenge for both the communities and the decision-makers.
- 38% of respondents felt that the economic downturn has led to an increase in racist comments and attitudes which some noted would lead them to consider leaving Northern Ireland.
- 20% respondents experienced racism at work and 14% of respondents said racial harassment and abuse was the main issue they currently faced.
- Respondents also highlighted different treatment for Black and Ethnic Minority community members in terms of position, pay and conditions at work.
- Overall 87% of respondents said the economic downturn had an effect on them and their family with eight out of ten saying they had to reduce spending because of the recession.
- When we consider 28% of our respondents have a second job (the local average is 3%), 44% are employed in elementary occupations, 38% receiving working tax credit, 29% receive housing benefits and 18% receive Job Seekers Allowance there is a risk of poverty in the Black and Minority Community in the North West, both for those looking for work and those already with a job.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/pivotgrid.aspx?dataSetVars=ds-4201-lh-37-yn-2005-2013-sk-18-sn-Labour%20Market-yearfilter-->

# 1. Introduction

The purpose of this research was to examine how Black and Minority Ethnic People in the North West of Northern Ireland had been affected by the economic downturn since 2009 by building a profile of the Black and Minority community in the L/derry, Coleraine, Strabane and Limavady Council areas. The research aimed to gather data about their economic activity, family lives, and their experiences of racism. The research also investigated the effect of the economic downturn (broadly defined as the UK recession since 2009) in terms of employment, experiences of racism and future plans for life in Northern Ireland.

This research builds on work by NICEM that helped to inform and reinforce the key areas to be investigated. In 2009 NICEM carried out a Northern Ireland survey of the Polish community that sought to ascertain the initial impact of the economic downturn<sup>2</sup> highlighting issues such as unemployment, job security and difficulty in getting recognition of qualifications. This was followed in 2012 by research into the experiences of the Filipino Community in Northern Ireland which raised issues around immigration rules for Filipino families living and working in Northern Ireland and, although noting a high level of employment among this community, noted concerns about future prospects as public sector cuts continued and the risk of child poverty<sup>3</sup>. In 2014 NICEM and Barnardo's Northern Ireland carried out research into ethnic minority communities childcare needs in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust<sup>4</sup>. As well as specific findings related to the difficulties in making arrangements for childcare respondents to this survey also highlighted broader themes:

- More than half of respondents had a weekly household income below the Northern Ireland average of £367 per week
- The most common job sectors ethnic minorities worked in were Food Services (25.1%) and Manufacturing and Production (14.9%)
- 25.5% of participants were not aware of the Working Tax Credit
- Respondents highlighted the challenges created by zero-hours contracts in terms of having short notice of upcoming work shifts in arranging childcare and how this impacted family income

From this basis of existing research, coupled with the ongoing experience of advice and casework carried out by the NICEM North West office, the broad themes of the research were defined.

<sup>2</sup> NICEM (2009) *Za Chlebem! The Impact of the Economic Downturn on the Polish Community* available at [http://nicem.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Za\\_Chlebem\\_Report.pdf](http://nicem.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Za_Chlebem_Report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> NICEM (2012) *Bayanihan! The Filipino Community In Northern Ireland* available at [http://nicem.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Bayanihan\\_January\\_2012.pdf](http://nicem.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Bayanihan_January_2012.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Dr Donna Kernaghan (2014) *Believe in Childcare: An Investigation into the childcare needs of ethnic minority communities in Northern Ireland*, available at <http://nicem.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Believe-in-Childcare-NICEM-and-Barnardos-NI-Dr-Donna-Kernaghan.pdf>

## 2. Methodology

Our research used a snowballing sampling method and in order to maximise the number of responses we provided both an English language and Polish translation of our questionnaire. The decision to choose a Polish translation was based on the experience of NICEM's work in the North West area as well as existing data from NISRA. The fieldwork for the research was carried out between June and December 2013 and generated a total of 220 responses, 13% of respondents answering the Polish language questionnaire and 87% answering the English version. The questionnaire was made available online and paper copies were also distributed. The survey was promoted through NICEM's clinics in L/Derry and Coleraine, by NICEM member groups and on NICEM's Facebook and Twitter pages. The survey was also promoted through the Polish Abroad Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/polishabroad.derry>).

## 3. Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the individuals who took the time to complete the questionnaire and generate the findings for our research. We would also like to thank all the individuals and groups who helped to promote the research to help increase the number of respondents.

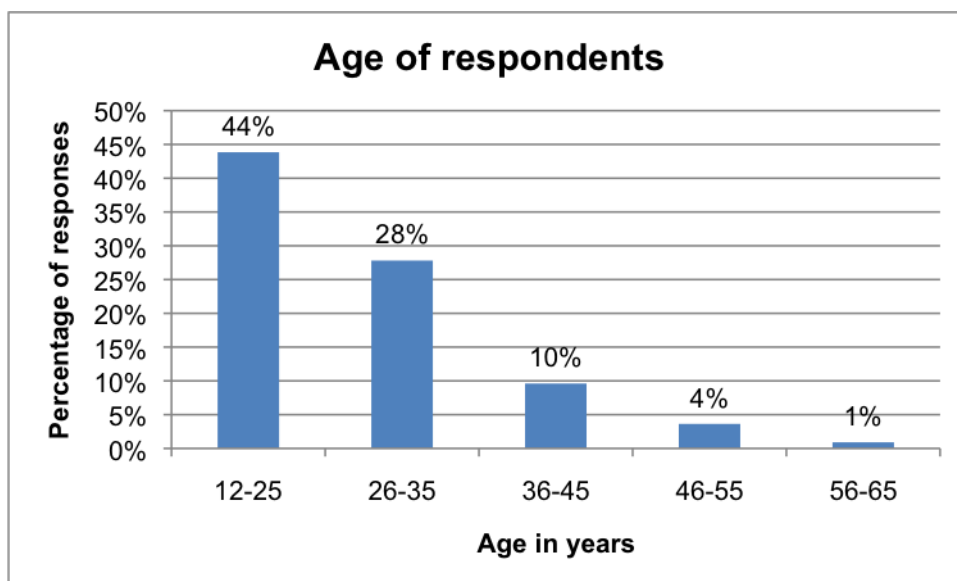
## 4. Profile of our respondents

### 4.1 Age

The respondents to our survey were mostly aged 35 years or under with 72% stating they were between 12 and 35. Although the first age category included those between 12-17 we would anticipate almost all of respondents would fall between 18-25. We can assume most respondents were 18 or over as when asked for occupation the numbers stating they were in full time education was very low and the distribution and promotion of the survey was

aimed at those over 18 years old. The full age breakdown of our respondents is shown:

**Figure 1**

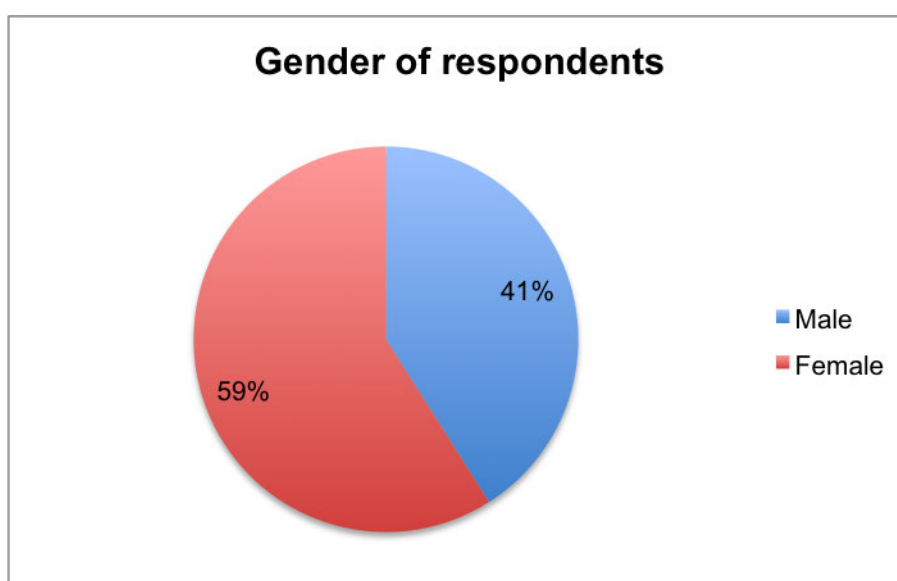


**Total 220 responses**

## 4.2 Gender

There was a slight majority of female respondents to our survey as shown in the chart below and this may be explained by anecdotal experience of a propensity for partners/wives to seek advice on matters on behalf of their male spouses/partners.

**Figure 2**

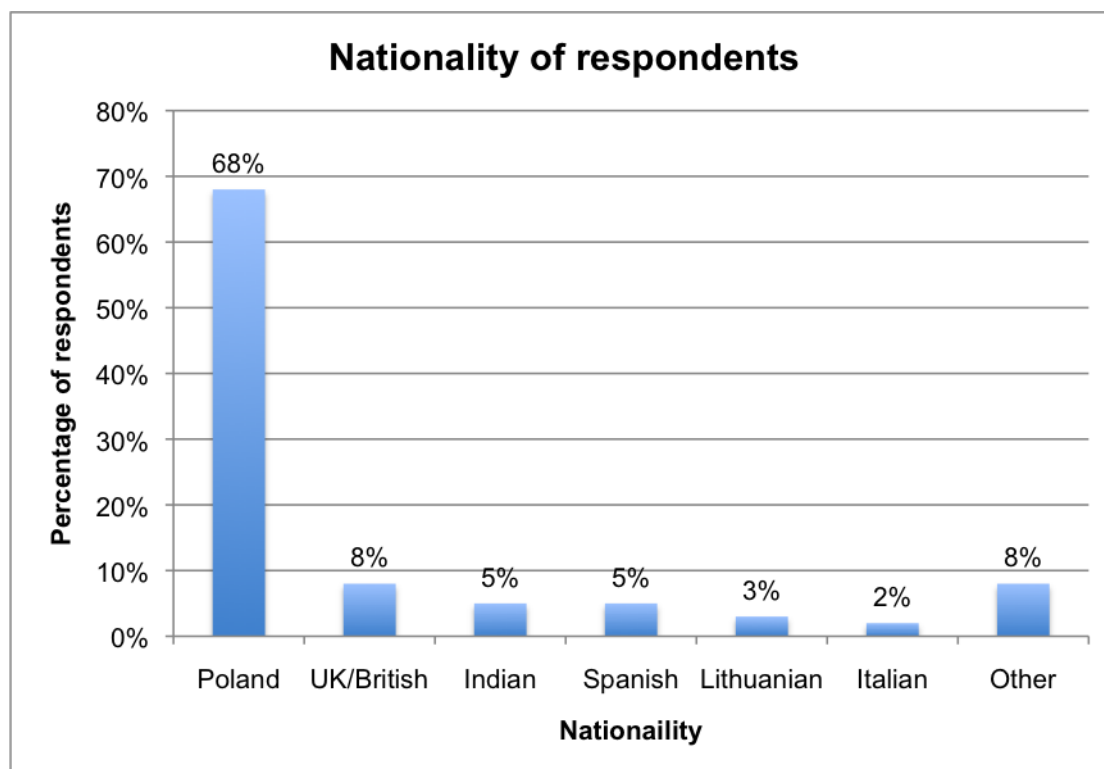


**Total 220 responses**

### 4.3 Nationality

We asked respondents to indicate their nationality with the majority identifying as Polish as can be seen in the following chart:

**Figure 3**



#### **Total 220 responses**

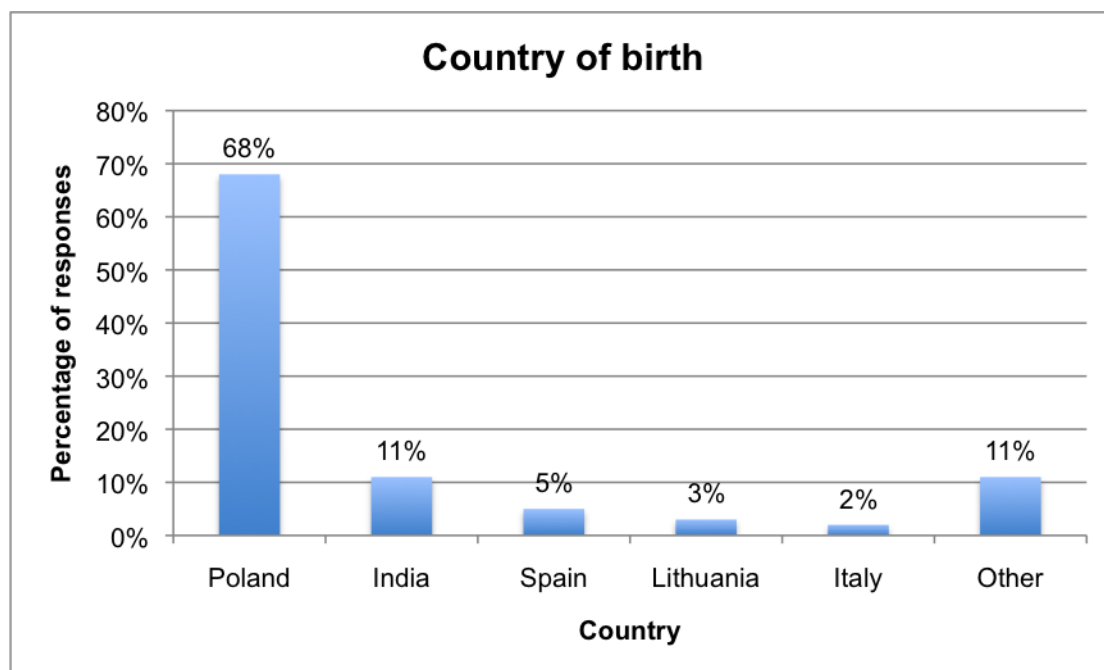
The other nationality category is made up of those nationalities with less than 2% of responses each which were: American, Austrian, Bulgarian, Chilean, Chinese, Dutch, Ethiopian, Filipino, German, Iranian, Irish, Mexican, Romanian and Russian.

