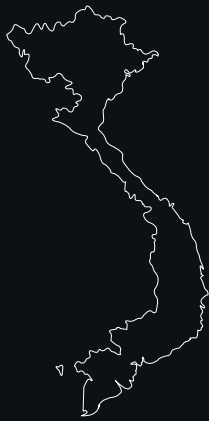




IOM International Organization for Migration



VIETNAM

MAPPING EXERCISE
LONDON, DECEMBER 2006

CONTENTS

Introduction	05
1 Mapping Exercise Outcomes – Information Channels	07
1.1 Introduction	07
1.2. Media	09
1.3 General information on use of services	18
1.4 Favoured locations for obtaining information and suggested formats	22
1.5 Geographical location and size of the Vietnamese community in the UK	24
2 Mapping Exercise Outcomes – Demographic Information	32
2.1 Gender	32
2.2 Age	33
2.3 Length of residence in the UK	33
3 Constraints	36
3.1 Limitations impacting on the mapping exercise	36
3.2 Dispersed communities	36
3.3 Community divisions	37
3.4 Receptiveness to the IOM message	37
3.5 Receptiveness to return	37

4	Conclusions and Recommendations	38
4.1	Media specific	38
4.2	Community outreach	39
4.3	Wider marketing opportunities	39
4.4	Other considerations	40
4.5	Vietnamese etiquette	40

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 exercise carried out by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) was to identify the location of potential beneficiaries of IOM's voluntary return programmes, which are open to asylum seekers and irregular migrants, as well as identify the main channels of information used by them. The ultimate goal of the mapping exercise is to help IOM improve its communications with foreign language communities in the United Kingdom through media articles, advertisements and presentations to community groups.

IOM designed a questionnaire divided into two sections with a total of twenty questions. The first section asked about media channels available to the Vietnamese community in the UK; and about other sources of information (e.g. community organisations, places of worship and festivals). It also explored what Vietnamese people do in their leisure time and looked at the most common ways in which they exchange information. Finally, the section explored the geographic locations and sizes of Vietnamese communities in the UK. A key purpose of questions in this section was to establish the most effective places for displaying IOM posters, and to distribute literature relating to voluntary return programmes and other activities. The second section gathered specific baseline data from each respondent about their age, gender and length of stay in the UK.

The research phase of the Vietnamese mapping exercise was conducted between September and October 2006. A Vietnamese national, who has been resident in the UK for two years, was employed by IOM as a mapping consultant to undertake this research. The consultant had previously carried out some independent research into her community. This experience, coupled with the contacts she had already established, helped in developing insights into a community that can otherwise be difficult to penetrate.

The methodology involved multiple approaches to data collection. Initially, data was gathered through in-depth interviews with community leaders and other individuals who have established themselves in the UK, and who are well known within their community. This informed the researcher's ability to distribute questionnaires to those places where irregular migrants are working, shopping, or gather for leisure activities. Visits were subsequently made to some of these places. Field visits were made to meet community leaders in Birmingham and Portsmouth. However, many regional Vietnamese community groups proved to be inactive or had closed down, so appointments with community leaders in other parts of the country could not be arranged.

Research did, however, identify Vietnamese contacts living in Doncaster, Greater Manchester, Leicester, Margate, Newbury, Norwich, and Scotland. Questionnaires were dispatched to them and duly returned.

In total, the consultant collected 121 questionnaires from Vietnamese nationals across the country from a wide range of different backgrounds. Twelve questionnaires were completed by the mapping consultant during the in-depth interviews that she conducted. The remainder were forwarded to IOM by post. Most of the in-depth interviews were with community representatives. People with no legal status in the UK were happy to complete questionnaires but they were more reluctant to participate in an in-depth interview. A few replies came too late to be included. They were used for background information only.

In addition to the questionnaires, the consultant has created an extensive list of contacts¹. Data from completed questionnaires was merged with information provided by the community representatives during the in-depth interviews. This resource will be used by the Information team at IOM to disseminate information on the voluntary return programmes to the Vietnamese community throughout the UK.

Questionnaires were distributed in both English and Vietnamese. Every effort was made to ensure that at least half the responses were from Vietnamese people that are in the asylum system or do not have any legal basis to stay (i.e. irregular migrants or former asylum seekers who have exhausted all rights of appeal). The rest of the questionnaires were filled out by those who are established residents in the UK. Many are recognised as refugees, and others have arrived more recently in the UK as legal migrants (e.g. for study or marriage).

¹ This document contains confidential information. It will be used as an internal IOM document only.

1 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

INFORMATION CHANNELS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to identify the main channels through which Vietnamese people living in the UK obtain information. The questions in this section are divided into different categories. They explore: language preferences; media preferences; other sources of information; overall preferences; and information exchange through community groups. In many cases it has been necessary to group the answers. Very often the frequencies of the answers were single and, therefore, not useful for the purpose of the mapping exercise. The contact details for media, community centres, and religious organisations, cited by respondents in the questionnaires or interviews, were merged and unified, together with the contact details provided by the multipliers². This contact list should be regarded as an important resource in any future action plan IOM may develop to raise awareness about voluntary return programmes among the Vietnamese Community in the UK.

A closely-related aim was also achieved during the mapping exercise. This was to raise the awareness and interest of Vietnamese community leaders and organisations in IOM's voluntary return programme. It will become clear later in this report that many sections of the Vietnamese community in the UK are not well informed about IOM programmes. It is good to report that disseminating information on IOM programmes in the course of the mapping exercise not only helped inform the Vietnamese community of their existence but also provided insights into outreach possibilities, which are listed at the end of this report.

1.1.1 Background Information on Migration Patterns from Vietnam to the UK

A total of about 24,000 Vietnamese refugees arrived in the UK in the late 1970s and throughout most of the 80s. Many had been resettled from Hong Kong. Others subsequently arrived under family reunification provisions to join close relatives of those who had been granted status in the UK. In more recent years, significant numbers of Vietnamese people have continued to arrive in the UK, both through regular, and increasingly irregular, migration routes. In addition, Vietnamese people, who had previously obtained citizenship in other EU countries, have chosen to relocate to the UK. Today, the Vietnamese community in the UK can be broadly divided into three main groups.

- Those from the former state of South Vietnam, who were the first group to arrive in the UK in significant numbers. In general, these people can read, write and understand English very well. Many of them are working in the UK, often as professionals. It is primarily members of this group who become active within Vietnamese community organisations. They predominately read English newspapers, listen to English radio stations and watch English TV channels. Many of them can also speak Chinese.

² This term is used to indicate individuals or organisations that are well known amongst diaspora groups and could therefore play a key role in delivering information.

- The second group comprises immigrants from the former state of North Vietnam. They began to arrive a little later. In general they can speak only limited English; many of them, in fact, had little or no schooling in Vietnam and are illiterate in Vietnamese. Those of Chinese ancestry may be able to speak, and possibly read, Chinese. For communicating in English, the children of this group (especially those educated in the UK) often act as interpreters for their parents from day to day. At the same time, these children often speak poor Vietnamese and cannot read or write in that language. Within this group oral communication is the most common way that new information is spread. Normally, only the elderly people of this group go to the local Vietnamese community organisations, either for help with paperwork and translation or to attend luncheon clubs, where they can chat with friends and exchange information. This group also has far greater contact with irregular migrants (see below).
- The third group are illegal migrants who have either overstayed a legally issued visa or have entered the UK using fake documentation or clandestine routes. This group primarily originates from the northern provinces of Vietnam, such as Quang Ninh and Hai Duong, as well as the city of Haiphong. In many cases, their passage to the United Kingdom is assisted by relatives who are already established here, especially those originating from the same northern provinces. The cost for each person to come to England is currently £12,500, an increase of £1,500 from 3 years ago. Many come to work for their relatives, particularly in nail salons, which are now located in most towns and cities throughout the UK. However, some work in cannabis factories. The potential income from this work is very high and they can pay back the cost of coming to the UK much quicker. They are referred to as *nguai rom* by the wider Vietnamese community. This translates as “scarecrow”, but the inference is that they are not who they seem or appear to be. Among this group, many are struggling with life in the UK. They may have found life not up to their expectations, or have even been cheated out of their money or otherwise abused. Nevertheless, there are barriers to many of them returning voluntarily: the overriding need to repay the cost of their journey here; and fear of losing face, for their family and themselves, if they return to Vietnam without something to show for their time away.

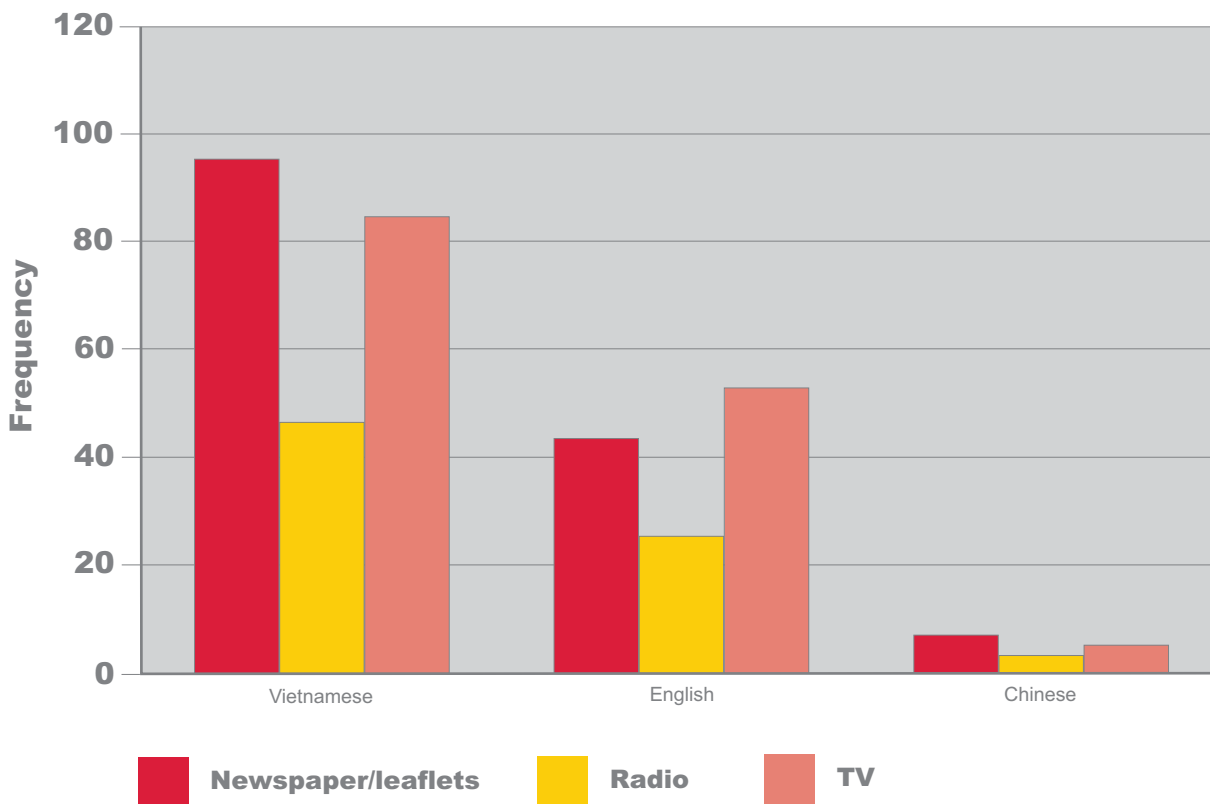
1.2 MEDIA

This section explores the most common media sources accessed by the Vietnamese community, the languages they most commonly understand, and how often they access different media sources.

1.2.1 Language Preferences

Respondents were first asked in which language they best understood information presented by the media; whether written, on the radio, or on television. Figure 1 shows that the majority of respondents feel most confident understanding different sources of information in Vietnamese. However, a sizeable minority understands the same information in both English and Vietnamese.

