



Project Open Opportunity



**Creating A Future Of Possibilities
In The Irish Media.**



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Foreword

Tommy Hamzat

This paper has been compiled by Tommy Hamzat, who is an 19-year-old second-year BA Multimedia student at Dublin City University (DCU).

Tommy is the founder of Black Irish Media, an Initiative that campaigns for greater access to media careers for recruits from a wider perspective than the existing narrow focus of the current middle-class grouping. The main aim of this initiative is to enable people from all walks of life to be able to both enjoy and engage with elements of the media without being constrained by their economic background or their education status.

Tommy has always strived to improve the life of others. At school he was a Prefect and Student Council member and is currently an Access Ambassador at DCU. Growing up in Ireland, Hamzat has long been aware of the lack of diversity in the Irish media and since beginning his studies, the lack of access to key advancement programs such as internships and apprenticeships also became clear. The Death of actor Chadwick Boseman in August, 2020 reminded Tommy that diversity and representation changes lives and has the power to inspire people. This event combined with Tommy's drive to help others prompted him to push for improvements to the media by devising the access scheme detailed in this paper.



Introduction

While the latest census figures available (2016) show that Ireland has a significant ethnic minority population in the region of 250,000 people, the long-simmering issue of multiculturalism and racial equality/justice in Ireland has only been brought into focus by the May, 2020 murder of George Floyd in the United States of America and the awakening of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in Ireland.

This document outlines the factors influencing and effected by lack of ethnic minority representation both on screen and in content production and recommends a strategy and tactics to address the issue. The Irish Media Diversity Scheme (IMDS), detailed in this document, is intended as an initiative to streamline and speed the fulfilling of commitments made in RTÉ's Diversity and Inclusion Charter, first published in 2018. Ethnic minorities in Ireland include those with diverse heritages including Traveller, Asian, South Asian, African, Caribbean, Eastern European and others. While all of these groups are marginalized by lack of representation, positive portrayals and production team inclusion, this paper mainly focuses on the representation of ethnic minority communities.



Zak Moradi on the "Becoming Irish" Series



Lawson Mpame in the BLM Protest Dublin

Ethnic minorities in Ireland include those with diverse heritages including Traveller, Asian, South Asian, African, Caribbean, Eastern European and others. While all these groups are marginalized by lack of representation, positive portrayals and production team inclusion, this paper mainly focuses on the representation of ethnic minority communities.

Current TV landscape

Irish TV has shown limited openness to embracing other cultures and having those cultures add to Ireland's richness by featuring and celebrating figures with mixed heritage such as Ruth Negga, Paul McGrath, Sean Og and Setanta Ó hAilpín, Seán Munsanje and Samantha Mumba. RTE's *Fair City* soap opera has featured a Brazilian character and Lee Chin, the GAA player with Chinese heritage has been featured regularly down to his performance in GAA and as captain of the Wexford County team. At the time of writing (Oct, 2020) The only black faces on Irish TV programming are Zainab Boladale, the *Nationwide* reporter; Demi Isaac Oviawe, the actor seen in *Young Offenders* and *Dancing with the Stars*; the Adenuga family from *Gogglebox* (seasons 1-4) and Canaan, Jane and Pam from Uganda who feature in season 5.





SECTION 1
IRISH MEDIA DIVERSITY SCHEME

Irish Media Diversity Scheme

What is the Aim of this Scheme?

Intended as part of a solution to the lack of ethnic minority representation, rather than 'commenting from the sidelines', the Irish Media Diversity Scheme (IMDS) has been devised as an initiative to enable greater opportunities for people of diverse and marginalized backgrounds to enter and progress in broadcast media.

The IMDS focuses on the production roles 'behind the camera' that act as creators, shapers and gatekeepers of broadcast content/output and is intended to operate alongside advances in ethnic minority representation in front of the camera.

The IMDS road-map includes recommendations for workshops in Sound, Audio, Presenting, Scripting and other production areas and features a framework for internships, work experience programmes, talent showcase days, Apprenticeships and Outreach programmes.



Irish Media Diversity Scheme

Here are are examples of a successful programs that allows candidates from all backgrounds to experience all aspects of the media.

- Work Experience-programs
- Talent Days
- Apprenticeships
- Outreach Programs

This program allows for a diverse set of candidates to be represented in the media as they get to experience it first hand.

The main objective is to produce new young talent as well as giving people the opportunity to get some experience in the media.

By using the initiatives detailed in this paper it will allow for greater representation as well as opportunity for young talent who have an interest in the media or are looking for a career in it.

These initiatives have been successfully carried out in companies such as Channel 4,BBC,ITV and Sky and has led to brilliant output from candidates.

We need more programs like this in the-Irish Media if diversity targets are to be met

Paid Internships



What Would This Include?

This scheme focuses on students in third-level education and is aimed at preparing candidates for the world of the media and equipping them with the essential skills needed to succeed in a media career. It would also provide valuable networking opportunities for future success in the industry.

- The intensive six-month work programme would see interns splitting the working week into three days TV and two-day radio to give experience across both main broadcast platforms.
- Skills covered include audio recording and editing for radio writing, recording, and editing video reports/content; photography and graphic design as well as training in scriptwriting and pitching and financing (producing) content.
- This also presents broadcast producers and companies with streamlined access to a welcome pipeline of diverse talent that would bring in innovative ways for working and exciting new content.



When?

To enable the greatest access to the scheme, this element of IMDS is timed to start around May at the end of the final semester of the year.

How Would The Application Process Work?

