Afrophobia in Ireland

Racism against people of African descent

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Ireland
Working collectively to eradicate racism in Ireland

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Foreword

Dr Lucy Michael's timely and essential 'Afrophobia in Ireland' is the first of ENAR Ireland's "thematic" reports using data from the iReport.ie racist incident reporting system, launched in 2013. It complements the quarterly and half-yearly 'Reports of Racism in Ireland', delving in depth into Irish manifestations of the increasingly recognised global phenomenon of Afrophobia. Where our robust 'Reports of Racism in Ireland' continue to contribute significantly to a growing acknowledgement of racism, 'Afrophobia in Ireland' starkly illuminates the granular detail of one key dimension of Irish racism. In holding a mirror up for all to peer into the Irish face of Afrophobia, the report complements the work of our partners in the European Network Against Racism, whose reports on Afrophobia collectively provide a Europe-wide view.

Afrophobia is a relatively new term used to denote key specific forms of global racism which people of African descent have experienced throughout the history of racism. In Ireland, as this report demonstrates, racism against people of African descent is not a new phenomenon at all, but one which has failed to be recognised by the State and wider society, even as it has evolved from colonial times. Afrophobia has contributed to the racialisation of Irish identities, both in Ireland and overseas, resonated with anti-Traveller racism at home, and found fertile ground in specific phenomena and events, for example in what Junior Minister for New Communities Aodhán Ó Ríordáin has called "our love affair with incarcerating people" (from the Industrial Schools and Magdalene Laundries to Direct Provision), or in the political expediency manifest in the 2004 Citizenship Referendum.

The timing of 'Afrophobia in Ireland' is significant. Its publication coincides with the beginning of the United Nation's **International Decade of People of African Descent**, providing an opportunity for us to examine Afrophobia in Ireland in the context of the wider life experiences of people of African descent, in Ireland and globally. In just one example of this report's relevance to this discussion, Dr Michael's findings in relation to the experiences of the self-identified "Mixed-Race Irish" offer a compelling challenge to the view that the UN Decade is somehow less relevant to an Irish context.

The report also provides a welcome contribution to the discussion of Hate Crime and Hate Crime Legislation, at

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a point when this discussion appears, lamentably and inexplicably, to have fallen down the Government's agenda. July this year saw the launch of 'Legislating for Hate Crime in Ireland' by University of Limerick's Hate and Hostility Research Group and a consortium of NGOs led by the Irish Council for Civil Liberties. Just days after the launch, Rebecca, an African-born working mother living in West Dublin, reported through iReport.ie, detailing a years-long pattern of repeated racist harassment, threats and criminal damage, culminating in her young family fleeing their home and neighbourhood.

Reviewing the media coverage of the Rebecca case, it becomes clear that the racism experienced by her and her children embodies in many ways the phenomenon of Irish Afrophobia now described in this report; the focus on women and their children as particular targets of scorn, the combination of old and new forms of racism and racist abuse, the inadequacy of the responses of the criminal justice system, local agencies and wider society. It is as though we are more inclined to criminalise People of African Descent, than the Afrophobia they experience.

Using the data from the iReport.ie questionnaire, this report makes informed, practical recommendations for improving Garda responses to racism. Implementing these recommendations would mark a significant step in improving the experiences of people like Rebecca. But as the Rebecca case and this report makes clear, what is needed is a National Action Plan Against Racism, encompassing Hate Crime Legislation, flanked by root-and-branch reform of all areas of state policy, its agencies and their practices. The time to act on this report and the wider snowballing evidence of racism is now. Let us both face up to the racism present in our society, and to the challenges this presents us. The kind of society we are building depends on it.
Shane O'Curry, Director, ENAR Ireland

1 What is Afrophobia?

This year marks the start of the International Decade for People of African Descent, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly, following the 2001 Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the recommendations of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent which has been working on this issue since 2002. The purpose of the International Decade is to provide a framework within which the United Nations, Member States, civil society and other relevant actors can work with people of African descent to identify and address problems of recognition, justice and development.

Afrophobia is a means of identifying prejudice directed at a particular group which dehumanizes the group and denies their humanity, their dignity and personhood[1]. Although not widely used to date, the term Afrophobia facilitates the specific analysis of negative attitudes and feelings towards black people or people of African Descent around the world. These can result in limited access to quality education, health services, housing and social security, and discrimination in access to justice, with racial profiling and high rates of police violence. Low political participation and opportunity results from and reproduces these forms of discrimination.

Afrophobia describes the hostility, antipathy, contempt and aversion expressed directly and through institutional and legal means, towards people with a background in sub-Saharan Africa or who belong to the African diaspora. It "manifests itself for example as verbal abuse, spatial segregation and physical attacks as well as systematic racial discrimination within areas such as employment and housing"[2], and "is observable as discrimination and racist violence on the basis of a person's skin colour, ethnic origin, and nationality".[3]

Like other forms of racism, Afrophobia also intersects with other grounds for prejudice, such as sexuality, religion, gender, age, class and disability. The way in which these intersect can produce varying forms and levels of discrimination for people of African descent. Multiple discrimination can make identifying Afrophobia difficult in individual cases both for those people experiencing it and those investigating it, but patterns can be observed across larger groups of people, and international comparison is particularly useful in this regard.
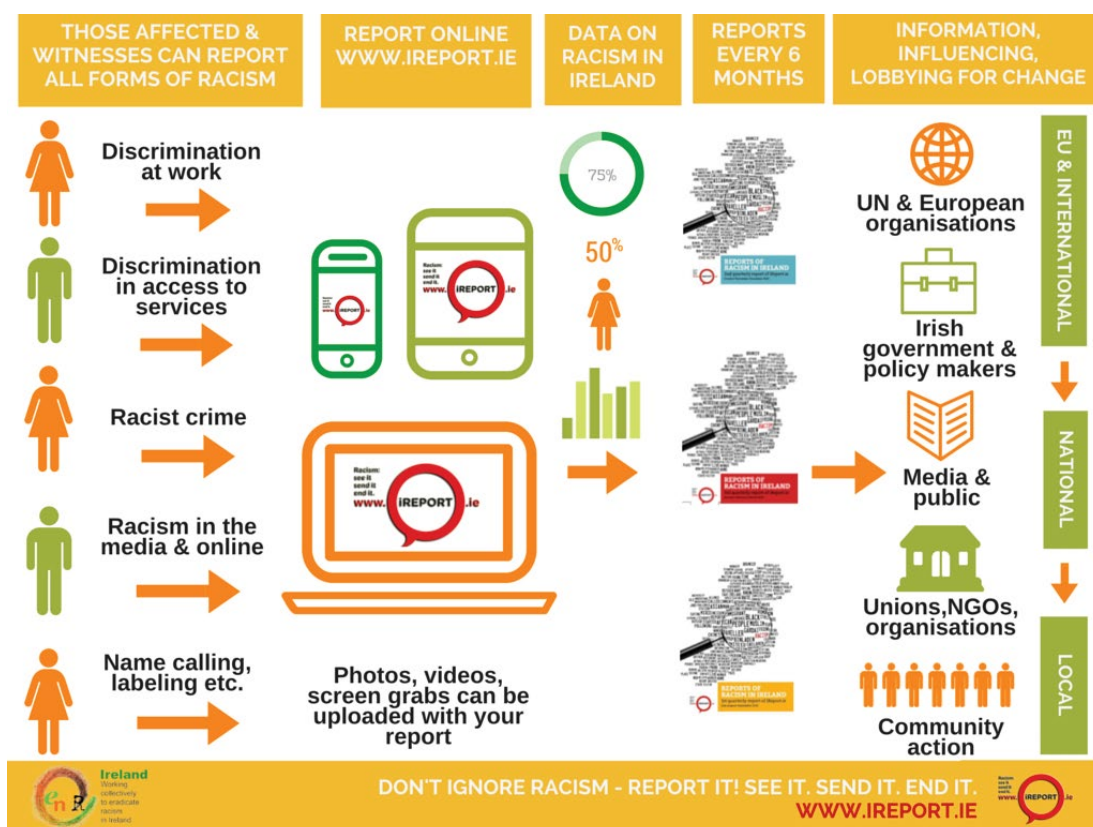
> Afrophobia describes the hostility, antipathy, contempt and aversion expressed directly and through institutional and legal means, towards people with a background in sub-Saharan Africa or who belong to the African diaspora