Figure 1: Preferred Language(s) for Media Comprehension

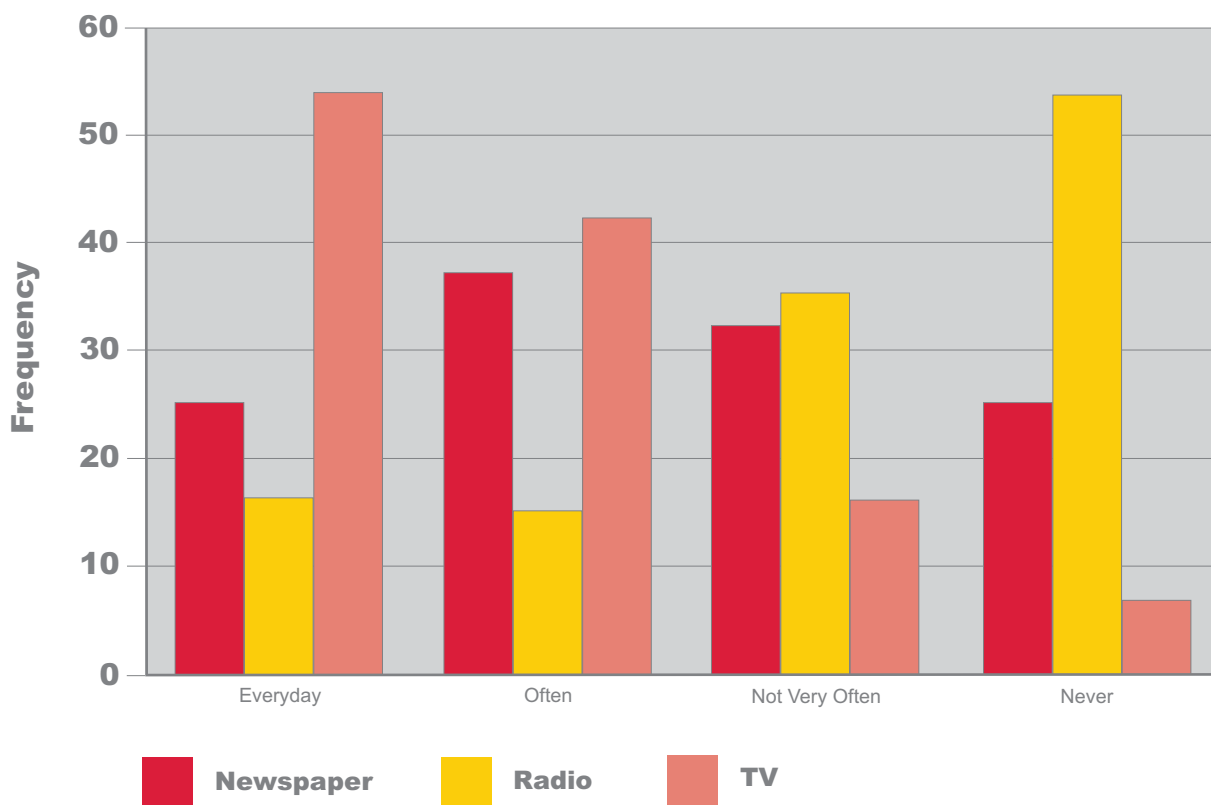


82% of respondents felt comfortable reading newspapers and leaflets in Vietnamese. 36% were comfortable reading in English and 5% read in Chinese. The total percentage is more than 100% because some respondents made more than one choice. It is clear from the in-depth interviews that recent migrants from Vietnam mostly read only in Vietnamese. Those who picked English as a language option for media usage are mainly members of the established Vietnamese community, or people who are in the UK for study.

1.2.2 Frequency With Which Media Sources are Accessed

Figure 2 shows that 80% of respondents watch television either every day (45%) or very often (35%); only 6% do not watch TV at all. Newspapers are read daily by 21% of respondents, with a further 31% reading them often (note that many Vietnamese titles are only published weekly). A smaller proportion (13%) listen to the radio daily with a further 13% stating they are regular but not daily listeners. 45% say that they never listen to the radio.

Figure 2: Frequency of Media Consultation



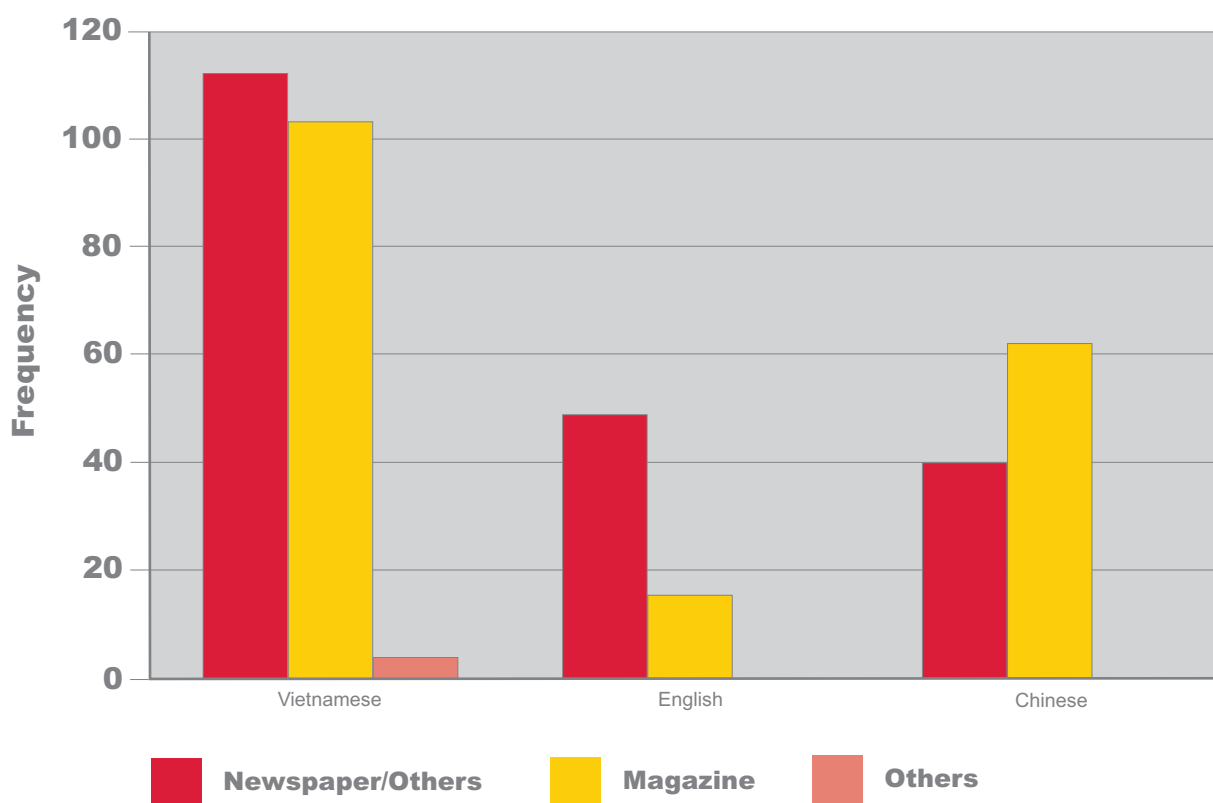
1.2.3 Newspapers and Printed Publications

Respondents were asked which newspapers and other publications they read the most. Apart from newspapers, respondents mentioned that they read a variety of other material, such as magazines, community newsletters, leaflets and publications from religious organisations.

Figure 3 shows that all the respondents who read newspapers do so in Vietnamese. But, 41% of the total respondents are also equally happy to read English newspapers. There is an even greater preference for Vietnamese language titles when it comes to magazines. A total of 87% of the respondents read Vietnamese titles, whilst only 13% of those responding read English magazines. Just 3% of the respondents read other publications, such as news from community centres or religious organisations, which are typically published every three months. However, when considering the small number of respondents who read this final group of publications, one must be mindful that these are predominately read by the older generation. As set out in section 2.3, the number of respondents from this age group is relatively small.

Due to the high number of single frequencies, the results of these responses are grouped according to language into: newspapers/publications in English; and newspapers/publications in Vietnamese.

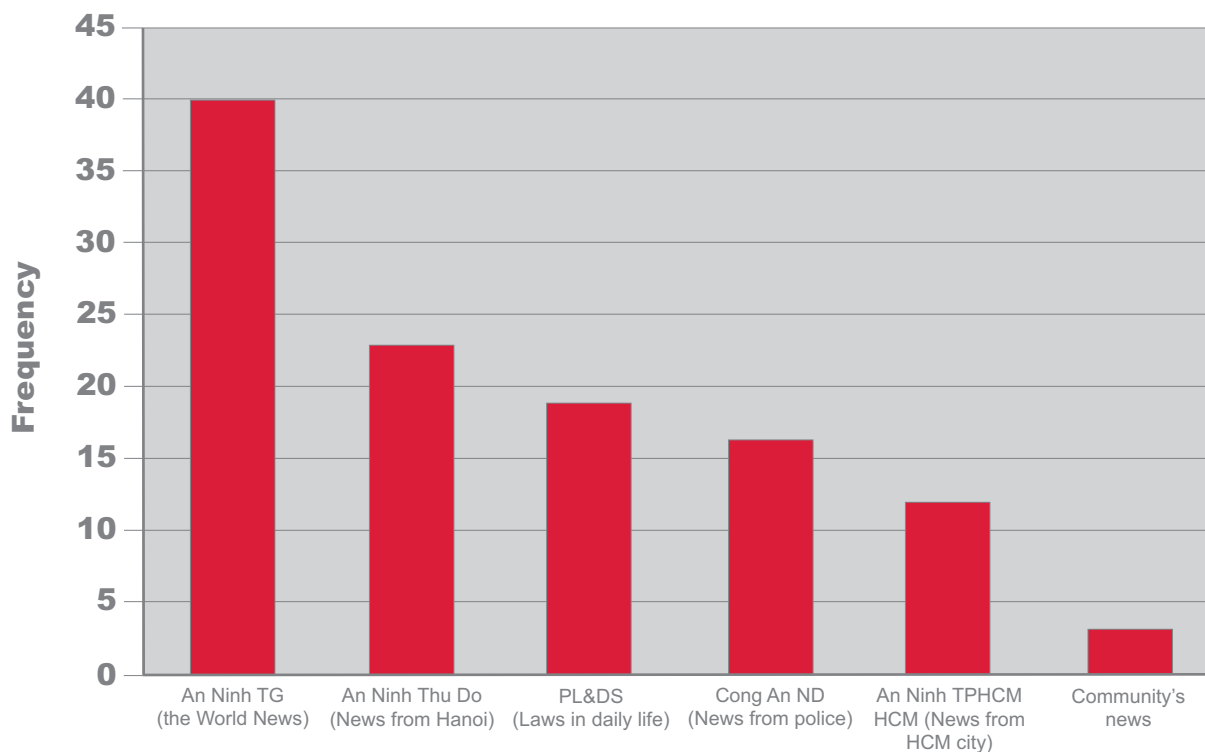
Figure 3: Linguistic Preferences for Reading Newspapers and Other Publications



Although 25 respondents previously stated they did not read newspapers (Figure 1), a disproportionate number responded to this question with a contradictory answer (i.e. that they read newspapers in Vietnamese and/or English). Hence the anomaly.

Figure 4 sets out the titles of Vietnamese newspapers, and their popularity with respondents. Apart from the community’s news (see explanation below), these newspapers are not printed in the United Kingdom. They are imported from Vietnam and available in all the Vietnamese shops and supermarkets in areas with a large Vietnamese presence, such as Deptford, Hackney and Woolwich.

Figure 4: Vietnamese Newspapers and Other Publications



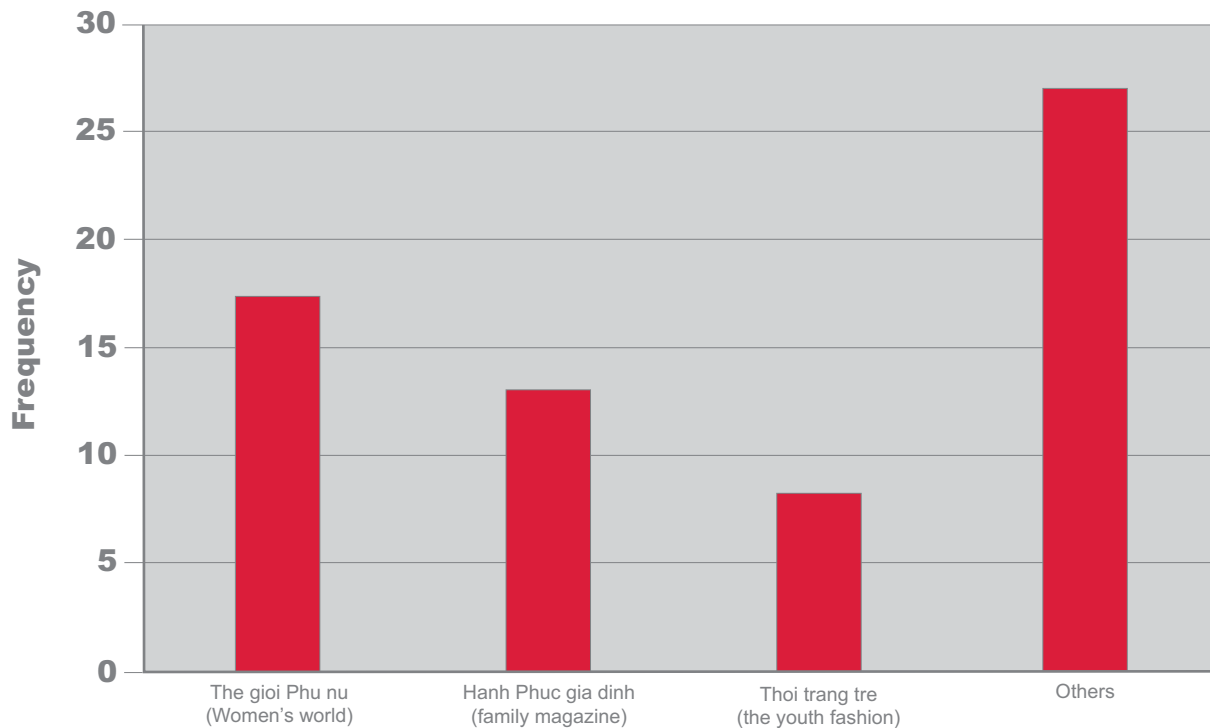
Some respondents, including those who previously stated they do not read newspapers, responded to this question, some specifying multiple titles.

