

# Indian Diaspora in Europe

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### Learning objectives

After reading this Unit, you will be able to describe:

- the distribution of Indian diasporas in Europe;
- background of Indian diasporas in Europe; and the
- profile of the Indian Diaspora in the UK.

## 10.1 Introduction

The Indian Diaspora is the third largest Diaspora in the world following the British and the Chinese. The over 20 million Indian diasporic population is spread over all the continents. In Europe, the strength of the Indian Diaspora is very large with a staggering share of about 5-8 % of the total population of Europe. In fact, the Indian Diaspora is spread over a large section of Europe, particularly in West Europe. The United Kingdom (UK) is said to have the single largest Indian Diaspora in Europe.

There are two main characteristic features of the Indian Diaspora in Europe: *one*, the emigration took place primarily in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; *two*, the emigration is based mainly on professional and skilled labour in various fields and sectors.

Europe comprises forty-five countries. It has the largest economy in the world. In the recent past, with the emergence of a unified political entity called *European Union* (EU) in November 1, 1993, a majority of the erstwhile countries of Europe have become members of the Union. At present, the EU has twenty-five member states.<sup>1</sup> The Indian Diaspora in Europe is mainly found in the countries of the EU. Therefore, much of the discussions on the profile of Indian Diaspora in Europe need to focus on some of the countries of the EU.

## 10.2 Distribution of Indian Diaspora in Europe

The Indian diaspora is distributed in various countries of Europe. The presence of Indian diasporics (both PIOs and NRIs) in Europe varies from country to country. There are countries with large Indian diaspora presence while in many other countries the presence is relatively low. The figures in Table 10.1

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<sup>1</sup> The names of the European Union member states are: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK (as of May 2006).

would give us some idea about the general picture of the demographic strengths of 'People of Indian Origin' (PIOs) and 'Non-Resident Indians' (NRIs) in Europe. In terms of demographic strengths of the presence of Indian diasporics we can loosely club the host countries into the following three categories for analytical purposes. In the first category, we have countries where there is a large presence of Indian population, such as, the UK, Netherlands, Italy, Portugal and France.<sup>2</sup> The Indian diasporics in the UK is exceptionally high with a population of about 1.2 million. The Netherlands rank second with a good strength of over 2 lakh Indian population. The remaining three countries vary from around 65,000 to 71,500.<sup>3</sup> The Indian emigrants in these countries primarily consist of businessmen, jewelry dealers, craftsmen, doctors, engineers, computer programmers and academicians.

**Table 10.1: Indian Diaspora in Europe**

| No. | Country     | Population (million)                                | PIOs   | NRIs  | Stateless | % of Population |
|-----|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1.  | Armenia     | 3.7                                                 |        | 200   |           | 0.005           |
| 2.  | Austria     | 8.1                                                 | 3005   | 8940  |           | 0.154           |
| 3.  | Belgium     | 10.2                                                |        | 7000  |           | 0.069           |
| 4.  | Bulgaria    | 8.2                                                 |        | 20    |           | 0.003           |
| 5.  | Cyprus      | 0.7                                                 |        | 300   |           | 0.460           |
| 6.  | Denmark     | 5.3                                                 | 900    | 1252  |           | 0.040           |
| 7.  | Finland     | 5.2                                                 | 410    | 750   | 10        | 0.220           |
| 8.  | France      | 58.8                                                | 55000  | 10000 |           | 0.110           |
| 9.  | Germany     | 82.0                                                | 10000  | 25000 |           | 0.042           |
| 10. | Greece      | 10.3                                                |        | 7000  |           | 0.050           |
| 11. | Ireland     | 3.7                                                 | 600    | 1000  |           | 0.027           |
| 12. | Italy       | 57.4                                                | 36000  | 35500 |           | 0.063           |
| 13. | Netherlands | 15.9                                                | 200000 | 15000 |           | 1.350           |
| 14. | Norway      | 4.4                                                 |        | 5630  |           | 0.127           |
| 15. | Poland      | 38.6                                                | 75     | 750   |           | 0.002           |
| 16. | Portugal    | 10.0                                                | 65000  | 5000  |           | 0.700           |
| 17. | Russia      | 145.6                                               | 44     | 16000 |           | 0.010           |
| 18. | Slovakia    | 5.4                                                 |        | 100   |           | 0.001           |
| 19. | Spain       | 40.0                                                | 16000  | 13000 |           | 0.040           |
| 20. | Sweden      | 8.9                                                 | 9000   | 2000  |           | 0.012           |
| 21. | Switzerland | 7.2                                                 | 8400   | 4800  | 300       | 0.117           |
| 22. | Ukraine     | 49.0                                                |        | 3400  |           | 0.069           |
| 23. | U.K         | 56.9 (Total PIOs + NRIs = 1,200,000 approximately)* |        |       |           | 2.109           |

\* Exact figures of NRIs and PIOs not available. Total number of Indians is currently estimated to be 1.2m.

