

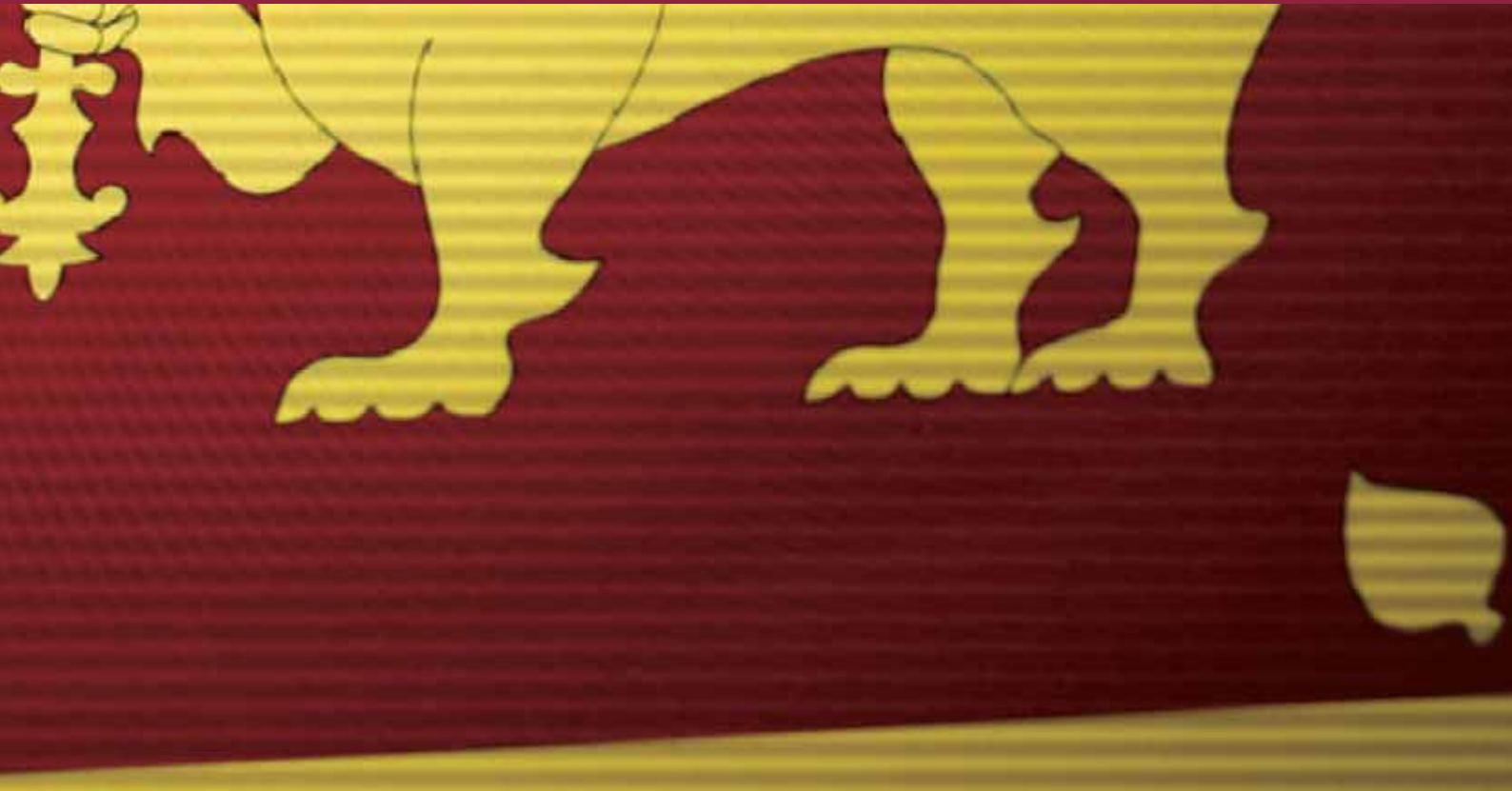


IOM International Organization for Migration



SRI LANKA

MAPPING EXERCISE
LONDON, FEBRUARY 2007



CONTENTS

Introduction	03
1 Mapping Exercise Outcomes – Information Channels	05
1.1 Introduction	05
1.2 Overview of the Sri Lankan community in the UK	05
1.3 Media	06
1.4 Use of services	15
1.5 Preferred sources of information	20
1.6 Community groups and other organisations	22
1.7 Geographical spread of the Sri Lankan community in the UK	24
2 Mapping Exercise Outcomes – Demographic Information	26
2.1 Gender	26
2.2 Age	27
2.3 Length of residence in the UK	28
3 Constraints	30
4 Conclusions and Recommendations	32

The aim of this Mapping Report is to guide IOM's outreach activities and communications strategies. The report does not purport to be exhaustive. The mapping consultant who conducted the exercise and wrote the report on behalf of IOM has taken every effort to ensure accuracy in his/her reporting and the views expressed in this report are his/hers. IOM cannot be held responsible for any omissions or inaccuracies.

INTRODUCTION

AIM OF THE MAPPING EXERCISE, TARGET GROUP AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of the mapping exercises is to identify the main channels of information and the location of potential beneficiaries of IOM's voluntary return programmes, which are open to asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The ultimate goal of the mapping exercises is to help IOM to improve its communication strategies with the diaspora in the United Kingdom through leaflets, media articles, advertisements and presentations to community groups.

The Sri Lanka mapping exercise is part of the first round of a mapping exercise in 2006-2007, which was carried out following the success of previous mapping exercise reports¹.

In order to carry out the mapping exercise, IOM designed a questionnaire in English and Tamil versions with 19 questions divided into two sections. The first section asks about media and other sources of information (e.g. voluntary organisations, religious centres and festivals), which are available to Sri Lankans in the UK. It also asks about the geographical location and sizes of the Sri Lankan communities across the UK. The second section of the questionnaire requests specific baseline data from each respondent, such as age, gender and length of stay in the UK.

A Sri Lankan national was employed on a part-time basis as a mapping consultant to interact directly with the Sri Lankan community and to gather the necessary mapping information. The skills and assets of the consultant, such as inside knowledge and an established network of contacts with Sri Lankans across the UK, proved to be an essential resource for this mapping exercise.

The mapping exercise was conducted using multiple approaches to data collection. Data was gathered using in-depth interviews with multipliers² and by distributing questionnaires. The questionnaires were prepared in Tamil for Tamil respondents and in English for Sinhalese who are widely fluent in it.

Extensive networking was carried out to identify media, community organisations, religious centres, businesses and individuals which interact with Sri Lankans. The fieldwork took place between November 2006 and January 2007. During this period the consultant interviewed 45 organisations and collected 235 questionnaires from community leaders, businessmen, religious leaders and other Sri Lankan nationals. 202 questionnaires were completed in Tamil and 33 in English. In addition to the considerable number of questionnaires that were received, in-depth interviews with the multipliers offered a particularly rich vein of information for the mapping exercise. Moreover, the completed questionnaires do not just represent the view of 235 individuals but the overall view of groups and communities.

¹14 Mapping exercises were completed during 2005-2006.

²This term is used to indicate individuals or organisations, which are known within the diaspora groups and could therefore play a key role in delivering information.

This report includes tables and charts with the results of all the questionnaires. In addition, IOM has created an extensive list of contacts³, which merges data gathered directly from completed questionnaires with information provided by the multipliers during their in-depth interviews. This resource will be used by the Information team at IOM to disseminate information on the voluntary return programmes to the Sri Lankan diaspora throughout the UK.

It is important to emphasise that the mapping exercise relied on networking. A large number of questionnaires were distributed but only those who chose to be part of this small study completed them. The study tried to represent the diversity of the Sri Lankan community wherever possible through interviewing individuals and community leaders from a wide range of media, religious, community and business backgrounds.

³This document contains confidential information and it will only be used as an internal IOM document.

1 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

INFORMATION CHANNELS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to identify the main channels of information used by the Sri Lankan diaspora in the UK. The questionnaire is divided into four categories: “Media”; “Use of Services”; “Preferred Source of Information”; and information about “Community Groups and Other Organisations”. The contact details identified by the respondents in the questionnaires, which covered media, community organisations, religious organisations and businesses, were merged and organised in a coherent way along with the contact details provided by the multipliers. This list of contacts constitutes an action plan for IOM. It contains details of organisations and agencies with which IOM could liaise in order to increase awareness of the assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes among the Sri Lankan community in the UK

One of the main achievements of the extensive networking conducted during the mapping exercise was to attract the attention of various Sri Lankan organisations, media and communities to IOM’s activities. Many of the interviews with community leaders and media representatives also proved to be valuable outreach opportunities. Some community organisations have shown genuine interest in working closely with IOM in relation to AVR programs. They believe that the best results could be achieved if IOM worked in partnership with grass roots Sri Lankan community organisations rather than with an umbrella organisation like Refugee Action. The Sri Lankan community organisations argue that they have a better understanding of, and more consistent contact with, the local community. They believe members of the community are likely to trust them.

Disseminating information on IOM programmes in the course of this mapping exercise has not only helped to inform the Sri Lankan community of their availability but has also provided an opportunity to obtain insights into the most effective outreach, as indicated in the recommendations included in this report.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE SRI LANKAN COMMUNITY IN THE UK

Sri Lankans have migrated to the UK since the colonial era and refugees began to arrive after 1983, when the civil war started in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan community in the UK makes efforts to integrate with the local community while maintaining its own identity at the same time. There are a number of Sri Lankan community language schools in every borough that offer language and cultural classes. The Sri Lankan community has widely established religious centres around the UK and the majority of Sri Lankan community members regularly attend them. Places of worship play an increasingly important role in reaching out to the Sri Lankan communities. There are a number of community organisations that have been set up over the years, which provide advice and services.

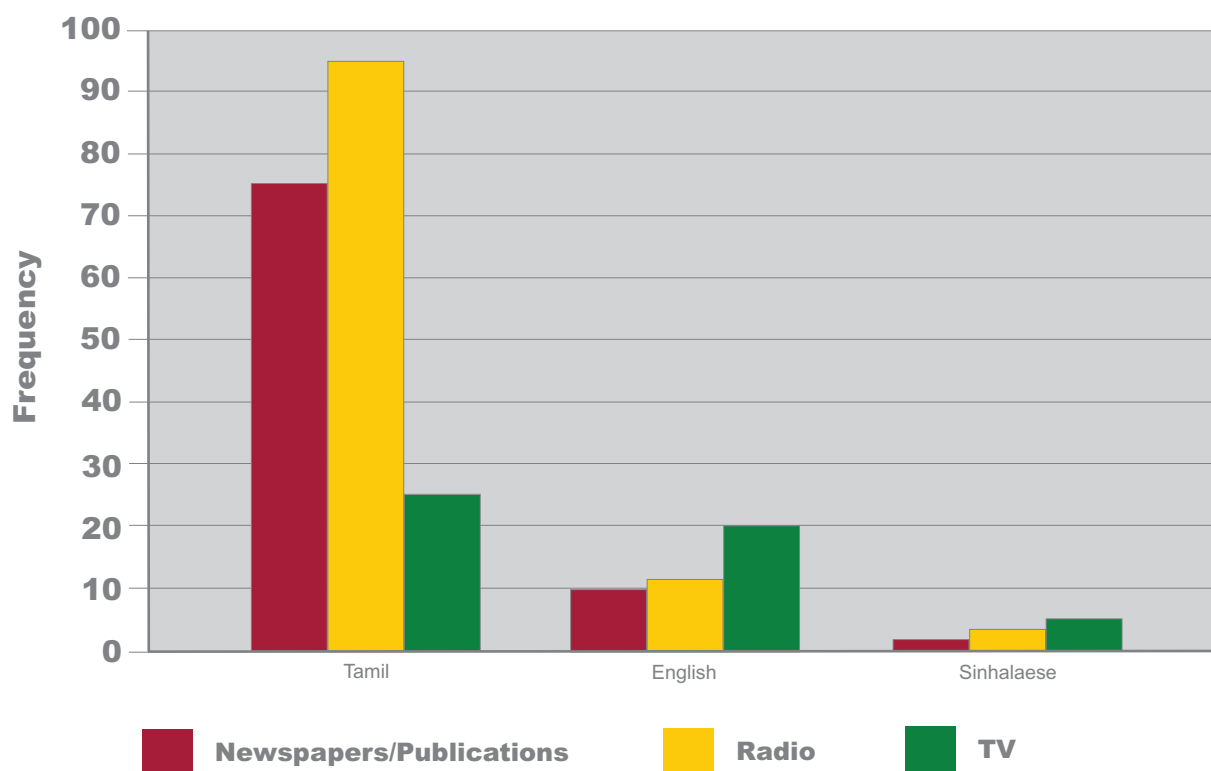
According to the Tamil Information Centre (TIC) there are approximately 170,000 Sri Lankan migrants in the UK. Nearly 30% of them are Sinhalese community members, mainly speaking the Sinhalese language. Around 55,000 of the 170,000 are asylum seekers and refugees. Sri Lankan Tamil Refugee Communities' estimates agree with Home Office figures, which indicate that over 30,000 of these 55,000 are failed asylum seekers and that only around 8–10% of them are from the Sinhalese community. The TIC believes that 70% of the Sri Lankan community live in the London area, 20% in the Midlands, with the rest scattered all around the UK.