The most read newspapers in Vietnamese are: *An ninh The gioi*, “the World News” (34%); *An Ninh Thu Do*, “News from Hanoi” (20%); and *Bao Phap luat va Doi song* “Laws of Daily Life” (16%). It should be noted that most Vietnamese newspapers can also be read on the Internet, though none of the popular titles mentioned here have their own Internet site.

The community’s news is a generic reference to the various newssheets that different community groups publish. There are several such publications in circulation, most typically on a quarterly basis. The in-depth interviews with multipliers proved that these publications are more popular than the results in the table above would suggest. In many cases, the content of such publications might also lend themselves to an editorial from the IOM about the voluntary return programmes. The religious organisations produce similar publications. All these titles are in the Vietnamese language.

Vietnamese magazines were also popular with some respondents: figure 5 refers. A fairly wide range of titles is read but three command a significant readership. The *gioi Phu nu* and *Hanh Phuc gia dinh* have a predominately female readership, whilst *Thoi trang tre* targets young people.

Figure 5: Popular Vietnamese Magazines

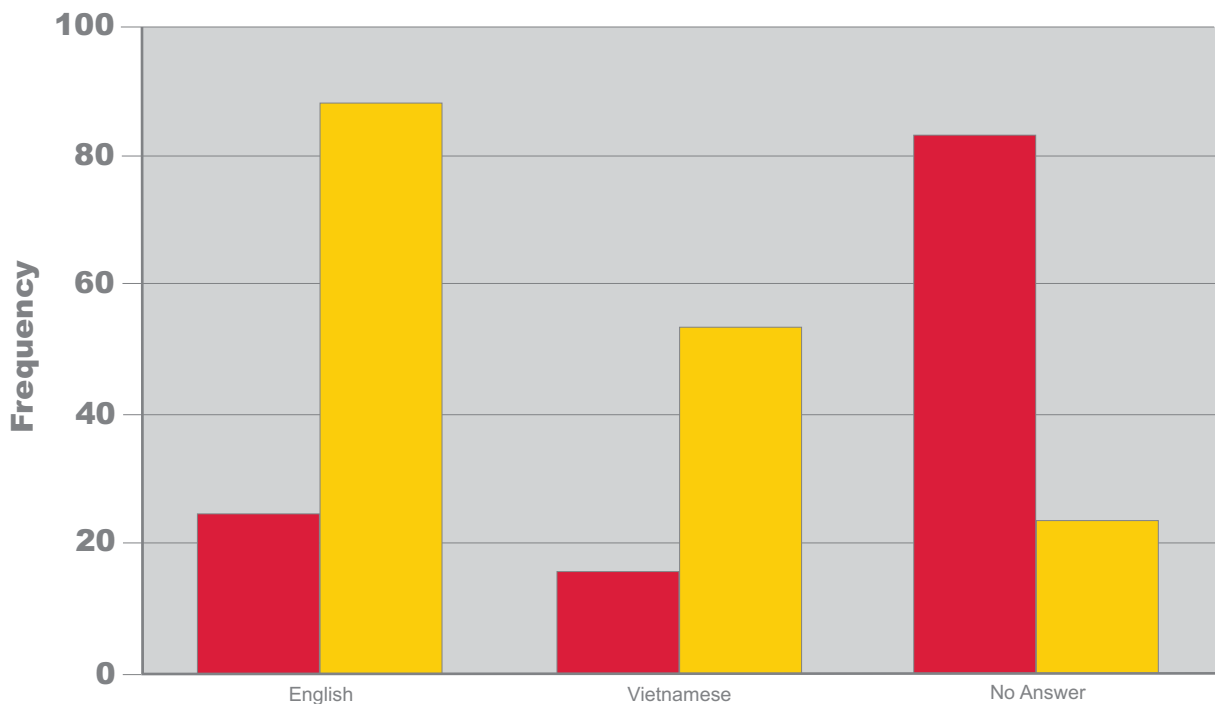


In addition, a new Vietnamese language magazine, called *Tri Thuc Viet*, was launched in the summer of 2006. This is published in the UK and targets Vietnamese living outside the country. Initial sales of this magazine have been quite high, though it is too early to know whether it will be a long-term success.

1.2.4 Television and Radio

Respondents were asked which TV channels they most frequently watch, and which radio stations they listen to most often. They were also asked about any specific programmes they like to tune in to. The most watched television channels in figure 6 are simply grouped into English-speaking, and Vietnamese-speaking channels because of the number of single responses. Radio stations have similarly been collected into English and Vietnamese language groups.

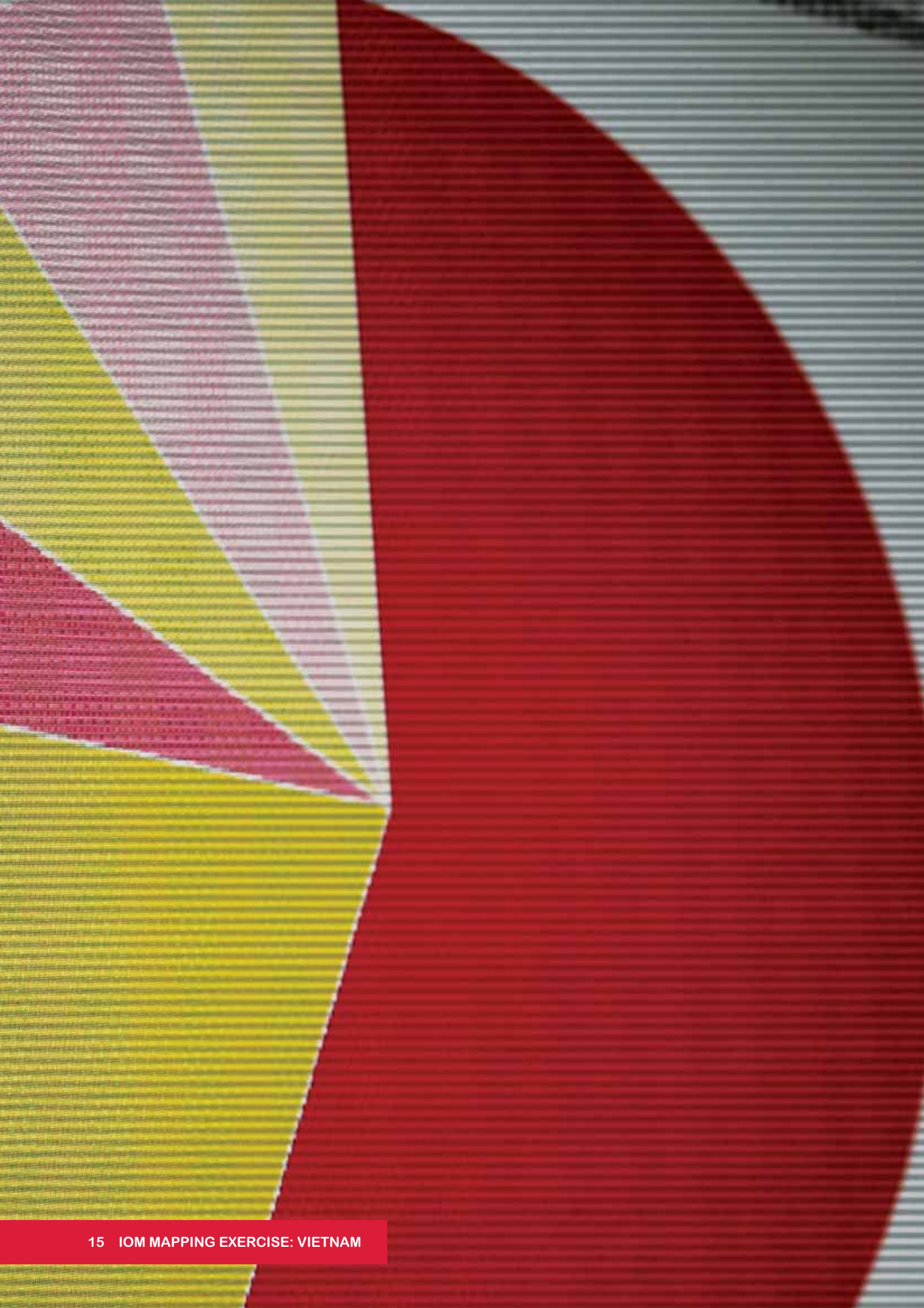
Figure 6: Television and Radio Channels Most Frequently Watched or Listened to



The results show that English-speaking TV channels and radio stations are the most watched/listened to. 74 % of the respondents specified watching an English-speaking TV channel whereas 45% said they watched a Vietnamese-speaking TV channel most. Some respondents said that they watch television in both languages and some did not disclose what they watch (so the total cannot equal 100%).

Taking the 88 respondents who indicated that they watch television regularly, 61% watch BBC channels (many did not specify which), 19% watch ITV, 19% watch other English channels (including subscription channels), and 22 respondents did not offer an answer. Many regular migrants cannot read or speak English very well but they can understand it to a level that will allow them to watch the news in English. Irregular migrants' understanding of English is often more limited and a very high proportion watch only the Vietnamese satellite channel (*VTV4*). This station is also popular with many established Vietnamese, who have it in their home. This group comprises 58% of those who watch TV regularly.

36 out of 119 respondents offered a response about the radio stations that they listened to. Of these, 47% listen to the Vietnamese BBC programmes. This is the single most popular station. Of the 36 respondents who listen to the radio, 61% listen to English language radio (11 different stations were specified). Some of the respondents mentioned listening to both *BBC Vietnamese* and specific English language channels. One respondent said that they listened to a Chinese station.