(Source: See MEAs, 2001)

In the second category, there are countries with a medium range Indian population ranging from 1000 (in Finland) to 35,000 (in Germany). They are: Germany, Spain, Russia, Switzerland, Sweden, Austria, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Ukraine, Denmark, Ireland and Finland. In these countries, the Indian emigrants mainly comprise industrialists in the sectors of fashion designing,

2 The countries are listed in descending order of population strengths.

3 The figures used for this analysis are taken from the reports of the MEAs, 2001.

garment making and textile designing, computer professionals, doctors, engineers, academicians, semi-skilled and unskilled labourers.

In the third category, there are European countries with a minimum Indian population. They are Poland, Cyprus, Armenia, Slovakia and Bulgaria.<sup>4</sup> The strengths of Indian presence in these countries range from 20 to 825. These Indian emigrants primarily comprise businessmen, doctors and engineers. There are also illegal Indian emigrants in these countries in semi-skilled and unskilled labour sector.

Most of the Indian populations in Europe, especially in the countries of the first two categories mentioned above, largely live in or near the urban centers, primarily the capital cities or the regional headquarters. They have a good concentration in the capital cities. For instance, London has a concentration of 41 %, Paris (85%), Brussels (45%), Berlin (43%) and Amsterdam (49%). The other regional headquarters and industrial towns have lesser concentrations, such as, Manchester with 19%, Cardiff (16.1%), Edinburgh (16.9%), Dresden (11%), Dusseldorf (10.1%),<sup>5</sup> Antwerp (41%), Lyons (9%), and Grenobles (8%)<sup>6</sup> to cite a few examples.

In these countries, most of the Indian population is employed in the services sector. The gap between employment and unemployment is quite high. Generally, the gap between the male and female employment situation is immense. In countries like Germany, France and Netherlands, the immigration laws wherein the spouse visa restricts employment of the concerned persons, result in a gender imbalanced employment condition. In the United Kingdom and Belgium the lack of available alternative child and elderly care creates a constraint in the female employment rates.<sup>7</sup>

In the realm of religion, there is also diversity in the concentration of Indian diaspora in different countries of Europe. Nevertheless, there is a general trend where the Hindus are in majority in most of the countries. However, there is a sizeable proportion of Indian Muslims and Sikhs in the Netherlands and the UK. Besides the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs there is also the presence of other religious groups such as Christians.

### 10.3 Background of Indian Diaspora in Europe

The history of Indian diaspora in Europe can be discussed under two eras. The first era consists of the period from ancient times till World War II, while the second era would deal with the post-World War II situation. The two eras may be considered respectively as '*old diaspora*' (or pre-modern diaspora) and '*new diaspora*' (or modern diaspora).

#### Indian emigration in pre-World War II

The Indian connection with Europe could be dated back to the 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C. There were evidences of trade and commerce being carried out between the peoples of the Indian sub-continent and Europe. The Indus River and the Gulf of Persia were said to be important points of passage of ships. The Old Testament Bible also mentions the import of spices, ivory, and peacocks

4 There could be some other countries Europe with minimum Indian Population, but they could not be mentioned here due to unavailability of data.

5 Census of Germany, 2001.

6 Census of France 2001 (See [www.insee.org](http://www.insee.org)).

7 See Census of UK 2001- "Men and Women, Equal Opportunities Office."

from India. The queen of Sheba is said to have procured spices from India and gifted to the King Solomon. Several Indian rulers sent emissaries to Rome and trade flourished between the two kingdoms more than two thousand years ago. Indian literature and science had also influenced the Western societies. For instance, the Greeks learnt from Indian science, especially the medical sciences and arithmetic. Europeans learnt of the concept of Zero invented by Indian mathematicians. The Panchatantra was translated in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. from Sanskrit to Latin, Spanish, Italian and other European languages. Indian philosophy was greatly admired by German philosophers and writers including Kant, Hegel, Goethe, and more recently the humanist Herman Hesse, who recognised that India was a major civilisation. There were Indologists of great repute such as Max Mueller.<sup>8</sup>