Since 2013, the highest number of any single group targeted in the incidents reported to ENAR Ireland has been from people of African descent, including African migrants, their children, Europeans and mixed-race Irish. Incidents have included political hate speech, racist crimes, racist violence, intimidation, racist bullying, illegal practices and discriminatory treatment in housing, education and service provision, poor policing practices and poor responses by Gardaí to racist crimes, lack of access to healthcare and employment and persistent and repeated racial harassment. This report describes and explores the range of incidents and types of discrimination and exclusion that reflect Afrophobia in order to illuminate the experiences of racism faced by people of African descent in Ireland today and inform public debates and policy change.

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1   Like Islamophobia, Afrophobia is a term which has been recently adopted in order to distinguish racism against a particular targeted group. Distinguishing the patterns of racism against particular groups is helpful in identifying the social and linguistic contexts which facilitate the oppression and violation of the target groups, developing targeted interventions and measuring the effectiveness of those. As such, the term is more than another name to describe racism, but is an effective tool for addressing this particular form of racism.

2   Mångkulturellt Centrum (2014) *Afrofobi: En kunskapsöversikt över afrosvenskars situation i dagens Sverige. [Afrophobia: An overview of the development of the situation of Afro-Swedes in Sweden today]* Tumba: Mångkulturellt centrum. http://mkcentrum.se/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Afrofobi-20140203-f%C3%B6r-webben.pdf

3   RED Network (2012) *Afrophobia*. http://www.red-network.eu/?i=red-network.en.thesaurus.1

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2 The ENAR Ireland data collection process

Data on experiences of racism in Ireland is gathered through an online self-reporting system www.iReport.ie which became operational in July 2013. Since then, ENAR Ireland have published an analysis of the data on 5 occasions, beginning with four quarterly analysis reports and later moving to bi-annual reports. The data is used in the course of the work of ENAR Ireland to respond quickly and effectively to ongoing events, and analysed to provide member organisations with the most up to date picture of racism in Ireland.

This report explores 24 months of reports submitted from July 2013 to end of June 2015, although dates of the incidents vary. In some cases the effects of racist violence continue for months and years after they occur, and reporting therefore can occur later than might be expected for other types of crime. Reports selected for analysis for this investigation were those which concerned incidents targeting people identifying or identified as 'Black-African' or 'Black-0ther', or 'Other' where the person chose to identify themselves in a way that made clear that they are a person of African descent.

Each report includes information about the person experiencing racism and those perpetrating it, as well as a large amount of detail about the context of the experience, including location, date, time, form of racism, reporting to relevant agencies or An Garda Síochána and the impact on the parties involved. In requesting this level of information, iReport.ie is aligned with the best practice in racist incident reporting, and facilitates a complex

analysis of each event as well as the overall collection of reports. Quotation from the reports produced below are accompanied by the location and details of the person reporting, and where relevant the time of day, to give contextual detail to the incident.

Reports may also be submitted by people who witness racism, regardless of their relationship to the targeted person(s) or perpetrator(s). Physical and verbal abuse is more easily identified by witnesses and is also more likely to prompt reporting to Gardaí by both victims of such violence and witnesses, but there is also significant reporting of racist expression in media and social media by people unrelated to the targeted group.

Data is collected on the language used by perpetrators during reported incidents, and on police or other responses to incidents where they are reported. Although it is commonly explained that African immigration to Ireland is relatively new, given the absence of significant populations of people of African descent until 1997, there has been no absence of 'race' in Ireland. This type of data therefore offers the opportunity to understand the ways in which racist expressions are used and understood by perpetrators and by those investigating racially motivated incidents.

Combining quantitative and qualitative data provides a number of ways of understanding the patterns, and the details, in the reported incidents. This methodology is informed by best practice in analysing racist incidents in the UK, Europe and USA. The author is a member of the Sociological Association of Ireland and British Sociological Association, and employs the ethical standards of these organisations. If you have detailed queries about the methodology employed in this study, you are invited to contact the author.

3 Everyday racism

In order to make sense of racism directed at people of African descent in Ireland, whether against migrants from Africa or Black people born in Ireland or Europe, it is necessary to take account of the context in which this racism occurs. This is not a means of excusing racism. Rather, by combining the daily experiences of individuals with a more structural account of racisms, we can better understand why particular forms of racism emerge and persist in different contexts. This helps to develop better recommendations to organisations addressing equality issues, whether state departments, NGOs, employers or service providers of other kinds.

Racism occurs in a wide variety of social situations, including on buses, in schools, takeaways, taxis, state offices and neighbourhoods, and at all times of day. Everyday racism is recognisable through repeated familiar experiences, which we see in the following report, and involves attitudes and behaviours that are learned in our society. Understanding those routine situations in everyday life in which it occurs repeatedly and how racism is perpetrated within them helps to inform and make more effective our responses to it.

Racism of this kind is not unusual or unrecognisable. It lies in repeated verbal abuse, bullying, discrimination, offensive jokes and graffiti. Indeed, it is often ignored because it is so widespread that we become accustomed to seeing it in everyday life. Sometimes these escalate to more visible or dangerous attacks, but every kind of racism can have a significant impact on people targeted by it. The experiences of any individual are also shaped by the experiences of their friends, family members, and other Black people, through the media and through their knowledge of racism in the systems structuring their lives[4]. Children who witness discrimination against their parents can be particularly affected by feelings of exclusion.

Everyday racism also includes microaggressions, which are small acts of rejection which have damaging effects over time. Microaggressions are an important aspect of Afrophobic behaviour, but are are rarely reported to racist incident reporting systems. They do have an impact, however, in the treatment of victims of racism by supporting agencies or An Garda Síochána, because they imply distrust, distance and legitimised isolation of people of African descent. Responding to Afrophobic incidents therefore requires not only being aware of the impact of violence or abuse on victims, but also of the impact of the whole experience including reporting as damaging to self-esteem and sense of belonging.

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4   P. Essed (1991) *Understanding Everyday Racism*. London: Sage.

'Old' and 'new' racisms: understanding Afrophobia

Racism can take many forms, and is often denied where it takes more subtle and cultural forms which are imbued with a sense of European cultural superiority. Institutional racism is also often denied where policies do not appear to be directly racist, even where outcomes are clearly discriminatory. However this is not to say that they are not recognised by Black Europeans or Africans, or by witnesses. To understand Afrophobia, it is necessary to investigate the ways in which people of African descent particularly experience racism of all kinds, how they understand these experiences of racism, and what impact they have on individuals, families and communities.