The scheme would be publicized through a PR push including social media posts, interfacing with relevant college programmes and university societies, careers guidance officers and presenter reads on 2FM. Candidates would apply for the scheme by completing an online form. The form would be structured to access the candidate's interest in a media career, motivations, existing skills, and areas of related interest. Shortlisted candidates would then be interviewed to assess suitability for the programme.



Outreach Programs



What Would this include?

This element of IMDS is aimed at giving access to transition year and third-year students from marginalized groups (ethnic minorities) and disadvantaged areas (DEIS schools), who would bring new perspectives to the media industry, but have little knowledge of the scope of roles available due to a lack of experience.

- Working in partnership with bodies similar to the DCU Access service, that interfaces with disadvantaged schools, this activity would invite groups of participants to meet-and-greets that involve studio tours and Q&A sessions with a scope of media executives including journalists, presenters, researchers, producers, camera and sound operatives, runners etc



When?

This would operate throughout the year depending on production schedules, with interested school groups applying through an Online booking system on media company websites.

How would it work?

- Student groups would be given outline instruction before conducting a series of hands-on challenges such as recording short (news) story that would then be branded with digital on-screen graphics and other generic elements.
- Participants would also receive a goody bag and certificate of the day.
- This would operate throughout the year depending on production schedules, with interested school groups applying through an Online booking system on media company websites.

Benefits Of This

1. **Builds Student confidence.**
2. **Builds connections with DEIS Schools.**
3. **Gives Students an idea of how its like to work in the media.**
4. **Creates a strong interest for students to work in the media.**



Apprenticeships

What Would this include?

This is a two-year programme for aspiring talent that want to get into the media, but aren't able to access college/university. Open accessibility and social mobility will be delivered by candidates benefiting from a salary restricted to a living wage level and expenses as necessary for them to complete the programme.



When?

Applications would open in the summer after the end of the final leaving certificate examinations. However, allocation of places should not be dependent on expected points, but more on an enthusiasm and passion for a media career as demonstrated in an interview.

How would it work?

- The initiative would feature a high element of hands-on training across the range of media/broadcasting skills with candidates working alongside talented reporters, producers, camera crews, gallery staff and researchers.
- This practical experience would be coupled with formal classroom learning about the fundamentals of media eg. the legal framework, guidelines, libel/defamation, ethics etc.
- This classroom element would be conducted by subject specialists drawn from the host organization's existing team, or would involve partnering with an appropriate education institute (with the necessary expertise)



Work Experience Programs



What Would this include?

The Work Experience program would be a 1-month scheme that would be targeted at people who would want to get an idea of what area of the media they would like to get in or ideally they could pick an area they are interested in and get to spend a month in that area.

- For Example, the candidate can decide if they want to get experience in TV presenting so they would get to work in that area by shooting and producing with the news team and on sets of shows. Another example would be if the candidate had an interest in Radio and Audio they would get experience in Audio Hardware and software as well as getting familiar with using a Radio setup and recording and producing podcasts.



When?

This would run around June giving candidates time to do research before doing the application process.

How would it work?

- This would be split into 2 sections one for students and one for adults and depending on its success it can be expanded. Candidates will be put through an application process than onto a job like an interview to assess their successes. Applicants would choose an area they would like to get experience in such as Audio Video or TV.
- Depending on their choice they will be put in a different area so if the person picked audio they would get work experience in the radio and audio section.
- A candidate interested in TV can get experience in presenting the news, editing their own footage, and even doing some scriptwriting. The whole point of this scheme is to familiarize people with the inner workings of the media and give them a taste of the potential career they could have in the organization of their choice.



Talent Days



What Would this include?

This is a week-long schedule of meetings between students on media-related courses and existing researchers, producers, presenters and camera, sound, and other technical executives.

Schedule	
9 to 10 a.m.	
Coffee Talk: Women in Media	[P]
10:10 to 11:45 a.m.	
Inside the Agency: Advertising	[P]
Communication Research and Policy in Health, Science, Technology and Climate	[P]
Sports Media	[P]
Careers in Journalism	[P]
Career Chats	[P]
Noon-1 p.m.	
How to Launch a Podcast	[P]
Career Chats	[P]
2:30 to 3 p.m.	
Visit from the Inside: Screen Production for Advertising, Brands and more	[P]
Traditional Graduate Student from Media into Science after B2	[P]



When?

The meetings are timed for the start of the year - ahead of the CAO early registration (reduced fee) deadline which is typically around 20 January. This will enable informed higher study choices to be made to facilitate a career in the media.

How would it work?

- The aim would be to let students in for a day to meet producers and presenters for activities like motivational talks and advice seminars on working in the Irish media as-well-as a Q and A session so students would be able to ask any questions that they have about getting into the media and making their mind up on what career choice suits them most.
- This would allow for students to get in contact and network themselves with producers and presenters in the future for potential projects.
- The benefit of this is that it allows for Media Companies to gain access to a pool of fresh diverse talent for new shows and ideas as-well-as improving diversity and representation on screen.



“There has been huge activity from RTÉ in this space [Diversity & Inclusion] – LGBTQI, women’s rights, and so on – both inside and outside,” she adds “We have to keep pushing ahead on this, acting like a leader and being a leader. I’m quite happy that in 2019 RTÉ has really stepped up to the plate.”

- Dee Forbes, 2018 (<https://www.ibc.org/interview-dee-forbes-RTÉ/4308.article>)

- As the national broadcaster, RTÉ has taken a leadership stance in respect to addressing D&I concerns including the lack of ethnic minority representation on screen and in content creation. The D&I charter published in 2018 includes the following commitments relating to ethnic minorities:

- Represent and reflect the voice and diversity of Ireland by... both on and off air, [mirroring] the nation’s diversity (by gender, Irish/non-Irish ethnicity, different ability and sexual orientation). By doing this, we commit to ensuring our audiences recognize themselves in us...