1.3 MEDIA

Media Comprehension

Respondents were asked in which languages they best understood information such as newspapers, leaflets, radio and television. Both communities preferred to read information in their mother tongue.

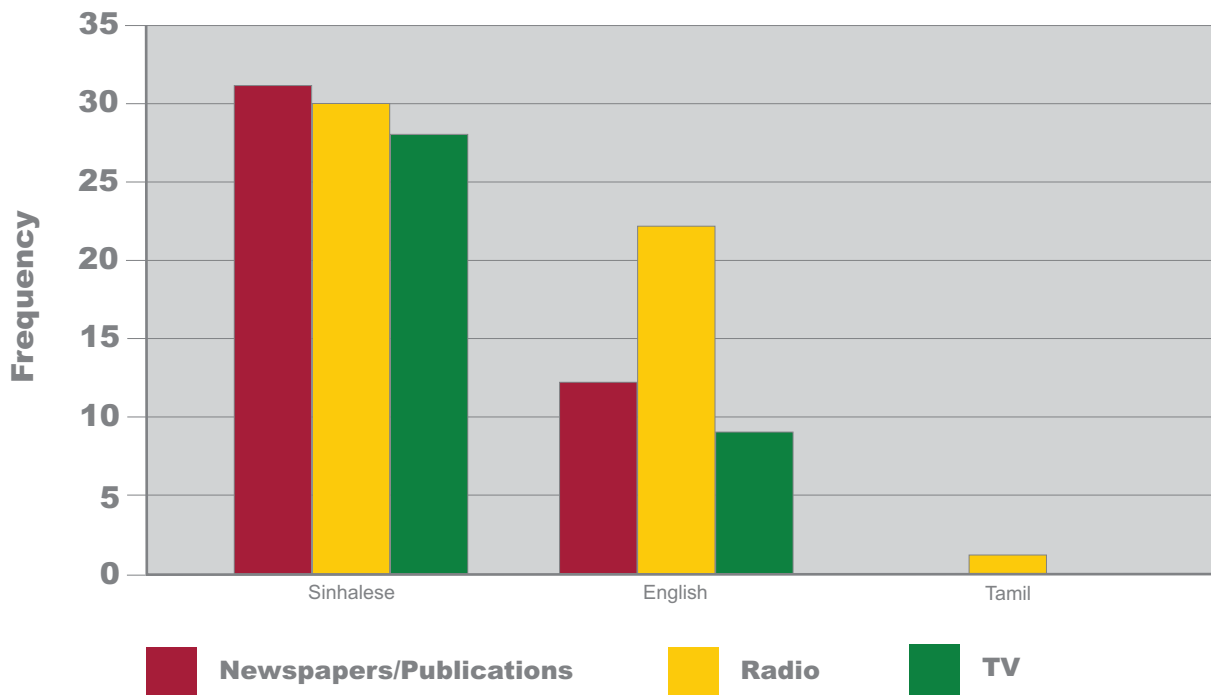
Figure 1a (Tamil): Media Comprehension



⁴TIC is a voluntary organisation providing information on the Sri Lankan Tamil community living in the UK.

⁵These figures are based on Home Office statistics.

Figure 1b (Sinhalese): Media Comprehension



Most Common Media Sources

Figures 2a & 2b show the most common sources of information, divided by Tamils and Sinhalese. The result for the Tamil community shows that although there are many free newspapers published in Tamil, Sinhalese and English in the UK, the most common information source is leaflets. Radio is second and word of mouth is the third most common source.

Figure 2a (Tamil): Common Sources of Information

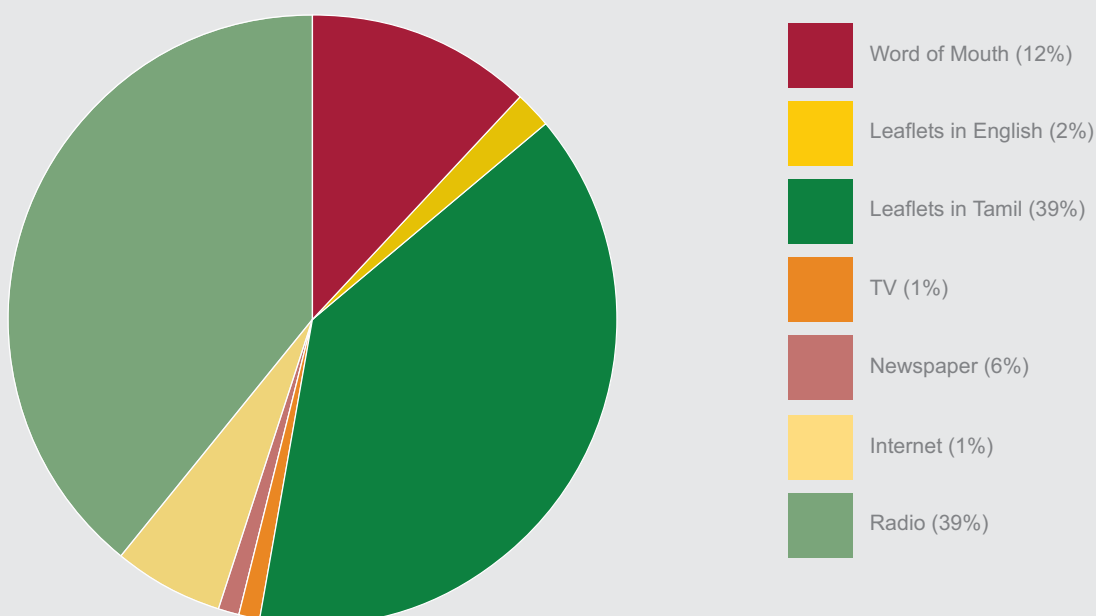
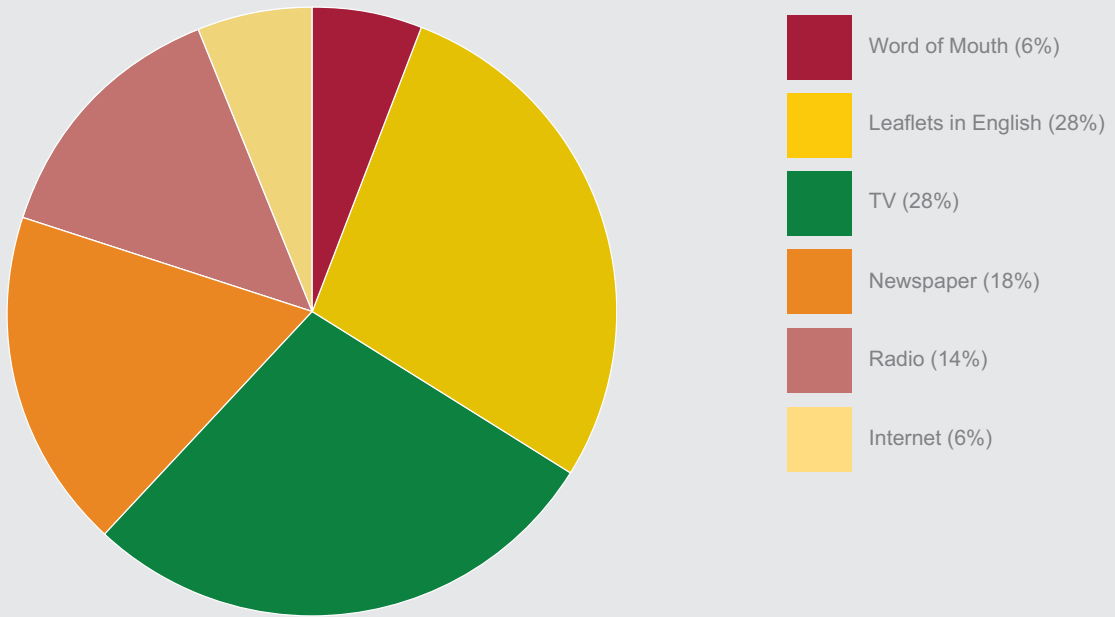


Figure 2b (Sinhalese): Common Sources of Information



Frequency of Media Consultation

The results in Figures 3a and 3b show the frequency of media consultation for the three media categories. Figure 3a shows that the large majority of Tamil respondents say they listen to the radio every day whereas Sinhalese respondents say only that they “often” listen to the radio. There are few Sinhalese radio stations broadcasting within the UK.

Figure 3a (Tamil): Frequency of Media Consultation

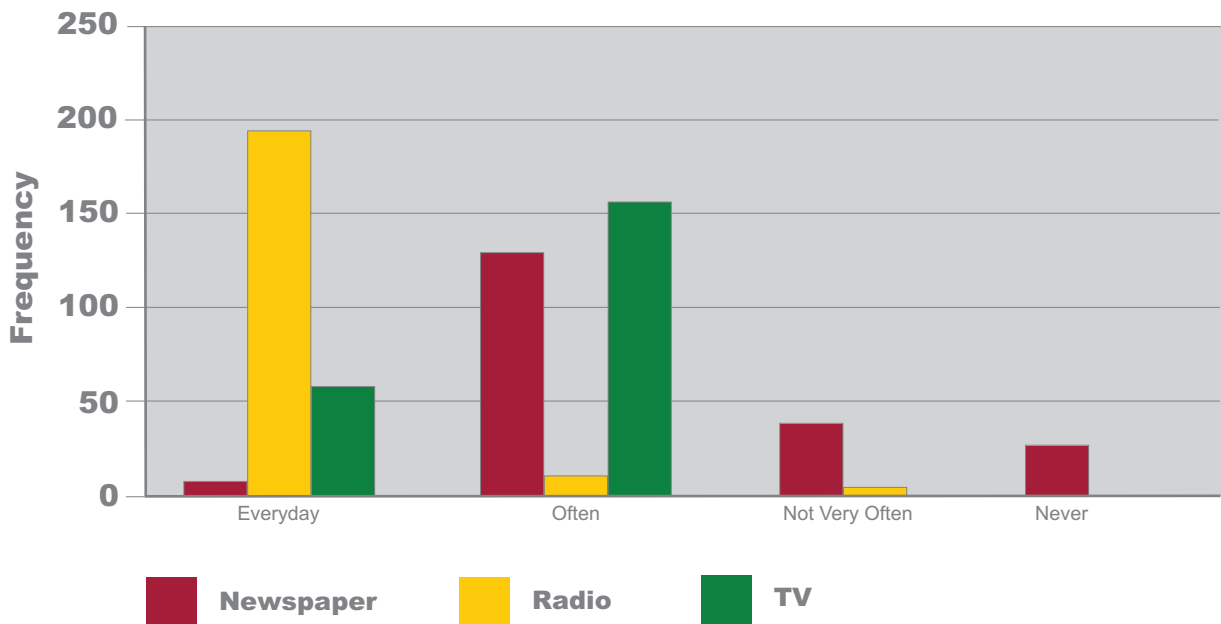
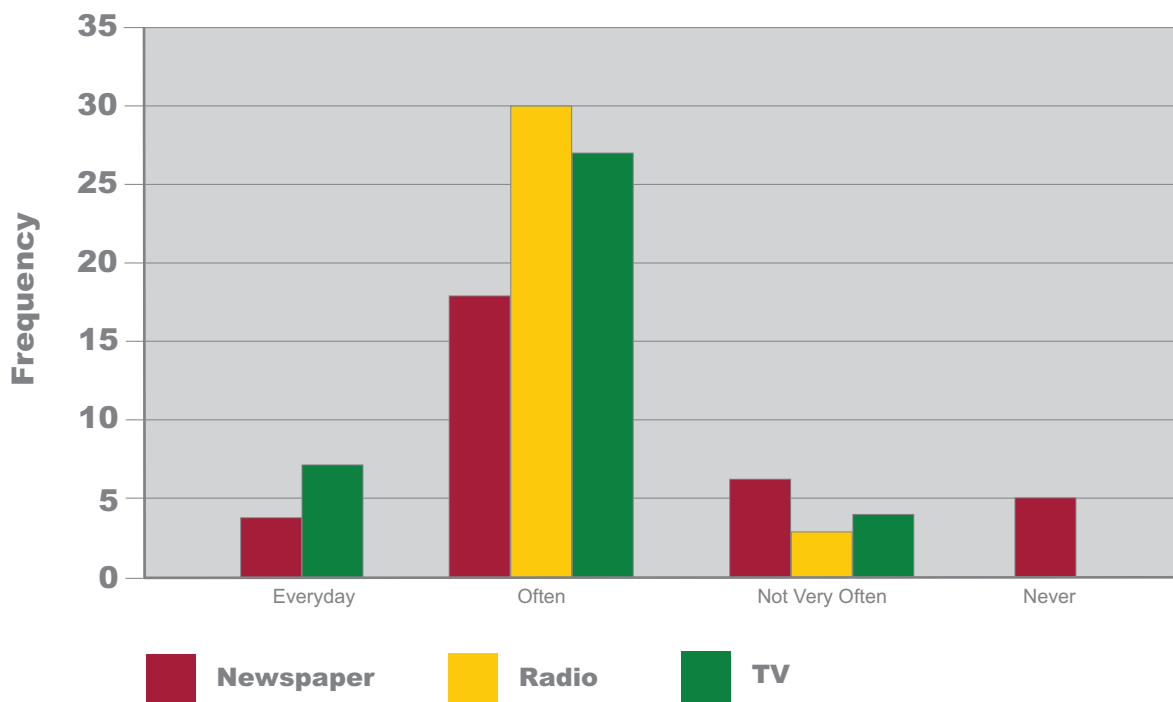