What have been described as 'new' racisms are the effects of a politics of containment, in which migration and difference are themselves seen as problematic, and biological racism is not inferred. It relies much more on the assumption of cultural characteristics because of skin colour and ethnicity, but refers to contemporary contexts rather than any natural position for groups

'Old' racisms usually refer to the way in which Black people or other non-white ethnic groups were perceived as racially biologically inferior, and framed within a binary logic of Black and White. The science of eugenics is representative of this form of thinking. When racism is denied by perpetrators or justified as rational, it is frequently because this kind of biological distinction is unintended. Yet most forms of racism have inherent within them this assertion of natural superiority by virtue of particular group membership.

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the assumption of cultural characteristics because of skin colour and ethnicity, but refers to contemporary contexts rather than any natural position for groups. An example of this is the way in which Nigerians are singled out in many of the reports as being subject to particular suspicion and are singled out by non-Africans for discriminatory treatment.

These ways of thinking about racism are simply ways of understanding how racist attitudes and behaviours can be denied while at the same time excluding and belittling particular groups based on their ethnic background. As an example, in the iReport.ie data, we will see that Black Europeans and Africans are repeatedly not distinguished from each other by perpetrators of racism, relying only on skin colour in their identification and stereotyping about cultural traits on that basis. The same is true across Europe.[5] Afrophobia merges both 'old' and 'new' racisms, bringing together well-known (and transatlantic) racial assumptions about the 'natural' inclinations of people described as 'Black' with contemporary fears about African migrants in Europe.

People of African descent in Ireland are repeatedly described in Irish media as producing racism simply through their presence in Ireland. African migrants to Ireland have been described in the national media as a "tidal wave", an "army of illegals", with the state described as "idiotic or feckless as [to] allow such vast numbers to enter" and Ireland (meaning the whole population) "so idiotic and so morally lethargic as to allow such massive inward population movements"[6]. Afrophobia, in Ireland, is distinguishable by the emphasis on place and race. People of African descent, through this lens,

become seen as illegitimate simply for being present in Ireland[7]. Research has shown groups that do not perform in a way that corresponds with expectations of them are punished for crossing those boundaries. This explains the excessive brutality of racist hate crimes compared to other forms of crime, and in this case, helps us to understand Afrophobic violence in Ireland.

Compared to other European countries, there has been relatively little public discussion of our racialised history (the dominant narrative of Irish as white, for example[8]) and its implications for future diversification of the population, nor even of the consequences of the 2004 referendum which took the country from the most liberal to the most restrictive immigration regime in Europe. This is despite a wealth of academic work examining the creation of Irish diaspora as white and its impact on Ireland's perception globally, the reputation of Irish diasporas as enforcers of racial boundaries particularly in the USA and South Africa and the hypocrisy of 'illegal' Irish immigrants abroad[9].

Our consumption of US media is largely in the form of 'white' media, exemplified by popular Hollywood films in which Black performers are repeatedly sexualised, characterised as violent or irrational, or used for laughs, with few spoken lines of their own. Consumption in Ireland of 'Black' culture in music, literature and film (mainly African American and Afro-Caribbean, rather than African) is through the lens of racial positioning in other Western countries, namely the US and Britain, but without the political and social discussions of 'race' which have taken place there. Watching those debates from afar permits a narrative of Irish innocence in global racism, even as we are gradually confronted with evidence that our history is influenced by the institutionalising of mixed-race children[10], and the role of the Irish middle classes (Protestant and Catholic) in British colonies, working as colonial administrators, police[11], lawyers, doctors, dentists, journalists and businessmen, who brought those hierarchies home.

5   ENAR (2014) *Invisible Visible Minority: Confronting Afrophobia and Advancing Equality for People of African Descent and Black Europeans in Europe.* ENAR Anti-Racism in Focus 2. Brussels: European Network Against Racism (ENAR). ISBN: 978-2-9601308-1-2.

6   K. Myers (2007) 'The problem isn't racism, it's the tidal wave of immigrants', *The Irish Independent*, 5 September 2007.

7   B. Perry (2001) 'Accounting for hate crime: Doing Difference', in B. Perry (ed.) In the Name of Hate, pp.31-56. Routledge.

8   S. Garner (2003). *Racism in the Irish experience.* London: Pluto Press; R. Lentin (2001). Responding to the racialisation of Irishness: Disavowed multiculturalism and its discontents', *Sociological Research Online,* vol. 5, no. 4, http://www.socresonline.org.uk/5/4/lentin.html; B. Walter (2001). *Outsiders inside: whiteness, place, and Irish women.* New York: Psychology Press.

9   See for example B. Fanning & R. Munck (Eds.) (2012) *Globalization, migration and social transformation: Ireland in Europe and the world.* Farnham: Ashgate; A. Lentin, & R. Lentin (Eds.) (2009) *Race and state.* Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars; R. Lentin (2007) 'Illegal in Ireland, Irish Illegals: Diaspora Nation as Racial State', *Irish Political Studies, 22*(4), 433-453.

10   F. Gartland, (2015). Mixed race Irish in State care subjected to colour specific abuse, Oireachtas told. *The Irish Times.* [online] Available at: http://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/oireachtas/mixed-race-irish-in-state-care-subjected-to-colour-specific-abuse-oireachtas-told-1.1973416

11   D. McCracken, (1991). The Irish in South Africa - The Police: a case study. *Familia,* 2(7), pp.40-6.

People of African descent are constantly told that they are disposable bodies, manipulable bodies, erasable bodies. Our news media, as well as Hollywood, inscribe those messages well upon the Black bodies they display. The body of the Black person is persistently subject to public shaming, whether in aesthetic (beauty) norms or in the policing of Black people's use of public spaces. Objects thrown at people of African nationality or descent and shouting at them in the street represent this type of public shaming of the Black body. The persistence of jungle sounds or banana throwing in racism is also a reflection of this body shaming. References to dirt, disease or laziness appear frequently in racist discourses as an extension of this shaming. Black bodies are often used as metaphors for disease, impurity and animalism – all present and thriving in the racist terms used every day on our streets, in our schools and workplaces.

In Ireland, the accusations of birth tourism directed at African women with young children are an extension of this view of the Black body as inherently pathological. As Shandy notes, in Ireland, "immigration debates were literally and figuratively inscribed on African immigrant women's bodies" and argues that "African women, and especially their children, in this case represented a sort of malignancy in the body politic" which has resulted in African mothers being "publicly demonized and subjected to verbal and physical assaults"[12]. Ten years after the 27th Constitutional amendment abolishing a 'jus soli' right to Irish nationality, women are still abused while present in public with young children. This includes verbal abuse and intimidation by being followed in public spaces, but also contains threats to personal safety. The sense of being 'out of place' produced by this aggressive harassment is disorienting and alienating, as well as creating feelings of extreme vulnerability.

A Gallup survey for the European Union Agency for Fundamental (FRA) in 2009 found that 73 percent of black Africans in Ireland believed discrimination based on ethnicity or immigration was "widespread" in Ireland[13]. The experiences of Africans in Ireland have been captured in a number of reports by agencies working in this area since then, including a series of research interviews capturing migrant experiences of racism and discrimination published immediately prior to the launch of the iReport.ie system[14].

Violent racism is not divorced from these everyday experiences. Neighbourhood harassment over periods of

months and years can escalate to incidents of criminal damage, arson and threats to life. The bodies and homes of people of African descent become seen as a valid target for the display and release of resentment and frustration in patterns of escalation, particularly if they are not responded to quickly by police or other agencies, and by other witnesses. In addition, racist attitudes can mean that violent behaviour is disproportionately enacted upon people of African descent[15].