### 4.4 Country of birth

As we can see 8% of respondents identified as being UK/British and so we also asked people for their country of birth in order to capture those who have this national identity but were born in another country.



**Figure 4**



#### **Total 219 responses**

The other country category is made up of those countries that received less than 2% of responses each which were: Austria, Brunei, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Germany, Holland, Hong Kong, Iran, Ireland, Mexico, Philippines, Punjab, Romania, Russia, UK and USA.

These results echo the 2011 Census data for these council areas in which Poland was the highest country of birth outside the UK apart from the Republic of Ireland.

**Table 1**

	<b>Coleraine</b>	<b>Derry</b>	<b>Limavady</b>	<b>Strabane</b>	<b>Areas combined</b>
<b>All usual residents</b>	59,067	107,877	33,536	39,843	240,323
<b>Country of birth highest outside UK</b>	Republic of Ireland 978 people	Republic of Ireland 4,455 people	Republic of Ireland 547 people	Republic of Ireland 2,171 people	Republic of Ireland 8151 people
<b>Second highest outside UK</b>	Poland 913 people	Poland 603 people	Poland 143 people	Poland 209 people	Poland 1868 people
<b>Third highest outside UK</b>	Germany 177 people	India 398 people	USA 96 people	Other EU Countries 104 people	USA 646 people

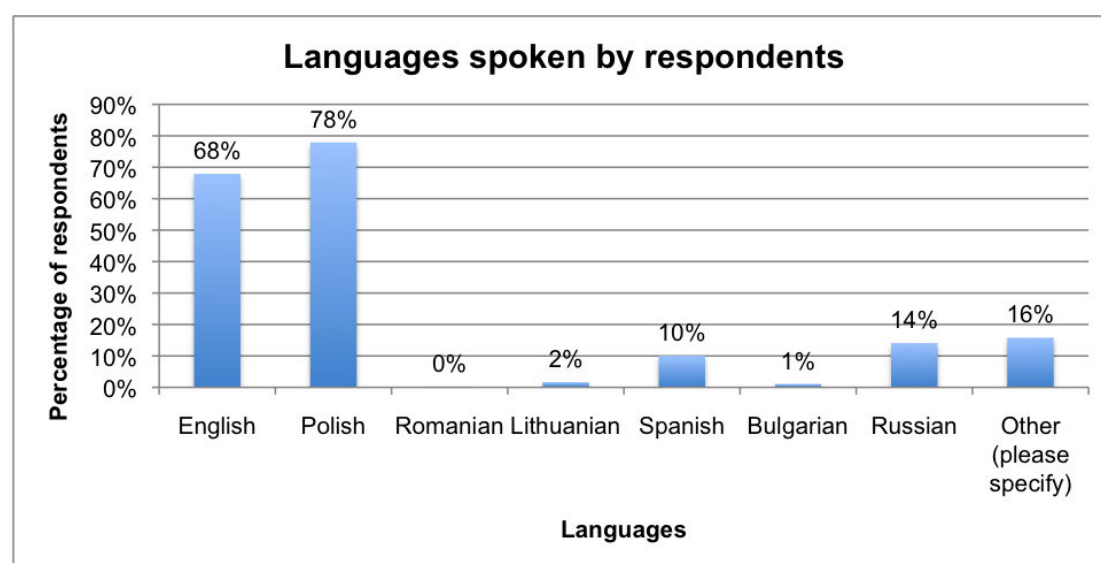
Source:

[http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/QS207NI%20\(a\).xlsx](http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/QS207NI%20(a).xlsx)

## 4.5 Language

We asked respondents what languages they could speak and respondents could select more than one language in response to this question. Reflecting the profile above, we found a large majority spoke Polish with English being the second most popular selection.

**Figure 5**



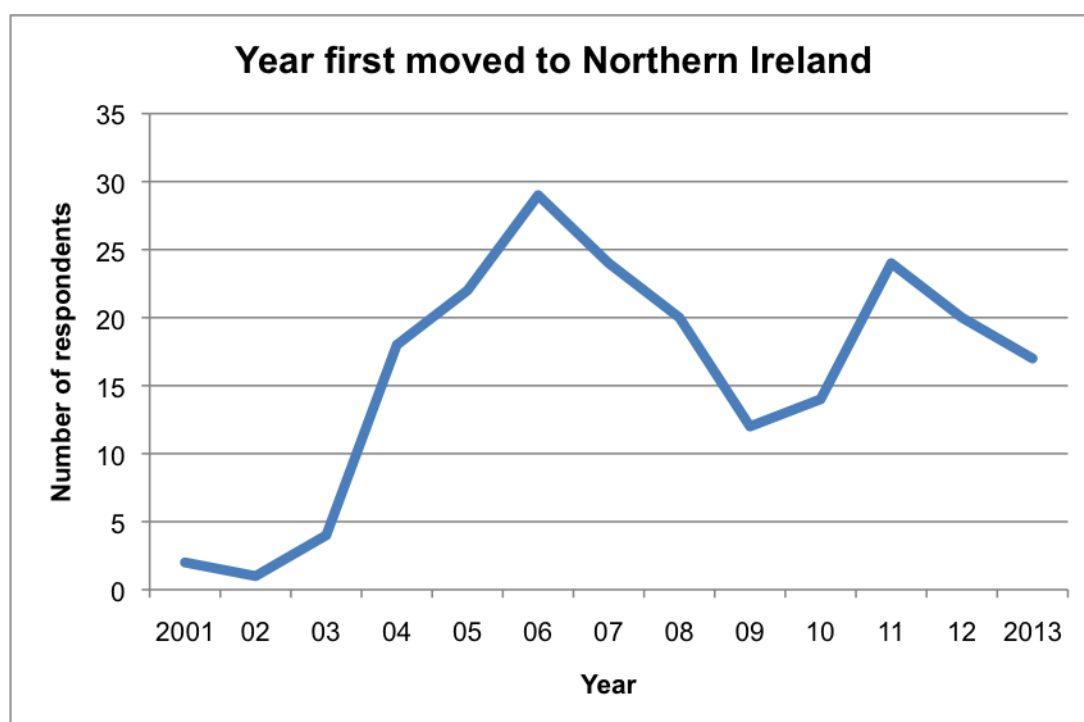
**Total 220 respondents answered this question**

Our respondents speak over 26 languages. In the other category the most commonly selected language was Malayalam with 17 responses followed by German chosen by 7 respondents, French was selected 6 times and Hindi 5 times. The other languages in this category were each selected less than five times: Amharic, Arabic, Basque, Chinese, Dutch, Filipino, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Kannada, Mandarin, Persian, Punjabi, Serbian, Tami and Telegu.

#### 4.6 Date of arrival in Northern Ireland

Fewer than 2% of respondents first came to Northern Ireland before 2000 with 2006 being the peak year for our respondents first moving to here. A downward trend after 2006 stopped in 2009, with higher numbers of respondents arriving in 2010 and 2011.

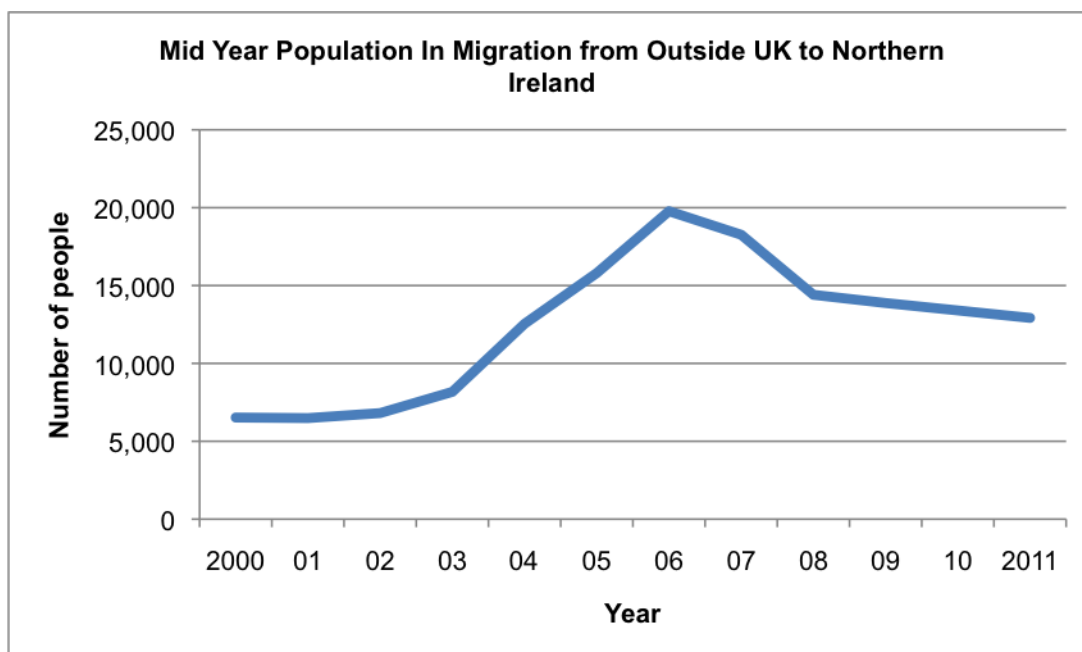
**Figure 6**



#### Total 211 responses

The trend of arrival to Northern Ireland of our respondents broadly reflects the data from NISRA mid year population which is shown below and also has mid 2006 and 2007 as the highest in flows for migration.