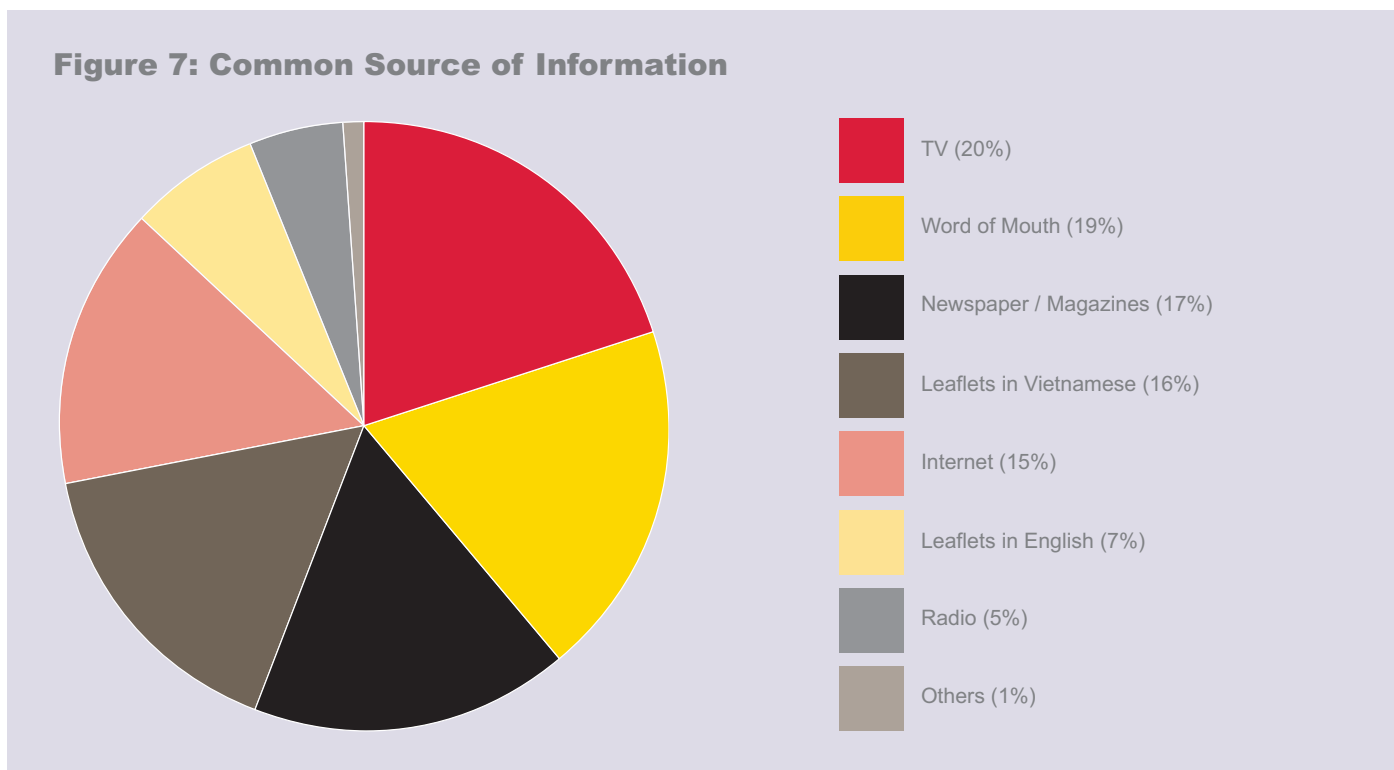


1.2.5 Internet

The Internet emerged as a popular medium for obtaining information. 67% of the respondents said they are able to use a computer to access information on the Internet. 55% of the respondents said they have a computer in their household. Vietnamese language sites are the most popular, especially *www.dantri.com*, the Vietnamese news section of *www.bbc.com*, *www.tuoitreonline*, and *www.vnexpress*. In addition, *Google*, *Yahoo* and *Hotmail* were also mentioned, although these are used to a large extent as applications for keeping in touch with family, friends and news from home.

1.2.6 The Most Common Media Sources

Figure 7 shows that TV is the most common source of information for 20% of the respondents, with word of mouth coming second with 19%. Newspapers and magazines (17%), leaflets in Vietnamese (16%) and the Internet (5%) are other common sources of information. Leaflets in English, the radio and the rest of the information sources are, by comparison, insignificant.



A more detailed analysis of the responses suggests that television is the most common source of information for established community members whereas word of mouth is almost equally important for irregular migrants (who in general terms can be identified by the considerably shorter duration they have been present in the UK).

1.2.7 Other Sources of Information

The results from the mapping questionnaire confirmed the anecdotal evidence of the in-depth interviews with community representatives. In short, it suggested that Vietnamese irregular migrants rely upon informal networks of friends and relatives for help and support. In contrast, regular migrants (with the possible exception of those who have come for a short-term stay, such as students) rely on other sources of support, include community organisations and Citizen Advice Bureaux.

A detailed list of relevant organisations, pagodas, churches and other establishments most used by the Vietnamese community has been provided to the IOM as part of its internal list of contacts.

1.2.8 Media Specific Conclusions and Recommendations

- There appears little scope for reaching the Vietnamese community through the British media.
- IOM should consider advertising on *VTV4* but should recognise that information will also be broadcast in Vietnam.
- Word of mouth is one of the most powerful means of communication between Vietnamese people.
- IOM should consider seeking publicity for its programs on Vietnamese BBC radio.
- Advertising in newspapers printed in Vietnam, targeting a tiny proportion of their overall readership, would not be cost-effective, but *An Ninh The Gioi* commands a sufficiently wide circulation to make reaching its British readership attractive.
- Advertising in imported Vietnamese magazines should also be considered.
- There are potentially attractive possibilities in communicating through the new *Tri Thuc Viet* magazine published in the UK, subject to it maintaining its initial success.
- Advertising in community magazines should be considered as a viable means of promoting voluntary return programmes.
- IOM should consider advertising on the most commonly used Vietnamese language Internet sites.

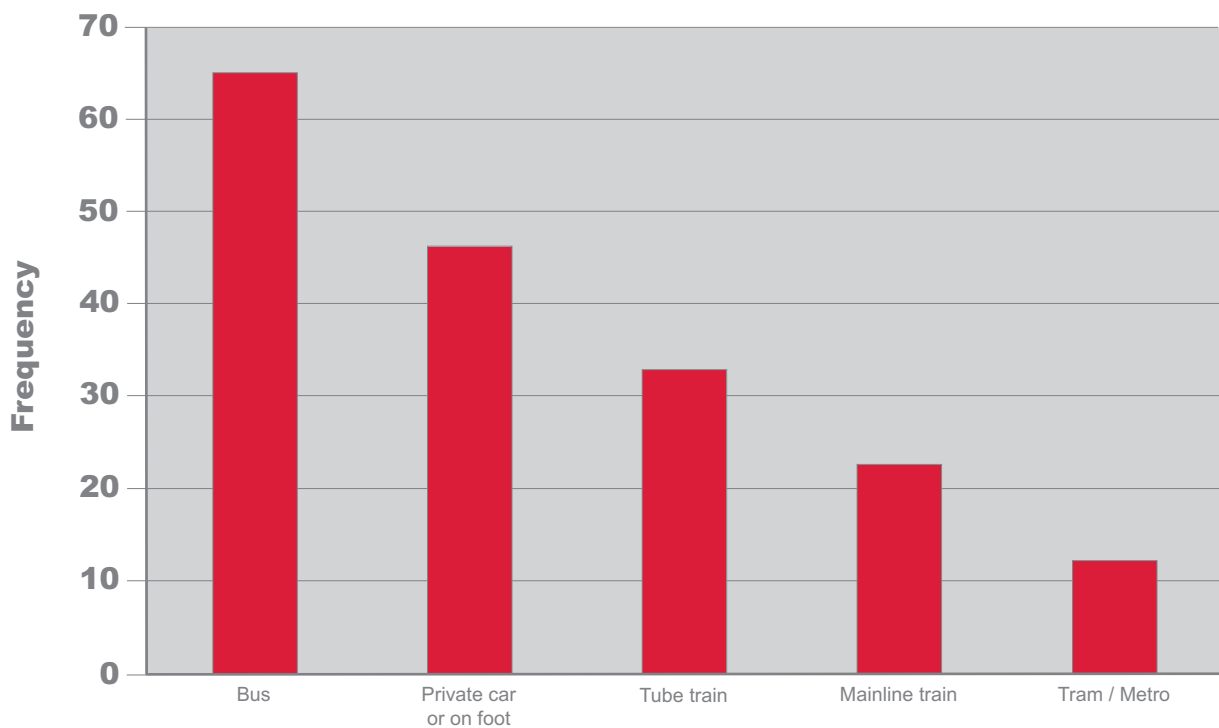
1.3 GENERAL INFORMATION ON USE OF SERVICES

Respondents were asked for general background information about the types of transport they use most frequently (figure 8), their means of communication with family and friends in Vietnam (figure 9), and their use of the local services available to them (figure 10).

1.3.1 Transport

Figure 8 shows that buses are the most commonly used type of transport (36%). Another 26% of the respondents used cars or walked, whilst a combined total of 38% use the Tube, trains, or trams. Some respondents used multiple forms of transport.

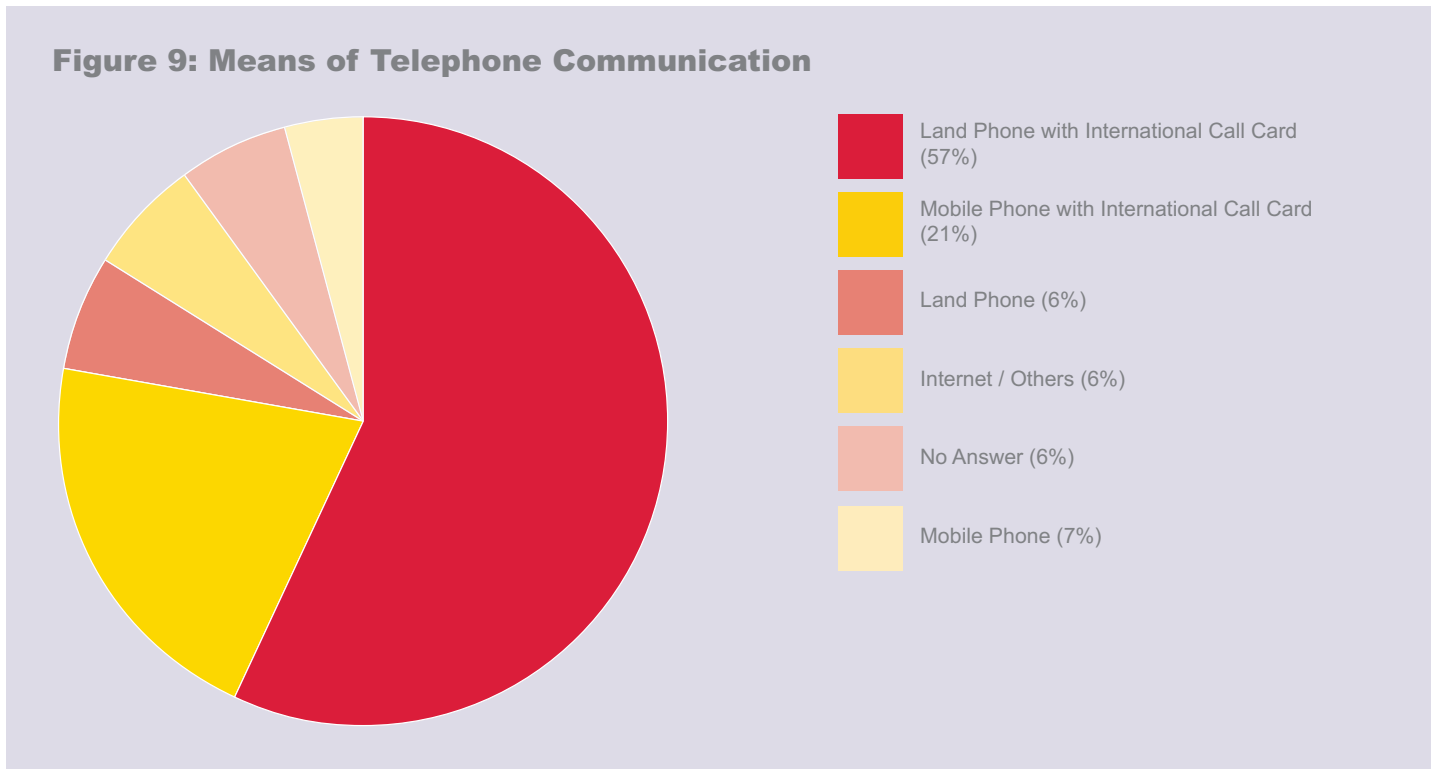
Figure 8: Modes of Transport Used



Categories for using a private car and walking are combined, since neither are forms of travel that will offer great potential for exposure to marketing initiatives.

1.3.2 Phone Calls

Respondents were also asked about how they make telephone calls to family in Vietnam. As set out in figure 9, the highest proportion (57%) of the respondents use a land line with a phone card. 21% use a mobile phone with a card, 6% use a land line without a card, and another 6% use the Internet. 4% offered no answer to the question.