Figure 3b (Sinhalese): Frequency of Media Consultation

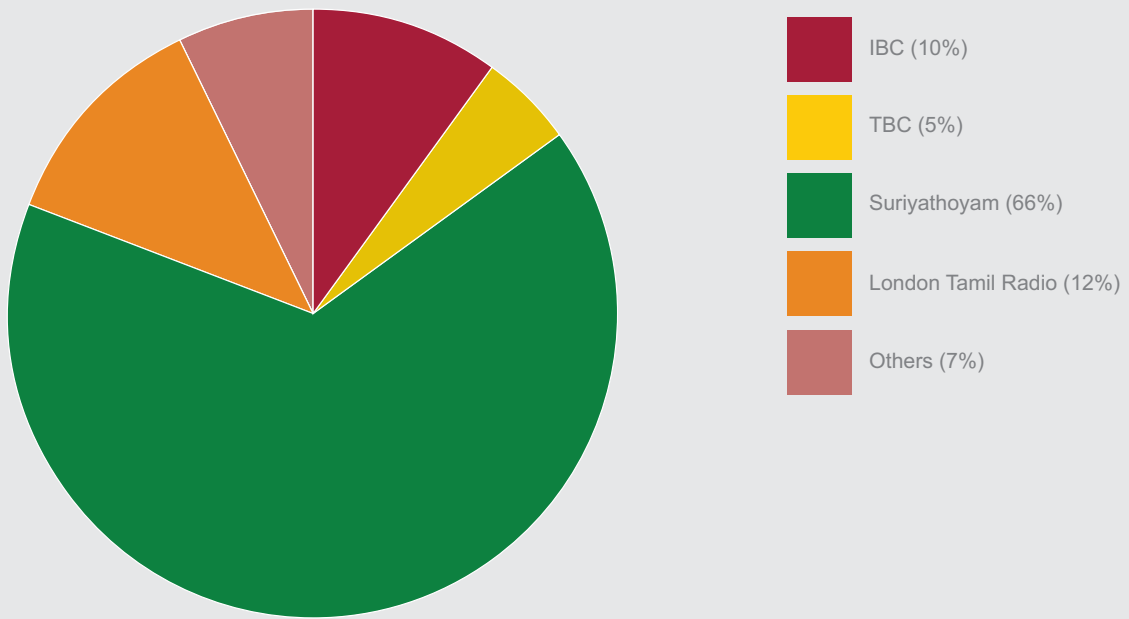


Radio - Tamil Community

Respondents were asked which radio stations they listen to most frequently. There are 5 radio stations broadcasting Tamil language programmes in the UK, mainly in London. *IBC* broadcasts its services on medium wave (MW 558) for 2 hours a day from 7.00 to 9.00 p.m. The *Soriyathoyam* station (MW 1035) is on air from Monday to Friday from 10.00 to 11.00 p.m. All the other stations, such as *TBC*, *London Tamil Radio* and *First Audio*, broadcast on Sky Digital or Hotbird frequencies. Many respondents said *Soriyathoyam* was the most popular station. In depth interviews with the respondents revealed that the hour at which it is broadcast is one of the prime reasons for the popularity of this station in the Tamil community.

During the mapping exercise, the consultant interviewed the director of *Soriyathaoyam Radio* about the radio and its popularity. It was the first Tamil language community radio in Europe and started to broadcast in 1988. In the beginning, it was on air for only one hour a week but this has now been extended. Most of the programmes focus on community issues. The director has said he would be willing to include IOM adverts and any other related material.

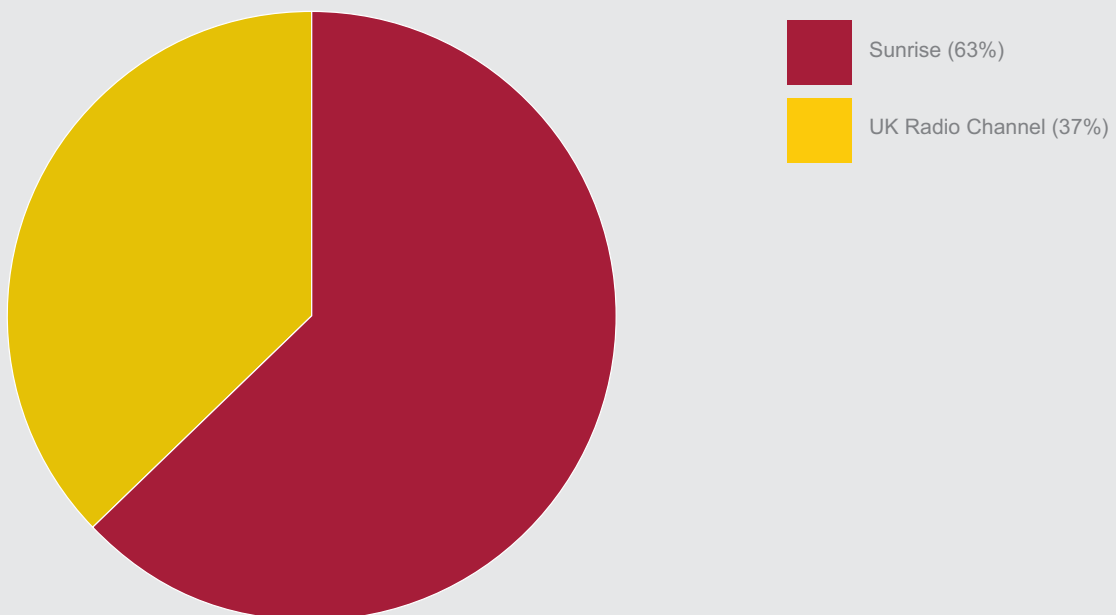
Figure 4a (Tamil): Radio

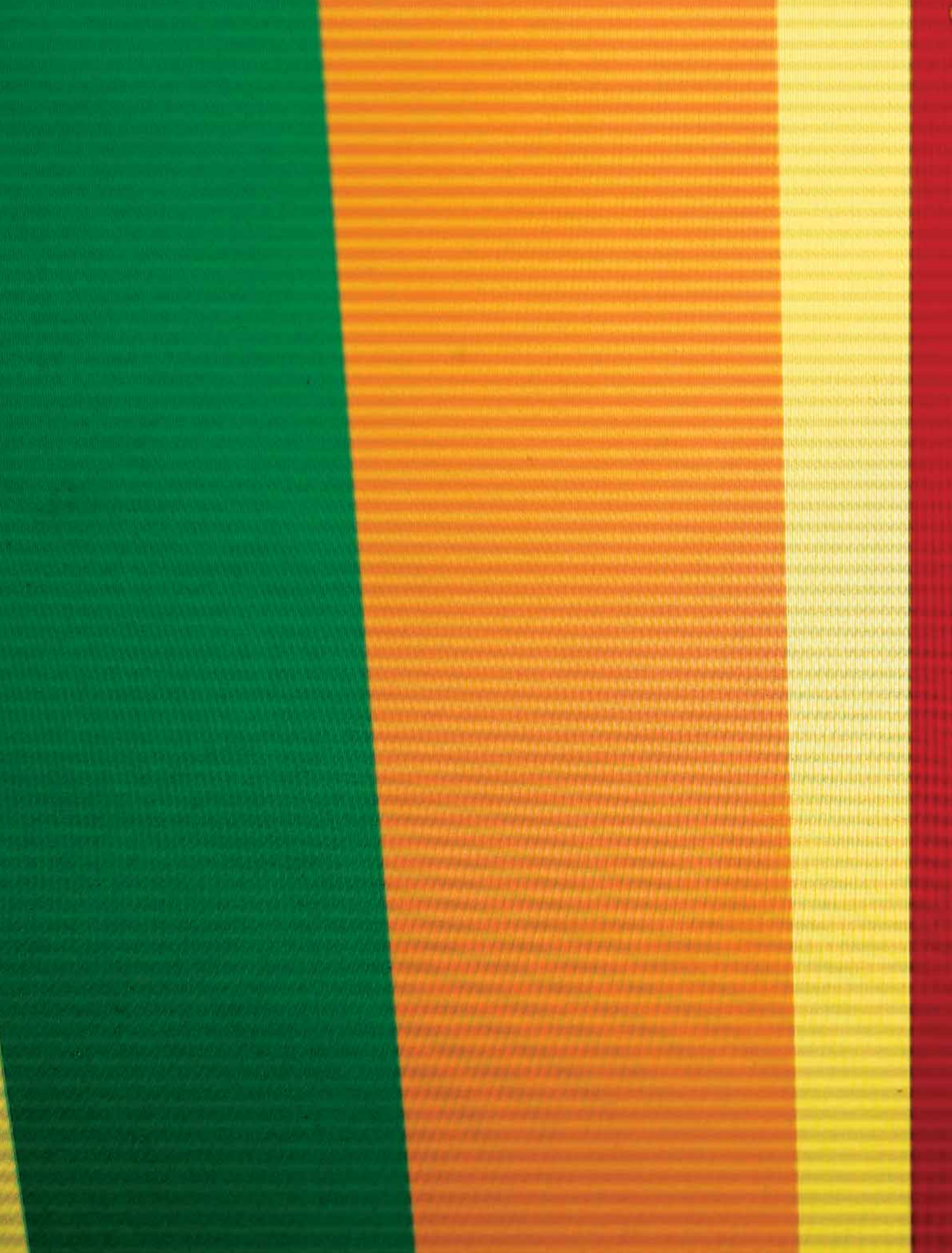


Radio - Sinhalese Community

The only radio broadcasting in the Sinhalese language in the UK is *Sunrise* on medium wave, which is on air for only one hour on Thursdays from 10.00 to 11.00 p.m. All the respondents said that they listen to *Sunrise* radio regularly, along with other UK English radio stations.