**Figure 7**

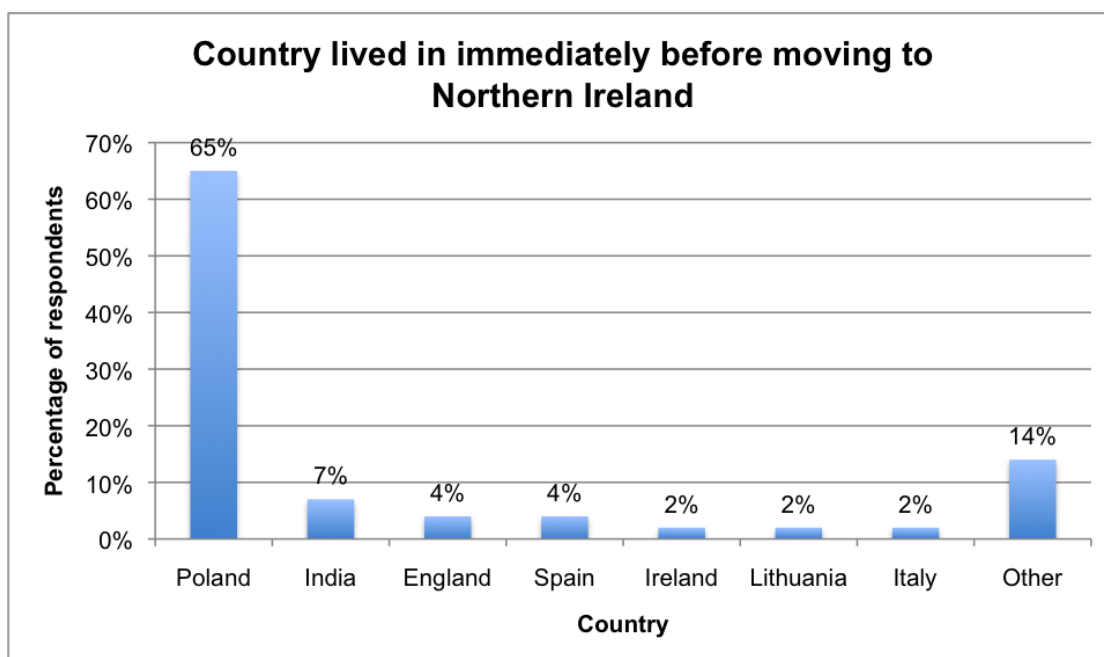


Source:

[http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/midyear/CoC\\_0012.xls](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/midyear/CoC_0012.xls)

We can see that the vast majority of respondents moved directly to Northern Ireland from outside the UK and Ireland, with just 6% stating they had lived in either England or Ireland before moving to Northern Ireland. As before, Poland was the most commonly selected category:

**Figure 8**



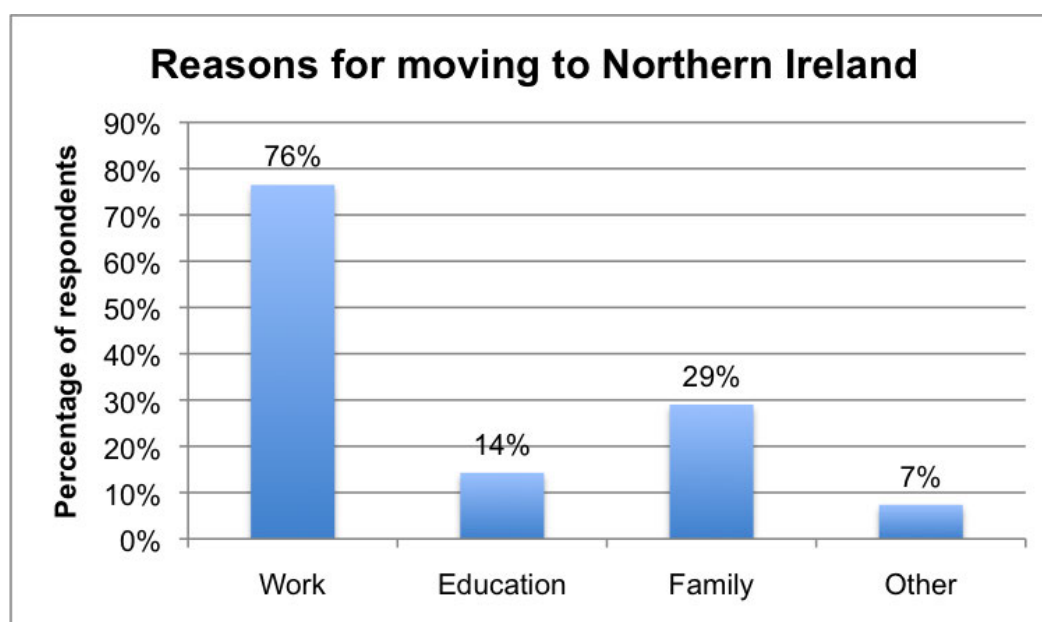
**Total 217 responses**

Respondents came from 28 different countries. The other category is made up of countries selected by 2% of respondents - Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, China, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Hungary, the Channel Islands, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, the Netherlands and United States of America.

#### 4.7 Reasons for moving to Northern Ireland

Respondents were asked to identify their main reasons for moving to Northern Ireland and were given the choice of work, education, family or other reasons. As we can see below the most commonly selected reason was work:

**Figure 9**



#### Total 217 respondents answered this question

The other reasons given by respondents did include some overlap with the given categories; for example, in relation to family one respondent said their reason for moving was that their husband moved here. Other respondents highlighted their partner or marriage as a reason for moving to Northern Ireland or due to a family bereavement. When these are taken into account the respective percentages are 33% for family and 4% for other reasons. Other reasons given by respondents included to improve financial situation, politics and to explore the world.

#### 4.8 Where our respondents live

Our research targeted those living in the North West of Northern Ireland and respondents predominately came from L/Derry, Strabane, Limavady and Coleraine council areas, although we did have a some responses with no or invalid answers to this question. The number of responses from the Ballymoney council area was higher than anticipated perhaps due to people from this area travelling to access NICEM services in Coleraine.

**Table 2**

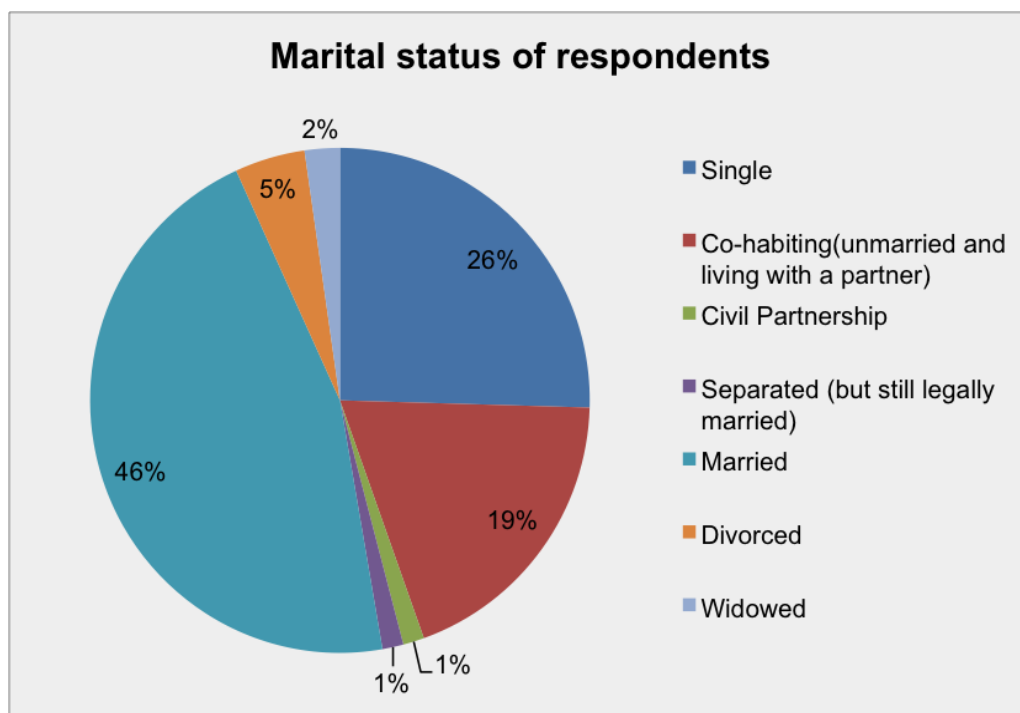
<b>Postcode</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>	<b>Council area</b>	<b>Towns/Villages in this area</b>
BT47	41%	Derry	L/derry - Waterside, Claudy, Feeny, Dungiven
BT48	18%	Derry	L/derry - Cityside, Ballynagard, Coshquin
BT82	7%	Strabane	Strabane, Artigarvan, Ballymagorry, Bready, Clady, Dunamanagh, Sion Mills
BT49	5%	Limavady	Limavady, Ballykelly
BT53	4%	Ballymoney	Ballymoney, Dervock, Armoy, Ballybogy
BT52	9%	Coleraine	Coleraine, Ballyvelton, Cloyfin
BT51	2%	Coleraine	Coleraine, Aghadowey, Articlave, Castlerock, Castleroe, Garvagh, Kilrea, Macosquin
Other post code areas with less than 2% of responses each	10%		
No Answer/Invalid answer	5%		

**Total 220 responses**

#### **4.9 Family composition**

A majority of our respondents (66%) were married, in a civil partnership or living with a partner.

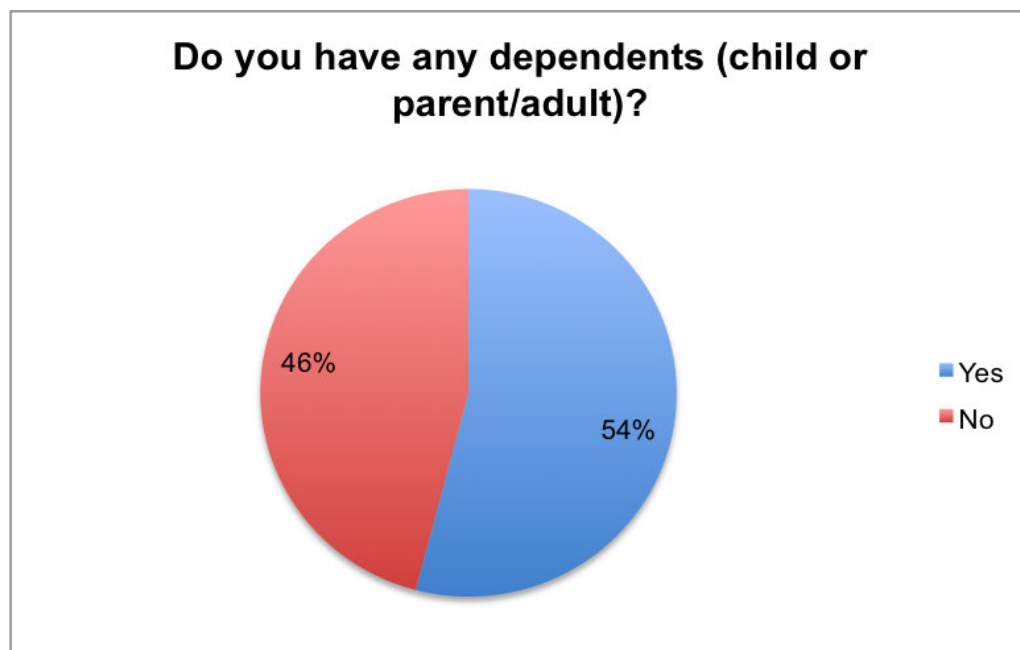
**Figure 10**



**Total 220 responses**

The majority of our respondents were responsible for dependents. Of these, 48% had child dependents and 24% were responsible for both children and adults and 9% had adult only dependents

**Figure 11**



**Total 220 responses**

With a view to getting more detail about our respondents' family situations we asked whether their dependants were children or adults and the number of each. Of those who indicated they were responsible for dependants 29% said they were responsible for one child and the second most common answer was two children that was selected by 14%. Of those respondents who indicated they had dependants 63% indicated they had children dependants and the full breakdown is given below:

**Table 3**

<b>Category of dependants not specified</b>	1 dependant	8%	17%
	2 dependants	8%	
	3 dependants	1%	
<b>Respondents with only adult dependants</b>	1 adult	8%	9%
	3 adults	1%	
<b>Respondents with only child dependants</b>	1 child	29%	48%
	2 children	14%	
	3 children	3%	
	4 children	2%	
<b>Respondents with child and adult dependants</b>	1 child, 1 adult	3%	15%
	1 child, 2 adults	2%	
	2 children, 1 adult	7%	
	2 children, 2 adults	1%	
	3 children 1 adult	9%	
	4 children 1 adult	2%	
	Answer not given	3%	

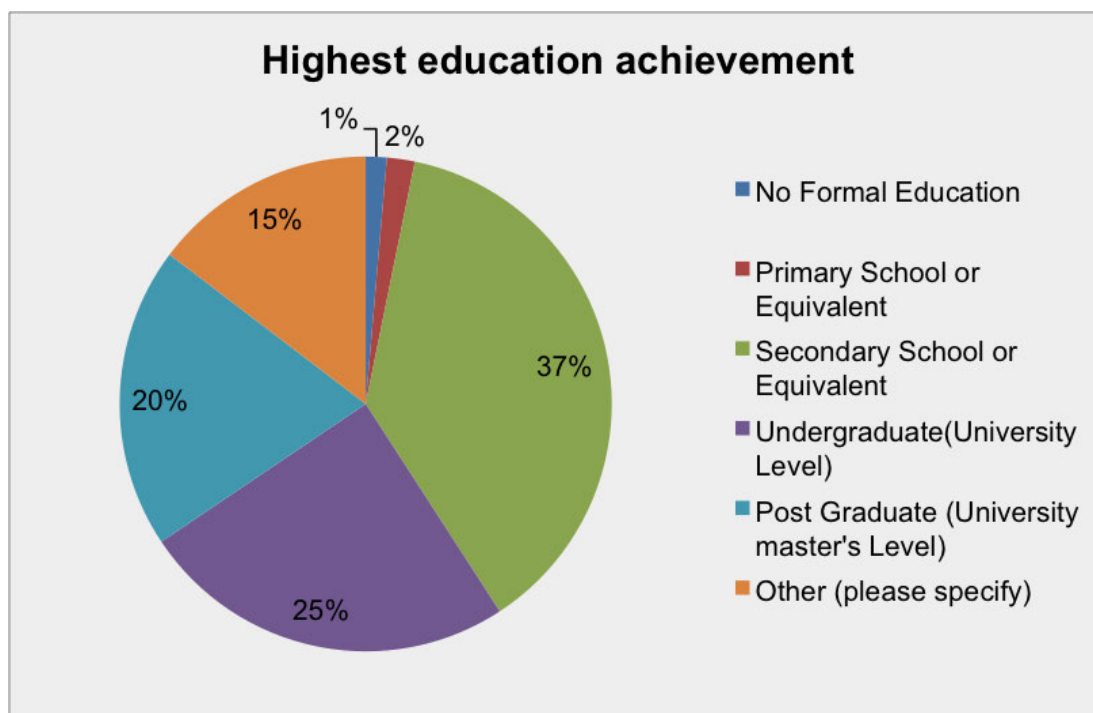
**Total 118 respondents**

#### **4.10 Education and skills**

In order to ascertain the skills possessed by our respondents we asked about their highest educational achievement. Thirty-seven percent had completed secondary school and 45% had completed either undergraduate or post-graduate university study.