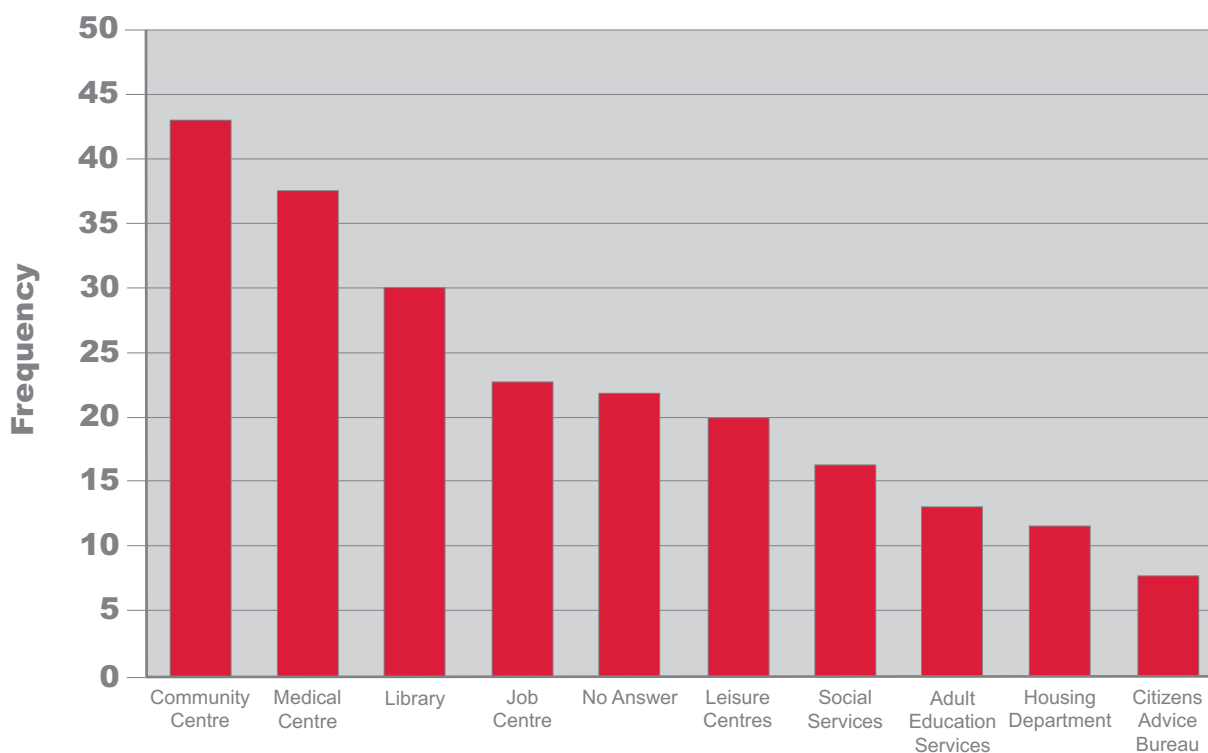


It is understood that IOM may be interested in the types of phone cards respondents use to call Vietnam. This is a fluid situation, since the best cards for calling Vietnam change frequently. Outlets for phone cards in localities with a high presence of Vietnamese, including some Vietnamese shops, will be able to advise on the most popular phone cards at any given time.

1.3.3 Local Services

Respondents were asked which local services they used the most. For the purpose of this exercise, the meaning of local services was extended beyond those provided by the local authority. It includes, for example, government agencies, such as the Job Centre, community organisations, and the health sector.

Figure 10: Local Services



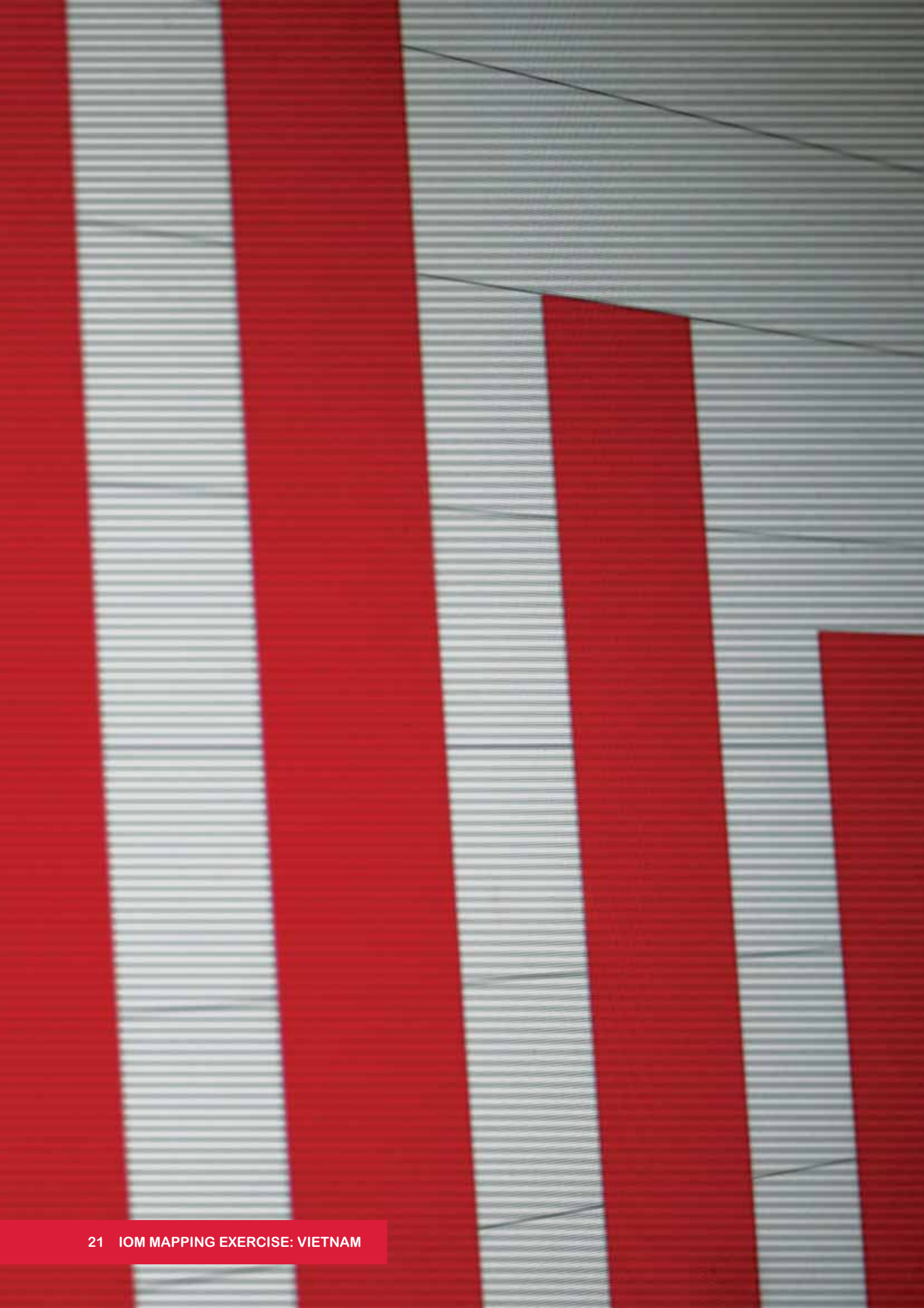
The most popular services (19% of the respondents) were provided by community centres whilst a total of 17% use services provide by medical centres³. 14% use the library, 10% the Job Centres, 9% leisure centres, 7% social services, 6% adult learning centres, 5% housing departments, and 3% use the Citizens Advice Bureau.

1.3.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

The information above should be used in devising IOM's outreach strategies, taking into account the following recommendations.

- IOM should advertise on strategically selected buses and in bus stops in areas where there are high concentrations of Vietnamese people. According to the in-depth interviews, not many irregular migrants will use trains due to the language barrier.
- IOM should consider advertising on phone cards.
- IOM should pursue the offers to put posters and leaflets in community centres and seek to expand the network of places such materials may be left.

³ But, possibly half of respondents will find access to these difficult.