Two killings of people of African descent in Dublin precede this report. In 2011, a black taxi driver died in Dublin after he was knocked to the ground by a passenger, just a year after teenager Toyosi Shittabey was stabbed to death in mid-afternoon on his way home from swimming. Defendants were acquitted in both cases. These, like many of the reports presented here, were unanticipated events which the victims could not predict or defend themselves from. Racism has not been proven, or indeed tested, in the criminal justice proceedings around these cases. However, it is well established in the international scientific literature on racism that greater levels of violence are used against people of African descent, and we cannot therefore be blind to the anxiety that such cases create amongst potential victims who recognise their assigned racial identity as making them more vulnerable.

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People of African Descent in Ireland

The 2011 census count of ethnicity reported 58,697 people identifying as "Black or Black Irish – African" and 6,381 people who identified as "Black or Black Irish - any other Black background". This represents a forty percent increase on the 2006 Census, which recorded 40,525 people of Black African ethnicity and 3,793 'Other Black'. The increase is partly explained by children born in Ireland, many of whom have one white Irish parent. An even sex ratio is evident in both populations.

Residential segregation is not evident in Ireland to date, although there are some concentrating effects observable in relation to private and social housing. Private rental housing has attracted more ethnic diversity and greater inte-

12   D.J. Shandy (2008) 'Irish Babies, African Mothers: Rites of Passage and Rights in Citizenship in Post-Millennial Ireland', *Anthropological Quarterly*, Volume 81, Number 4, Fall 2008, pp. 803-831.

13 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2009) European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey, http:///fra.europa.eu/eu-midis/

14   B. Fanning, B. Killoran, S. Ní Bhroin, and G. McEvoy (2012) Taking Racism Seriously: Migrants' Experiences of Violence, Harassment and Anti-Social Behaviour in the Dublin Area. Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.

15   While some violence is connected to drug or alcohol consumption, this is a small proportion of the reported events.

Although it is quite common to think of racism against Africans as a new experience in Ireland, there is much evidence to disprove this position

gration[16]. There are, however, a number of areas of Dublin and the surrounding counties which have recognisable, if small, African and African-Irish populations, mainly due to the presence of available and affordable housing. The European resettlement programme has also placed Congolese, Sudanese and Ethiopian refugees in rural areas.

A study in 2010 noted that while more than half of primary and secondary schools had at least one African national amongst their students, primary schools tended to be more impacted by residential patterns since they draw on small local catchment areas to a greater extent[17], and are more segregated on economic bases.

Although it is quite common to think of racism against Africans as a new experience in Ireland, there is much evidence to disprove this position. Irish people have mixed with people of African descent in Ireland as well as in the diaspora over a long period of time. As well as servants working historically in Ireland's cities, people of African descent have come to Ireland as students and profession-

als over the previous three centuries. Irish people working overseas have had extended contact with people of African descent, often from positions of authority (and as part of the 'civilising missions') in churches, schools, hospitals, military and government, and have shared those experiences through their families and communities in Ireland over generations[18]. British rule facilitated much of this movement across Empire, but the Republic of Ireland has also been a popular destination for students from African countries since the 1960s. Irish people returning from abroad have (as we continue to do) also brought partners and children of African descent to live here.

Mixed race children born in Ireland in previous generations, many to a highly educated African parent working or studying in Ireland, have been persistently rejected by families and wider society. One of the most shocking aspects is that documented by Mixed Race Irish, a campaign group representing survivors of institutional abuse, who gathered extensive evidence of the abuse of mixed-race children in Irish institutions between the 1950s and 1970s where their skin colour marked them out for segregation, starvation, sexual abuse, forced labour and violence. The

16   ZM Vang (2010) 'Housing supply and residential segregation in Ireland', *Urban Studies*, 47(14), 2983-3012.

17 D. Byrne, F. McGinnity , E. Smyth & M. Darmody (2010) 'Immigration and school composition in Ireland', *Irish Educational Studies*, 29(3), 271-288.

18   T.P. Coogan (2002). Wherever Green is Worn: The Story of Irish Diaspora. London: Random House.

Mixed Race Irish group have documented extensively the effects of the denigration of mixed-race children for their future identity development and self-esteem, noting the relationship between alcohol and drug abuse, and high rates of suicide, among mixed-race people who have experienced such identity-based trauma[19].

'Mixed race' is a term sometimes avoided, because 'race' infers the idea of naturally separate groups which each possess characteristics, abilities, or qualities specific to that group or 'race', and which can distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races. The reality of 'race' therefore lies in the perception. But for people who describe themselves as mixed-race, the perception of them as 'Other' is key to understanding the way in which they have to undertake extra identity work to identify where they belong in a racialised society. The term 'mixed race' then offers an insight into the process of self-identification and as well as recognising these particular experiences.

The identification and treatment of mixed race children is an important consideration in the understanding of Afrophobia in Ireland, since it encapsulates the problems with being defined as not-Irish by default. The most obvious way in which the issue of being described as not-Irish or being 'really' from another country impacts on peoples' wellbeing is in the way in which they may be described or be permitted to describe themselves.

The Census 2011, for example, forces mixed-race people to choose between ticking 'White Irish' and 'Black Irish', or allows them to write a description of their 'mixed background' under 'Other'. The construction of the census along the lines of 'White', 'Black' and 'Asian' reinforces the boundaries between these colour-based categories, and requires mixed-race people to choose one part of their identity, or feel like an 'Other'.

One case submitted to iReport.ie by a man identifying as mixed race attests to the difficulties of being identified as 'Other'. He describes how his colleagues joked publicly at a company event that he was 'really' from Africa rather than Ireland. He was shocked by their behaviour but extremely aware that his career could be damaged by complaining. He therefore had to continue working with those colleagues without remedy. In this report, there are a small number of cases which explicitly describe the targeted person as 'mixed race', although there is no way for witnesses to be certain that people who are victimised as 'Black' are not in fact mixed-race. A much larger number of cases attest to the damage which is inflicted on both children and adults in the denial of their citizenship, and these start to address the experience of being defined as 'not Irish' by default.

One of the most shocking aspects is that documented by Mixed Race Irish, a campaign group representing survivors of institutional abuse, who gathered extensive evidence of the abuse of mixed-race children in Irish institutions between the 1950s and 1970s where their skin colour marked them out for segregation, starvation, sexual abuse, forced labour and violence

Children born in Ireland today to a parent of African descent, regardless of whether both parents share a racial identity, identify strongly as Irish in growing up, because they contrast their experience and cultural influences with those of their parent, feel loyalty and belonging in their local communities, are educated within an Irish pedagogic framework, have their strongest relationships in Ireland, and see their future lives as being influenced by their Irishness. This affects a significant number of children, since the CSO report showed that, for example, 77 percent of Nigerians lived in Nigerian-Irish mixed households in 2008[20]. Racism in all forms can directly impinge on these feelings of belonging, decreasing their confidence and causing high levels of stress which are very damaging in the long term.

The presence and integration of people of African descent in Irish cities and towns is important to understanding their experience in neighbourhoods, schools, workplaces, and public spaces. It affects their access to appropriate facilities, including support in relation to incidents of racism. It helps to understand the ways in which Afrophobia has a local, as well as a global, context. This has, therefore, been taken into account in the analysis of the data, although some of this information is not presented here in order to preserve the anonymity of the reports.