**Figure 12**



#### **Total responses 218**

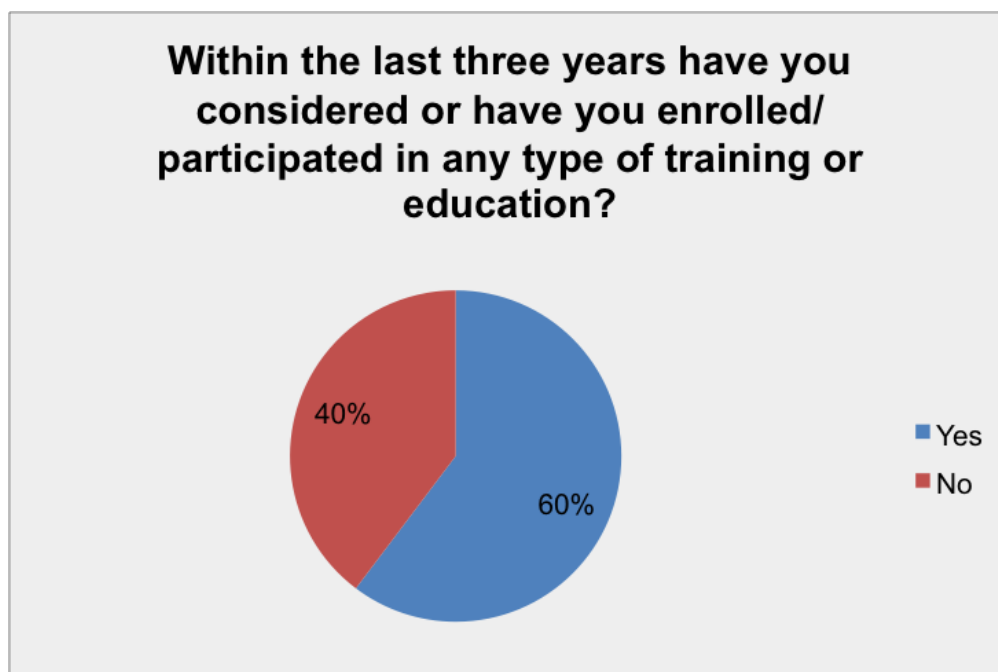
A sizeable proportion of respondents chose the 'other' category which may be due to their not associating themselves with the Northern Ireland equivalent of their qualifications. Of these, 18 respondents indicated they had completed secondary education in Poland across four types of schools at this level:

- Liceum Ogólnokształcące - a three year general secondary school education leading to the maturity certificate which is a requirement for entry to Higher Education;
- Liceum Zawodowe – also a three year secondary education leading to the maturity certificate but also offering a general vocational education in a chosen area;
- Technikum – a four year technical secondary level education leading to the maturity certificate and vocational qualifications at technician level;
- Szkoła Zawodowa – a 2-3 year basic vocational school leading to skilled worker qualifications.

In addition, one respondent had attained PhD level qualifications, one had a diploma level qualification and one said they had attained a HNC level qualification. Of those respondents who said they had under-graduate or post-graduate level qualifications 43% were from Poland and 23% from India.

From these results we can see most of our respondents were educated to at least a secondary level and as Figure 13 shows a majority indicated they had, or were considering, taking part in education or training.

**Figure 13**

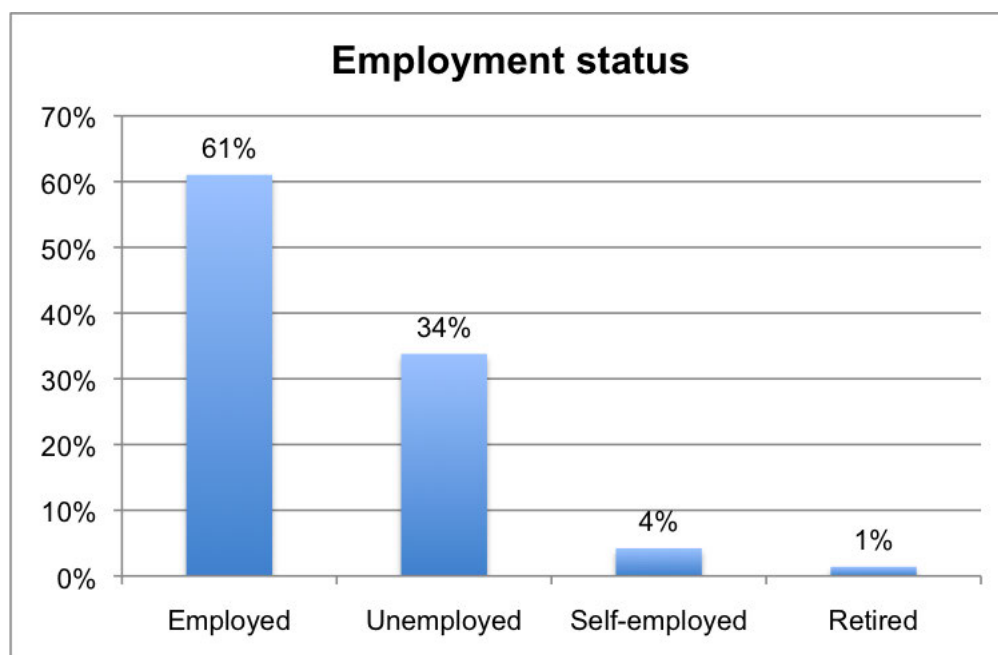


**Total responses 209**

#### **4.11 Economic Activity**

A clear majority (65%) of our respondents were in employment but a significant proportion stated that they were unemployed:

**Figure 14**



**Total responses 213**

This level of unemployment contrasts starkly with the claimant count in the four council areas, which was between 4.7-7.6% in 2014 as shown in table 4. It should also be noted that in three of the council areas (Derry, Limavady and Strabane) the general unemployment level is higher than the Northern Ireland average:

**Table 4**

	<b>February 2014</b>
<b>Council Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Working Age Claimant Count</b>
<b>Coleraine</b>	4.7
<b>Derry</b>	8.6
<b>Limavady</b>	6.3
<b>Strabane</b>	7.6
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	5.1

Source: [http://www.detini.gov.uk/table\\_3.8\\_february\\_2014.xls](http://www.detini.gov.uk/table_3.8_february_2014.xls)

#### 4.12 Employment by job classification and sector

Respondents indicated the nature of their employment as follows:

**Table 5**

<b>Job Classification</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Managers and Senior Officials	3%
Professional Occupations	14%
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	8%
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	6%
Skilled Trades Occupations	9%
Personal Service Occupations	8%
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	5%
Process, Plant and machine Operatives	8%
Elementary Occupations	32%
Response with insufficient detail to classify	8%

(Analysis based on Standard Occupational Classification 2010)

#### **Total responses 173**

As Table 6 shows, when compared to the general population in the council areas our respondents were significantly more likely to be employed in elementary occupations. Further, of those respondents who had completed post-graduate or under-graduate studies just over one fifth (22%) were

working in elementary occupations which suggest that their skills and education are being under-utilised.

**Table 6**

	Managers, directors and senior officials %	Profession al occupations %	Associate profession al and technical occupations %	Administrat ive and secretarial occupation %	Skilled trades occupations %	Caring, leisure and other service occupations %	Sales and customer service occupations %	Process, plant and machine operatives %	Elementary occupations %
Coleraine	8.43	17.10	7.59	13.27	14.28	8.92	11.38	7.17	11.86
Derry	7.44	17.86	8.69	12.21	11.03	9.49	14.08	8.23	10.96
Limavady	6.81	13.99	7.58	14.96	18.01	9.91	8.05	9.08	11.61
Strabane	6.53	13.33	7.11	12.25	19.65	9.69	10.14	10.15	11.15
Northern Ireland	8.04	17.15	8.64	14.06	14.02	9.28	10.05	7.96	10.80

Source:

[http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/KS608NI%20\(a\).xlsx](http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/KS608NI%20(a).xlsx)

As the following table shows, our respondents contribute to all aspects of the economy as illustrated below:

**Table 7**

Employment sector	Percentage of respondents
Accommodation and food service activities	10%
Administrative and support service activities	7%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1%
Construction	2%
Education	10%
Electricity, Gas, Steam and air conditioning	1%
Financial and insurance activities	5%
Human health and social work activities	10%
Information and communication	3%
Manufacturing	17%
Other service activities	11%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	3%
Transport and storage	1%
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	15%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	3%

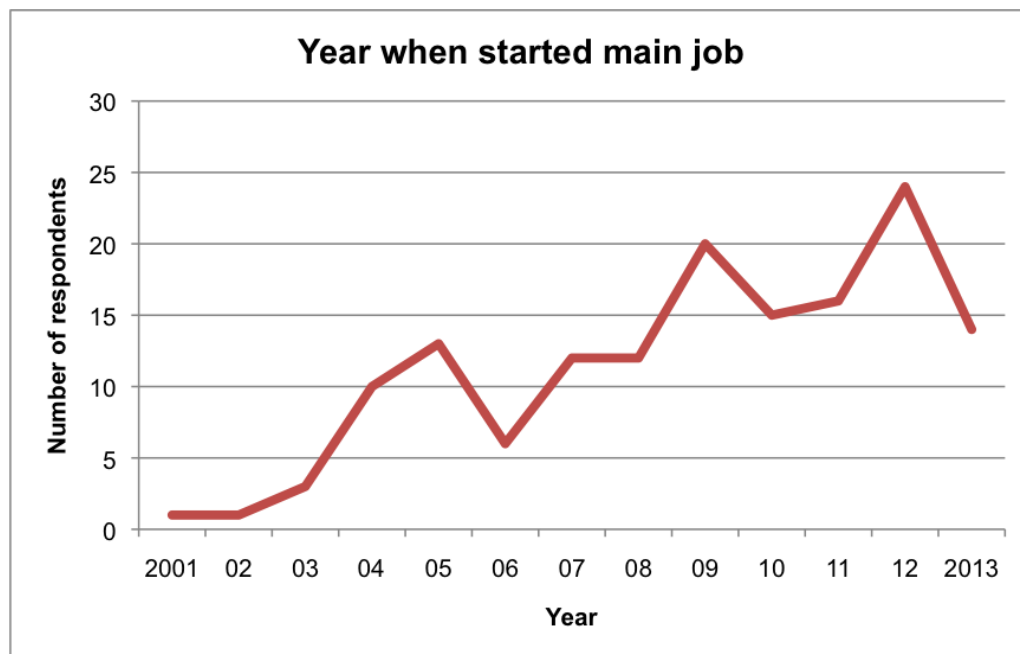
(Analysis based on 2007 UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities)

**Total 143 responses**

#### 4.13 Employment profile of respondents

Most respondents have been in their main job for less than 5 years with 16% of those who answered this question starting in 2012.