The connection of Indian diaspora in Europe is also found in the lists and histories of traders of pearl, gold, diamond and semi precious stones, muslin cloth, supplying the royal houses of France, UK, Netherlands, Portugal, Germany and Belgium along with the various nobles who patronized them. Amongst those who immigrated to these nations, and especially UK and France were 'students, seafarers, cricketers, and housemaids'.<sup>9</sup> Also present in the diasporic community of that time were the exiled princes of India, the most noted of whom was Dileep Singh, a Sikh prince who had an estate in East Anglia. In France, the first contact was with Prince Dwarka Nath Tagore, who had been invited to Louis Phillip's court.<sup>10</sup> Here contact was established between Prince Tagore and Eugene Burnouf, one of the noted French Indianists who was the teacher of the famed German Indianist Max Mueller. Dwarka Nath Tagore, Rabindra Nath Tagore's father had also given a vocal recital and Teophile Gautier, a French writer of the nineteenth century had also noted that Indian dance performances were held in Paris in 1836. It is also said that Prince Tagore had visited England, Germany and Belgium on his visit to the European continent.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the colonialists in India- British, French, Dutch and Portuguese brought about migration of Indians in a significant way, mostly as indentured labour (a kind of slavery),<sup>11</sup> including traders, teachers, clerks, etc. to the European colonies. The emigration of indentured labourers to European colonies was to primarily fill up the vacuum of the liberated African slaves in plantations after the ban on the practice of slavery. Amongst the traders, people settled in Europe (Paris) was also one Ratanji Dadabhoi Tata, whose second son was J. R. D. Tata, one of India's famous industrialists'. Due to sustained cultural exchanges between India and the European nations, particularly, the UK, France and Belgium, and the founding of institutions for Indian studies in some of these countries, some Indian artists were attracted to make frequent visits to these countries. In the process, some of these artists opted to settle in the host countries. As a case in point, Amrita Sher Gill, an eminent artist and the first Asian to receive international consecration attributed by the *Grand Salon* for one of her paintings, *Conversation*, Uday Shankar and Alauddin Khan was one of the settlers in Europe.

8 Refer Narayan, 1999; MEAs, 2001; Abraham, 1993.

9 See Tatla, 2003.

10 Berthet, 2003.

11 Indentured labourers are like slaves who have been engaged in work (mainly plantation) under captivity in the European colonies. The contract period generally varies from 3 to 5 years. It is said that the first indenture labour system began sometime in 1830s in Mauritius, Uganda and Nigeria. Cf. Bhat et al, 2002.

In another significant situation, the indentured Indian labourers among others, in various European colonies went through a second emigration process due to a political 'power-shift' brought about in the host countries in favour of the native peoples. Following the emergence of aggressive nationalistic regimes in several countries in Africa, the Asia-Pacific and Latin America after they achieved independence, a significant proportion of these Indian communities migrated to the colonial centres. Thus Surinamese Indians went to the Netherlands; Indians from Madagascar, Mauritius and Indo-China went to France; Indians from Mozambique and Angola went to Portugal and Indians from East Africa went to the UK. The immigration of Indians to these countries during the colonial days was also facilitated by business and family ties and through exposure to metropolitan centers while receiving their education.<sup>12</sup>

### Indian emigration in post-World War II

The second wave of Indian migration to European countries began after World War II. This wave is also known as the 'new diaspora'. Indian migration began during this period largely in response to demand for cheap labour and professionals for the post World War II economic reconstruction in West Europe. The high rate of Indian emigration to Europe during the 1960s and 1970s was also mainly because of the relaxation of immigration laws of the welcoming countries for both skilled and unskilled labour. The Indian emigrants during the period consist of mainly the educated and professional talents from urban middle class families. It was a kind of 'brain drain' situation even though the unskilled labour were also still part of the labour system.

The UK, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal and Germany were some of the main destinations of the Indian diaspora in Europe. In the United Kingdom, the settlers were workers primarily in the industrial sector and small retail traders, personified in the small street corner grocery shops. Shops owned by Indians are estimated at 20,000 out of total 46,000, constituting about 70% of the corner shops.<sup>13</sup> Many were construction labourers and transportation workers. Amongst the skilled professionals, the most prominent were the doctors, who today have become the most visible face of the National Health Service in the UK, accounting for about 16% to 20% of the total medical work force.