Figure 4b (Sinhalese): Radio

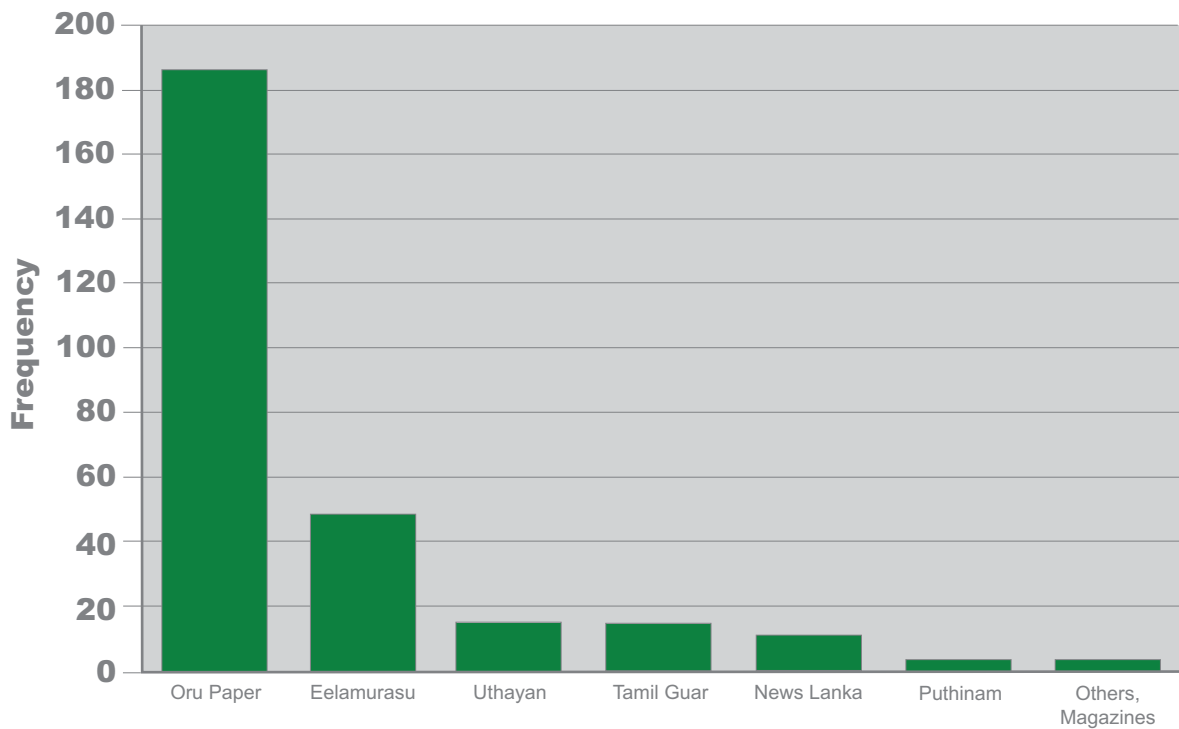




Newspaper Readership

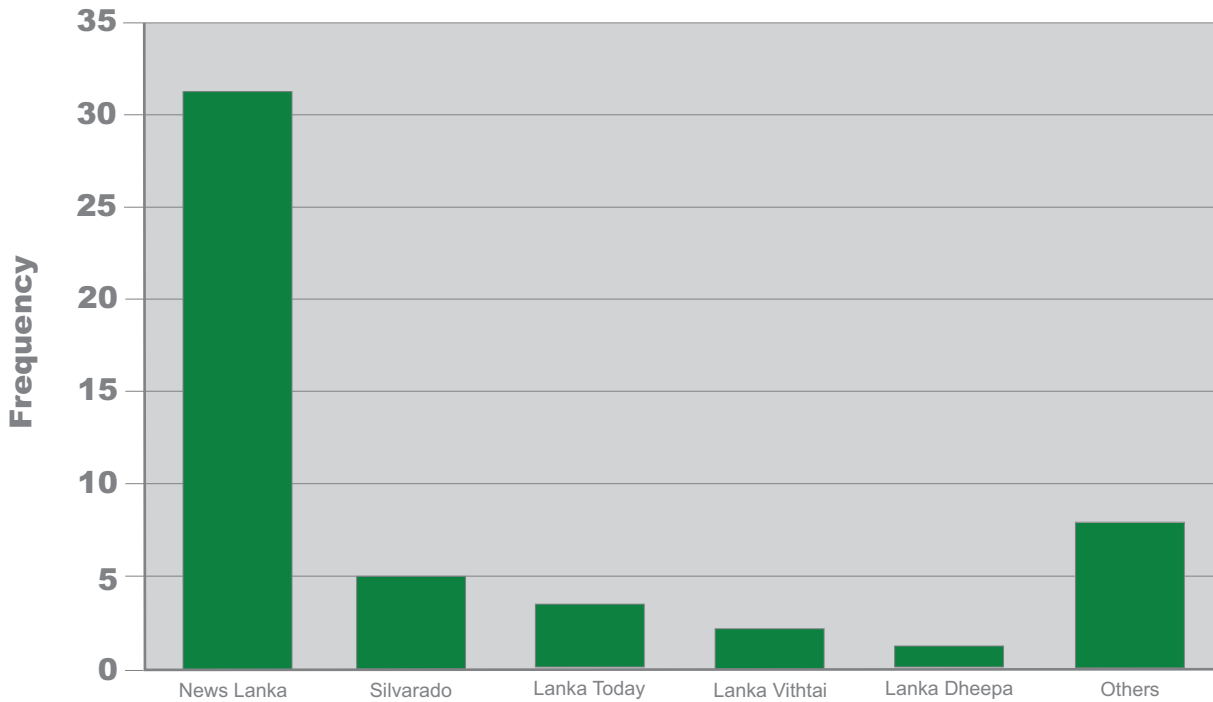
Respondents were asked which newspapers they read the most. The feedback from Tamil respondents suggests that the vast majority of people read the fortnightly *Oru* newspaper, which provides local news for the Tamil community. The second most popular newspaper is *Eelamurasu*, which is a weekly publication with news from Sri Lanka. Some Tamil interviewees said that they read publications in Tamil published in South India and available in the UK, e.g. the monthly publications *Ananda Vikatan*, *Kalki* and *Kumuthan*.

Figure 5a (Tamil): Newspapers & Other Publications



The majority of Sinhalese respondents read a weekly free newspaper in English, *News Lanka*, which contains Sinhalese community news mixed with Sri Lankan current politics. There is only one Sinhalese language newspaper published in the UK, the *Lankadeepa*.

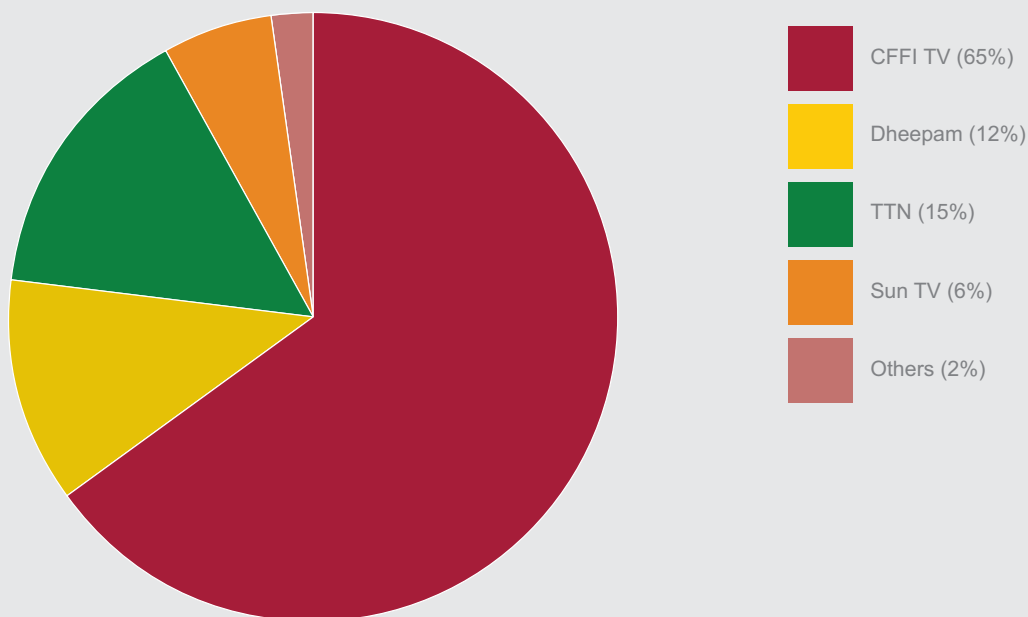
Figure 5b (Sinhalese): Newspapers & Other Publications



Television

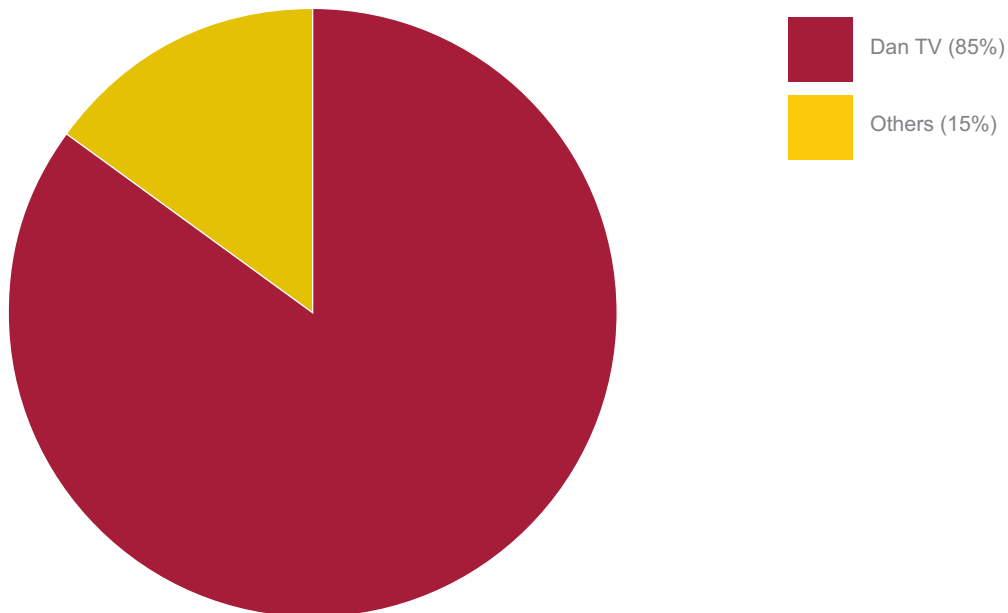
Four Tamil language television programmes are available in the UK. All are on air for 24 hours. The most popular and regularly viewed channel is *CEETV*. The others are *Dheepam*, *TTN*, and *Sun TV*. *CEETV* is the only free channel and is carried by both Sky and Hotbird digital channels.

Figure 6a (Tamil): Television



The most popular (because the only) TV channel in Sinhalese is *DAN Sinhalese*.

Figure 6a (Sinhalese): Television



Internet

Computers and the Internet are not much used by Tamil community respondents. Out of 202 interviewed, 136 said that they had no access to the computer. The majority of respondents who use the computer and the Internet do so in Internet Cafés (see Figure 7a). The survey of the Sinhalese community shows an entirely different picture of computer usage. 31 out of 33 respondents answered that they have access to computer and Internet (see Figure 7b).

The following UK based websites are popular among Tamils: www.tamilnet.com and www.lankasri.com. Sinhalese respondents use www.lankaacademy.com

Figure 7a (Tamil): Access to the Internet

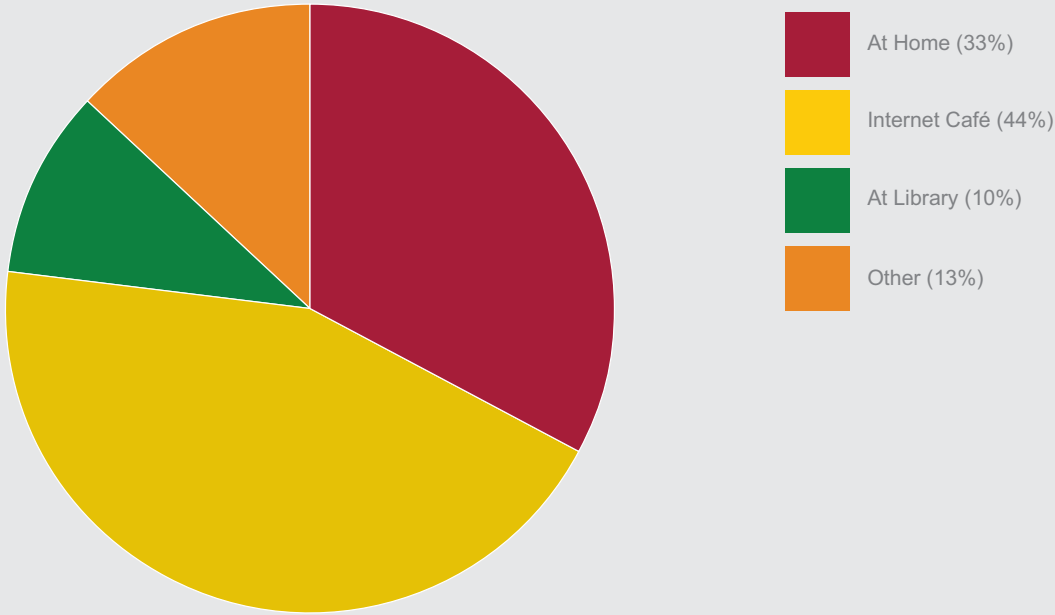
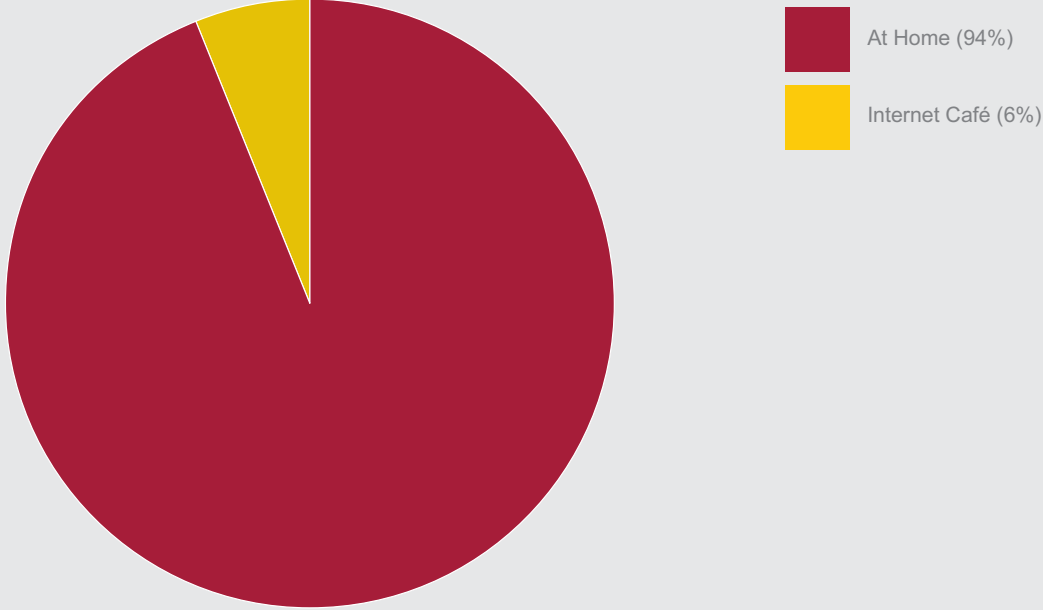


Figure 7b (Sinhalese): Access to the Internet



1.4 USE OF SERVICES

Respondents were asked what method of transport they use most often, how they make phone calls to their home country and which local services they use most. These questions were included in the questionnaire to investigate where else IOM could advertise its voluntary return programme and reach out to the Sri Lankan community more effectively.

Method of Transport

A majority of respondents from both the Tamil and Sinhalese community said they used the bus most often. The Tube was the second most popular means of transport.