19   'Experience of Persons of Mixed Race in State Institutions: Mixed Race Irish', Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality, 22 October 2014, https://www.kildarestreet.com/committees/?id=2014-10-22a.543

20   The CSO does not detail how many of these households include a white parent, and how many refer to children born in Ireland to two parents born in Nigeria. Nonetheless, the identification of the children as Irish citizens is the relevant point here. Central Statistics Office (2008) Census 2006: Non-Irish Nationals Living in Ireland. Dublin: Stationery Office. ISBN 1-4064-2055-5.

4 Overview

Reports concerning specific incidents targeting people of African descent accounted for 30 percent of the total reported cases submitted to iReport.ie. 225 reports concerning this targeted group were submitted in the first 24 months of data collection, between July 2013 and June 2015.

Twenty-two reports of assault and aggravated assault were submitted in this period. These included four cases of opportunistic violence against adults in the street, three instances of sudden violent attacks on public transport, and two allegations of unlawful assault during detention by security and police. Weapons were involved in two cases. The first was an attack with a glass bottle in a busy city centre street, and the second an attack with a hurley stick on a child in her own back garden by a neighbour. In two further cases, aggravated assault was occasioned through a directed dog attack on a child and an attempt to hit a man with a vehicle. Two reports involved assault of children by other children. One report of arson endangering life was submitted in this period, although several more were reported in national newspapers. In addition to the 22 assault cases above, five cases of spitting were reported and three cases where missiles were directed at people of Black-African ethnicity.

The largest proportion of face-to-face incidents took place on public transport (including against transport staff), followed by on the street and in shopping centres or shops. Together these accounted for 75 percent of reported locations. These incidents have occurred in the absence of any prior relationship with the perpetrator, and appeared to involve randomly selected victims in the targeted group. It is not possible to tell from the data whether these incidents were opportunistic or whether the perpetrator intentionally sought out a victim. Since many of these incidents involved city centre areas and public transport, it would be foreseeable to a motivated perpetrator that there would be an available potential victim population. The interchangeability of victims in the targeted group, however, also means that there is a greater reasonable fear amongst people of African descent for their safety in these public places[21].

Repeated harassment appears most frequently in relation to neighbours or people identified as local residents. These reports include repeated incidents of verbal abuse, intimidation, harassment, frequently escalating to violence and injury. Reports of this kind are most frequently submitted when serious crimes have been committed. Fifteen reports

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21   Interchangeability is a key characteristic of hate crimes that makes them different from many other offenses. Since the victim typically does nothing to provoke the attack or mark themselves out as a target, from the perpetrator's standpoint, any member of the targeted group would be a satisfactory victim. See J.Levin and J.McDevitt (2002). *Hate crimes revisited: America's war against those who are different.* New York: Basic Books.

> Twenty-two reports of assault and aggravated assault were submitted in this period. These included four cases of opportunistic violence against adults in the street, three instances of sudden violent attacks on public transport, and two allegations of unlawful assault during detention by security and police

indicated that incidents were related to a repeated series of harassments involving neighbours or co-workers and in one case, a teacher. Fourteen of these related to situations which were previously unreported. Of these, three involved serious injury and one involved arson. One report resulted in a resident and young children leaving her home to stay with family. Reports of repeated harassment can relate to a sequence of events over a period of months, and if not addressed promptly, become normalised in the neighbourhood and in police responses. In one report, a family had experienced threats and criminal damage from neighbours over a period of eight years.

112 reports (46 percent) related to websites, forums, social media posts and other online comments which targeted people of African descent, sometimes alongside other migrant groups. This figure does not include reports of racist materials which do not specifically target people of African descent. It is however well established that people of African descent are referenced widely in anti-immigration discussions on social media in Ireland, and therefore this number is a conservative reflection of the frequency of racist expression in social media.

5 Assaults with injury

The most serious incidents described in reports to iReport.ie involve assaults resulting in injury. As well as the assaults described here, there have been several incidents of assault reported in the national media which are not also reported here. Assault is known to be an ongoing risk for people of African descent in Ireland as well as for other minority ethnic groups. Assaults occur in a range of different contexts in these reports, and can be spontaneous or part of an ongoing pattern of harassment.

In our back garden

Harassment by neighbours which escalates over time is frightening and invasive. Unchecked, it can escalate to serious violence and endangerment of life. This case illuminates the nature of such a case and the danger in which it places all members of a family.

A mother living alone with her two children in North Dublin recounts a lengthy period of harassment by a neighbouring woman and her children, which included repeated verbal abuse, an incident of assault and criminal damage, and repeated threats:

> "This Irish woman (about 35 years old) would not let my children play outside even in my own backyard, she said they are black and have no business being here. Calls my 12 years old daughter fat black bitch. She lives seven houses away from me, but she would send her children to come and be playing and throwing their ball into my garden just to provoke us and start a fight. [...]She has threatened to bring her family to come trash my house and set it on fire. So I am doing everything humanly possible to avoid them. We sleep with one eye open not knowing if the house will be set on fire while we are asleep as she threatens. [...]I understand she does the same to the other Africans in the neighbourhood."

But even avoiding the neighbours did not protect the family from their violence. The ways in which racism was perpetrated frequently upon the family encouraged the children of the perpetrator to behave in ways which harassed the family, leading to further abuse and violence from the perpetrator.

> "On Wednesday, her kids throwing ball into my garden. I asked my daughter to throw it back to them twice but they kept throwing it back into the garden. When it was not thrown back their mother burst open my garden door and said no matter how many times the ball is thrown into my garden we have to throw it back because we don't deserve to live here. My 13 years old daughter started videoing her with her phone she got angry and hit my daughter with the hurley stick. She came into my garden with and her son snatched the phone from my daughter and smashed the phone on the floor and removed the memory card and they walked away raining abuses on us calling us nigger and animal."

The woman described feeling *"helpless, frustrated, abused and violated even in my own house."* She reported the harassment and violence to local Gardaí at the time but the Garda that attended the scene advised her to contact local community Gardaí. Despite frequent attempts to contact them, she was unable to do so, and personal visits to the Garda station were also unsuccessful. She was simply told to try again when particular Gardaí were on duty. The case was still not investigated at the time of this report.

In our neighbourhood

Simply passing through the neighbourhood alone in early morning and evening can also be hazardous.

> "The boy was walking pass the place where the girl lives to which she always called him a "nigger". So this particular day as the boy was heading to the playground to play soccer and as he passed along the girl's place kicking the ball to his friends who are not from Irish origin. The girl called them "nigger and Paki". So the boy went closer to her and told her to stop, but the girl didn't instead she sent her dog speaking in her native language believed to be polish instructing the dog to bite him . The boy was badly bitten by the dog and the father took him to the hospital. The father and the boy showed [NGO] the pictures of his wounds."

> "A young black Male was on the way home from work (cycling) [location removed]. Two men set upon him [information identifying perpetrator removed]. They beat him to the ground and repeatedly kicked him. He shouted to leave him alone. I am only coming home from work. They continued to kick and harass. They took his Bike, Jacket and Phone. The young Black Male limped up towards [location removed]. The Police arrived 45 Minutes Later and then left." (South Dublin, 10pm midweek, reported by witness)

The witness to this second case, a local resident, called the Gardaí on seeing the incident, but could not intervene otherwise. S/he described the victim as *"Too Terrified to do anything about it. Probably feels the Garda won't investigate properly. And he is probably right."*

Walking in the city centre

Amongst the most shocking assaults reported in this period is this brutal and sudden attack on a man of African descent on O'Connell Street, Dublin at 2 o'clock in the afternoon by a younger white Irish man. At the time of reporting, investigations by Gardaí were continuing aided by CCTV recording of the assault.