Portugal has a relatively large Indian community owing to its colonial connections with India. The bulk of the Indian emigrants in Portugal (PIOs) hail mostly from Mozambique, whose ancestors were once part of the Portuguese colonial administration from Goa. Gujarati traders followed them from Daman and Diu. The Indian emigrants were mainly engaged as junior administrators, teachers and doctors. The Goan emigrants in Portugal were soon assimilated into the Portuguese society due to their Catholic background and knowledge of Portuguese language and their culture.

France has also a large population of Indian emigrants. The Indian emigrants were primarily traders and skilled professionals, such as scientists, doctors and engineers. Traditionally, France has been regarded as a seat of arts and aesthetics and this has been maintained as training in art, sculpture, literature and design, and draw some of the brightest from the Indian shores. However, the bulk of immigrants in France too were skilled and unskilled workers from India. People of India who were former residents of the French colonies in

<sup>12</sup> Refer MEAs, 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Tatler, Op cit.

India and Africa also migrated to France, contributing to the growth of the Indian diaspora community.

The Netherlands witnessed the migration of a major portion of the Indian Surinamese who had been taken to Suriname as indentured labour. They formed the main body of the diasporic community in the Netherlands. Later on, skilled professionals, especially in the field of remote sensing technology, software and IT professionals, doctors and social scientists have migrated to Netherlands. The Surinamese Hindu diaspora (*the Hindustanis*) have well been integrated in the civilian life of the Dutch people. Similarly, the Indian Surinamese Muslim community residing in Netherlands has a different development trajectory, as they were not included in the Hindu religious fold.<sup>14</sup>

Belgium, once a major seat of Indic studies has given way to commerce related activities within the Indian diaspora residing there. The Indian diasporic community in Belgium is miniscule, and yet they control the majority of the diamond trade in the country. They are the major dealers in cutting and polishing of stones. They also control the wholesale trade in uncut diamonds. Today, they have overtaken the Jewish community of Antwerp in the control of diamond trade.

The Indian diasporic community in Germany is composed primarily of technocrats, scientists, research scholars, medical personnel and businessmen. The new entrants here are the software and the IT professionals, for whom Germany has relaxed the 'work permit' laws, though it has not granted full citizenship. Germany is one of the European countries where immigration laws are strict and so very few people could avail permanent resident statuses.

The third emigration wave took place in the 1980s. This wave largely excluded the unskilled and semi-skilled labourers from India and other Asian countries from entering the European countries. This was mainly due to the re-imposition of emigration restrictions after the alarming rate of Asian immigration into Europe. They would permit only restricted professionals to emigrate such as doctors, engineers, scientists, nurses, and teachers.

The fourth wave of Indian emigration began in the 1990s. Although, the bulk of the Indian brains were channeled to the United States, the European countries also have their own share of the Indian brains. Most of these Indian emigrants were trained in premiere educational institutions such as the Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) and Universities. In computer professionals and its sector, people have become numerous in the Information Technology sector workforce in Britain. In the recent times, there has been considerable presence of the Indian diasporic community in the merchant banking and accountancy sectors as well. One of the characteristic features of the new emigrants is that they are very mobile and maintain close socio-economic ties with India. It should be mentioned, however, that in recent years illegal migrants from India and refugee settlers from strife-torn colonies like Sri Lanka have also entered and settled in European countries. For obvious reasons, it is not possible to estimate their actual numbers.

#### Reflection and Action 10.1

Describe the historical process of Indian emigration to Europe.

## 10.4 Indian Diaspora in the UK: A Case Study

The United Kingdom (UK) is one of the largest host countries of Indian diaspora. Amongst the European countries, the UK ranks first in terms of the presence of Indian diaspora. The colonial connection between India and Britain for over two centuries has largely contributed to the presence of large Indian diaspora in the UK since two centuries. It is not exactly known as to when the first Indian emigrant settled in the UK. However, the Parsis and Bengalis are considered to be the first Indian settlers in the UK from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The first Indian emigrants were qualified lawyers, doctors and professionals. They were followed by a series of Indian emigrants particularly after World War I and World War II. But the bulk of Indian emigration into the UK took place after the World War II. In the 1950s, there were many Indians, mainly Punjabis of Indian origin who migrated to the UK as workers for reconstruction purposes post World War II. The second major wave was in the 1960s and 1970s when people of Indian origin (PIOs) mainly of Gujarati origin were forced to migrate to the UK from former British colonies of East Africa including Uganda.<sup>15</sup> They were mainly skilled in trade and commerce. Indian migrations to the UK still continued in the 1980s and 1990s. But the bulk of these Indian emigrants are well-trained managers, teachers and computer professionals. In the following section we shall discuss the various profiles of Indian diaspora in the UK.