Figure 8a (Tamil): Means of Transport

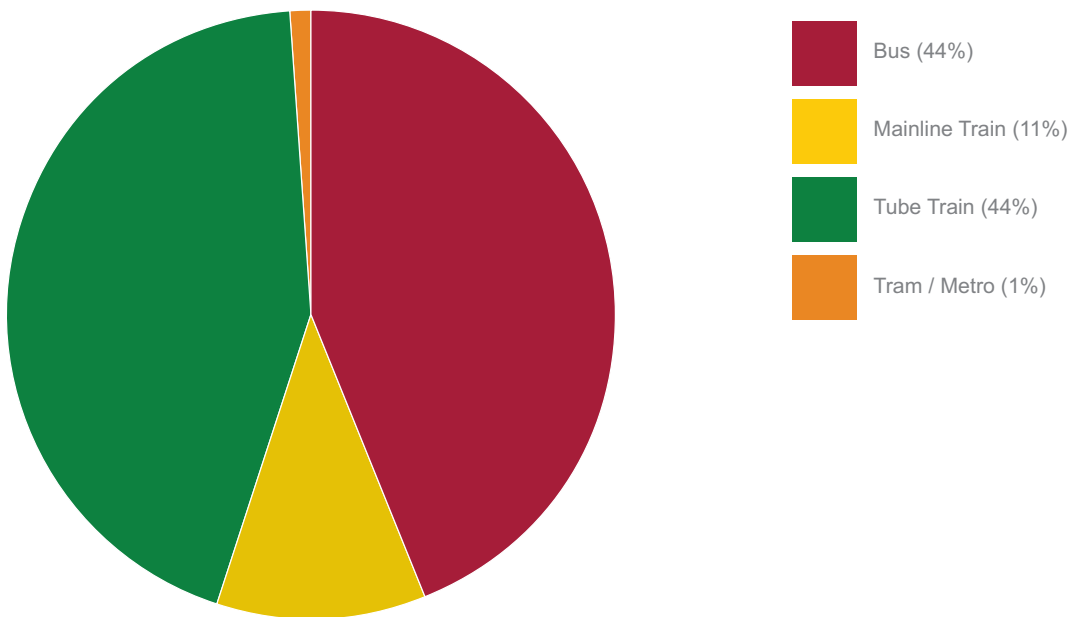
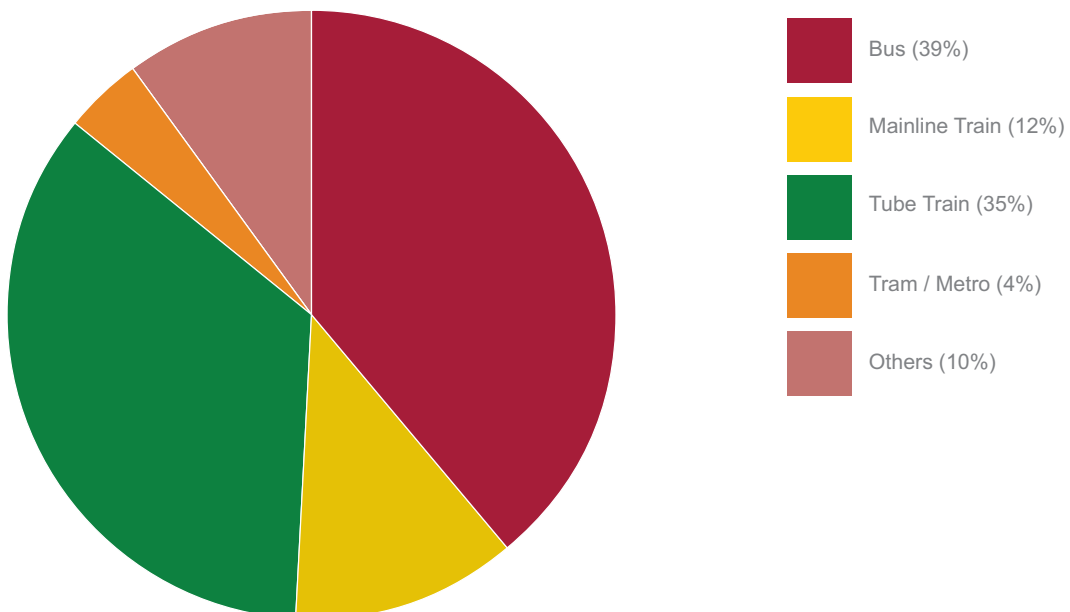


Figure 8b (Sinhalese): Means of Transport



Phone Calls

Respondents were asked how they make phone calls to friends and relatives in Sri Lanka. The results show that the most common way of making phone calls to Sri Lanka is by landline with an international calling card. The majority of respondents said they use a variety of phone cards but the most popular one is *Lanka Bell* among both the Tamil and the Sinhalese community.

Figure 9a (Tamil): Phone Calls

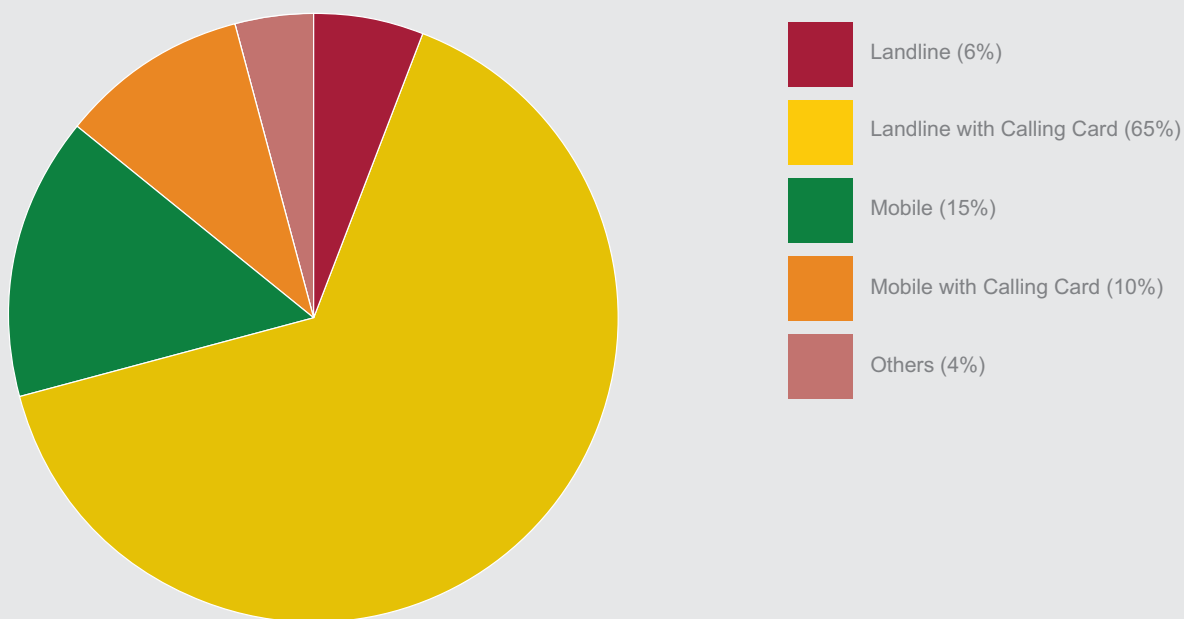
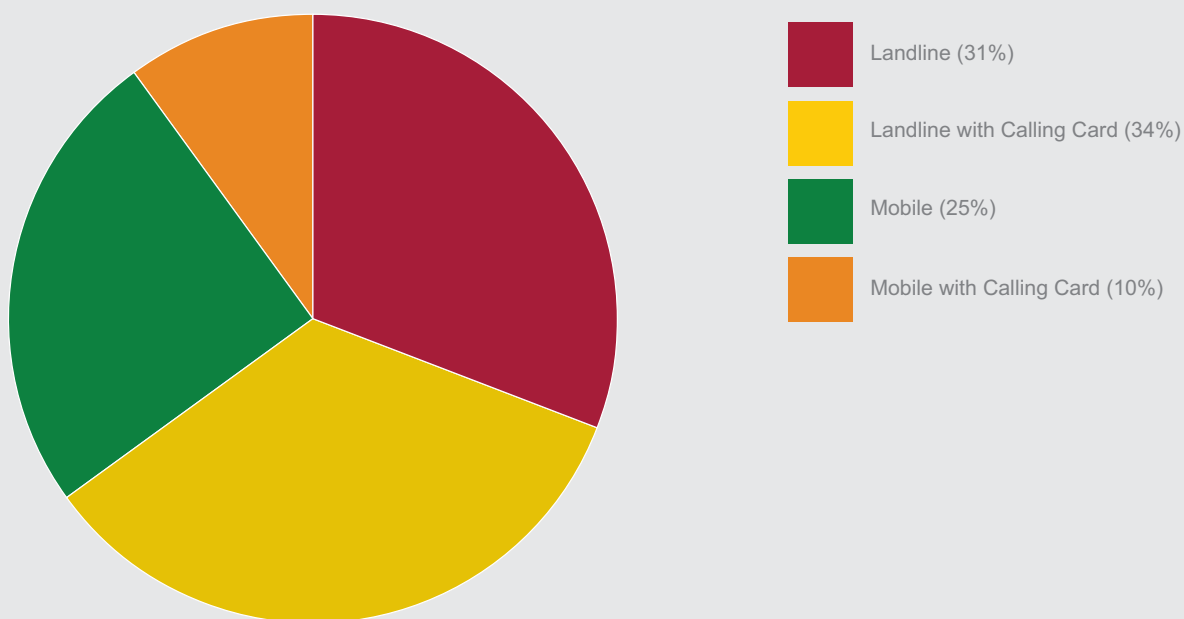
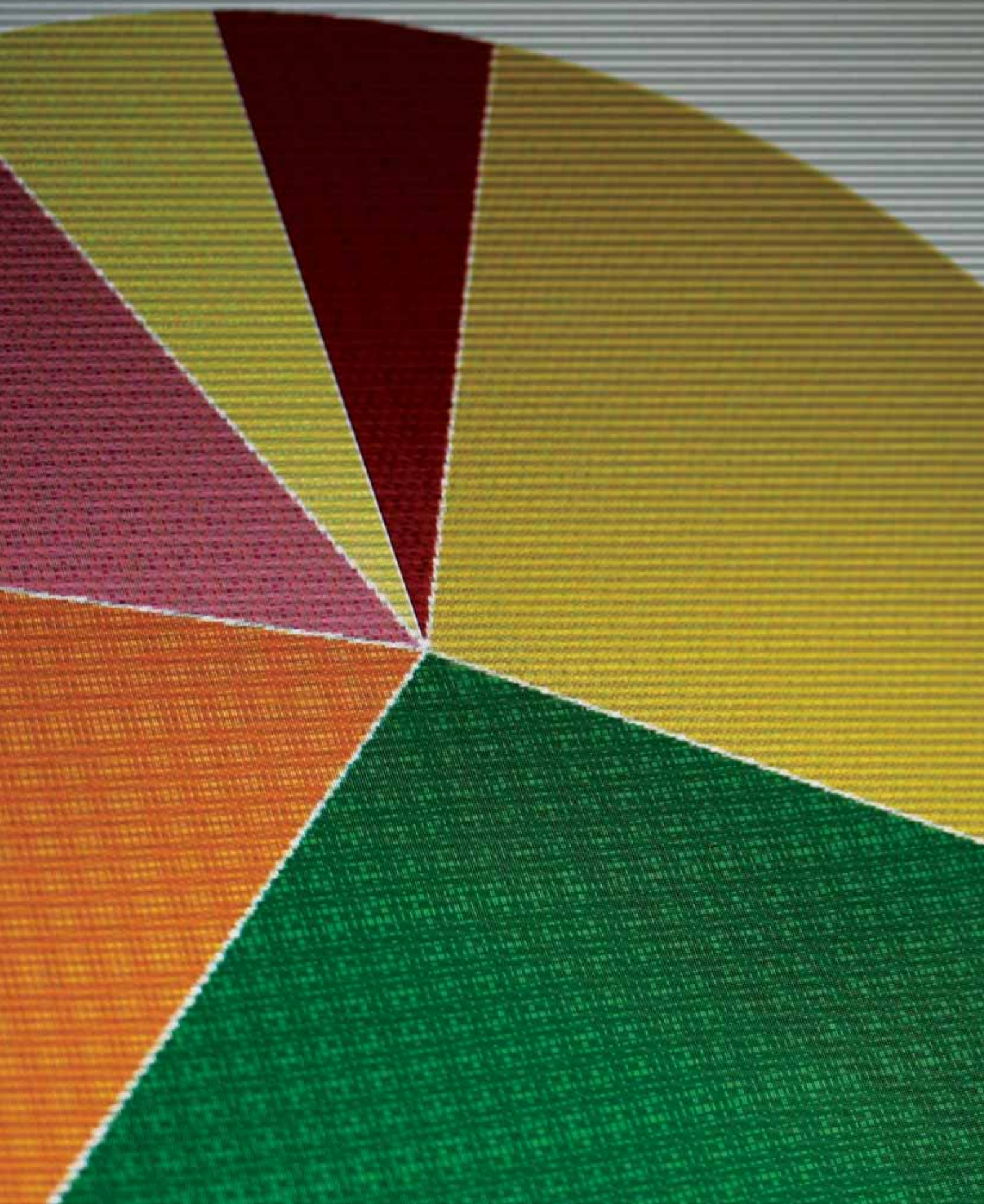


Figure 9b (Sinhalese): Phone Calls





Local Services

Respondents were asked about the local services they use. Most respondents said they used more than one local service. The results show that the vast majority of the Tamil community goes to local community centres. During the mapping exercise, the consultant was able to identify a number of community groups which serve the Tamil community in local areas. There are not many Sinhalese community groups in the UK and the Sinhalese communities therefore use a wider variety of local services.