Our representation goals are to have 5% rising to a minimum of 10% of persons from a non-Irish background.

- The detail of this charges the HR team with creating/expanding partnerships for placements from a broad range of institutions (such as the National Film School at IADT, DCU School of Journalism, NUIG’s Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, DEIS schools etc) to be actioned between 2019-2022

- Engage and educate our workforce in what D&I means to the organization and encourage an active role in creating a diverse and inclusive environment

- Fully integrate D&I into our workplace policies and practices

- Since 2019, HR has been responsible for revising the recruitment and selection strategy (including targets for diverse candidate slates and interview panels)

- We will act as a leader in championing D&I across Ireland and in promoting strategies, including a focus on social mobility, to address inequities of access, representation and development in the creative and media industries... The charter includes the following detail for this commitment:

- Open RTÉ’s campus to provide learning opportunities through placements and secondment via third-party partnerships across educational, social and community linkages (including increased connections to talented DEIS school students).

- Formalize a programme for graduates and non- graduates from under-represented groups per year and support them through sponsorship and mentoring.

- Use the New Voices initiative to get more diversity on to newsroom/journalist panels.

- Implement supplier diversity quotas (for work with extras, production runners etc).

As it is not clear, from the author's viewpoint and publicly available information, what progress to date has been made in fulfilling these commitments, the Irish Media Diversity Scheme (IMDS) has been devised to aid with achieving these commitments, which are both ambitious and much-needed.





SECTION 2

MEDIA INITIATIVES

Amazing opportunities to kick-start your career with Channel 4!



2016 is the Year of Disability at Channel 4. It's the year when we will broadcast the Paralympic Games in HD and provide more on- and off-screen opportunities for people with disabilities on our biggest shows and with our biggest suppliers.

Alongside this, we have increased 10% of places on our Apprenticeship and Work Experience programmes to support people with disabilities to get into.



Applications are now open for the ITV Insight Programme

'Dream big, sparkle more, shine bright' this New Year



Closing 14th January 2017



Channel 4 Diversity Production Training Scheme

Nations and Regions

Up to 3 months paid placements in Bristol and Cardiff

Think working in television isn't for you? If Sandy and Sandra cracked it, so could you. Channel 4 is launching a new scheme based in Bristol and Cardiff and we're looking for people we don't see enough of on TV - those from a BAME or a socially disadvantaged background or people with disabilities.

So if you want to work behind the scenes, we're offering three month contracts with some of the best.

everything runs smoothly - the star organized co-ordinators. And we have a great training programme to go alongside it, so you'll be well prepared for continuing your career in the industry.

If you've been thinking television isn't for you - think again.

Go to channel4.com/diversityproduction to apply.

Channel 4 Apprenticeship Programme

Apply by 21 August 2016



4 Talent

C4 Apprenticeship Pop Ups

Applications open!



4 Talent

Could you be the next ITN Media Apprentice?



To Apply:
Produce a video of up to 3 minutes that demonstrates your creativity and technical ability.

It should give us a flavour of your best personal qualities and your passions. We want something that will tell us about you!

Send your completed video to: tracey.evans@bigcreative.education

Deadline:
Midday on the 27th April



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ITV News announces new youth focused offering: The Rundown

Published: Thu 19 Sep 2016







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Quay House, BBC MediaCityUK,
Salford

40-1000 hours — \$8,000/year \$4,000 less per year

Control

It won't make the evening right. At the toll they keep us below. The ashens open like September 24.



"I had always enjoyed the design and new features, so I looked for it in a career - which led me to U

5075-45, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667,



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to work in such a field.
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Communicate. For more information,
contact the National Bereavement
Council, 1140 Ave. 2040.

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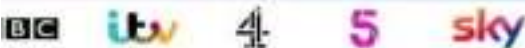




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'Starting Out in the Screen Industry' Mentoring Programme





SECTION 3
BENEFITS OF SHOWING ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE MEDIA
GROWING VIEWERSHIP
DIVERSITY PROBLEM
POC IN THE IRISH MEDIA

Benefits of showing ethnic minorities in Irish TV programming

As well as combating racism by educating against ignorance, ethnic minority representation on Irish TV has other specific benefits for these marginalized communities. TV’s position to both reflect and shape society sees it ideally placed to correct and balance negative attitudes to Ireland's multiculturalism.

Setting aspirational goals

The phrase “You cannot be what you cannot see” perfectly embodies TV’s far-reaching positive impact on ethnic minority children’s aspirations and achievements.

One of the many reasons why Barack Obama’s Presidency of the United States was so significant to ethnic minorities around the world was setting the example that they too could aspire to those heights. The movie *Hidden figures* was widely lauded for portraying minorities (African-American women) in high positions and central to the historically significant story.

The counter to this is the largely US-imported stereotypes of drug dealers, pimps and other criminals – all these characterizations featured in the RTÉ drama *Taken Down* - , or as slaves/servants in lavish costumed dramas built on the ‘saviour’ trope and often win accolades for the white actors eg. *Gone with the wind* and *12 years a slave*. Just as limiting is the parade of sports stars that perpetuate the stereotype of black people only being good athletes, which sits alongside the view that blacks are good at singing and dancing.



Rotimi Adebare The First Black Mayor In Ireland

Societal Impacts

In addition to ethnic minority immigrants, former refugees/asylum seekers etc Ireland is home to second-generation minorities who are bona fide Irish citizens. These people have been born in the state and grown up going to Irish schools, learning Irish, doing GAA sports and speaking with Irish accents. With all of this in mind, it is still common for the following exchange to occur:

White Irish: “Where are you from?”
2nd-gen ethnic minority: Ireland
White Irish: “Yes, but where are you really from?”