### Socio-Demographic profile

The UK has the largest Indian population in Europe. In fact, the Indian Diaspora forms the single largest minority group in the UK amounting to almost 1.8 % of the total population and another 2 % - 3 % of British citizens of Indian origin could be added to the population. Hence, the total Indian population can be estimated at about 2.1 % of the total population of the UK. This figure constitutes about two-thirds of the total Indian emigrants in Europe.

The largest Indian emigrants hail from Punjab constituting about 45% of the total Indian population in the UK. The Sikhs alone have strength of about 300,000 people. Besides the Punjabis, the Gujaratis comprising Hindus, Muslims, Ismailis and Bohras have sizeable population. There are also other Indian populations with significant numbers in some selected pockets hailing from West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, etc.<sup>16</sup>

The Indian diasporics are settled mostly around the inner city clusters and around the fringes of the industrial towns. Over 40% of them live in inner and outer London.<sup>17</sup> The Indian emigrants in the UK like some other recent emigrants from other countries, have a relatively larger proportion of young population as compared to the general population of the host country. The Indian population in the UK forms a higher than average percentage of pupils and young people pursuing education. The enrolment of Indians in educational institutions is quite high compared to the poor enrolment of the whites (English) students especially in the age group 16-24. The performances of the Indian boys and girls are also relatively better than most of the other emigrants. Among the Indians, girls do better than boys in some

<sup>15</sup> Cf. MEAs, 2001.

<sup>16</sup> Op cit.

<sup>17</sup> Op cit.

subjects like English but are much closer in subjects like Mathematics and Science.<sup>18</sup> However, gender differences in enrolment ratio (in favour of males) in educational institutions (in the level of GCSE,<sup>19</sup> Graduates, etc.) are highest in the Indian groups.

Education statistics for England in 2003 indicated that in the Indian community, girls did better than boys in English across Key Stages 1-3, but that results were much closer in Mathematics and Science. At age 14 the difference in the percentages of girls and boys achieving the expected level for English was in the range 12-15 percentage points for most groups.

### Socio-cultural profile

The Indian diaspora in the UK is a very vibrant and dynamic minority group. The enormous diversity in India is also reflected in the Indian diaspora in the UK. The Indian migrants carry with them their religious, ethnic and regional origins. This is also true in the case of floating various socio-cultural organisations numbering about 1000.

There are various religion-based organisations among the religious groups of the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Christians and Parsis. Some of the important ones are Hindu Cultural Society, Indian Muslim Federation, Arya Samaj, Sikh Forum, Ambedkar & Buddhist Organisation, Zoroastrian Organisation, Indian Christian Association, etc. Along with these organisation. There are also several religious places of worship such as gurudwaras, temples and mosques.

Then there are various organisations based on regional and/ethnic affiliations. Some of the better-known organisations are Confederation of Gujarati Organisations, Andhra Association, Bengali Association, Goan Association, British Malayali Association, Maharashtra Mandal, and Punjab Unity Forum. These associations are mostly registered as trusts or charities. They raise generous contributions for relief and rehabilitation of victims during national crises and calamities in India. Various cultural and religious functions and festivities are also organised by different organisations including informal exchange programmes between institutions in India and the UK.

In the recent years, there are new initiatives of setting up socio-cultural centres in the UK such as Nehru Centre, which was established in 1992 in London. The centre is being used as part of the High Commission of India. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is also one of these centres.<sup>20</sup>

### Socio-economic profile

The Indians are one of the most prosperous emigrant groups in the UK. It has a per capita income of 15,860 pounds per year. In fact, the per capita income of the Indian emigrants is higher than the national average. The Indian community is engaged in various key sectors of commercial and industrial spheres. In the retail sector, they account for about 40%. Besides, there is a significant number of professionals, such as doctors, engineers, computer and IT professionals, academics and so on. Along with these, there are also many important Indian commercial organisations in the UK such as, Indian

18 See Education Statistics for England, 2003; Department for Education and Skills, 2004; Census of Great Britain, 2001; ONS (2004) Labour Force Survey Spring 2004.