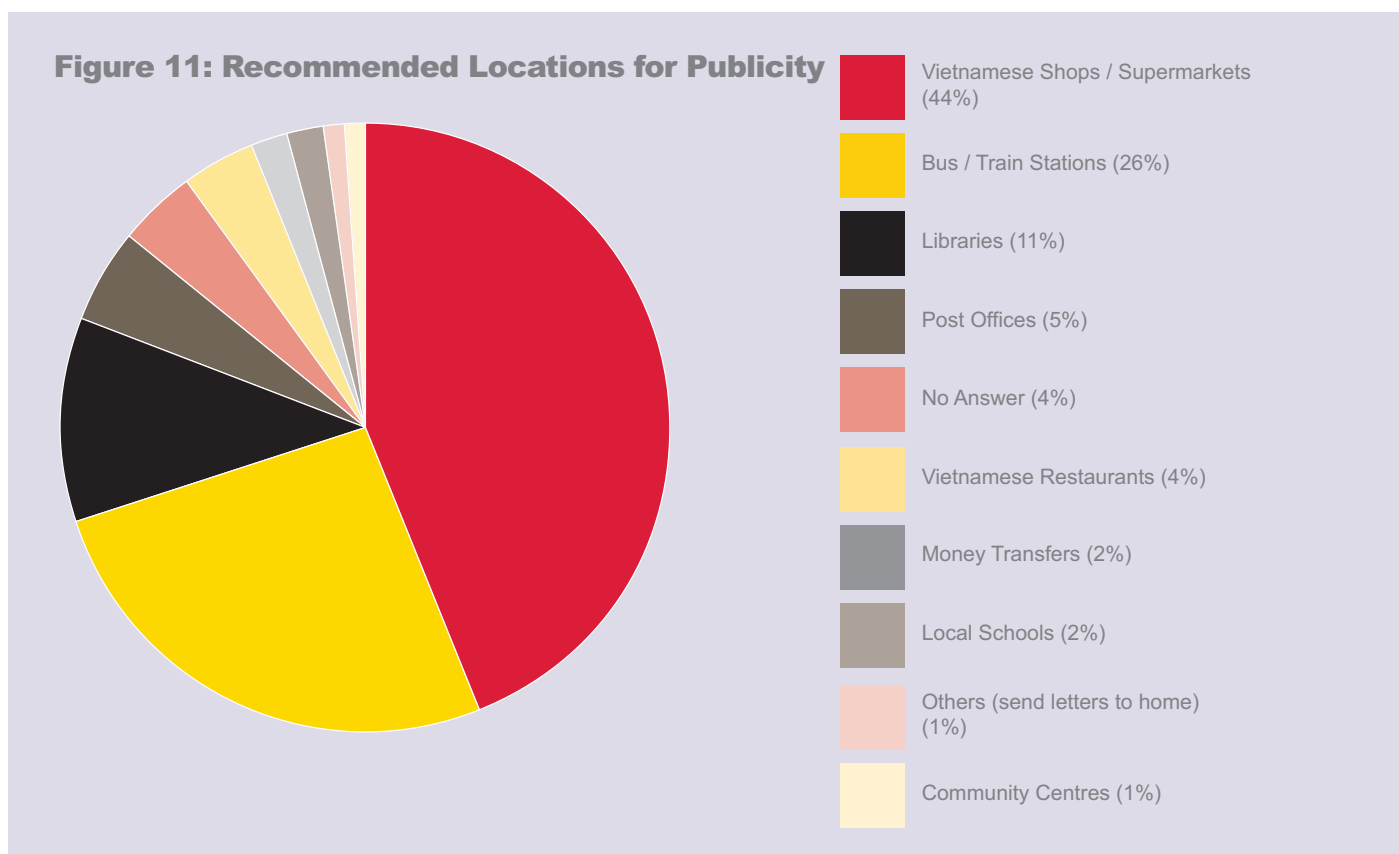


1.4 FAVOURED LOCATIONS FOR OBTAINING INFORMATION AND SUGGESTED FORMATS

1.4.1 Favoured Locations

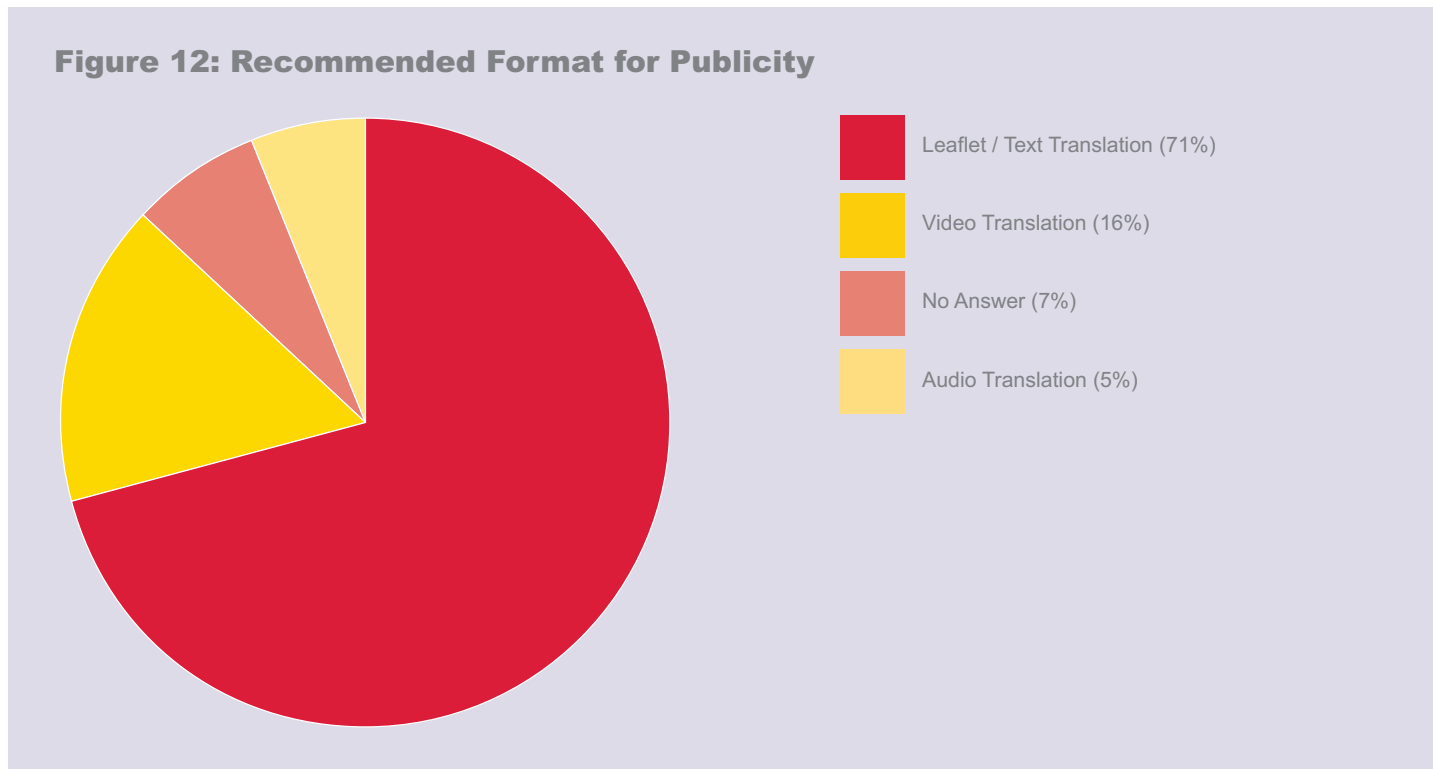
Respondents were also asked about locations where they preferred information to be made available for them. The consensus amongst community leaders during the in-depth interviews was that information should be provided where Vietnamese gather informally. For this reason, pagodas, churches, Vietnamese restaurants, and karaoke bars were popular suggestions. A number of restaurants in East London, an entertainment venue in Birmingham, and religious centres (Buddhist and Christian) were visited during field visits. These visits proved to be highly beneficial in confirming the view of community leaders. It was possible to see at first hand that a diverse range of Vietnamese frequent each of these locations. It was also observed that posters or leaflets available at such locations did attract the attention of clients and visitors. In particular, it is highly likely that, if the option of religious centres had been specifically listed on the questionnaire, a large number of respondents would have ticked that box.

However, the results in figure 11 do not fully bear out the views of the community representatives. These show that Vietnamese supermarkets and other Vietnamese shops are the most popular locations for advertisement. 44% of respondents favoured such places for picking up information from posters and orally. Less popular, are bus and train stations (26%), followed by libraries (11%).



1.4.2 Recommended Formats for Publicity

The respondents were also asked about the form in which they prefer to receive information. Figure 12 shows that 71% of the respondents prefer leaflets and text translation, whilst 16% prefer video translations.



1.5 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND SIZE OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY IN THE UK

It is known that 24,000 Vietnamese were resettled as refugees in the United Kingdom, having fled after the 1975 war and the subsequent expulsion of many ethnic Chinese in 1979. Many were later able to bring other family members to the UK under family reunion programmes. More recently, many Vietnamese families have sought spouses for their children from Vietnam. Taking account of these arrivals, and the natural growth of families in the UK, informed respondents are fairly consistent in suggesting the Vietnamese community numbered approximately 50,000 by around 2003.

Since 2003, increasing numbers of Vietnamese people have sought to come to the UK, either as asylum seekers or by routes of irregular migration. Many who are unsuccessful in asylum applications, or arrived with a legally obtained visa, have not left the country when their right to remain has been exhausted. Considerable numbers of others enter the United Kingdom by clandestine routes. There is also a trend for Vietnamese people with citizenship elsewhere in Europe to migrate to the United Kingdom. Given these factors, and because the Vietnamese community in the UK is highly fragmented and widely dispersed, informed community sources agree that an accurate estimate of the number of Vietnamese people currently living in the UK is almost impossible. However, all these sources do agree that numbers have increased significantly from 50,000 and continue to rise.

Areas visited for the mapping exercise were the London Boroughs of Hackney, Southwark, Greenwich and Lewisham. The boroughs mentioned have amongst the highest numbers of resident Vietnamese people in London. There are also significant numbers in Tower Hamlets, which was not visited. Croydon, where there is a smaller but active community group and a pagoda (currently shut by Croydon Council), was also visited, as well as Newham. The main Catholic Church for Vietnamese people is in Poplar and Bexley (near a number of Vietnamese people living in Thamesmead).

Outside London, the mapping consultant visited Portsmouth and Birmingham. Contacts made in these locations enabled her to obtain completed questionnaires from respondents in Bolton, Bury, Doncaster, Leicester, Margate, Newbury, Norwich and Scotland.

1.5.1 Mapping Results

From mapping questionnaires and in-depth interviews with multipliers, the following distribution of Vietnamese people in London and the regions has been collated. As noted, the increasing numbers of people with no legal basis to stay make these figures exceptionally difficult to estimate, and impossible to source accurately. The following data represents the views of the best-informed community representatives.

Main Boroughs of Residence for Vietnamese People in London

London has by far the highest number of Vietnamese people but an accurate estimate is difficult. However, sources suggest that there are between 30,000 and 35,000. Figure 13 provides a breakdown of the estimated populations in those London boroughs that are believed to have the highest concentration of Vietnamese people.

Figure 13

Borough	Estimate
Hackney	4,000 - 5.500
Southwark	4,000 - 5.000
Lewisham	4,000 - 4,500
Greenwich	3,000 - 4,000
Lambeth	3,000 - 4,000
Tower Hamlets	3,000 - 4,000

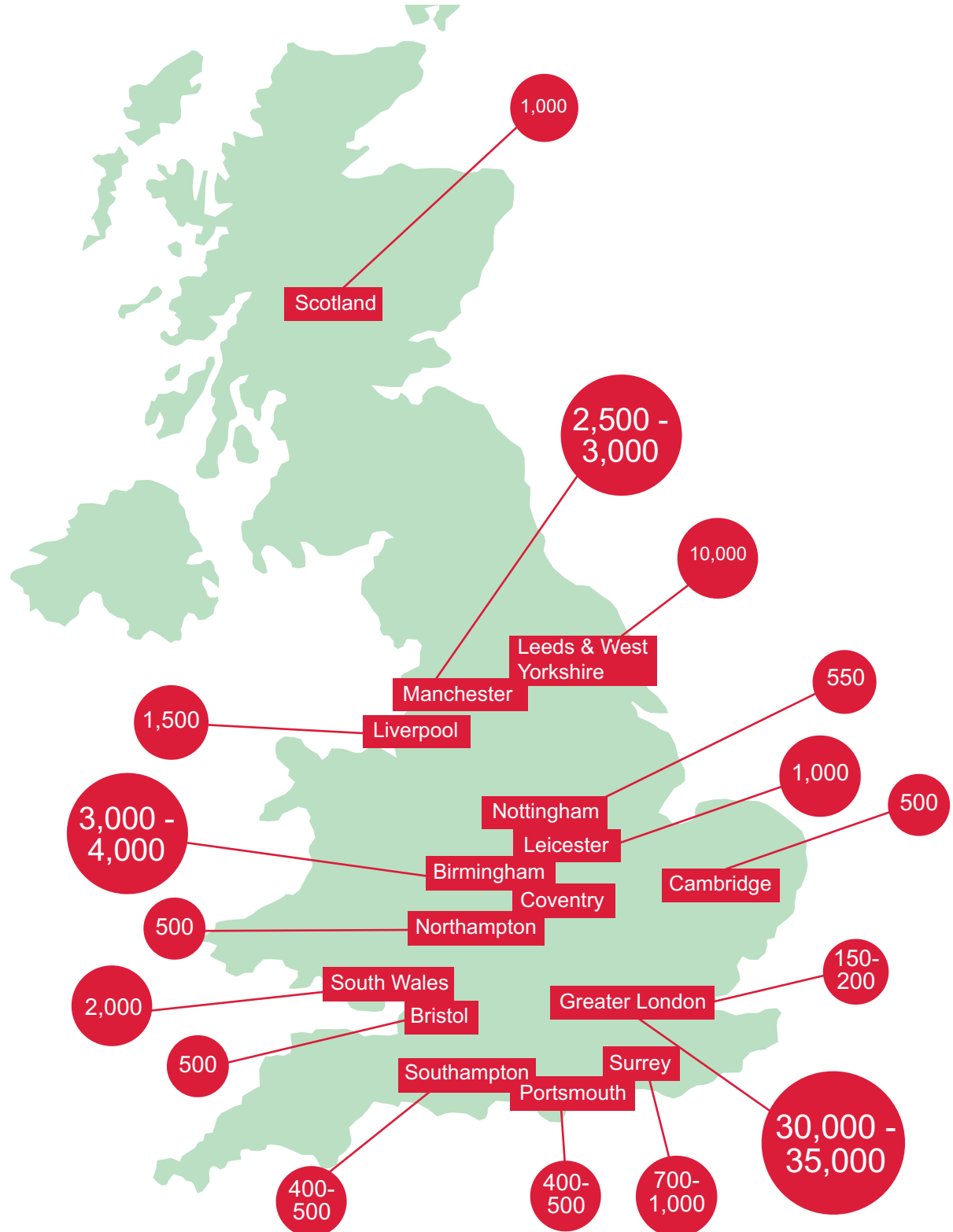
Nationally, community representatives have slightly more reliable information on the number of families living in certain parts of the UK. But, many irregular migrants work across the country so it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain a clear picture. Figure 14 primarily focuses on information from one well-informed community activist but, in some cases, other representatives had different opinions.

Estimated Regional Distribution of Vietnamese

Figure 14:

Location	Estimate
Birmingham	3,000 - 4,000
Manchester	2,500 - 3,000
South Wales	2,000
Liverpool	1,500
Leeds and West Yorkshire	1,000
Leicester	1,000
Scotland	1,000
Surrey	700 - 1,000
Bristol	500
Cambridge	500
Northampton	500
Portsmouth	400 - 500
Southampton	400 - 500
Nottingham	550
Coventry	150 - 200

Geographical Spread of the Vietnamese Community in the UK, 2008

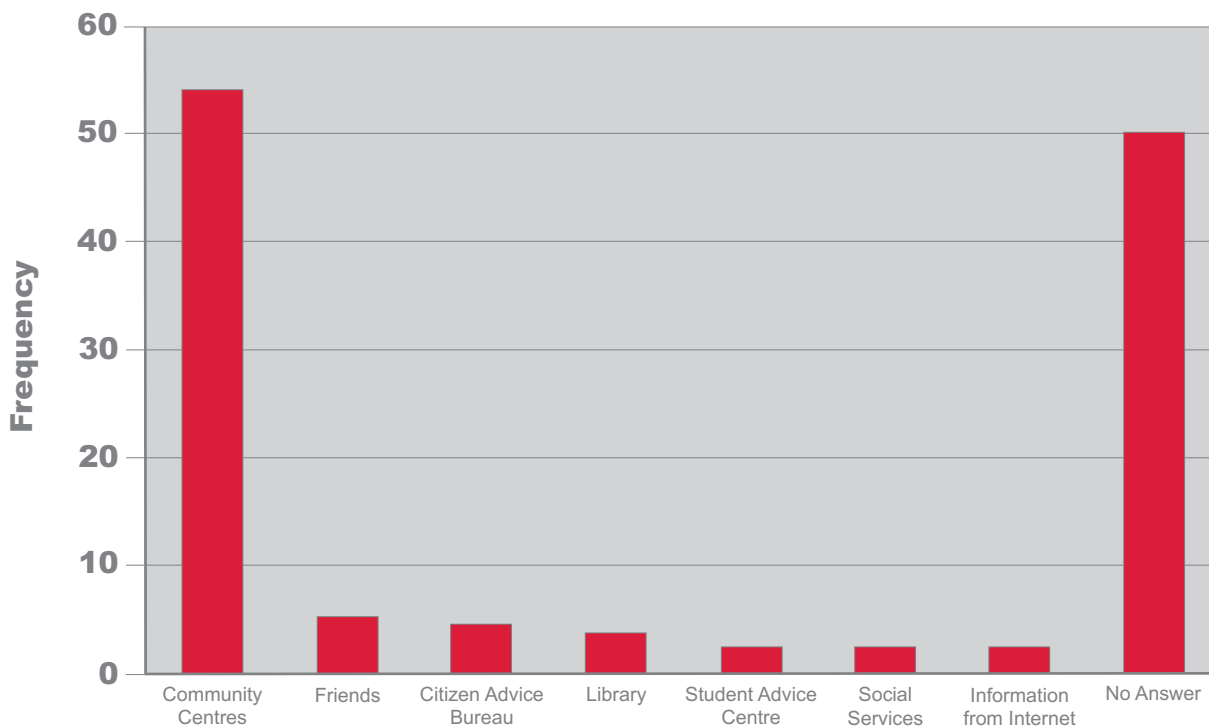


The above figures are based on estimates supplied by Community Leaders.