> "He was smoking in front of Dr Quirkey's Casino in Dublin 1, when suddenly one of 2 guys came running toward my friend and without any warning he assaulted him with a glass bottle in his head. He was injured and he was transported to hospital by ambulance." (Reported by friend of the victim)

Assaults by groups upon single victims are not unusual, although it is not essential for all members of the group to be involved, since the group itself gives a sense of security to perpetrators of spontaneous racist violence in any case. The group can also prevent the escalation of violence in some cases, and censure the perpetrator, but as in the case below, this is unusual.

The largest proportion of face-to-face incidents took place on public transport (including against transport staff) . . . there is a greater reasonable fear amongst people of African descent for their safety in these public places

"As I was walking at the side of River Liffey, I came close to 6 people walking the opposite side when the third boy around 23 year of age reached closer to me he swing his hand to my head and touched my left eye leaving a cut which caused the bleeding for almost 30 minutes. After punching me the group started shouting 'why did you hit the black bastard, he didn't do anything." (Male, 18-25 years old, Dublin).

This case was not reported to Gardaí.

Sudden displays of violence are commonly reported, and reflect the interchangeableness of victims for the perpetrator, as well as the spontaneous nature of the violence. This case from Limerick closely echoes the Dublin case above and, again, was not reported to Gardaí.

"We were heading out for our wedding anniversary. Myself and my husband were walking down O'Connell Street to a local club. When a group of young girls walked past shouting slurs at him, then one of them ran back and slapped my husband across the face and told him to 'go home'. The girls only focused on my husband (I am white Irish). They were calling him monkey, and shouting other slurs." (Limerick, 10pm)

Incidents like this encourage avoidance of public spaces for leisure. For example, the couple in the above case were visiting the city centre for a special occasion, and have decided not to revisit, out of fear and feelings of unsafety. City spaces are endangered when visitors and residents do not feel safe in them, and do not feel able to anticipate and police behaviour in them.

Walking our kids to school
Persistent harassment from known perpetrators makes everyday life vulnerable to interruption at any time, but when escalation to racist violence occurs, assaults can be repeated and escalate in severity and number of perpetrators. The following case is such an example.

*"She made comments such as 'black and dirty', 'monkeys, get your f**king passports and go back to your country', 'black people smell like fish' etc. This has been going on for ages and is about escalating.*

Last week Monday, she walked up to me and my 5 year old daughter and assaulted me (slapped me) after calling me stupid, bastard etc. I was forced to defend myself. The next morning, she came with her partner to assault me again after I'd dropped my daughter off in school.

We have made several efforts for her to leave us alone. She insults us every day (both in the morning when we drop our daughter off in school and in the afternoon when we go to pick her from school). She stalks us every time she sees us. We, especially our daughter, no longer feel safe walking the streets of [location removed]." (Male, 26-35 years old)

In this case, the family reported the harassment, and the assaults, to local Gardaí. The case was frustrated by false reports by the perpetrator and, although Gardaí discovered the false reports and sympathised with the family, no further action was taken. The victim says *"At the moment, me and my family have lost total confidence in the Gardaí."*

On the way home from the mosque
In the following case from South Dublin, a man and his pregnant wife were attacked by a group of teenagers near their home, with racist language used during the violent attack. The attack took place in mid-afternoon.

"I was walking home from the Mosque to my house. I was walking with my pregnant wife. We were stopped by a gang of white teenage boys, about 12 of them. They asked me the time. And then they assaulted me. It was only when my pregnant wife interceded that they stopped. I was beaten, punched and kicked to the ground. They busted my lips and kicked my ribs. My wife then phoned the police. The guards arrived straight away. I was injured on the ground while the guards asked did we want to press charges, suggesting that we don't, because the perpetrators were kids."

Despite the evident injuries of the victim and the use of racist language, the involvement of teenage perpetrators prompted Gardaí to encourage the victims not to press charges for serious racist violence. The teenagers were residents from the same neighbourhood. The combined result of the attack and the failure of Gardaí to take the incident seriously has caused the victim to continue to suffer the effects of the incident for a significant period of time afterwards.

"It has made me afraid. I don't walk home alone any

more. I always take the car. I am more vigilant and suspicious, and less trusting of white Irish people."

This case is an example of the ways in which Islamophobia and Afrophobia can intersect, as in this case, the victim's wife was wearing a headscarf which identified them as Muslims. It is not clear whether the pregnancy of the victim's wife was also targeted in the attack, since no violence against her is reported, but this is possible given the pattern of incidents against and causing distress for pregnant women and young mothers, as discussed later in this report.

> The ways in which racism was perpetrated frequently upon the family encouraged the children of the perpetrator to behave in ways which harassed the family, leading to further abuse and violence from the perpetrator

On the bus
Public transport is well known to be problematic in making people of African descent vulnerable to racism, whether they are passengers or staff.

In an assault case in South Dublin, a bus driver was the target of an unanticipated assault, while passengers were verbally abused by the perpetrator at the same time.

> "A woman came onto the bus and started shouting abuse at the bus driver about being a non-national. Turned to the rest of the passengers most of whom, myself included, are non-nationals and started yelling about foreign scum and how we need to get off of the bus and out of Ireland. She turned back to the driver and started trying to reach through the window and hit him. ... This continued for 10-15 minutes until she got off the bus."

This incident was not investigated by Gardaí.

> "I phoned the Guards and they said they were sending someone to address the issue, but no one arrived and the woman walked off the bus. There is however CCTV footage from Dublin Bus as the whole thing happened on the bus."

One case of assault in particular highlights the problem of racist harassment in this kind of environment. A Black African man was verbally abused and then hit by a white Irish woman on a crowded bus in South Dublin, and found himself subject to further abuse and violence when he defended himself.

> "I got on the bus and got upstairs to find a seat and as soon as I walked up the stairs, a woman with blond hair and red dress looked at me disgracefully and said 'look at him BLACK BASTARD, BLACK NIGGER, GET OUT AND GO BACK TO YOUR F**KING COUNTRY'. I did not say anything and continue behind her to find a seat [...]. The woman turned herself toward me and pointed her fingers to me: 'it's you f**king black bastard, I am talking to, look at you nigger, get out and go back to your f**king country', and was going more and more with even some of the strongest words which I cannot remember."

> "It was disgraceful, shocking and unacceptable as she was extremely and aggressively using racist words such as: 'You black bastard, are you not only a nigger, which was completely inexcusable. I am sick of you black coming into our country and taking our jobs, thinking you're better than us, it's because of people like you that I'm like this, my country is f**ked of you black bastard.' My kids' future is f**ked up because of people like you, who do you think you are, sitting at the top of this bus with us? Nobody wants you here, she then said everyone else here on the bus is thinking the same thing like me but I am the only one with the balls to say it out and louder."

The woman continued to abuse him loudly in front of other passengers, and when he asked her to stop, she stood up and threatened to hit him. He warned her not to do

> The bus driver was persuaded by the victim to call the Gardaí, although some passengers insisted on removing him from the bus, saying he was 'the cause' of the problem. One started shouting at the bus driver

this and that he would defend himself if necessary.