While it is rarely delivered with any intended malice, it is demeaning on multiple levels, with no comprehension of its offensive impact. It is only through the public education role that regular ethnic minorities in mainstream programming can play, that white Irish people will understand this.

Irish TV has a role to play in dispelling negativity around Ireland's shifting societal makeup by addressing any ignorance and showing integration as a positive force by normalising ethnic minorities in the state through featuring them on TV with greater frequency and ideally in an on-going basis.

(Eastenders, Coronation Street and Emmerdale) and even in The Archers on radio. These are just a snapshot of the roles that ethnic minority children/families in the UK can see and identify with. This was also proven by the everlasting impact that the actor Chadwick Boseman left from his role in Black Panther which was one of the first black heroes in the MCU. "It excited particularly young people - anybody who went to the early screenings felt the excitement and the interaction between audiences and what was happening on the screen," Kunle Olulode, director of BAME advocacy group Voice4Change, told Sky News. "The £1.3bn the film took speaks volumes - and his [Boseman's] performance electrifies that film," says Mr Olulode.

Kristen Mate Maher 2018 Rose Of Tralee Winner



Chadwick Boseman on the Cover of TIME



Growing Viewership Figures

Population Usually Resident and Present in the State 2011 to 2016 (Number) by Ethnic or Cultural Background (Both sexes, All ages)	
White Irish	3,854,226
White Irish Traveller	30,987
Any other White background	446,727
Black or Black Irish - African	57,850
Black or Black Irish - any other Black background	6,789
Asian or Asian Irish - Chinese	19,447
Asian or Asian Irish - any other Asian background	79,273
Other including mixed background	70,603
<i>*Excludes census responses for 'Non stated' ethnicity</i>	

Source: CSO (Census Year 2016)

The numbers for the ethnic minority audience (from the latest available census) show that this audience segment is close to a quarter million at 233,962, or a significant 5.14% of the total population, it should be remembered that the public service commitment does not specify numerical criteria regarding representation as a barrier to representation on screen.

With almost a quarter million non-white people in Ireland, there is justified commercial reasoning for investment in making programming more attractive to ethnic minority audiences. Including any other white backgrounds and white Irish Traveller as other minorities increases takes the numbers to a figure approaching three-quarters of a million.

Competition

"The range of media, entertainment and information services available to Irish audiences is now virtually limitless. Audiences are fragmenting and competition for audiences and revenue is more intense than ever... Business models which have for many years underpinned the provision of quality media services are being challenged everywhere. Audiences are fragmenting and competition for audiences and revenue is more intense than ever."

- Public value in the digital age. RTÉ Public Service Statement 2015

At a time when RTE operates in cultural and business environments that see greater market fragmentation and growing competition for 'eyeballs', Sky TV subscriptions give access to UK TV with mainstream programming that features ethnic minority people in a way that is not remarkable. Attraction to UK output deprives RTE of viewership which is an issue that should be addressed.



ទុំប៊ុំឆ័យ



Lack of diversity in Irish broadcasting

At the time of this report, the Irish broadcasting only has six POC in presenting roles. Seán Munsanje was Irish TV 3's first Black presenter. He featured on TV3 (bought by Virgin Media) as a presenter on Xpose for one year between 2009-2010. Virgin Media only features one POC presenter, Nadine Reid on the Six O Clock Show.

Zainab Boladale is RTE's first female Black presenter. She started as a reporter on RTE's News2day in 2017 and has since progressed to be a regular presenter on Nationwide. In the three years since Boladale appeared on-screen, there have been no other POC presenters on RTE. Kevin Sharkey is the first Black Male Presenter on the RTE in 1986 for the show Megamix.



Zainab Boladale on News2Day



Kevin Sharkey on Megamix



Seán Munsanje

Radio

Irish radio features four POC presenters: Seán Munsanje, FM104; Tara Stewart, RTE 2FM; Ola Majekodunmi on Raidió Na Life and Beat102/103's Trishauna Archer. Given the audio nature of the medium, radio can call on an element of being 'colour blind' with the race of its presenters not being an issue. However, this is not the case when lack of diversity in the production team impacts the topics discussed and the guests featured on air.