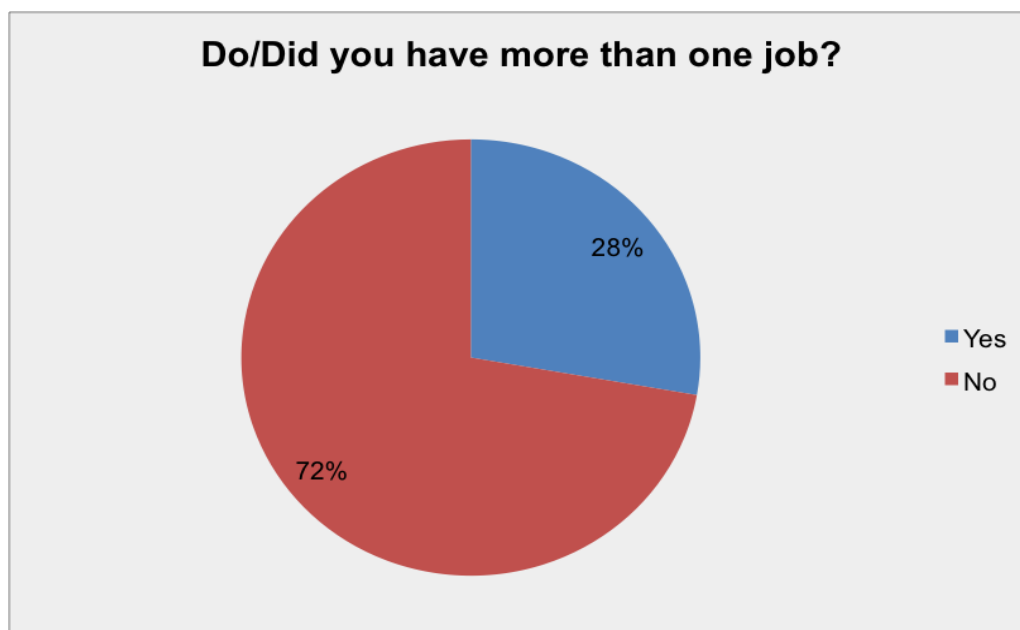
**Figure 15**



#### Total 151 responses

Over a quarter of our respondents stated they had more than one job that is a much larger proportion than for the wider Northern Ireland population of which stands at just 3%. (Source: [http://www.detini.gov.uk/lfs\\_2.6\\_nj14.xls](http://www.detini.gov.uk/lfs_2.6_nj14.xls)).

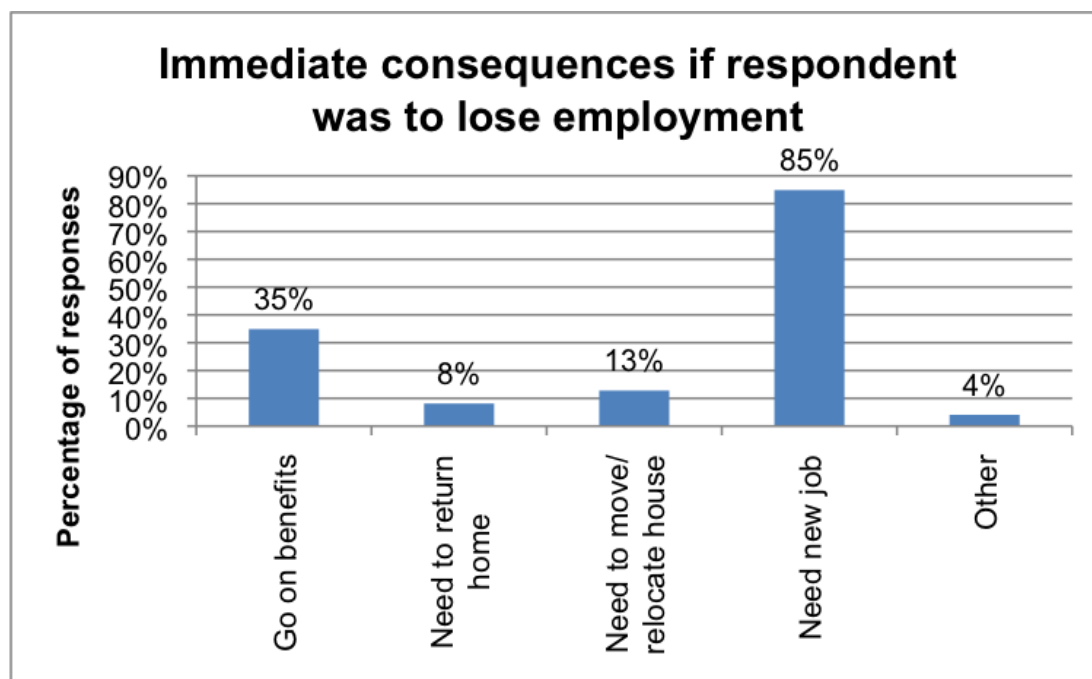
**Figure 16**



#### Total 209 responses

We asked our respondents what the immediate consequences would be if they were to lose their job. Fully 85% would seek new employment compared to 35% who believe they would need to rely on benefits.

**Figure 17**

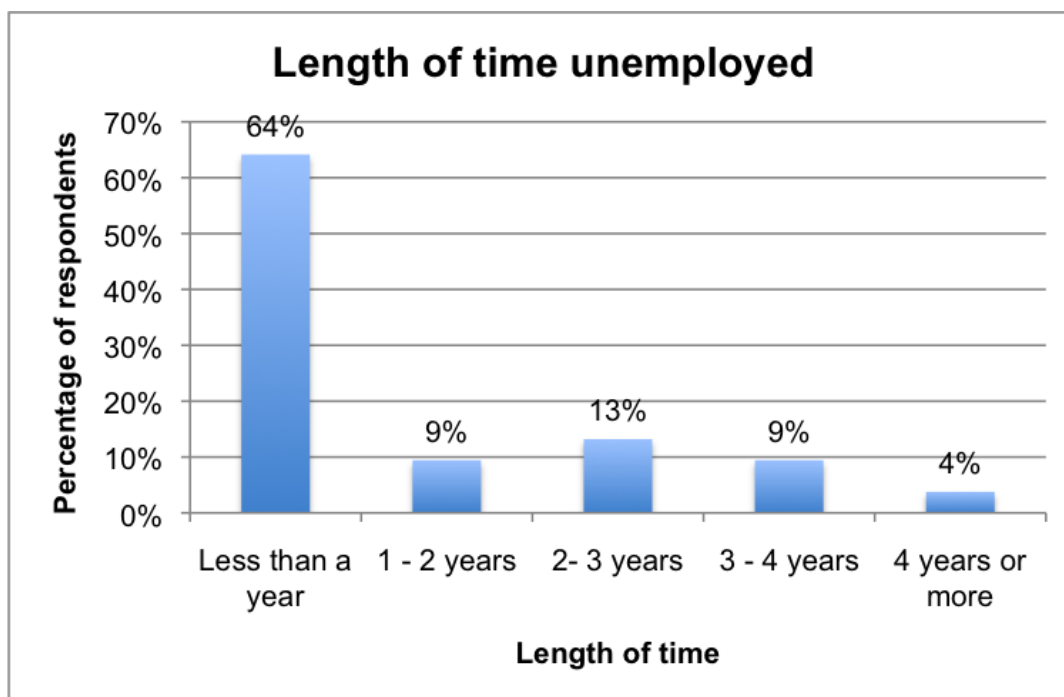


**Total 172 respondents answered this questions**

In the other category one respondent highlighted their pension as option if they were to lose their employment while another person said: "I am not able to receive benefits because my last employer did not register my tax".

For those respondents who said they were not working at present, a majority had been unemployed for less than a year:

**Figure 18**

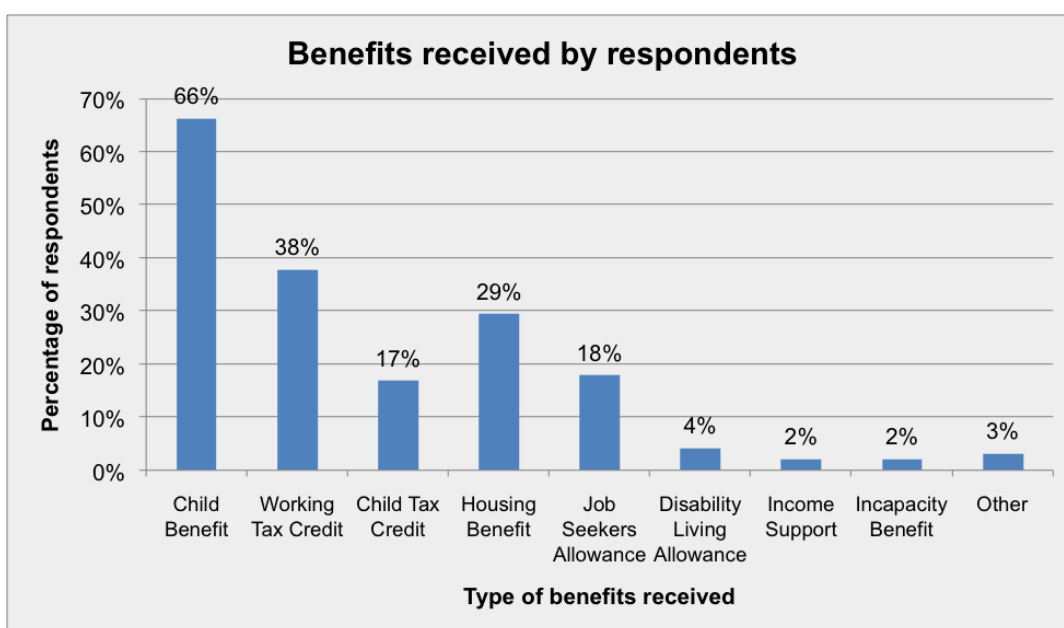


**Total 56 responses**

#### 4.13 Social Welfare

We found that just under half (49%) of our respondents said they were currently receiving benefits and the breakdown of benefits received is shown below:

**Figure 19**



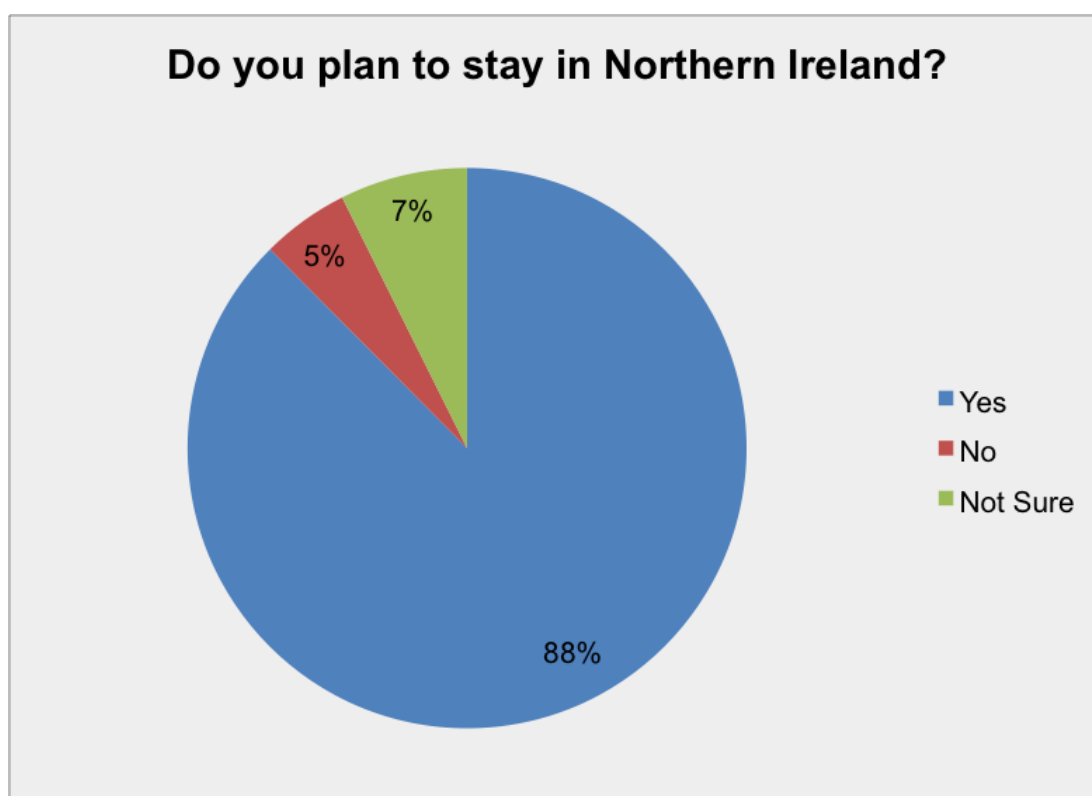
**Total 95 respondents answered this question**

As we can see the take up of benefits was highest for those universal and work related benefits. The level of take up for child benefit reflects the high number of our respondents who stated they had children as dependents. The fact that 38% of our respondents receive Working Tax Credit is reflective of the fact that many of our respondents were in employment and suggested they were in lower paid jobs. This echoes the fact that a substantial proportion of our respondents were in elementary occupations that would qualify for this tax relief.

#### 4.14 Future Intentions

As part of the research we asked our respondents whether they planned to stay in Northern Ireland and we found that almost 9 out of 10 respondents they saw their future as being in Northern Ireland.