Figure 10a (Tamil): Local Services

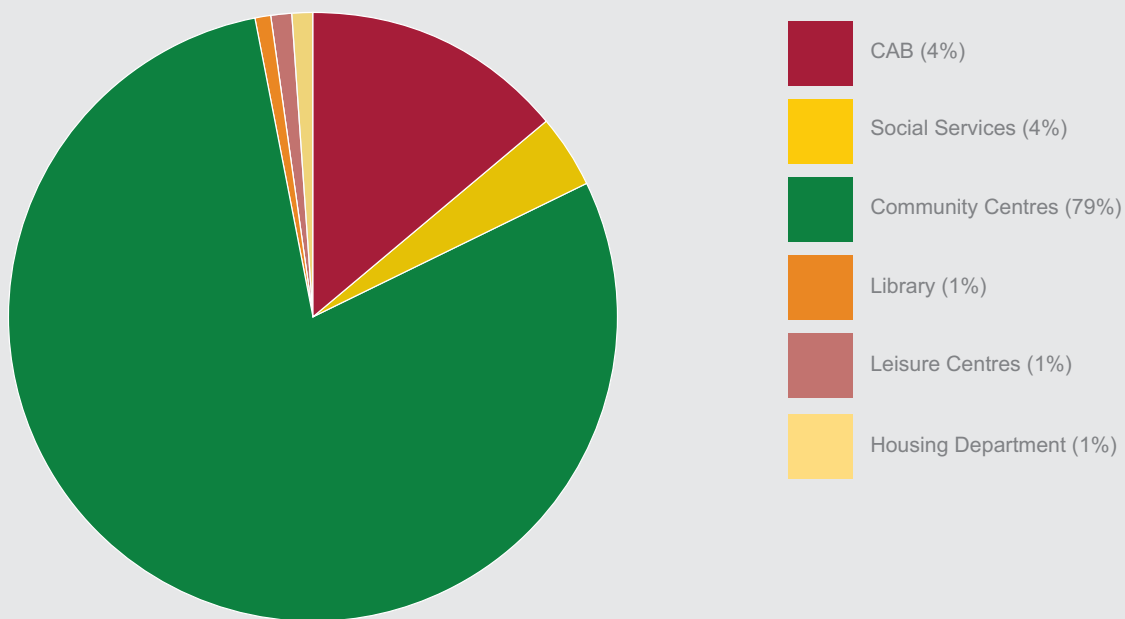
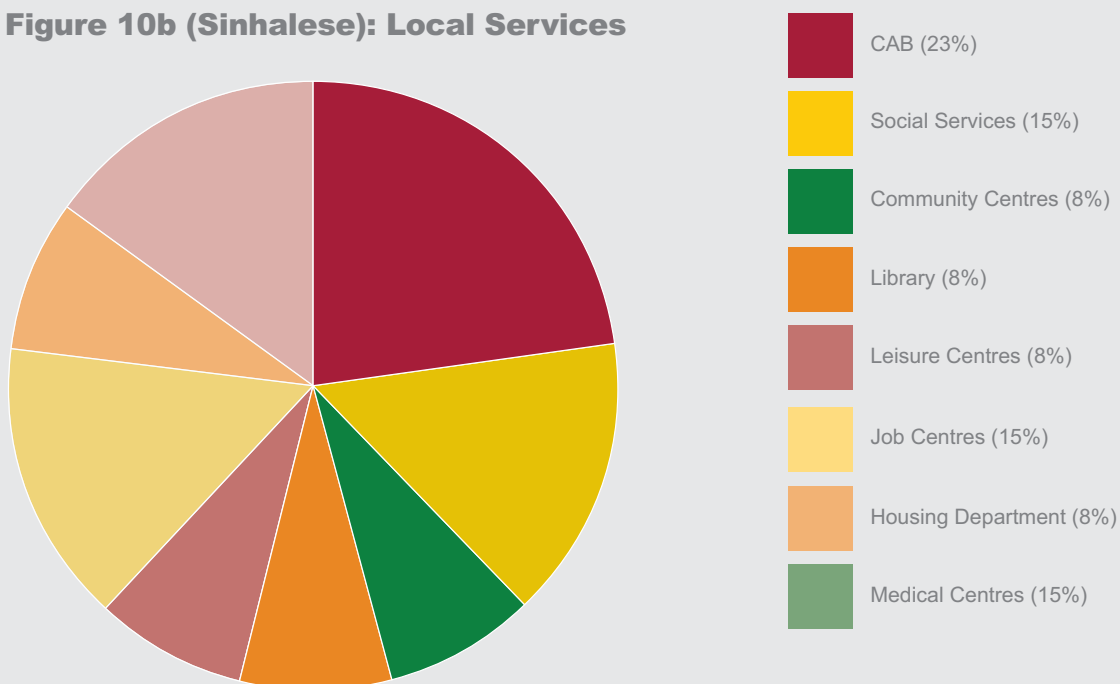


Figure 10b (Sinhalese): Local Services



1.5 PREFERRED SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Respondents were asked where they would prefer information to be made available to them. Responses from both the Tamil and the Sinhalese communities are shown in the charts below. Both Tamil and Sinhalese people come from a country where religious faith and practices are very important in day-to-day life. The majority of the Sinhalese community is predominantly Buddhist and the Tamil community mostly Hindu. Religious temples therefore have an important role in social as well as religious life. The mapping consultant identified several places of worship in the UK.

Figure 11a (Tamil): Preferred Location for Publicity Materials

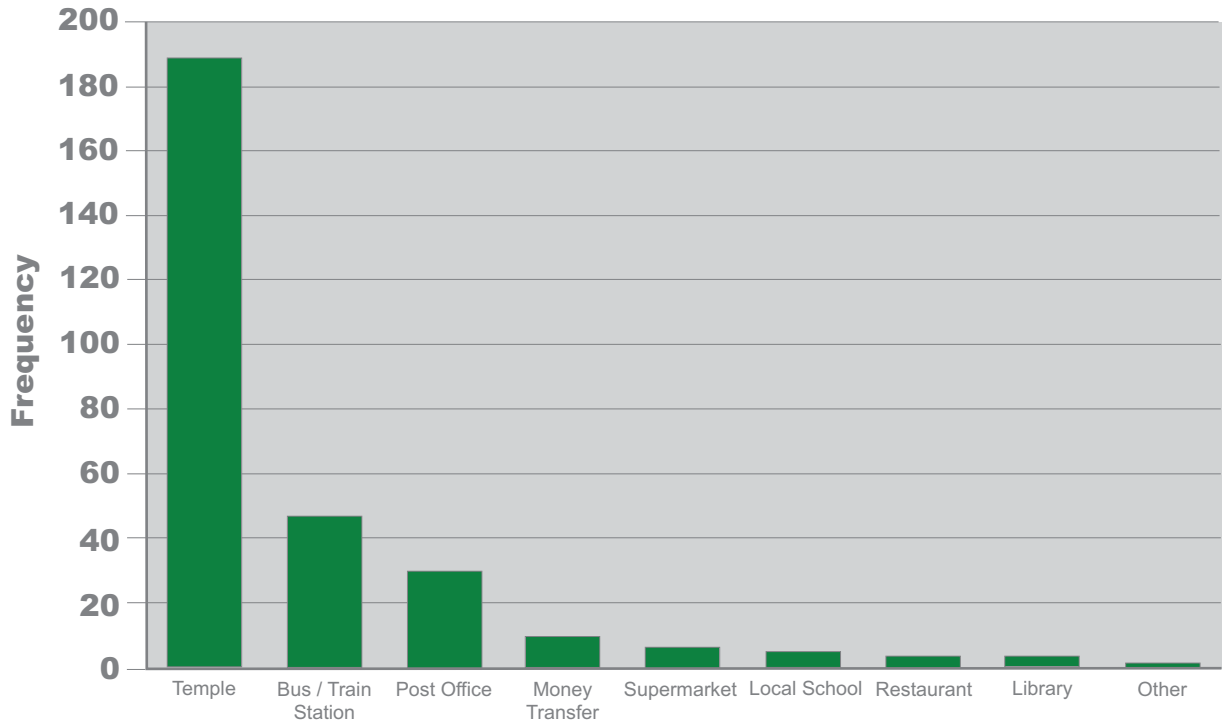
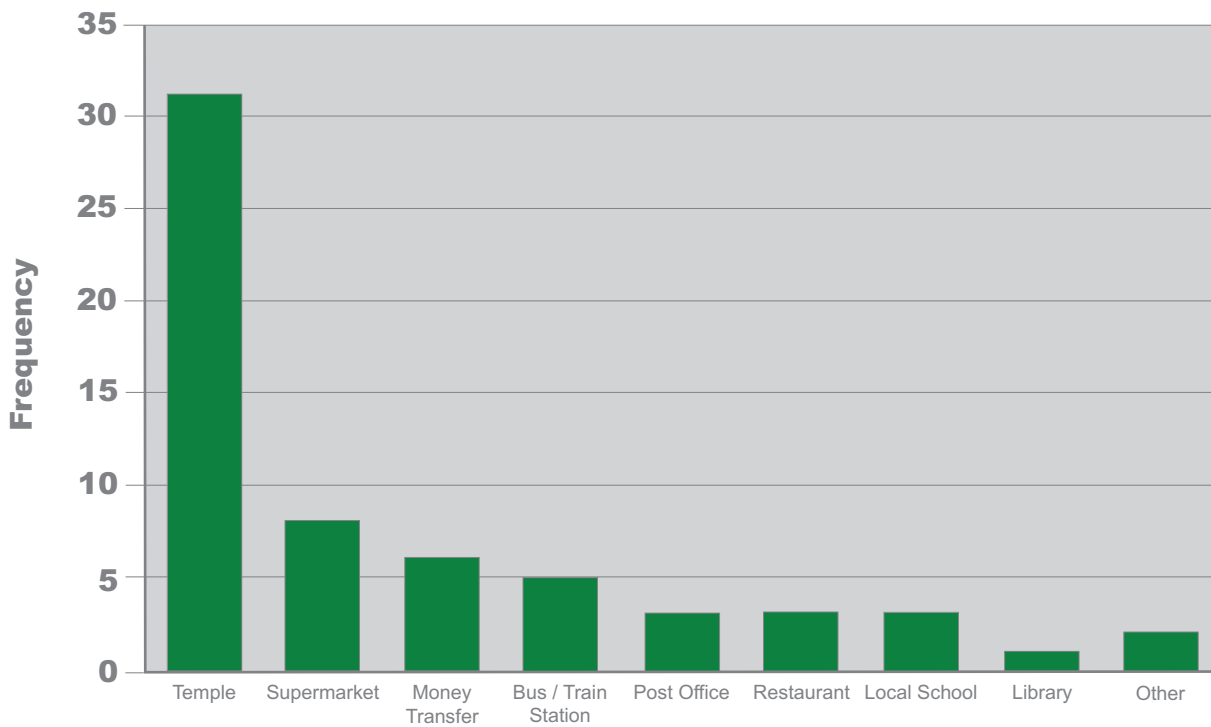


Figure 11b (Sinhalese): Preferred Location for Publicity Materials



Preferred Format of Information

The respondents were asked about their preferred format for information. Both the Tamil and Sinhalese respondents indicated that leaflets are most effective.

Figure 12a (Tamil): Preferred Format of Information

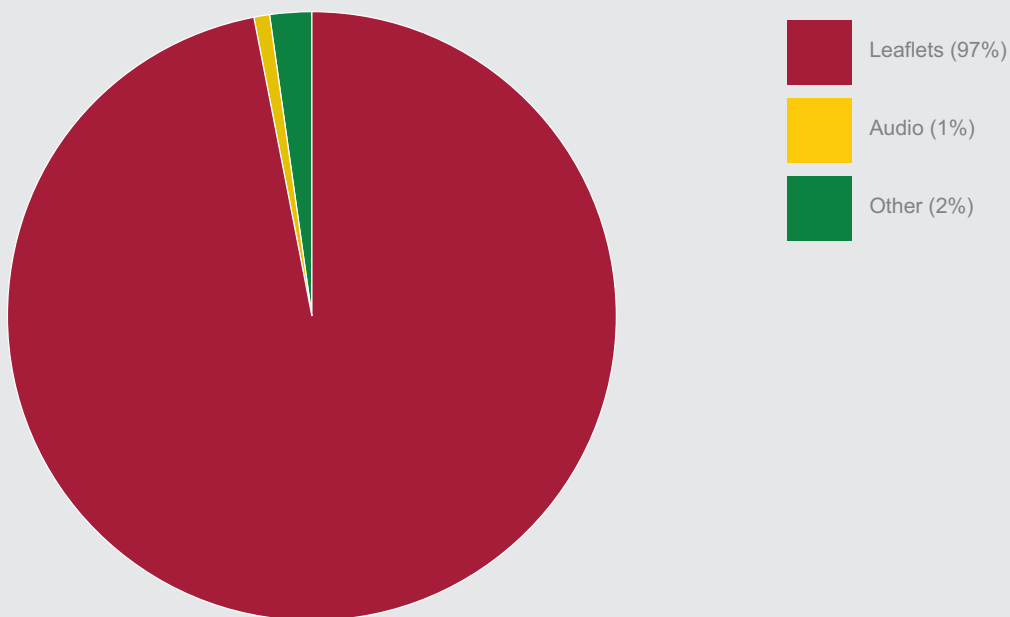
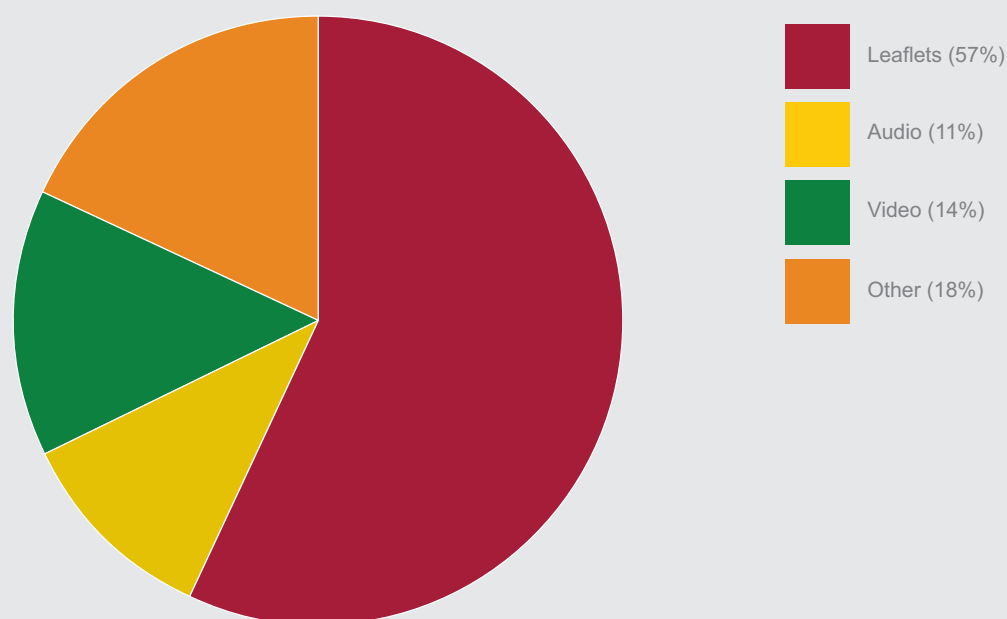


Figure 12b (Sinhalese): Preferred Format of Information



1.6 COMMUNITY GROUPS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

During the mapping exercise the consultant identified several Sri Lankan Tamil community groups in London (many of the community groups are based in London). During the mapping exercise, the consultant met most of the community group leaders and had in-depth interviews about their potential involvement with IOM activities. Many of them expressed a willingness to work together with IOM.