POC In The Irish Media

Kevin Sharkey in 1985



Ola Majekodunmi 2014



Seán Munsanje 2009



Kamal Ibrahim 2013



Liz Bonnin 2008



Tara Stewart 2015



Dil Wickremasinghe 2017



Zainab Boladale 2017

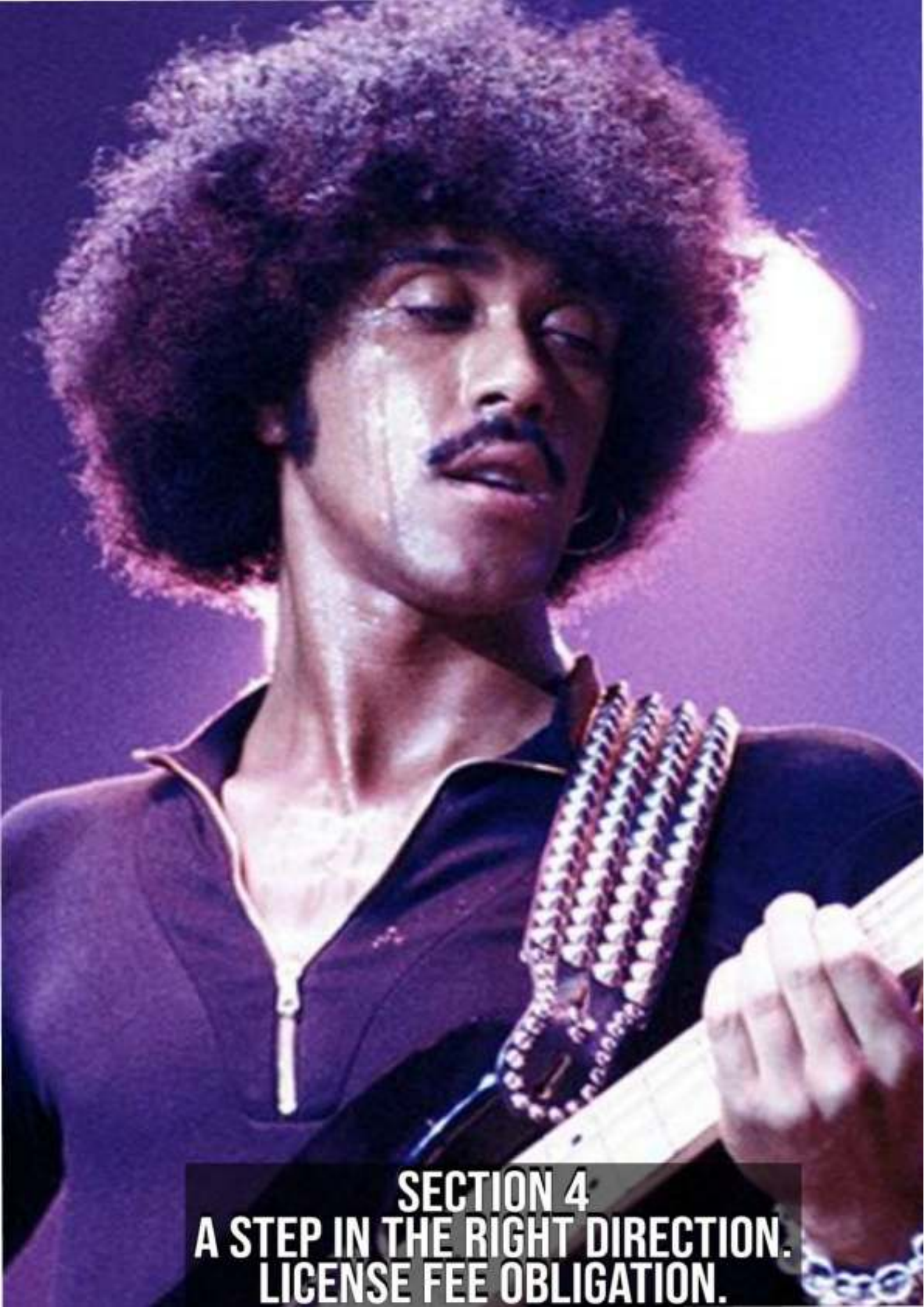


Nadine Reid 2018



Bazil Ashmawy 2008





SECTION 4
A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
LICENSE FEE OBLIGATION.

THE IRISH TIMES

7-day TV
& Radio

Saturday, July 4, 2020

Black Irish lives

- Ruth Negga talks to Emma Dabiri
- Faces of the future
- 'But where are you really from?'

INSIDE
Ticket



SECTION FOUR

The media has a role to play in dispelling negativity around Ireland's shifting societal makeup by addressing any ignorance and showing integration as a positive force by normalizing ethnic minorities in the state through featuring them with greater frequency and ideally in an on-going basis. Irish media embraced the national 'conversation' that has been taking place following the murder of George Floyd and the global surge of support for BLM. The shifting zeitgeist and greater awareness of racism in Ireland and lack of ethnic minority representation has seen a number of steps in the right direction across the media.

A step in the right direction

It has to be acknowledged that RTÉ brought the weight of its credibility and status as the national broadcaster to joining the conversation about race in Ireland. RTÉ TV's airing of the New Gaels documentary was a hit with the public and received universal praise for sharing the harrowing stories of different athletes navigating their lives in Ireland with challenges such as racism and discrimination.

RTÉ is also praised for its enlightening interview with Denise Chaila on the Late Late show. This strongly resonated with the public as they praised her braveness in the face of racism and her singing talent. Further content in the New Gaels format should cover the stories of more people of different heritages and backgrounds. Covering stories in health, politics or other areas away from the music and sport would help with not perpetuating the stereotypes of minorities only being good at sports/singing/dancing.

Virgin Media can improve on diversity by adding more variety in their guest such as the time Black and Irish was on the 6 O'clock show. This applies for things like the Late Late show and Irish radio stations.



RTE needs to increase this diverse content. The New Gaels has massive potential to expand into new territory with different backgrounds and ethnicities to tell new stories in and out of sport. There is massive potential to expand this formula especially with the rapidly changing population of Ireland with plenty of positive and harrowing stories to be told as highlighted by New Gaels. There is a massive possibility to do stories with the rising Black Irish talent that has been on the rise in Music Sports and Politics. This should be expanded outside of the black community and across other as-well which results in a more diverse relatable cast.

"I have Kurdish blood with an Irish heart, as I always say. We're always hearing the bad things about refugees in this country, we're not hearing the good things. Just go to Tallaght hospital – all the people working there are refugees and immigrants, all the doctors and nurses, it's all mixed"

"You're never going to get rid of racism in this world, you're going to get it in every country in the world. You're going to get that small minority and the problem is we can't let the small minority ruin it for everyone else. At the end of the day we're all human beings. The only difference is I'm probably a bit more tanned than you!"



A step in the right direction Irish Times

The Irish Times published a BLM-themed special edition of the magazine on 4 July, 2020, which presented a flawless example of what can be achieved when ethnic minorities are given a voice and access in Irish media.