**Figure 20**

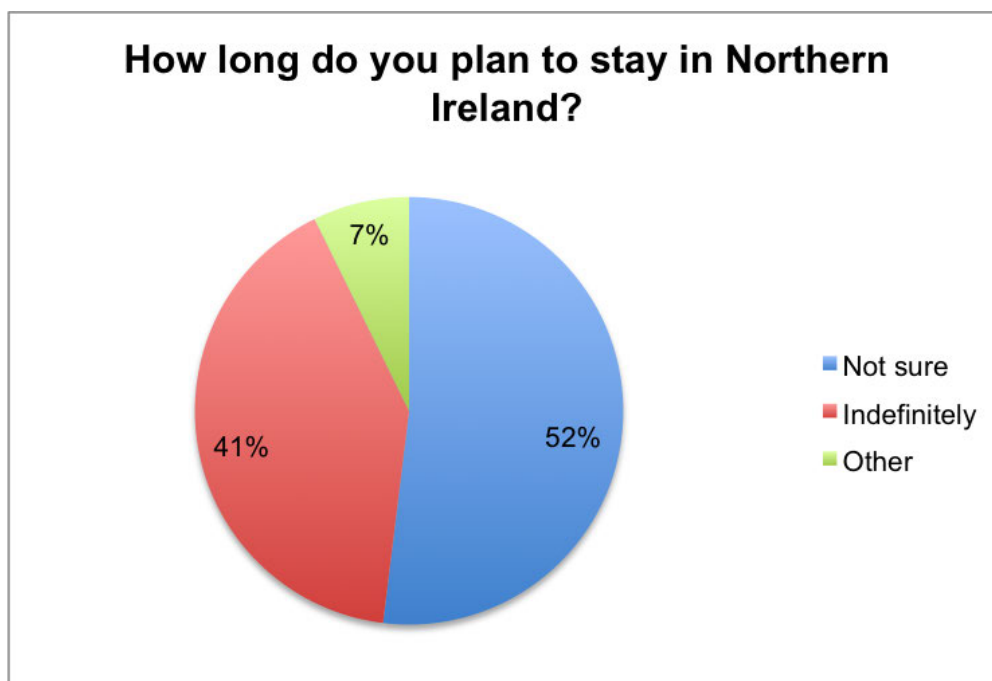


**Total responses 217**

However, the length of intended stay was less clear with 52% of respondents stating they were not sure how long they would stay in Northern Ireland. This high level of uncertainty about this perhaps reflects the difficulty we all have to make definitive statements about future intentions.



**Figure 21**

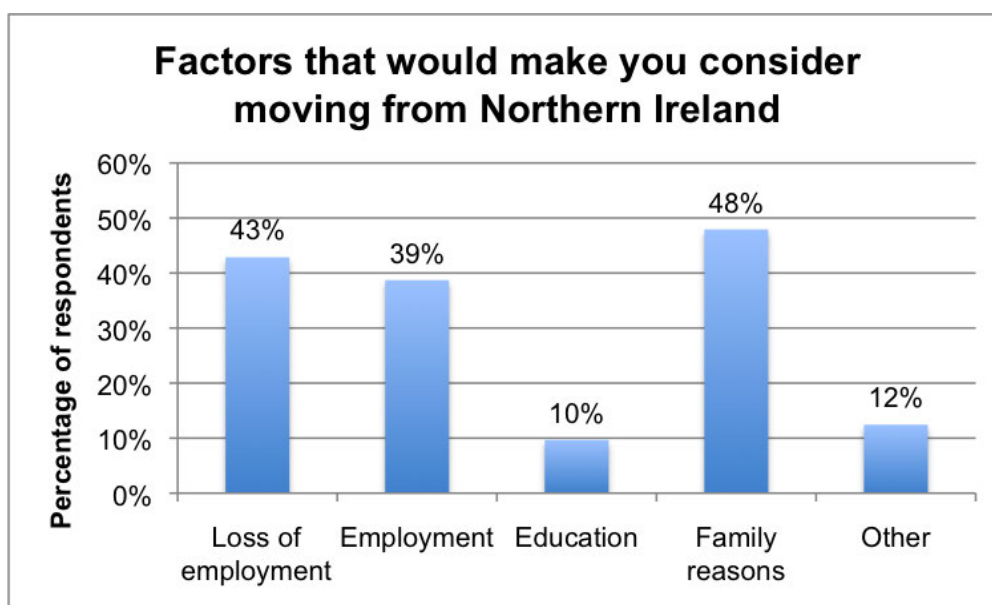


**Total 206 responses**

Of the 7% of respondents who selected 'other' 9 thought they would be in Northern Ireland for 10 years or less.

When asked what would make people consider leaving Northern Ireland family was the most commonly selected reason, although loss of employment in Northern Ireland or employment elsewhere were the next most popular reasons:

**Figure 22**



**Total 217 respondents answered this question**

Some of the other reasons given included:

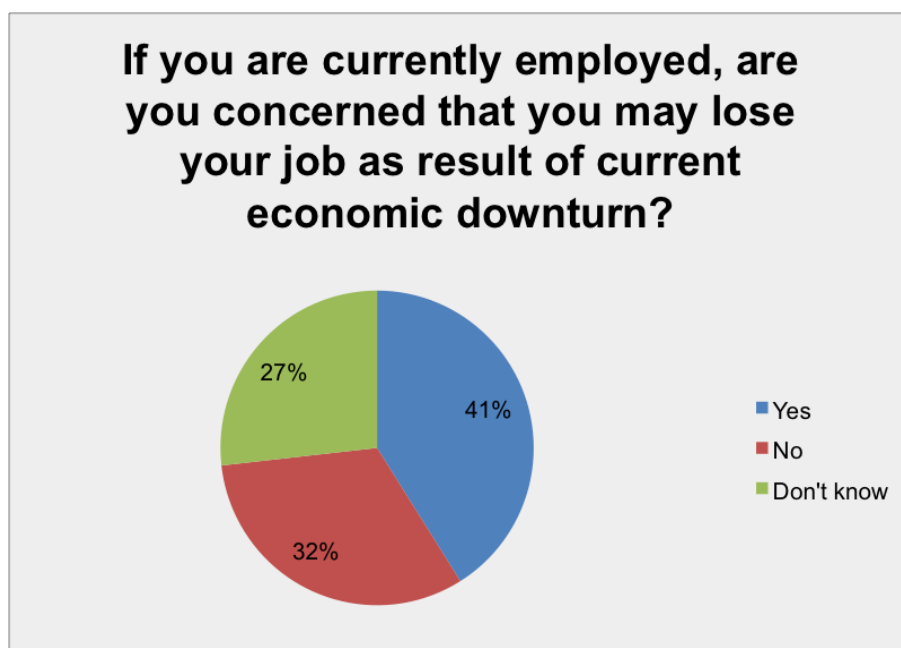
- Racism or if the situation for BME community gets worse
- Racial discrimination
- Health
- Security
- Climate
- Family bereavement
- Better career development opportunities in another country
- Partner's career
- Personal matters
- Retirement

## 5. Effects of the economic downturn

### 5.1 Economic downturn and job security

We asked a series of questions specifically about the economic downturn and how it was affecting our respondents' lives. Of those respondents who were currently employed a significant proportion (41%) were concerned they might lose their job as a result of the economic downturn.

**Figure 23**

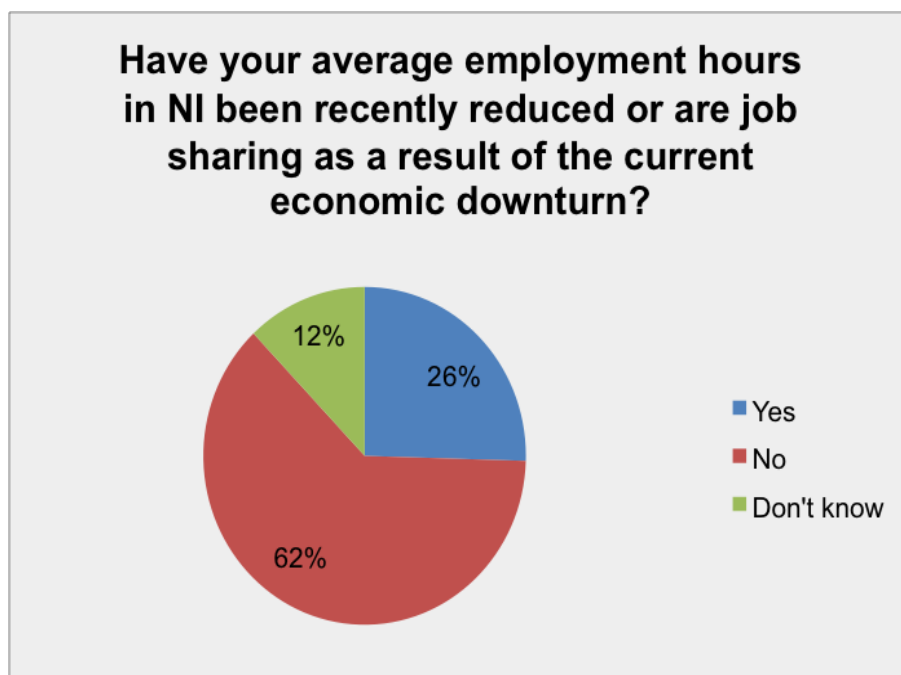


**Total 112 responses**

### 5.2 Economic downturn and hours of work

We also found that over a quarter of respondents had had a reduction in their working hours following the economic downturn.

**Figure 24**

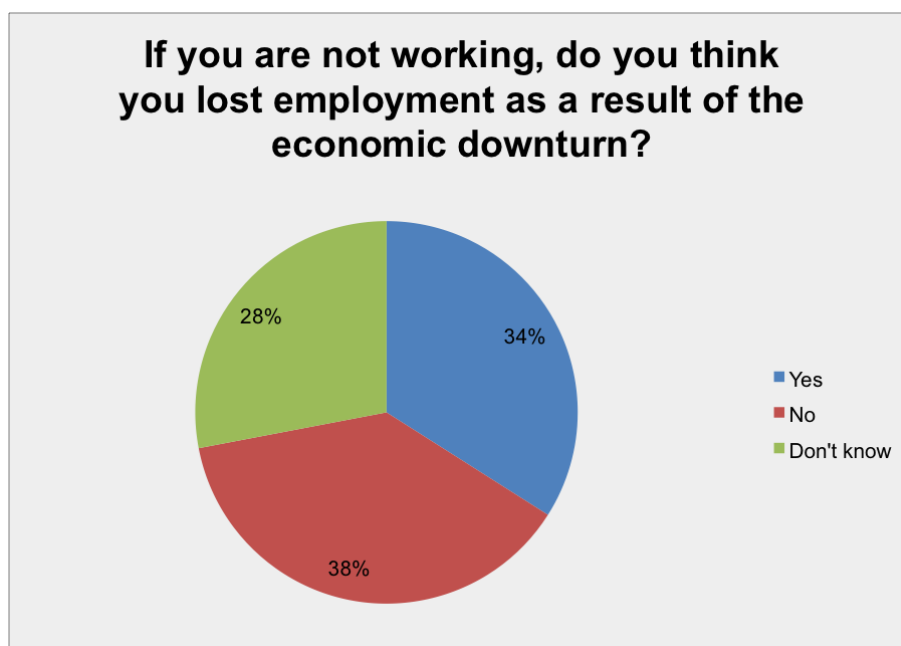


**Total 157 responses**

### **5.3 Unemployment and the economic downturn**

For our respondents who were not working, over a quarter attributed their unemployment to the economic downturn:

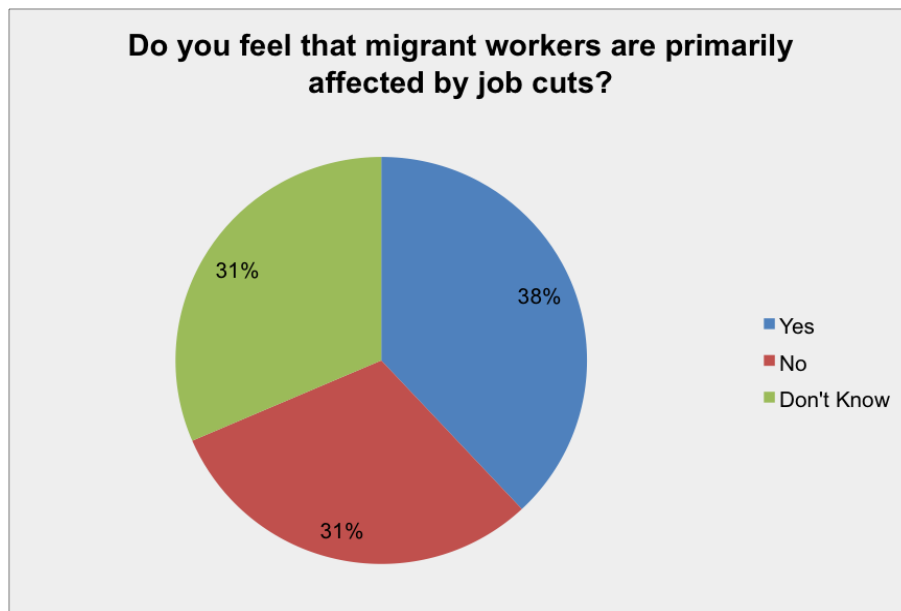
**Figure 25**



**Total 50 responses**

Whether they were currently employed or not, a substantial proportion of all our respondents (38%) stated they felt that migrant workers were primarily affected by job cuts.