Mapping Questionnaire Results

Respondents were asked where the highest concentrations of Sri Lankan nationals are in the UK, and the size of their populations. Their answers were consistent with those given by the community leaders. The table below shows the location of concentrations of Sri Lankans in the UK and approximate population sizes.

Region	City/Borough	Tamils	Sinhalese
London	Newham	35000 to 40000	10000 to 12000
	Wembley	25000 to 30000	6000 to 7000
	Tooting	15000 to 18000	5000 to 6000
	Harrow	10000 to 12000	3000 to 4000
	Southall	5000 to 6000	1000 to 2000
Birmingham	Coventry	4000 to 5000	1000 to 2000
	Other areas	7000 to 10000	5000 to 6000
Total		101,000 to 121000	31000 to 39000

When respondents were asked to say where the Sri Lankan community goes for help, advice and support, almost all the respondents said that they always go to local community groups. Most of the Sinhalese respondents said they go for help and advice to Sinhalese faith centres.

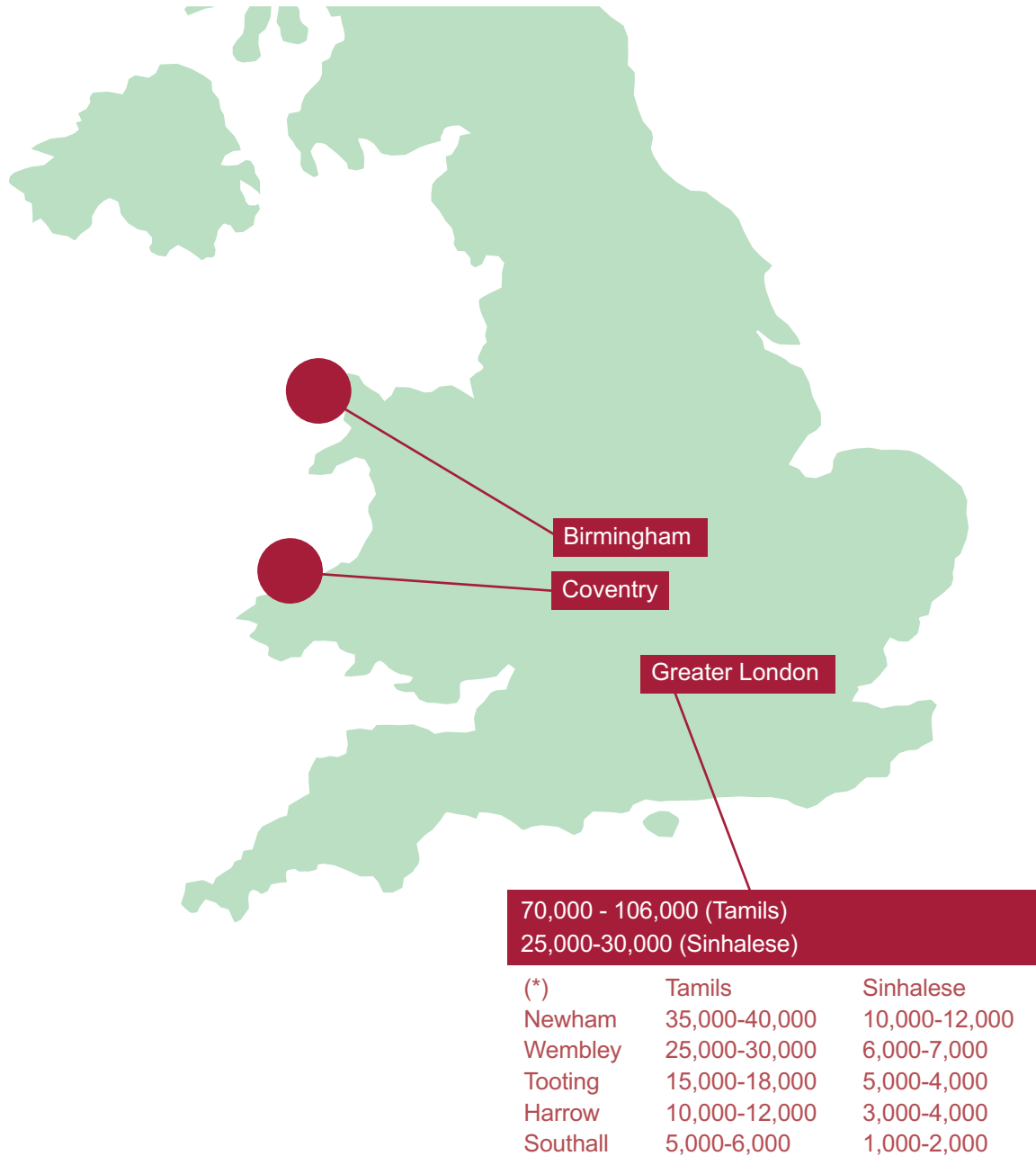
Number of Community Organisations and their Locations

Location	Tamil	Sinhalese
East London	3	1
North London	2	1
West London	2	1
South London	1	1
Total	8	4

Most respondents were not aware of any regular social events, festivals or other community gatherings taking place. A few said they used to attend temple festivals.

1.7 GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD OF THE SRI LANKAN COMMUNITY IN THE UK

Geographical Spread of the Sri Lanka Community in the UK, 2008



Based on estimates supplied by community leaders



2 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The second section of the questionnaire was designed to gather baseline data from the respondents, such as age, gender and length of stay in the United Kingdom. The findings from this section will help IOM tailor its communications better to suit its audiences.

2.1 GENDER

Out of the 203 respondents from the Tamil community, 143 were men and 60 women. There were 26 men and 9 women from the Sinhalese community (see Figures 12a and 12b).

Figure 13a (Tamils): Gender of Respondents

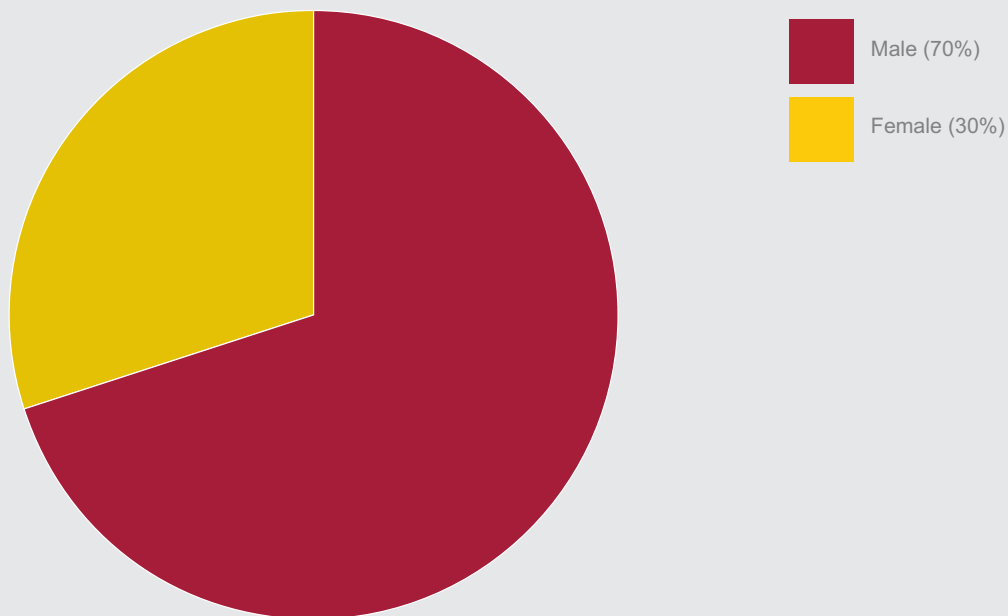
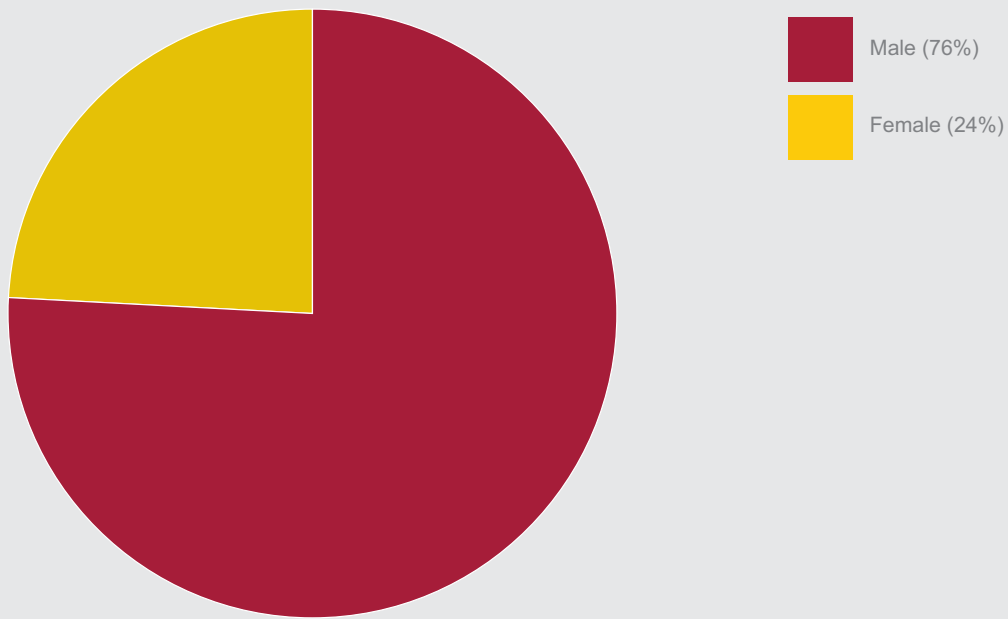


Figure 13b (Sinhalese): Gender of Respondents



2.2 AGE

It was mostly young people between the age of 25 and 34 that completed the questionnaires. This was the same for both the Tamil and the Sinhalese community. The charts below show the age groups.

