

NORTHERN IRELAND

THE BBC IN NORTHERN IRELAND

We built on the BBC's local strengths and diversity, delivering great content and responding to new digital opportunities. And we celebrated the BBC's 100th birthday in Northern Ireland with special programmes and community-based events.

BBC News provided audiences with detailed coverage of stories from across the region. It made effective use of the BBC's specialist journalism, explaining issues and holding decision-makers to account. Our teams delivered ambitious coverage of the Westminster election campaign and its results. And we continued to report the work of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive and some of the challenges facing different sectors. Digital technologies and platforms helped us to engage audiences in new ways and *Spotlight's* investigative programmes included *I Am Not OK*, a compelling insight into the experiences of families with children who have complex needs. Our news services were a trusted source of information during weather-related difficulties and summer disturbances in parts of Belfast; and the Foyle bureau consolidated its place within the BBC's integrated, cross-platform news operation in Northern Ireland.

BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle maintained its broad popular appeal. Some new programmes and presenters were added to its schedule; familiar voices from the past returned to mark the station's fiftieth birthday; and a busy programme of outside broadcasts brought local festivals and events to a wider BBC audience. Concert recordings, including *The Living Air* from Belfast Cathedral, showcased the Ulster Orchestra and local musical talent. And listener stories and voices were at the heart of interactive programmes like *Talkback* and *The Stephen Nolan Show*. Dramas, comedy and documentary strands were also well-represented; *Assume Nothing* and the *GAA Social* found a much wider audience on BBC Sounds; and there were lots of book-related features and conversations as part of the annual *Book Week* initiative, in partnership with Libraries NI.

86%

23/24 **86%**

Pan-BBC reach

% of adults in Northern Ireland who use BBC TV/iPlayer, Radio or Online on average per week.

Source: Compass by Ipsos UK 16+

64%

23/24 **62%**

% of adults in Northern Ireland consuming BBC Northern Ireland content on average per week.

Source: BARB, RAJAR, Piano Analytics, Compass by Ipsos UK



For the full list of statistical information on Northern Ireland **see page 242**

To read more about how the BBC Board has monitored and reviewed performance in Northern Ireland **see page 124**

Local people, places and talent featured in returning series of *Blue Lights* and *Hope Street* on BBC network television and *Crá* brought Irish language drama to a UK-wide audience. Other new network commissions included: *Anna Haugh's Big Irish Food Tour*, *First Communion* and *Teen Predator/Online Killer* – all of them locally produced with support from Northern Ireland Screen. *Chronicles of the Sperrins*, *Give My Head Peace*, *House of the Year*, *Paula McIntyre's Hamely Kitchen USA* and *The Priests: Faith and Fame* allowed us to reflect other aspects of community life and experience. And there was comedy innovation with *Fun Boys* – a co-commission with BBC Three.

The BBC's Blackstaff Studio was the recording location for *Mastermind* and *The Finish Line*, making use of our new outside broadcast vehicle. The skills-base of the local production sector facilitated recordings of *A Kind of Spark* and *Picklestorm* for BBC Children's; BBC Parliament moved its broadcast operation to Belfast; the first development phase of Broadcasting House's substantive refurbishment was completed, equipping it for the future; and we continued our efforts, working in partnership with others, to secure the longer-term sustainability of the screen industries in Northern Ireland, including through the CINE initiative.

We were pleased to have secured broadcast rights for Northern Ireland men's international football fixtures, complementing our coverage of the GAA All-Ireland Senior Football Final, Irish League and women's soccer, rugby and the North West 200. Much of this output is digitally focused, responding to new audience needs and opportunities.

Hope Street is a crime drama series filmed in Donaghadee, Northern Ireland