- The special edition provided a template for telling positive Black Irish stories, highlighting successes and tribulations, but without racism being the central story platform
- While repetitions of the experience of racism helps to educate, it presents readers/the audience with the narrative of ethnic minorities as victims. This is obviously not a helpful mindset to be developing



Where do we go from here?

Earlier this Summer The Irish times had a page dedicated to allowing people to submit their Black Irish stories but this page can no longer be found it would be ideal to bring this back as it allows for more varied stories outside of the racism ones. This should be brought back not just for the black community but for ethnic minorities like Travelers who might want to tell their stories aswell.

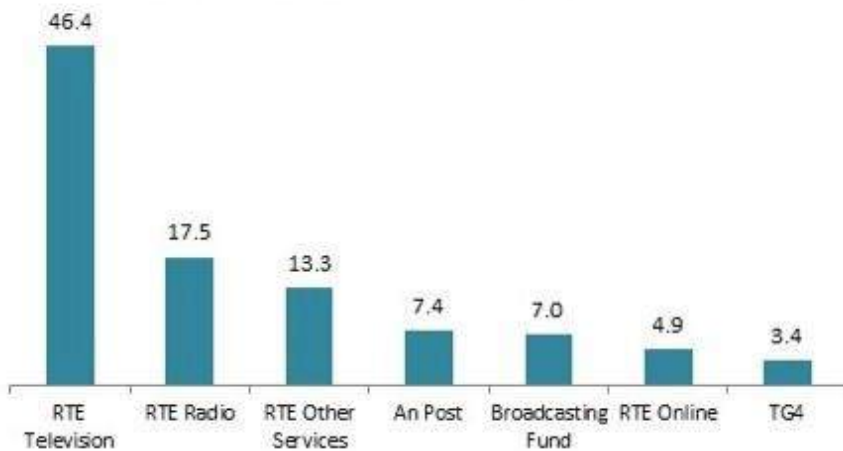


License Fee Obligation

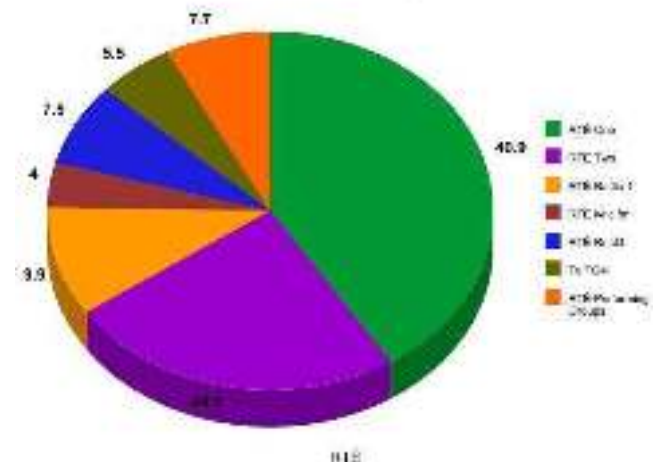
- While Netflix and other OTT subscription/viewership rates are climbing, RTÉ is facing falling revenues both from advertising shifting to Online platforms and from increasing failures in payments for the license fee.

- While there are no studies available to prove the case, it can be held that ethnic minorities are may be resistant to paying the license fee because they do not feel the national broadcaster 'is for them' since it doesn't reflect of feature them. Greater representation of ethnic minorities will help these communities to relate to the organization and its work.

Expenditure of TV License Revenue: 2018 (%)



Attribution of License Fee, 2018



Public Service Commitment

Before RTÉ published the Diversity and Inclusion Charter in 2018, the organization had an obligation to include ethnic minority people in Irish TV in accordance with the published Public Service Statement 2015:

- RTÉ must cater for both majority and minority interests
- Every day and across all its services, RTÉ will continue to follow the stated Guiding Principles by... being inclusive and reflecting the diversity that exists in Ireland



The Black And Irish Podcast 2020 By RTÉ



RTÉ Diversitea Initiative 2020



SECTION 5 RACISM IN IRELAND

Racism in Ireland

2020 has seen a sharp rise in reported racist incidents as reported by Irish network against racism (INAR – www.inar.ie).

Figures released by the body show 530 reports received in 2019. The breakdown for these is as follows:

- 174 reports concerning hate speech
- 112 criminal offences excluding 'Incitement to hatred'
- 111 reports of Discrimination
- 130 other recordable racist incidents

INAR highlighted key trends observed in this period including:

- The highest ever number of racist assaults (50 reports)
- A high rate of physical injury and mental health consequences across both crime and discrimination cases
- The highest rate of repeat harassment cases to date (92 reports)
- Continuing low rates of trust in An Garda Síochána and low rates of reporting for all crimes, including assaults
- Reports of racial profiling and assault of ethnic minority persons by An Garda Síochána
- Continuing patterns of illegal racial discrimination in public sector services
- An increase in the number of victims of crime who were under 18 (20% of targeted persons)
- Increasing publication of hate speech by political candidates in news media
- Low removal rates of social media posts, including those advocating racist violence
- Growth in the number of far-right websites and social media identities, particularly targeting asylum seekers and refugees, but also young people of African background and/or Muslim faith

Source: INAR report (Data from iReport.ie , December 2019 – https://inar.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2019_iReport_Final.pdf)