Figure 14a (Tamils): Age Range

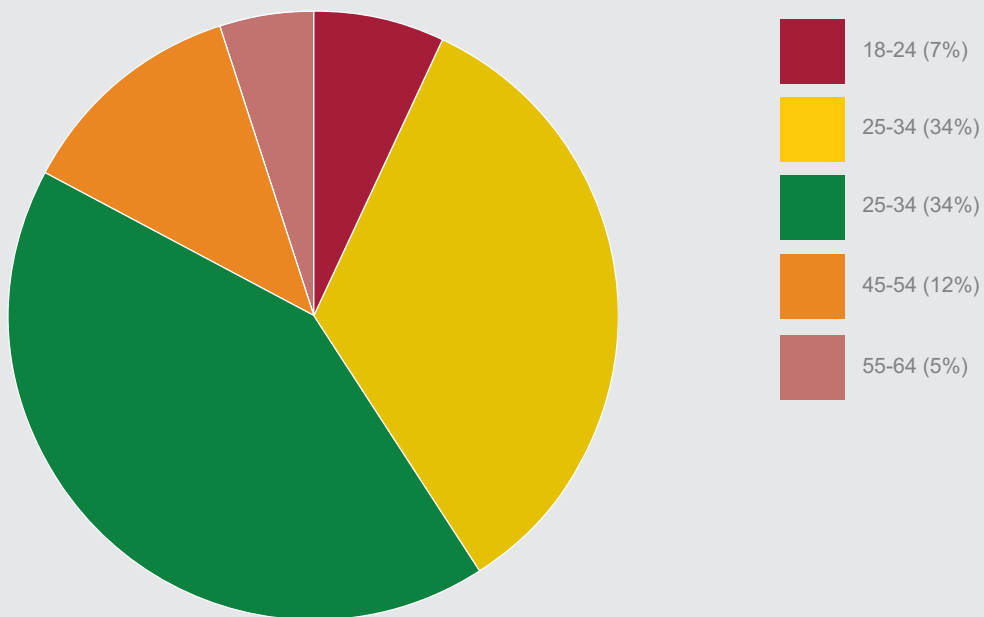
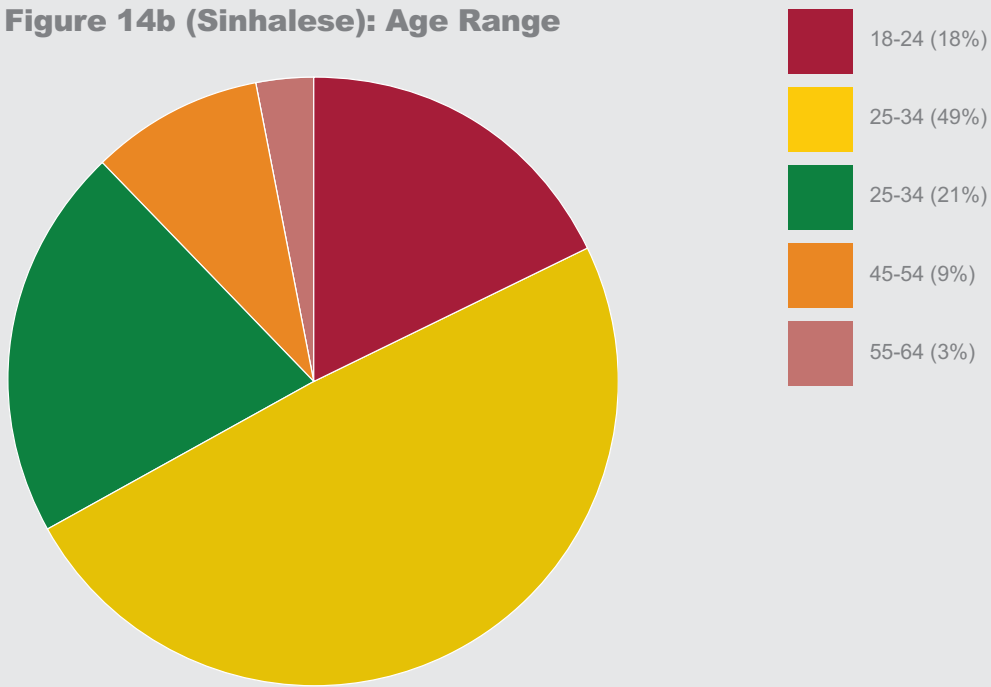


Figure 14b (Sinhalese): Age Range



2.3 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Charts 14a and 14b show that length of residence in the UK varies between the Tamil and Sinhalese communities.

Figure 15a (Tamils): Length of Residence

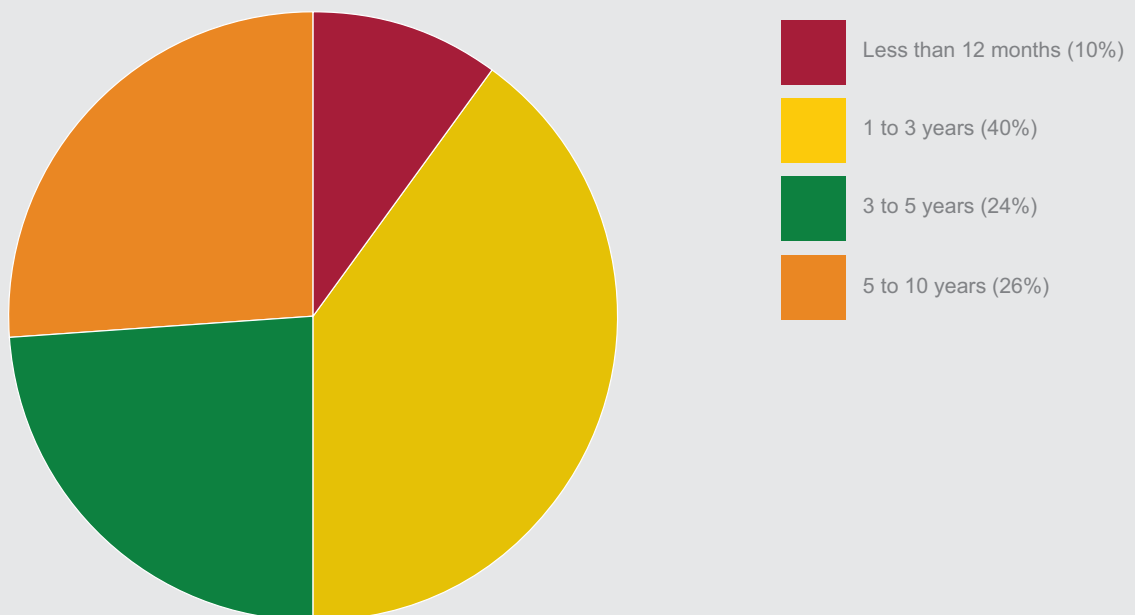
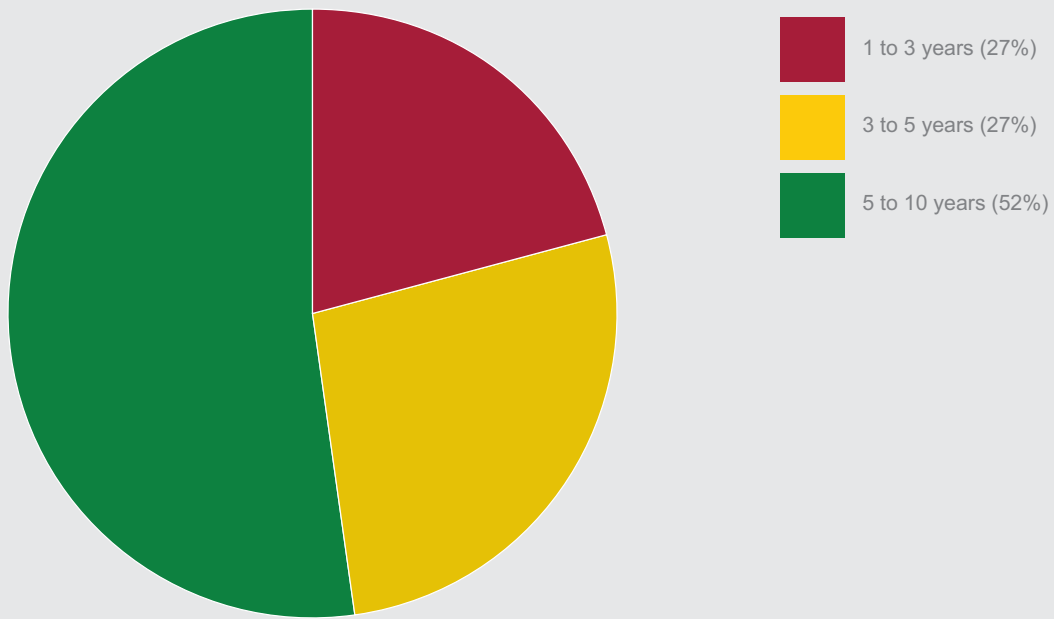
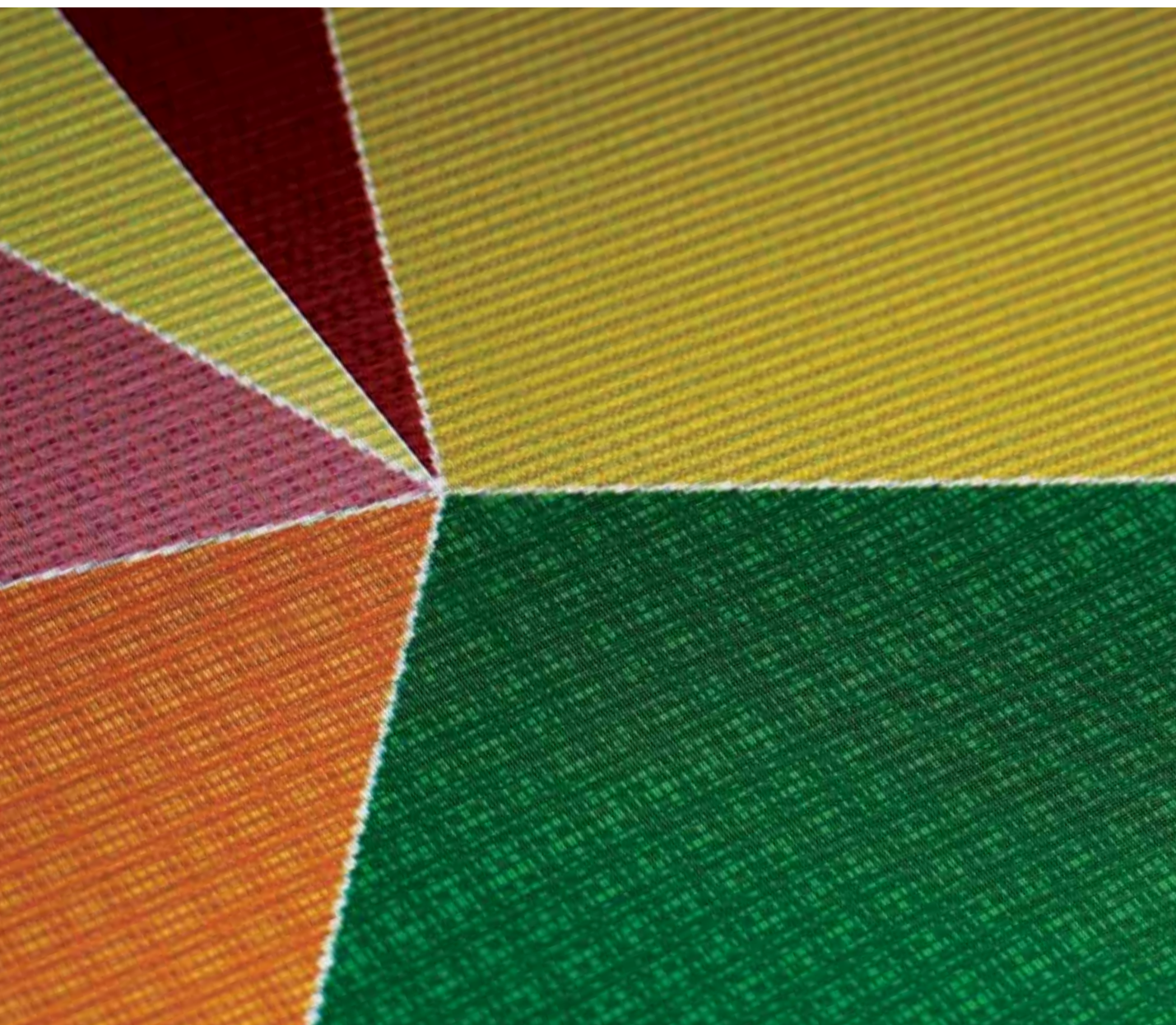


Figure 15b (Sinhalese): Length of Residence



3 CONSTRAINTS

The Sri Lankan mapping exercise ran quite smoothly. During the exercise, the mapping consultant discovered that the majority of the respondents preferred to give answers in a face to face interview rather than sending the completed questionnaires by post. As a result, the Sri Lankan mapping exercise took a little longer than the average. Many of the respondents were not clear about the mandate of IOM with respect to voluntary return programmes. There was some confusion, amongst those who had received a letter from the Home Office informing them about the AVR programme, about the relationship between IOM and the Home Office. The distinction between the two needs to be emphasised.





4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This mapping exercise has generally achieved its aims by identifying the main channels of information used by Sri Lankans in the UK, and their main locations. The Sri Lankan diaspora in the UK is one of the best informed about the work of IOM but there is still scope for better communication. The mapping exercise revealed that many Sri Lankan community organisations, media and businesses agree that IOM programmes could benefit a large part of the community. They also expressed genuine interest in working with IOM in disseminating information to the community. During the mapping exercise the consultant discovered that the vast majority of Sri Lankans approach their local community organisation for advice and support. IOM should consider working in partnership with these community organisations.

IOM outreach activities should be tailored to the outcome of the mapping exercise. The following recommendations emerged from the exercise.

- A number of Tamil-language free newspapers are published in the UK. All these newspapers are based in London. IOM is currently advertising in many of the free Tamil newspapers, including the popular fortnightly publication *Oru Paper*, as well as *Thessam*, *London Kural*, *Newslanka* and *Puthinam*. It is recommended that IOM should also advertise in the second most popular weekly newspaper *Ealamurasu*.
- IOM should consider advertising on the most popular radio station *Soriyathoyam*, widely known as a “community radio” among the Tamil community. The station has already been approached but further follow-up is needed.
- IOM should consider advertising on *Sunrise*, the Sinhalese station, as it is the only radio station broadcasting within the UK.
- IOM should consider advertising on *CEEITV*, the most popular TV channel among Tamils.
- IOM should continue to produce leaflets in the Tamil and Sinhalese languages and make them available in temples and churches. IOM should maintain regular contact with the people in charge.
- IOM should consider producing information materials telling the success stories of returnees from both the Tamil and the Sinhalese communities to encourage voluntary return.

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