1.5.2 Places for Help, Advice and Support

Respondents were asked about where they go for help, advice, and support. Figure 15 shows that 44% of respondents go to community centres for help and advice. 4% seek help from friends, 3% go to CABx. 2% would get help from libraries, 2% from student centres, 1% from social services and 1% from the Internet. But, nearly as many as go to community centres gave no answer (41%).

Figure 15: Places for Help, Advice and Support



Respondents were also asked about Vietnamese community organisations they knew or were members of. A list of contacts for all the active communities that have been identified, both inside and outside London, has been prepared for IOM as a separate document. It must not, however, be viewed as exhaustive: there were several leads about other community organisations but it was not possible to establish contact with them. They should be followed up in the near future.

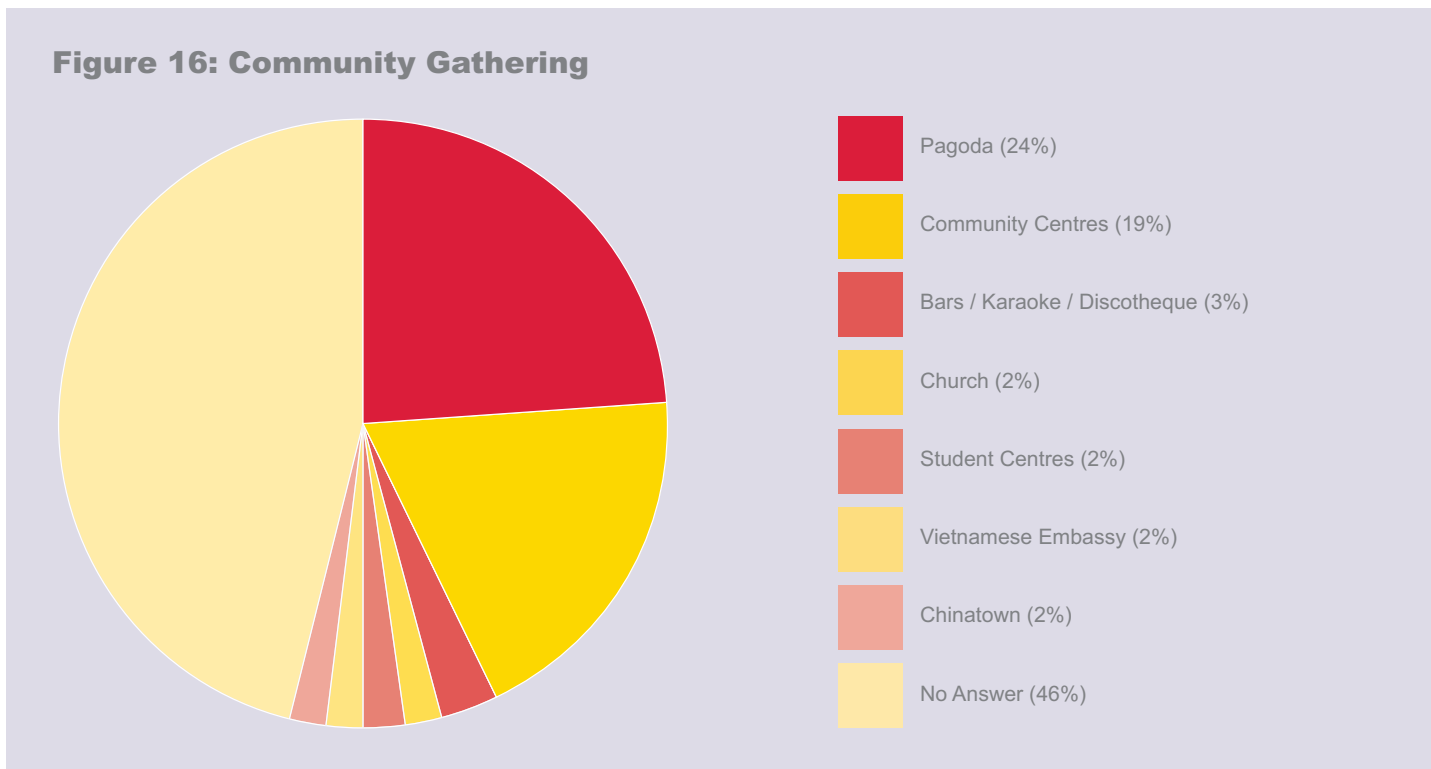
1.5.3 Religious Worship

When asked specifically about religion and places of worship, the results from in-depth interviews and questionnaires show that 58% of respondents go to pagodas and 13% go to church. 29% did not give an answer.

As these figures suggest, Vietnamese people are generally quite religious. Those from the south tend to be Catholic whereas those from the north have a higher proportion of Buddhists. The majority of irregular migrants and asylum seekers who have come to the UK in recent years are from the north and they are, therefore, more likely to be Buddhist. As explained in the next section, even if people do not go to places of worship on a regular basis, they are likely to attend on special days. Many Vietnamese Buddhists follow a lunar calendar that informs them when special days fall, as with many Christian holidays, such as Easter.

1.5.4 Community Gatherings

Vietnamese people in the UK often come together to celebrate special occasions and festivals in a variety of places, as illustrated in figure 16. 24% of respondents said they gather in pagodas, 19% said they gather in community centres and small percentages of respondents variously gather in places such as churches, student centres, the Vietnamese embassy and Chinatown (London or Manchester). The majority of respondents (46%) did not give answer, suggesting they do not gather in any of the public places specified as options in the questionnaire.



The following are some of the most important events that occur during the year. At these times there will be various locations where Vietnamese people come together to celebrate.

- Traditional Vietnamese New Year (known as Tet), which falls in late January or early February (subject to the lunar calendar).
- The Vietnamese National Day, falling on 2 September (this would not be celebrated by refugees from the South).
- Full Moon Festival, which falls in October (subject to the lunar calendar).
- Buddha's birthday. This falls in May. This is one of the major annual events in pagodas (subject to the lunar calendar).

Common Meeting Places for Vietnamese People:

- Community Organisation Events. Community groups are to be found in places where there is a sizeable Vietnamese community. Those in London tend to have members who live in the locality, whilst provincial groups may have members from across a wider area. Some community organisations with their own premises will have year round activities, but others have to hire premises. However, many community groups will have events where members and guests can gather and enjoy a New Year's party together, or a Full Moon Festival party and show, or other special events within the Vietnamese community. Such groups are often wary of strangers and it is important to build relations slowly.
- Pagodas. These are places of worship, particularly every 1st and 15th day of the lunar month, when larger numbers of people will attend. Pagodas will also host big events like Buddha's Birthday Anniversary or Traditional New Year. The most important Vietnamese pagoda in the UK is in Birmingham.
- Churches. Most Vietnamese people who are Christian are Catholic. The Church has Vietnamese Fathers in the UK and premises predominately attended by Vietnamese people. Attendance will at its largest during the Christian holidays of Christmas and Easter.
- Embassy. The Vietnamese Embassy organises a big party on New Year's Day and on Vietnam National Day for Vietnamese people who are living, working, and studying in the UK.

Occasional concerts starring musicians and singers from Vietnam are very popular with members of the community and would be a good place for IOM to advertise its voluntary return programme.

1.5.5 Conclusions and Recommendations on Community Outreach

- Advertising IOM voluntary return programmes through Vietnamese-run businesses (particularly shops) with posters and literature is one of the best ways to communicate with the primary target audience.
- Communications in Vietnamese are the best way to connect directly with the primary audience.
- Word of mouth is one of the most powerful means of communication amongst Vietnamese people.
- Community organisations are a potentially important medium for promoting voluntary return information.
- There is potential for IOM to have a presence at certain Vietnamese community events.
- There is considerable benefit in developing relations with religious organisations.
- Relations with the Vietnamese community and religious organisations need to be managed sensitively and gently, as they are based on trust and respect.



2 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The second section of the questionnaire was designed to gather baseline data from each respondent about age, gender and length of stay in the UK. The final section of the questionnaire aims to gather general information on:

- i) respondents' use of different types of transport;
- ii) how they communicate with relatives or friends in Vietnam; and
- iii) which local services they use in the UK.

This should be used by IOM to improve future information campaigns for the voluntary return programme.

2.1 GENDER

45 of the 119 respondents were men and 73 women. One person did not respond. The reasons for this gender imbalance are that many interviews took place in nail salons around London and questionnaires were sent to a number of nail saloons around the UK. In such establishments, most of the employees and clients are women. Respondents from pagodas were also predominantly female but respondents from universities and from community centres were both men and women.

2.2 AGE

Figure 18 shows the age of the respondents. The profile of the community leaders who were interviewed tended to be male and in the age range of 45–65 years. Irregular migrants were generally aged between 18 and 34, though some were older. It will be noted that there is a lack of responses from the older generation. This is partly because this generation was not able to complete the questionnaires easily, due to illiteracy or in some cases old age.

Figure 18: Age

Age group	Number of respondents	Percentage
Under 18	3	6%
18 -24	17	34%
25 – 34	23	46%
35 - 44	6	12%
45 - 54	1	2%
55 - 64	0	0%
65 and over	0	0%
No Answer	0	0%

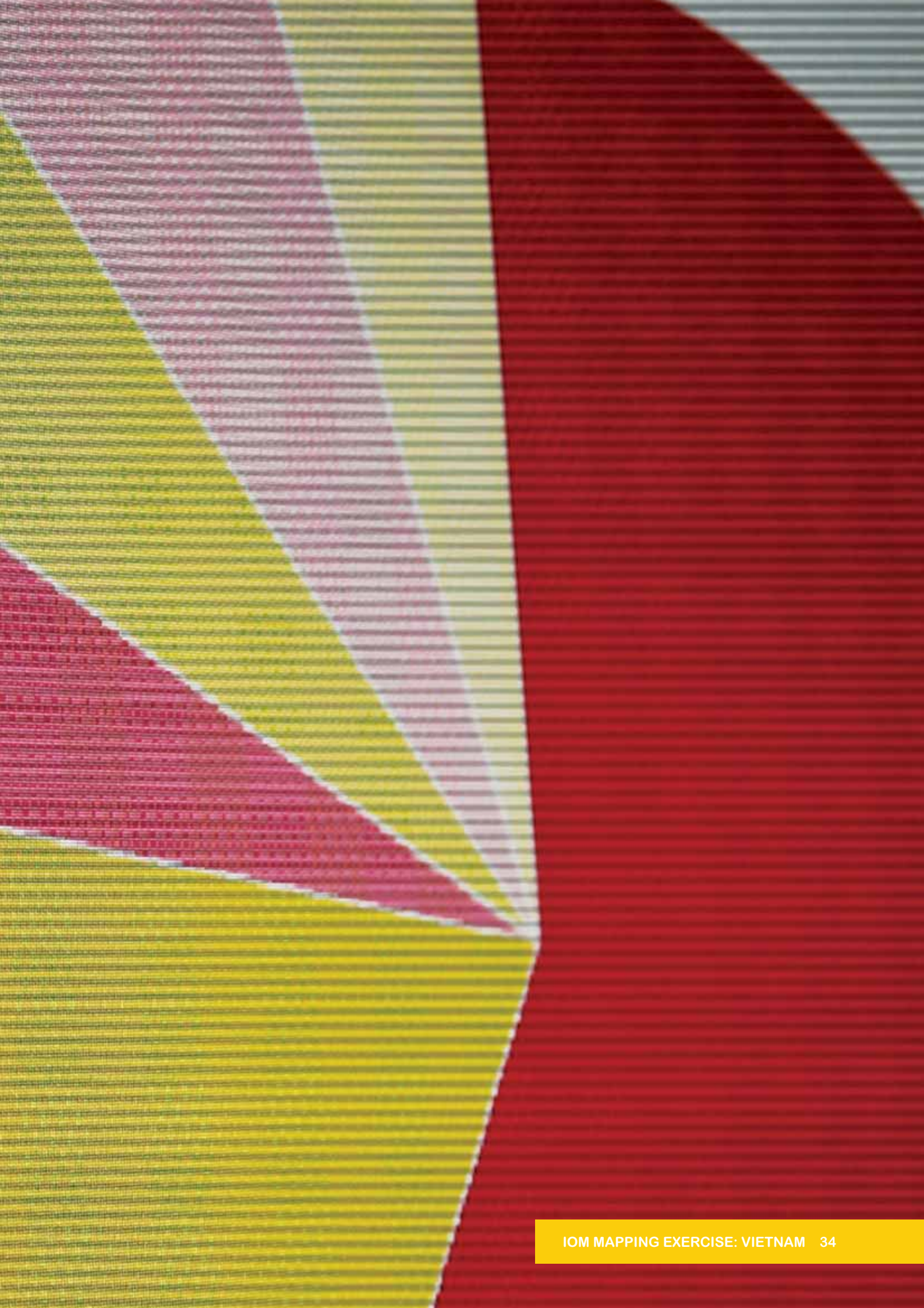
Total: 119

2.3 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE UK

Figure 19 shows that there is a balance between those living in the UK for 5 or more years and who have been in the country for less than 5 years.