> *"She suddenly hit my face and from there I hold her hand at the second time she wanted to hit me again and I pushed her back which she felt and stood up to fight me. At that time, I stood up from my seat to find my way down the stairs and report it to the bus driver. I realised that a man who was sitting behind hold my neck from behind and pulled and hit me (he shouted on me, black bastard, leave her alone), which I turned and pushed him and he felt at the back and I again pushed the woman who was hitting me to force my way down the stairs."*

The victim pushed his attacker away. As he stood up to go downstairs, he was attacked by a white Irish man and again by the first perpetrator, drawing the attention of other women on the bus, who joined in the verbal abuse. The bus driver was persuaded by the victim to call the Gardaí, although some passengers insisted on removing him from the bus, saying he was 'the cause' of the problem. One started shouting at the bus driver.

> *"She said the woman was right racially abusing me and I should get back to my country. I told her that she was also racist and she should be ashamed of her disgraceful behaviours. She asked the bus driver to put me off of the bus otherwise they are the ones to leave the bus. I told her to leave as the bus will not move till the Garda come and report the incident. She said who cares and with other women (presumably her friends) they left."*

The first perpetrator also assaulted a female tourist who confronted her about her racism, and eventually walked away from the scene without arrest or interview.

> *"I called the police and with the bus driver help contacting the bus office and reporting the incident. I was told two times that the Garda will be up to us within two to five minutes but unfortunately they took over 20 to 30 minutes and even more and the woman and her male friend or companion eventually came down stairs and abused me again and other*

people calling them all f**king foreigners and that we should all f**king get out and go back to our bloody countries. She also hit a tourist woman who asked her to stop and said don't dare talk to people like that. At that stage an Irish woman who also tried to intervene was called f**king foreigner who replied to her that she was Irish but she replied f**k you all and got off of the bus with her male companion and walked away."

The impact of the incident on the man has been significant, seriously affecting his health and confidence, and encouraging him to avoid normal everyday activities. The combination of the ferocity of the incident, the support given to the perpetrator by other passengers, and the failure of Gardaí to adequately respond to the situation have made him feel *"shaken, humiliated, shocked and completely devastated."*

> *"The police only arrived after about or approximately around 30 to 40 minutes after they were called, and the woman walked freely down the street with her companion cursing. I was so frightened by the behaviour of the woman toward me and I have quietly left shaken, humiliated, shocked and completely devastated. Since then, I have been dealing with days and nights headaches and now so scary to even get on the bus or sitting even close to someone else. I have been left so devastated and unable to sleep and been having panic attacks each times not truly knowing what to do which I am expecting GPs appointment to seek for help. I am completely, truly and honestly left in a shocking situation which I am lacking of real words to express myself."*

The perpetrator was reported by another passenger to be well known for her racist abuse of foreigners in the area but not previously known for violence. The victim continues to suffer panic attacks and reports his disappointment in the Garda response which blamed alcohol abuse by the perpetrator.

This incident is worth presenting in full because it highlights the problematic nature of racist harassment and violence when groups of perpetrators are involved and when Gardaí believe alcohol to be the cause of incidents. People of African descent are expected to be passive victims of racist violence, not to defend themselves or respond in any way. Such an expectation is unfair and unrealistic. It is not, however, unique to Ireland. Research from the United States and Australia shows that white populations (and police) view Black people who respond to racist violence as undeserving of sympathy or support[22]. This is known as the problem of the 'perfect victim' or 'ideal victim'.

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22   K.M. Craig (1999) 'Retaliation, fear, or rage an investigation of African American and White reactions to racist hate crimes', *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 14(2), 138-151; G. Mason (2007) 'Hate Crime as a Moral Category: Lessons From the Snowtown Case', Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology, 40(3), 249-271.

6 Endangerment to life

Verbalised threats to life are frequent in cases of harassment, but there are significant cases where threats made have been enacted and perpetrators have committed criminal offences which have endangered the lives of the people of African descent they have targeted. Some of these have taken the form of arson directed against Black people, several of which have also appeared in the media over the past year.

This case, in South Dublin, involved an incident of arson at 2am which put the lives of sleeping residents at severe risk:

> *"After a pattern of racist harassment directed at me by the same group of people in my apartment block, including previous incidents of criminal damage to my flat door and to my car. One woman shouted "n---er, you've come here to take our jobs, go home!". They called the guards on me to get me to move my car. They damaged my car. Later that night, I awoke because the fire brigade came. I didn't want to go outside because of the racial harassment because I didn't realise that they had set fire to the house. Then my girlfriend left and the Guards came again. After they left, I awoke to smoke and the flat was on fire. A neighbour was banging on the door trying to alert me to the incident. He had seen the perpetrators set the fire. I really thought they were trying to kill me. Initially, [Gardaí] did not take a statement. After the media coverage they came and took my statement. I was too traumatised to give it to them. So they wrote a summary of what happened. (South Dublin, 2am, reported by EU National of Black African ethnicity)*

People of African descent are expected to be passive victims of racist violence, not to defend themselves or respond in any way. Such an expectation is unfair and unrealistic

7 Assault without injury

Assaults of these kind are frequent and usually sudden. They cause fear and intimidation, but may not be taken seriously by witnesses or even by Gardaí because there is no injury resulting from the incident.

Out shopping

After using the toilets in a South Dublin shopping centre, one man found his exit from the toilets blocked by a security guard in an incident described by a witness as *"threatening, intimidating, abusive, unprofessional, uncivilized and inappropriate behaviour"*. The security guard *"deliberately obstructed"* the exit, *"shouting continuously"* at the man, and when the man removed his phone from his pocket to call for help, threatened to take the phone.

8 Harassment and verbal abuse

Harassment of people of African descent in public spaces is commonly reported to iReport.ie, with incidents also including verbal assault, intimidation, being followed, threats of violence, and assault without injury. The impact of harassment and verbal abuse in public spaces must not be underestimated. People experiencing this kind of unpredictable verbal abuse report heightened levels of fear going about daily activities, including walking in their local neighbourhoods, and significant levels of avoidance activity, where they do not participate in normal activities because of their fear of physical attack. No previous experience of physical attack is necessary to experience this heightened level of fear because physical attacks have been reported in Ireland in the mainstream media as well as by ENAR Ireland and other NGOs.

> *"I should have my liberty to walk freely in Dublin, that has been taken from me. I calculate every minute, waiting for the bus is pretty scary, when a white person approach my direction, I move away and pray they would not abuse verbally or physically. It is a horrible sinking feeling that I would not wish on anyone."*

> *"I was walking at the city centre with my sister and my friend. We were chatting and laughing and then all of a sudden there was an Irish white lady at the back, she started screaming at us, saying 'bitches' and other things we couldn't even understand, we looked back wondering what is going on, and she kept on going, she was following us and she screamed even louder, the other two Irish women who didn't even know her joined her and started giving us strange and spiteful looks whispering something and the*

first lady screamed even louder and pointed at us and other local people looked and were not bothered, my friend called us and said we should run away because she was afraid they could attack us physically, so she ran into the Dublin bus station office and we followed her and got in. (South Dublin, 3.30pm)

Among the most shocking forms of racism are the unanticipated incidents of violence and threat which are reported. These are difficult to predict and to prevent, and cause significant shock in witnesses as well as victims. There are, as well, unpredictable threats:

"A person on bike called me a Black ape, and said he was going to kill me." (South Dublin, 1.30am)

People experiencing this kind of unpredictable verbal abuse report heightened levels of fear going about daily activities, including walking in their local neighbourhoods, and significant levels of avoidance activity, where they do not participate in normal activities because of their fear of physical attack

Witnesses attest to the impunity with which perpetrators appear to act, although the threat of a witness calling police can prevent further harassment.