**Figure 26**

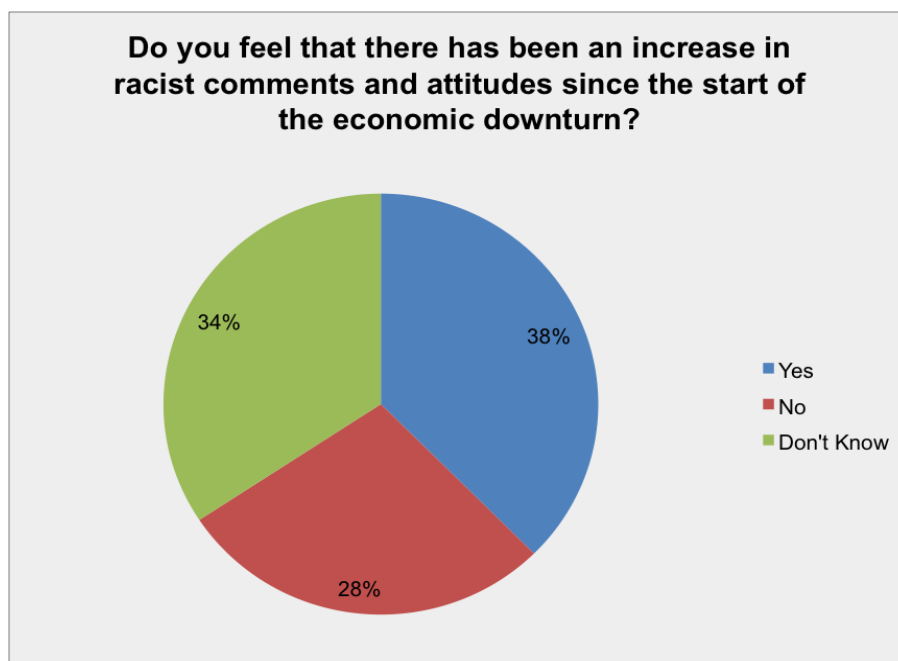


**Total 213 responses**

#### **5.4 Racism and the economic downturn**

38% of respondents felt that there was an increase in racist comments and attitudes since the start of the downturn and just over one fifth of all respondents, including those currently in employment and those not, stated they had experienced racism in their workplace.

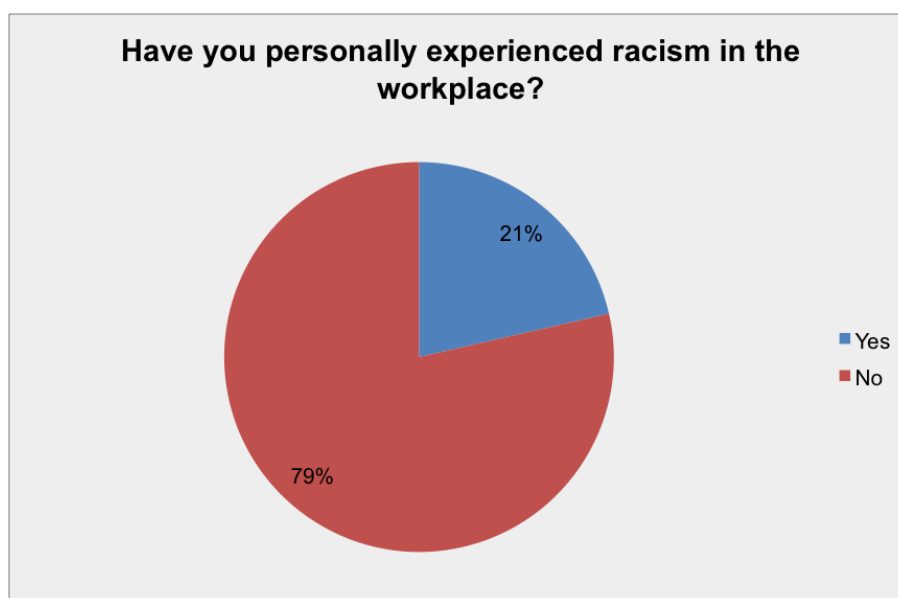
**Figure 27**



**Total 213 responses**

## 5.5 Racism and work

**Figure 28**

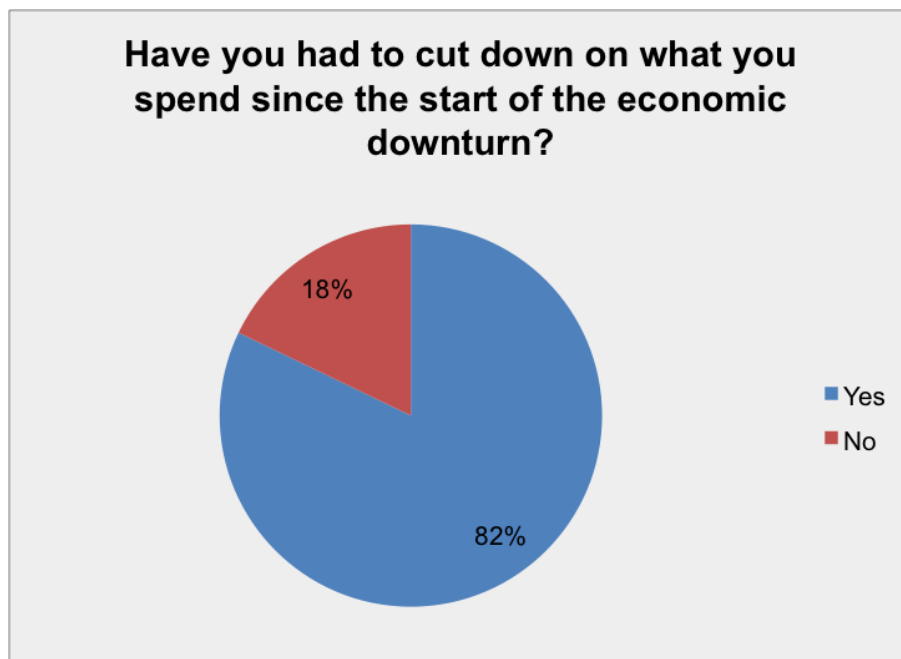


**Total 210 responses**

## 5.6 Overall effects of the economic downturn

8 out of 10 respondents indicate that they have had to reduce expenditure since the economic downturn began:

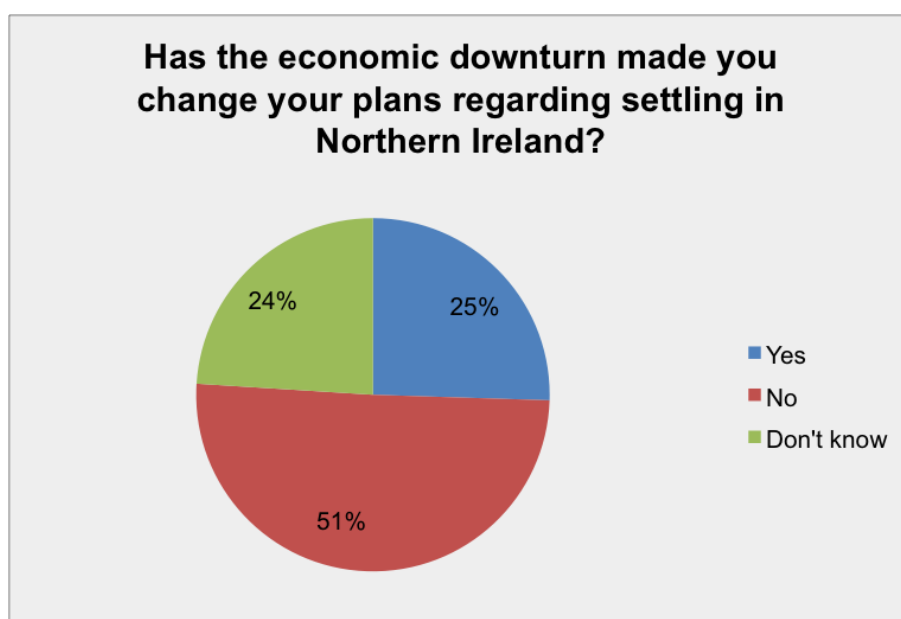
**Figure 29**



**Total responses 196**

We found that respondents' plans in relation to their future in Northern Ireland had mostly been unaffected by the downturn with just a quarter saying it had caused a change of plans:

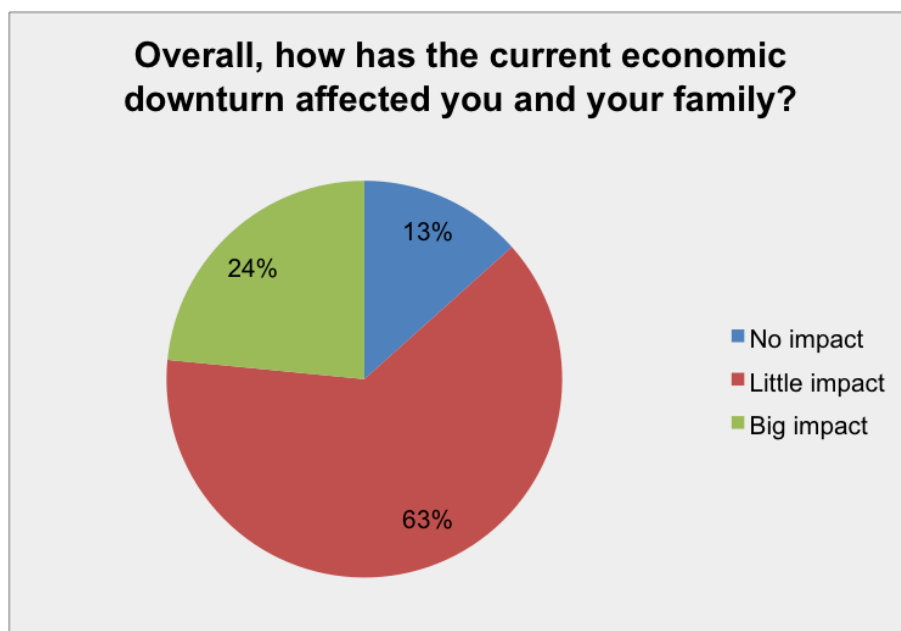
**Figure 30**



**Total responses 200**

We can also see how a large proportion of our respondents (87%) stated the downturn has had an impact on them and their families.

**Figure 31**



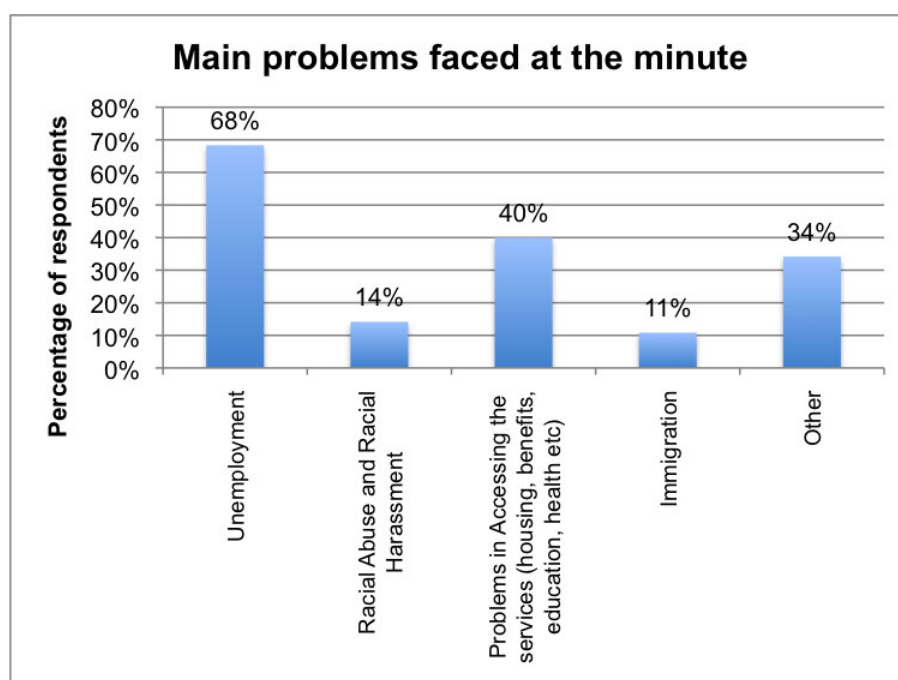
**Total 209 responses**

## **6. Issues raised by respondents**

We asked our respondents what main challenges they faced at present and found that unemployment was the most commonly selected category at 68%. Forty percent indicated that accessing services was an issue. Fourteen percent of respondents said racial harassment and abuse was a challenge and over 1 in 10 people said that immigration was the main issue they faced.