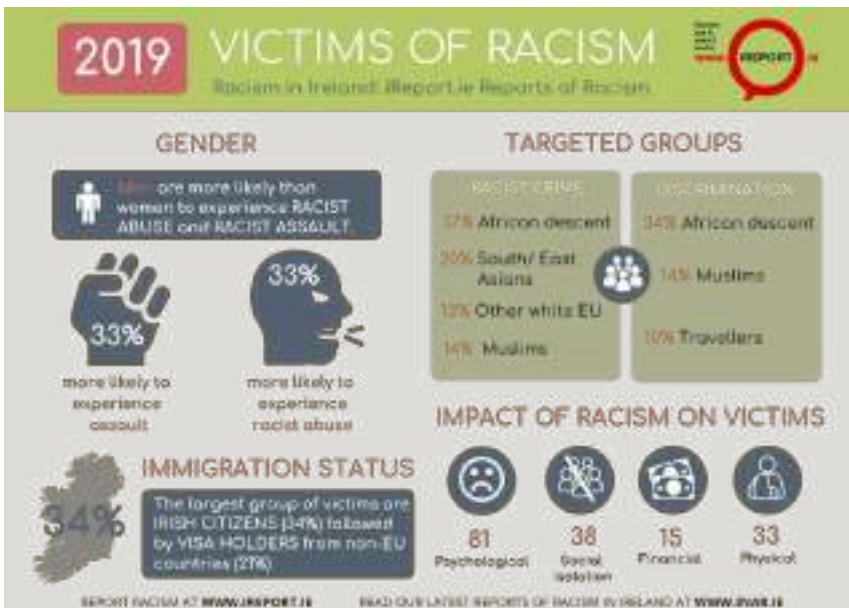
Following the surge of support for BLM in Ireland following the murder of George Floyd on 25 May, 2020 and an awakened drive to bring the previously little-discussed issue of Racism in Ireland into the national spotlight, media platforms and broadcasters including RTÉ featured first-hand accounts from black readers and audience members telling those listening/reading/watching about their lived experience of racism in Ireland, its many forms (including micro aggressions) and its effects.

This societal 'conversation' and its educational role continues today in October, 2020 as do the incidences of racism and attacks including:

- Shelley Xiong being pushed into a Dublin canal (<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/garda%C3%AD-investigate-after-woman-pushed-into-royal-canal-following-alleged-racial-abuse-1.4331416>)
- Two students being assaulted in Cork (<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/garda%C3%AD-investigate-alleged-racist-attack-on-two-chinese-men-in-cork-1.4332274>)
- Emer O'Neill being abused in Bray (<https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/i-hear-the-n-word-at-least-once-a-month-says-young-mother-39518961.html>)
- Numerous anti-immigrant protests against direct provision centres for asylum seekers being sited across the country

- And many more

Rather than contributing to these problems, Irish TV needs to provide a safe space for people of all backgrounds and religions to be able to participate in and enjoy content away from these problems.



RTÉ journalist experienced racist abuse online for over two years

Zainab Bolechale said she has been dealing with much of the abuse since 2017.

News 10:26, 3:53 PM 20/11/2020 85 Comments Share 50 Tweet Email 1

AN RTÉ JOURNALIST has been subject to racist abuse online for over two years, mainly through a YouTube channel featuring comments saying she "looks like a monkey".

Journalist Zainab Bolechale said the channel targeted her and her work in a racist manner since she began working at RTÉ in 2017 as a presenter on children's news show news2day.



Looking forward

Hiring more minority presenting staff or actors for mainstream roles would address the issues laid out above and would help to resolve it before it becomes a reputational crisis.

This issue can't be looked at without examining the reasons that may have created it, that may include the following (not an exhaustive list):

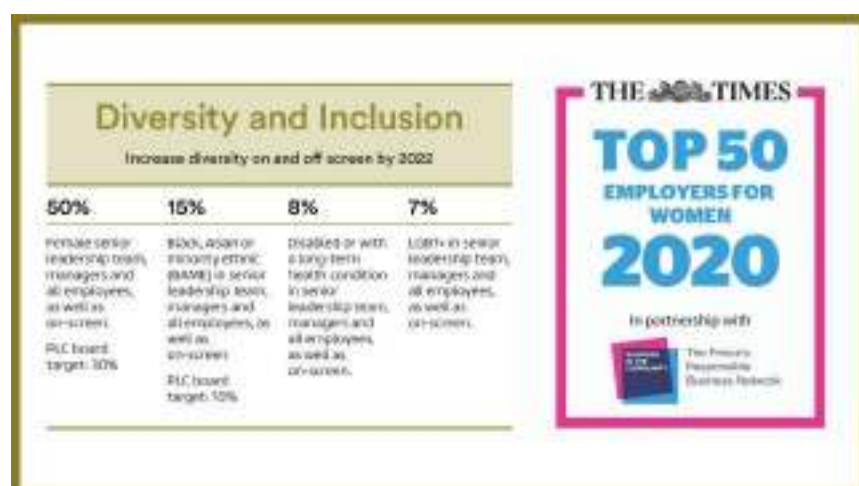
Are there ethnic minority people in RTÉ production teams?