Figure 19:

Length of residence in Britain	Number of respondents	Percentage
Less than 12 months	7	6%
1 years but less than 3	26	22%
3 years but less than 5	27	23%
5 years but less then 10 years	13	11%
10 years or more	45	37%
No answer	1	1%





3 CONSTRAINTS

3.1 LIMITATIONS IMPACTING ON THE MAPPING EXERCISE

The Vietnamese mapping exercise ran very well and the level of responses received from the community was sufficient to provide a good overview of the Vietnamese community in the United Kingdom, considering the time allotted to the task.

Possibly the area that would have benefited most greatly from additional time would have been the development of contacts outside London. As previously noted, many community groups in the regions are dormant or no longer exist but people who once led these groups will, in many cases, still be contactable and prove potentially useful contacts.

Within London, the opposite is true. There are very many community groups and it was simply impossible (and not desirable given the need to focus the study nationally) to speak to them all. It is likely that some potentially helpful people have not been identified.

It is to be noted that a proportion of respondents (particularly those working in the community or without a legal basis to stay) were initially very reluctant to participate in this exercise. It often took considerable time and conversation to persuade them. Even then, they would often leave certain questions unanswered, or say they were not relevant. This is perhaps more of a challenge than a constraint but Vietnamese people are, by character, generally cautious of outsiders and what their motives might be. Access to the community by a non-Vietnamese would have been an even more challenging process.

3.2 DISPERSED COMMUNITIES

A strength of the Vietnamese people is their adaptability to different circumstances. The success of nail salon businesses, and to a lesser extent employment opportunities in the catering business, have seen the community spread itself across the UK. As noted, many community organisations have ceased to meet and, without the focal point of a community centre, it is difficult to reach Vietnamese people who live in relative isolation from the heart of their community. It was possible to make individual contacts with a range of regionally-located Vietnamese for the purpose of this exercise but any follow-up activity may find it more difficult to reach all Vietnamese people who live in provincial locations.

3.3 COMMUNITY DIVISIONS

Two community leaders, who were from the South and fierce critics of the Government of Vietnam, were particularly suspicious. They scrutinised the questionnaire for any political questions, and then seemed very reluctant to help. This type of barrier could have been overcome if there had been more time to develop a relationship of trust. This situation is representative of the wider division and mistrust that exists between Vietnamese from the north and the south. In many cases, people from one region will have little or no contact with people from the other. Even if they do, the relationship (except where there are cross-region family ties) may not be easy. Whilst more of the IOM target group will be from the north, it is important to remember that efforts must be made to target both northerners and southerners with future campaigns. Messages spread efficiently within the Vietnamese community but they may not easily cross between the northern and southern groups.

3.4 RECEPTIVENESS TO THE IOM MESSAGE

In general, there was considerable interest in IOM's voluntary return programme from people the consultant met during the exercise. Only a small minority of the people interviewed in-depth said they knew about IOM. Even then, it was usually because IOM had assisted them in coming to the UK some years previously. Some communities were quite interested in having presentations or additional information about the work of IOM.

One group that did have an awareness of IOM's voluntary return programme were people who are (or had previously been) in the asylum system. These people had received information from the Home Office but this did not necessarily provide a clear idea of IOM's voluntary return programme.

There was some hostility from a small minority, based upon IOM's reputation. There are rumours within some sections of the community that Vietnamese people returning with IOM's help have not received the support packages they were promised. As an extreme example, one supermarket owner on Mare Street, Hackney, said that, if he put an IOM poster in his window, it would be smashed, such is the reputation of IOM. During a discussion of IOM in one nail bar in Deptford, a similar account of dissatisfied returnees was told.

3.5 RECEPTIVENESS TO RETURN

Many young Vietnamese come to the United Kingdom primarily for economic reasons. Whether they apply for asylum or seek to remain illegally, their family will have often made a significant financial sacrifice to send them overseas. For those who travel to the United Kingdom by illegal means the current price is (as previously noted) £12,500. Many families are in considerable debt but make the sacrifice with the expectation that the outlay will bring future financial benefit.

Vietnamese people who are in the United Kingdom will want to repay any debt and also provide for a better life for themselves and their families. Given the amount of money many must spend to travel here, they will be unlikely to consider voluntary return until they have made the experience a success; even if the overall experience has been disappointing. Returning to Vietnam before the debt has been cleared, and they have savings to show for their time away, would be humiliating for themselves and their families. In some cases it could be potentially dangerous if criminal elements are left short of money as a result.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, this exercise has highlighted many potentially beneficial opportunities to engage the Vietnamese community about IOM's voluntary return programmes, and reach the target audience by both direct and indirect means. Some ideas may need further research or activity to make them fully effective but many initiatives can be informed by the results of this exercise. This chapter is divided into five sections. The first three build on the recommendations contained in the body of the report, which are specific to the media, community outreach and marketing, informed by the habits of respondents. The final two sections look, first, at some broader issues IOM should consider and, secondly, at what may be called "etiquette" in engaging with the Vietnamese community.

4.1 MEDIA SPECIFIC

Media specific recommendations are briefly summarised in section 1.2.8. This section seeks to develop some of this thinking.

- Advertising in Vietnamese newspapers to target the tiny proportion of their readership who live in the United Kingdom does not seem economic. Nevertheless, *An Ninh The Gioi* is read by more than one third of all respondents. Targeting the British-based readership must therefore be attractive. One possibility is to identify and negotiate with the exporter of these papers to the United Kingdom (or possibly the vendors) and seek agreement to place IOM material in the newspapers exported for sale in the United Kingdom. This could prove a simple and relatively cost effective way of circulating the IOM message.
- Promoting IOM voluntary return information through *Tri Thuc Viet* is a potentially attractive possibility. This British-produced magazine is distributed to other countries in Europe with a Vietnamese population. An article might perhaps be offered, which would be representative of IOM's work on voluntary return in the European countries where it is circulated. IOM should not be deterred by the superficially low readership. The references to this type of publication in the media section were probably misleading. During the course of the exercise it became clear that these communications are well read. Though they do not go to the target audience directly, readers will, in many cases, know some potential beneficiaries personally but will probably not know about the IOM schemes. This would be a very cost effective method of promoting the voluntary return programmes since the message would be passed on orally.
- IOM should consider an advertisement on the Vietnamese television channel, *VTV4*. Many irregular migrant Vietnamese in the United Kingdom watch this channel, though it is also watched in Vietnam and in many other countries. It is perhaps a good idea to let as many Vietnamese people as possible know about IOM's programmes. They will let family, friends and whoever is living illegally in the UK know. Also, anyone who is cherishing the hope of coming to the UK through trafficking would learn about the difficult life of many who do. It may influence their decision about coming to the UK illegally. There may be a concern that such publicity in Vietnam may encourage people to come to the UK to get the grant from IOM but the cost of coming to the UK illegally is much more than any grant that may be available.

- *BBC Vietnam* may also offer an opportunity to publicise IOM's work, although the message would again reach people in Vietnam and other countries beside the UK. The channel might be interested in a news article on IOM or a discussion on one of its shows.

4.2 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Engaging community groups will, in the majority of cases, provide a secondary route to the core target group that may qualify for voluntary return programmes. Nevertheless, most Vietnamese people will have either a relative or a friend who is, or knows somebody who is, in the UK without permission. Such is the oral tradition of Vietnamese society that messages channelled through community organisations, particularly those that include North Vietnamese people, will quickly reach the primary target group.

- The Vietnamese community in the UK is currently not well informed of IOM programmes. IOM should prioritise publicity aimed at increasing awareness about its programmes within the Vietnamese community. Given the complexity of the situation, IOM should carefully select the most effective and efficient means to achieve that aim. It should be noted that some groups expressed interest in presentations about the voluntary return programmes. IOM should pursue this interest, as well as the offers to put posters and leaflets in community centres. IOM should seek to expand the network where such materials may be left.
- Whilst irregular migrants and people who seek asylum are unlikely to attend community groups themselves, most will have family members who are already established in the UK and active in such groups. Many groups particularly cater for the older generation who, like recent arrivals, prefer oral communication. They are an excellent base from which to spread information about the work of IOM.
- IOM should liaise with the main community representatives identified during the mapping exercise to implement outreach activities. Some interest in presentations on voluntary return work was identified during the mapping exercise. They should also stay in touch with community information about forthcoming events. However, it should not be assumed at all that the two-month mapping exercise has identified all potential multipliers who could prove useful community contacts in the future.
- Outreach work in the regions is particularly important, as the Vietnamese community has scattered considerably with the success of nail salons. People who ran community groups can still be useful contacts and knowledgeable about the community in their region, even if the groups have ceased to meet. It may also be the case that the community cannot organise events due to a lack of funds to hire premises. IOM may be able to assist in finding a sponsor.
- IOM should also continue to produce leaflets, and start to produce posters, in Vietnamese. IOM should make them more widely available. It appears that Vietnamese is very much the preferred language for any information. Many irregular migrants cannot read English at all.
- Most importantly, IOM must engage with religious organisations to put up posters and send out leaflets. IOM should possibly be aware of forthcoming special events, although being present at certain religious events may be sensitive, and potentially counter-productive.

4.3 WIDER MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

Apart from the media, there are many routes of communication open to IOM.

- IOM should respond to the suggestion of respondents and advertise in shops that sell Vietnamese goods. A full list of shops that were visited during this exercise has been provided in IOM's contacts list. Most shops and businesses, and many community groups, are happy to assist in raising awareness of voluntary return programmes. Many might not charge to display posters and some may distribute leaflets. However, there are some exceptions (see section 3.3 above).

- IOM should investigate advertising on strategically selected buses and at bus stops in areas where high concentrations of Vietnamese irregular migrants are known to live. It is worth noting that, according to community representatives, few irregular migrants will use trains, due to the language barrier.
- IOM should consider advertising on phone cards. It must, however, be recognised that favoured suppliers change frequently. This is because the cost of calling Vietnam is still relatively high and the quality of line unreliable. There is therefore a risk that any substantial outlay to advertise on a card could be undermined by a different supplier offering a better deal or service. Any contract IOM has with a service provider will need some safeguards.
- Capitalising on the link between the nail salon businesses and the Vietnamese community seems to be an area of great potential. This is a route to Vietnamese people across the UK. Possibilities might include asking suppliers to distribute leaflets (one visited during the exercise was positive about the idea). Additionally, it is may be possible to advertise in a trade magazine.

4.4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The following is a summary of some other general considerations intended to enable IOM to maintain its links within the Vietnamese community in promoting voluntary return programmes and a reminder of some key points to remember in delivering a successful marketing strategy.

- Word of mouth is the most common way the majority of IOM's primary target audience learn of new information.
- Research has revealed that a small proportion of Vietnamese talk very negatively about the work of IOM and spread stories of people who returned on an voluntary return programme but did not receive money that was promised. It is important that IOM take steps to dispel such stories quickly. Perhaps some literature that offers specific stories of Vietnamese people who returned home successfully would be helpful.
- If certain ideas in this report are taken forward the result will be to promote voluntary return programmes to a secondary audience in the UK: a Europe- wide audience or an audience predominately in Vietnam. All can bring benefit but the messages that are communicated need to be specially tailored.

4.5 VIETNAMESE ETIQUETTE

The following points aim to provide additional background that is intended to complement the points raised earlier in the report but which are essential to successful marketing and outreach.

- It is essential to remember that Vietnamese people do not easily trust strangers, even other Vietnamese. To get co-operation with the community, or with the business owners, it is necessary to invest time and build a relationship of trust.
- It is essential to bear in mind sensitivities between the north and the south of Vietnam and the negative opinion some people have of the Vietnamese Government.
- Respect for Vietnamese ceremonies is essential. The permission of the chief monk or community leader must be sought and their advice taken about the best way to promote IOM programmes when targeting any event. Upsetting such people can easily upset the wider community.

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