**Figure 32**



**Total of 120 respondents answered this question**

Other problems raised by respondents included financial issues, in particular the cost of living, difficulties paying bills and general financial problems. Some respondents said their own health was the main issue they were facing while others highlighted difficulties in accessing quality health care changing attitudes towards the BME community in Northern Ireland including discrimination and racism, family and personal reasons and career opportunities.

When we asked for any other comments our respondents raised a number of issues most commonly employment. They highlighted fewer job opportunities and had experienced difficulties in looking for jobs and with working conditions.

One respondent suggested: *"You should ask how many job interviews a person attended where they were singled out because they were foreign"* while another said *"there are less opportunity for ethnic minorities, when interviews are conducted. Their names are not shortlisted even after performing well"*. Other outlined challenges for those who are in jobs with one respondent saying *"More visible and significant differences in the treatment of local workers"*, *"there a tendency to ignore immigrants for office jobs with more responsibilities and giving easy jobs like restaurant servers"* while another highlighted that *"you should ask more in depth questions concerning the level of racism found in the workplace in terms of wage pay, vacation time, workload"*. Respondents also highlighted financial concerns with one saying *"prices are rising very rapidly whereas salaries stay the same or rise slightly"* and another saying they had to limit expenses.

## 7. Conclusions and recommendations

### Summary of our findings

- Northern Ireland's Black and Minority Ethnic community in the North West is a young population with 72% of respondents under 35.
- In terms of country of birth, nationality and language most of our respondents were Polish reflecting the findings of the 2011 Census and administrative sources for the Black and Minority Ethnic population in the North West.
- There was a clear pattern of in-migration post 2004, peaking in 2006 then dropping until a rise in numbers again in 2011 and 2012.
- Respondents coming from 23 different countries and speak 26 different languages. Despite efforts to publicise the questionnaire we no representation from African and African-Caribbean communities that stood at 423 people in these areas in the 2011 Census.
- Black and Minority communities include many families with 66.6% of respondents married, in a civil partnership or living with a partner and more than half responsible for adult or child dependents.
- A majority of respondents see their future in Northern Ireland with three quarters saying they planned to stay here.
- 40% respondents said accessing housing, benefits, health, and education services were the main challenge they face at the minute.
- The Black and Minority population is educated and skilled (with 40% first degree and 25% master degree and/or PhD) with many people seeking to increase these skills further. However, it appears that many skills are being underutilised as respondents are disproportionately represented in elementary positions in their main and their second jobs although they make an economic contribution in Northern Ireland across a number of sectors.
- Looking for work was a key reason for coming to Northern Ireland and a large majority of our respondents are in employment, with a significant proportion having second job. When respondents were asked what they would do if they lost their job the most common response was to look for a new job (85%).
- In spite of this economic activity we can see that unemployment is an issue for our respondents with the level of unemployment among our respondents at 34% being higher than averages in North West council areas. (NI average in 2013: 5.4%, Coleraine: 5%, Derry: 8.6%, Strabane: 7.7% and Limavady: 6.9%)<sup>5</sup>
- 64% of those who are unemployed have been out of work for less than one year and 68% of respondents highlighted unemployment as the main challenge they are facing due to a lack of job opportunities.
- 41% of respondents said the recession had made them worry about losing their job whilst a quarter felt their of hours of work had been reduced

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/pivotgrid.aspx?dataSetVars=ds-4201-lh-37-yn-2005-2013-sk-18-sn-Labour%20Market-yearfilter-->

because of the recession since 2009 and 34% said their loss of employment was caused by the economic downturn. The issue of poverty is the main challenge for both the communities and the decision-makers.

- 38% of respondents felt that the economic downturn has led to an increase in racist comments and attitudes which some noted would lead them to consider leaving Northern Ireland.
- 20% respondents experienced racism at work and 14% of respondents said racial harassment and abuse was the main issue they currently faced.
- Respondents also highlighted different treatment for Black and Ethnic Minority community members in terms of position, pay and conditions at work.
- Overall 87% of respondents said the economic downturn had an effect on them and their family with eight out of ten saying they had to reduce spending because of the recession.
- When we consider 28% of our respondents have a second job (the local average is 3%), 44% are employed in elementary occupations, 38% receiving working tax credit, 29% receive housing benefits and 18% receive Job Seekers Allowance there is a risk of poverty in the Black and Minority Community in the North West, both for those looking for work and those already with a job.

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Access to Services**

- 1.1 Access to health, housing, benefits, education and other services by Black and Minority Ethnic peoples should be improved. Barriers to services should be reduced by ensuring ongoing training for frontline staff and the provision of interpreters as needed.
- 1.2 All departments and agencies that provide public services should recruit bi-lingual staff to improve both the current access to public services and under-representation in the work force.

### **2. Welfare Reform**

- 2.1 There is a need to ensure that any reform of the welfare system does not exacerbate the problems being faced by Black and Minority Ethnic people particularly since the research highlighted concerns about the loss of jobs as a result of the economic downturn. Information about any change to benefits should be provided in a transparent and accessible way. Bearing in mind the complex benefits system and a lack of language skills to access benefits the new migrant communities also face challenges to the legal rights to claim these benefits as a European citizens. The use of interpreters alone should not be seen to resolve these issues.
- 2.2 We have shown an image of families who are working in difficult economic times, facing particular challenges, to avoid poverty. This is an issue that

cuts across a number of Northern Ireland departments including OFMDFM, DEL, DSD and DHSSPS. It is imperative action is taken to tackle poverty among Black and Minority Communities by ensuring access to services and entitlements such as affordable childcare, free school meals and Education Maintenance Allowance. It is also crucial that those in Black and Minority Ethnic communities are aware of and access work credits within the current system and under any altered arrangements.

### **3. Education and Skills**

- 3.1 The education and skills of Black and Minority Ethnic people need to be acknowledged including through the recognition of qualifications from other countries. There is a need to raise awareness of the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) comparisons of qualifications that can be carried out in some Jobs and Benefits Offices.
- 3.2 The Department of Employment and Learning should take steps to inform and educate private sector employers about overseas qualifications.
- 3.3 The Department for Education and Learning should establish specific training courses that include ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision so that Black and Minority Ethnic workers are able fully to make use of their skills in the in the job market; this will both assist economic recovery and better integrate these workers into the labour market.

### **4. Addressing Racism**

- 4.1 It is vital that increases in racist attitudes, due in part to the changing economic conditions, are comprehensively challenged across Northern Ireland. Both Central and Local Government must ensure that Good Relations strategies address racist attitudes. The reorganisation of Councils offers the opportunity to utilise the experience of legacy Councils and improve and consolidate best practice.

### **5. Racially Motivated Crime**

- 5.1 The PSNI must encourage reporting and effectively investigate racially motivated crime. The Department of Justice should ensure that racial harassment and attacks are addressed throughout the criminal justice system and OFMDFM's Racial Equality Strategy should ensure that adequate resources are available to tackle this issue.

## 8. Research Questionnaire

Below is the English version of the questionnaire used in the research. A Polish and English version were both made available online and in paper format for participants to complete.

### Research Questionnaire



### **“The impact of the economic downturn on the Black and Minority Ethnic People in the North West of Northern Ireland”**

This questionnaire is designed to examine how the economic downturn has affected Black and Minority Ethnic People in the North West of Northern Ireland. By carrying out this research we hope to find out more about Black and Minority Ethnic People in the L/derry, Coleraine, Strabane and Limavady Council areas so we can better ensure their needs are met. Throughout the survey we use the term “economic downturn” and by this we mean the current recession in the UK since 2009.

### SECTION A: ABOUT YOU

1. What is your age group? *(Please tick appropriate box)*

12-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55 ☐ 56-65 ☐ 66 and older ☐

2. What is your gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐

3. What is your nationality? *(please specify)*

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4. What is your country of birth? *(please specify)*

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5. What languages do you speak?

English		Bulgarian	
Polish		Russian	
Romanian		Hungarian	
Lithuanian		Slovakian	
Latvian		Slovene	
Estonian		Portuguese	
Spanish		Other ( <i>please specify</i> ) .....	

6. What is your highest academic qualification?

No Formal Education		Undergraduate (University level)	
Primary School or Equivalent		Post Graduate (University Master's Level)	
Secondary School or Equivalent		Other: .....	

7. Within the last three years have you considered or have you enrolled / participated in any type of training or education?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Other (*please specify*)

8. What is your marital status?

Single		Married	
Co-habiting (unmarried and living with a partner)		Divorced	
Civil Partnership		Widowed	
Separated (but still legally married)		Other ( <i>please specify</i> ): .....	

9. Do you have any dependents (child or parent/adult)?

Yes	<input type="text"/>
No	<input type="text"/>

If yes, how many:

Children	<input type="text"/>
Adults	<input type="text"/>

10. What is your postcode? (this information will be kept strictly confidential)

BT	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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## SECTION B: YOUR LIFE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

1. When did you move to Northern Ireland?

Month	<input type="text"/>
-------	----------------------

Year	<input type="text"/>
------	----------------------

2. What country did you live in immediately before moving to Northern Ireland?

(please write the name in the box)

<input type="text"/>
----------------------

3. What were the reasons for you moving to Northern Ireland? (please tick all that apply)

Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>

4. Do you plan to stay in Northern Ireland?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
4a. If yes, how long you do plan to stay in Northern Ireland?	<input type="text"/>
(please specify the number of years in the box)	<input type="text"/>
Not Sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indefinitely	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Which factors would make you consider moving from Northern Ireland? (please tick all that apply)

Loss of employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment Elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family reasons	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>

## SECTION C: YOUR JOB, WELFARE AND TAXES

1. Are you currently? (please tick)	Employed	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What is/was the full title of your main job? (please write) \_\_\_\_\_

3. What services or products does the company in your main job provide? (please write) \_\_\_\_\_

4. When did you begin your main job? Year \_\_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do/did you have more than one job?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	NO (If NO go to Q.6)	<input type="checkbox"/>

5a. If yes, what is the nature of your other jobs? (please write) \_\_\_\_\_

6. If you are currently employed are you concerned you may lose your job as a result of the current economic downturn?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	DON'T KNOW	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Have your average employment hours in NI been recently reduced or are you job sharing as a result of the current economic downturn?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	DON'T KNOW	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. If you were to lose your employment, what would be the immediate consequences for you and your family? (please tick)	Go on benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Need to return home	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Need to relocate/move	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Need new job	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other (Please specify): .....	



9. Have you had to cut down on what you spend since the start of the economic downturn?	YES		
	NO		
10. Has the economic downturn made you change your long-term plans regarding settling in NI?	YES		
	NO		
	DON'T KNOW		
11. Do you feel migrant workers are primarily affected by job cuts?	YES		
	NO		
	DON'T KNOW		
12. Do you feel that there has been an increase in racist comments and attitudes since the start of the economic downturn?	YES		
	NO		
	DON'T KNOW		
13. Have you personally experienced racism in the workplace?	YES		
	NO		
14. If you are not working, do you think you lost employment as result of the economic downturn?	YES		
	NO		
	DON'T KNOW		
15. If you are not working, how long have you been unemployed?	YEARS	MONTHS	
	.....	.....	
16. Are you currently in receipt of any benefits?	YES		
	NO (go to Q16)		



This is the end of the questionnaire.  
Many thanks again for taking the time to answer it,

Your help is greatly appreciated!

Please return the questionnaire to the researcher or you can post it to:

**NICEM North West Office**

**The Old Church**

**Clarendon Street**

**Derry BT48 7ES**

Or you can email your completed questionnaire to [max@nicem.org.uk](mailto:max@nicem.org.uk)

If you would like to receive a copy of the research report once completed please write your email address below:

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Northern Ireland**

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