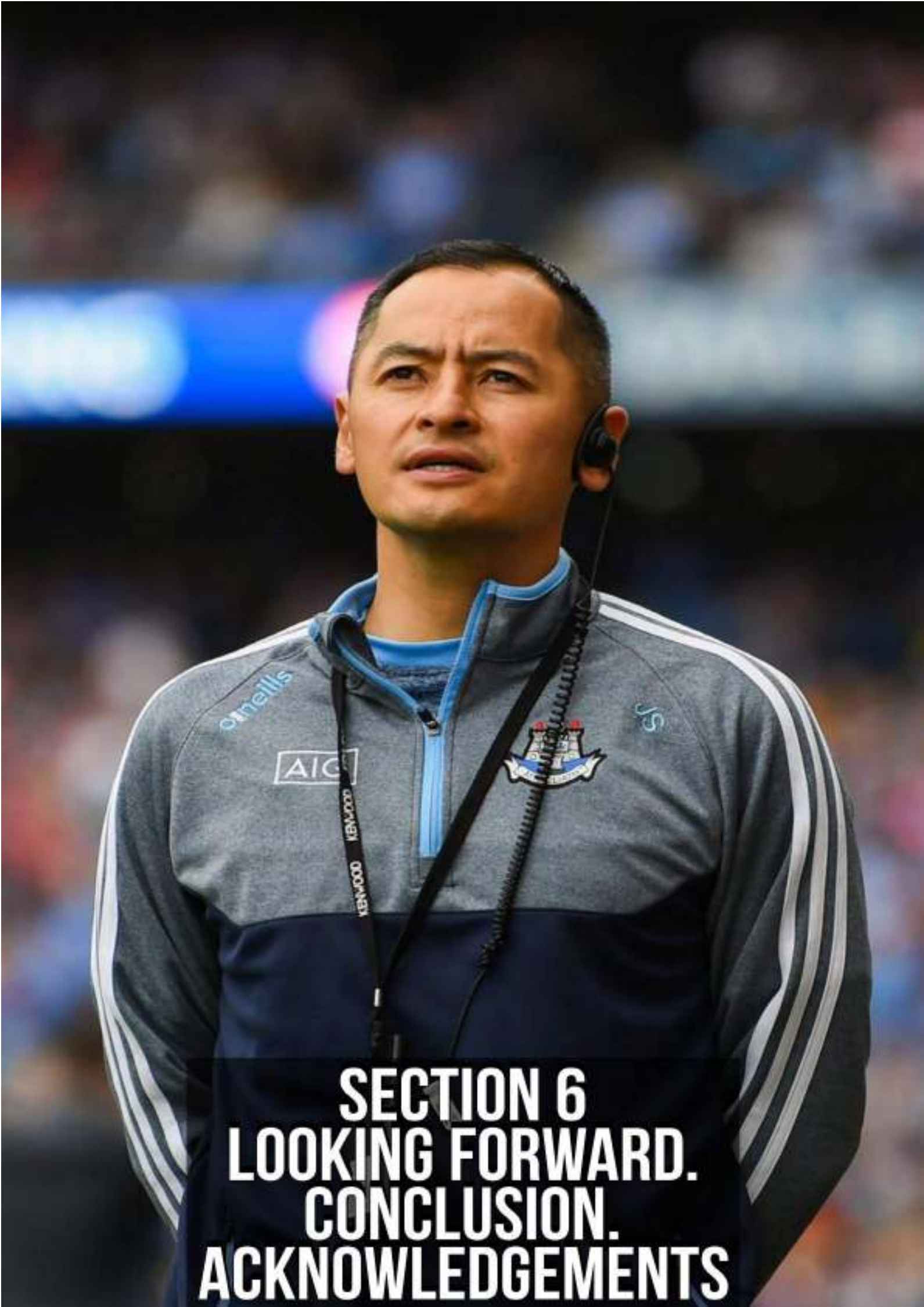
Lack of presentation in production teams may mean that a ethnic minority voices and needs/ concerns/sensitivities are not heard in programme planning. It is difficult for ethnic minorities to be represented on-screen if they don't have representation on the desk.

While headlines of Kieran Mulvey's recent pay level report highlights gender differences, the media stories did not explore racial differences and they may not have been part of the report's remit. This means that I couldn't look at levels of racial differences in the make up of RTE's workforce. It would be interesting to see a breakdown of what roles ethnic minority people hold at RTÉ.

Is ethnic minority acting talent available?

Related to the section about aspirations of ethnic minority children/families, it might be that ethnic minority people in Ireland do not apply to media production/acting roles because they do not see a place for themselves, i.e "There are no minority people on TV, so why would I bother applying for that career/role?". With this, in which case, RTÉ should explore and address this by taking the initiative to show a season of shows focusing on ethnic minority programming - covering drama, current affairs, culture and sport.





**SECTION 6
LOOKING FORWARD.
CONCLUSION.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Conclusion

While there may be many reasons that created the lack of diversity and inclusion in Irish media, the national conversation has worked well to dispel any claims of innocent ignorance about the issue. The need for robust D&I policies backed by measurable actions to counter the historical imbalances has been widely accepted. Training is being implemented and new ways of working with greater awareness of (often unintended) harm are becoming the norm.

Adopting the IMDS measures detailed in this document will help to ensure the Irish media industry can benefit from the richness of talent that a diverse workforce brings. While RTÉ's D&I charter presents comprehensive and valuable commitments for the organization and the wider industry, there is a protracted timescale for their progress. Taking on the IMDS measures will give lasting benefits in a shorter time-frame.



A Big Thanks

Thank you for taking time to read through this document. I welcome further discussion of the points raised and the detail of the IMDS - Please see contact details below.

Email: [REDACTED]

LinkedIn: [REDACTED]

Twitter: [REDACTED]



Embracing inclusion and diversity is at the heart of what we do. We will work to increase diversity representation across all characteristics, in line with our 2022 targets and have a number of initiatives in place to support new hires as well as our existing colleagues. Our focus for 2020 is on building out BAME and disability representation at all levels of the organisation. Ultimately, we will continue to build an inclusive working environment where everybody can reach

their potential and thrive, regardless of their background.

On screen, we have commissioned a research project which will inform our strategy, and we will be working to improve representation across the network, particularly in prime time and in major roles. We are also committed to improving representation in key editorial roles such as writers, directors and senior producers.

ITV DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MISSION STATEMENT

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