19 The GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. It is usually taken after two years of study in Years 10 and 11. It is graded A\* to G.

20 Refer MEAs, 2001.



The statistics of the labour market (Table 10.2) also show a good overall picture of the Indian diaspora in the UK. The statistics is based on the Census Report of 2001.<sup>21</sup> The observation of the labour market<sup>22</sup> statistics may be summarised as follow.

Table 10.2  
Employment by ethnic group 2001 (Age cohort 16-74)

|                        | <i>In Employment</i> |             | <i>Employment rate*</i> | <i>Unemployment rate*</i> |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|                        | % Full-time          | % Part-time |                         |                           |
| <b>Men</b>             |                      |             |                         |                           |
| Indian                 | 91                   | 9           | 65                      | 6.5                       |
| All ethnic minorities† | 87                   | 13          | 56                      | 11.9                      |
| All aged 16-74         | 60                   | 40          | 54                      | 4.4                       |
| <b>Women</b>           |                      |             |                         |                           |
| Indian                 | 71                   | 29          | 50                      | 6.6                       |
| All ethnic minorities† | 71                   | 29          | 42                      | 9.6                       |
| All aged 16-74         | 60                   | 40          | 54                      | 4.4                       |

Source: ONS (2004), Census 2001

†All the non-white groups, including those not listed separately. There were 3.2 million people from ethnic minorities in Britain in 2001.

\* Excluding full-time students.

- i) In general, Indian women have higher unemployment rates than men. This disparity between women and men can be attributed to the fact that (a) women look after the home and/or family; (b) Figures for Indian men are generally low; (c) Women start families at the early age.
- ii) In the part time sector, Indian working women (29%) are much more likely to occur than men (8-9%).
- iii) Indian working men are much more likely to be self-employed than their female counterparts.
- iv) Indians in general are spread across almost all segments of industries. However, the non-resident Indians (NRIs) dominate in the Interactive and Communication technologies sector.
- v) At the employment level of managers and senior officials, there are more Indian men than women.
- vi) In professional occupations such as, doctors, researchers, educationists, economists and engineers there are more Indian men than women.
- vii) The high and middle class percentages of Indian population and U.K. cannot be worked out simply on employment figures. It is noteworthy that the percentage of dependants among Indian immigrants is much higher than that of employed persons.

21 See ONS (2004) Census 2001.

22 Labour market statistics from the 2001 Census are based on the 16-74 age group instead of adults of working age or under 65 years. So employment rates are slightly lower than usually reported. Full-time is defined as 31 or more hours per week and part-time up to 30 hours per week in main job.

## Political profile

The Indian diaspora in the UK have also made a breakthrough in the political field. The political participation of Indians in the polity of the UK is vibrant and dynamic. There are Indian politicians who have made it even to the top positions of the UK polity. In the British Parliament, there are four Indian elected members and 11 members in the House of Lords.

The Indians have also a significant presence in the affairs of political parties, particularly in the three major political parties, namely, the Liberal Democrat Party, the Labour Party, and the Conservative Party. The first two parties have even formed a platform known as “Friends of India Parliamentary Groups”. In a significant development, Lord Dholakia has also been the Chairman of the Liberal Democrat Party. Even in the European Parliament, three Indian members have represented the UK.

At the lower level, there are about 300 Councillors of Indian Origin in the UK. They also have an association called “British-Indian Councillors’ Association” (BICA). Besides, there are a few Indian mayors of the Councils. The Indian parliamentarians in the UK also have an association called- “British-Indian Parliamentary Association” (also known as “Curry Club”) to discuss matters towards promotion of India’s interests and concerns.

### Reflection and Action 10.2

Discuss the profile of the Indian diaspora in the United Kingdom.

## 10.5 Conclusion

The Indian diaspora has a large presence in Europe, the largest economy in the world. It is spread all over Europe with higher concentrations in West Europe, which is largely co-terminous with the European Union (EU). It accounts for about 5-8% of the total population of Europe. The United Kingdom (UK) is the single largest country with about two-third of the whole Indian diaspora in Europe. There are also other countries with significant presence of Indian diaspora, such as, Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, France, Germany, etc. The Indian emigration to Europe took place mainly in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They are considered to be the second wave of Indian migration, which is also known as “new diaspora”. The new Indian diasporics mainly consist of the educated and skilled professionals. They have a good participation in various walks of life in Europe, be it, socio-cultural, socio-economic or political realm.

## 10.6 Further Reading

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