"I was at a bus stop at Mountjoy Street waiting for a bus and an African young girl originally from Somalia was called nigga and spat by two Irish ladies in their 40s. The lady was standing just behind me and the two Irish ladies were passing by and suddenly I heard the abusive language which called my attention. I took the challenge with them and was told that I wasn't concern as they were not talking to me. I asked them what the poor lady did to be abused? One said she hit me with her bag which was completely lies as the lady was just standing at the bus stop and the other said I don't care. I took my phone said I am dialling the police now... They said "F**k You and the police" and disappeared. Talking to the poor lady she told me she get these abuses often." (North Dublin, 1.30pm, reported by witness,)

These incidents are so frequent, and Gardaí responses so frequently poor towards more violent offences, that people targeted do not see reporting as worth their time. The Mountjoy Square incident exemplifies this well.

"When I asked the lady to report it on iReport, she asked me "what will that do? Is the iReport more powerful than the Gardaí, she asked me? Who are they? Same people, I don't waste my time..." ... "I have gone few times to the Garda and was more disappointed. They even threat me more badly" she said. "I was called a big liar by a Garda going to report it to the Garda Station. Now I just take it and move on with my life. I pray that I don't get kill as now I always go out with fear and praying for god to bring me safe back home. My sister was beaten by Irish boys but when we reported it to the Garda they never came back to us. Its more than 2 years now. What can we do? Just prayers..." (Reported by witness)

The impact of the UK Home Office 'Go Home' immigration campaign which used vans clad in posters saying 'In the UK illegally? Go Home or Risk Arrest' is sharply reflected in the on-street experiences reported here in Ireland.

"I was walking toward the main road from my home in the afternoon. A small white car driving in the opposite direction slowed down and started to shout violently "Get out, Go home!" One of them pushed half of his body out of the window and continue to shout at me. I was afraid. I started to pray. It was pouring with rain and there was nobody around. I was afraid to take out my phone in case the young man jumps out of the car and try to attack me. It was like a dream. They drove off and I walked quickly to a shop. I could not tell the Gardaí because they never listen. My family and I have approached them before and they were not helpful. I phoned my husband who consoled me and informed that in England vans were driven around with the same words "Go home!" These young men were confident and proud to do what they did."

Adding to the sense of vulnerability is the failure of witnesses to intervene or attempt to address the apparent danger in many cases. Entering local shops or other businesses to shake off harassers is a common strategy amongst people of African descent in Ireland, and can be quite successful. Finding help or shelter is not guaranteed however, and being refused help at this point further contributes to the general feeling of unsafety. In one case, a Black African woman (25-35 years old) was chased down the street by a slightly older white Irish woman shouting abuse. Other passers-by did not offer support. When the woman ran into a nearby shop for help, she *"was told her type was not welcome and should go back to where she came from".* (North Dublin, 7.30pm, reported by NGO)

Some of the incidents involving racist language arise in

'I would love to find out more information about approaching a racist attack'

the context of everyday interactions, where Black people are picked out and blamed for supermarket queue-jumping, bumping into people on pavements or in shops, causing traffic jams or minor collisions while driving. These are reported to iReport.ie for two reasons: either because the target notices that white Irish people are not blamed for similar incidents, or because of the level of abuse and violence that arises out of these encounters. Common insults include 'nigger' and 'black bastard', and these are used frequently across a wide variety of situations.

> *"Walking past the Spar shop at the corner of Dorset Street and Temple Street, a man coming out of the shop called out 'nig, nig, nig, nig, nig, nig...' at a black man walking past the shop."* (North Dublin, 6pm, reported by witness)

> *"As I was walking through a car park a man in a car who was waiting for someone to pull out of a parking space was subjected to racist abuse from the car behind. The man shouted 'F***ing Nigger' and then drove around him."* (Limerick, 11am, reported by witness)

Recent incidents have included references to Ebola, used against Black Europeans as well as African nationals.

Spitting is frequently used as a means of communicating disgust towards people of African descent. Like the Dublin bus stop case mentioned above, spitting can occur alongside either or both verbal abuse and assault, and is used to intimidate the targeted person. The use of spitting is a common means of indicating disgust to the targeted person(s) at their presence.

> *"On the street, I met the person head on, person looked at me, saw me, turned and spat on the ground with disgust on face, looked away till l passed by and went away."*

> *"While I was waiting a train to Connelly station 2 guys were standing in front of me then he just spit on me and they started making fun of me. I felt really bad because it was awful and disrespectful. It was a really bad experience especially spitting on people only because of skin colour so this thing it will make you uncomfortable wherever you go."*

9 Public shaming

Evident throughout the reports is the highly performative nature of racism against people of African descent of all ages. This is marked by shouting and continued harassment in public spaces, frequently escalating as the perpetrator attracts the attention and intervention of others. This can result in violence perpetrated against witnesses as well as against the initial target of the racist abuse. This type of incident is documented on public transport, in shopping centres and in the street. Attention is loudly called to the blackness of someone's appearance and this acts as a means of identifying a wider audience of support or tolerance for further forms of abuse.

People targeted in this sort of incident frequently report the frustration they feel at being restrained in their response. The few who respond to the racism, either verbally or physically, are subject to further harassment and sometimes violence by a wider audience, and usually become the subject of attention from the Gardaí as well if they are called to the scene. Witnesses to public incidents who are not themselves Black frequently cite feeling powerless, and are aware of the possibility of violence against them if they intervene. One such witness described feeling upset with herself at not having intervened in an incident near her in a pub, since she was unsure whether intervention would aggravate the situation:

> *"I would love to find out more information about approaching a racist attack. I am worried about using the wrong language or saying something which might make the situation worse. I think that might be a fear that a lot of people have and maybe there is a need for some more information."*

There is a good deal of evidence of support offered by passers-by in the aftermath of these events, however witnesses are evidently reasonably concerned about their own safety and therefore offer only emotional support.

> *"I was waiting at the bus stop when young boys walked up to me while I was on my phone sending a text and one of them shouted on my ear: "f*** back to your country". The others were funnily laughing at me I was shaken of fear and when I looked at who shouted at me, I saw them walked away looking at me and making me a sign language and the one who shouted at me using his fingers on me. There was an old man just beside me who immediately grabbed my shoulder and said to me: "I am sorry to hear what he said to you, this is the stupidest thing I ever heard. Please don't respond to him. This is a shame that this is happening in my own country."* (North Dublin, 5.45pm)

Neighbourhood abuse of Black residents can also be highly performative in nature. Residents subjected to har-

assment frequently find that perpetrators use the public space outside their houses or flats to watch them, shout abuse when they arrive or leave, and intimidate other passers-by. This continuous form of harassment is evidently not taken seriously by other neighbours or the Gardaí, given the reporting of ineffective responses to it, despite making residents feel that they are under surveillance and threat. This creates a particularly threatening environment for women living alone with their children, and makes the issue of private rental housing availability problematic.

'I am a nurse by profession and at times it hurts me that people treat other people like this. Do I have to explain to every white person that no, I am not on benefits???'

Young mothers and children as targets

Young Black women under 35 are particularly subject to public shaming in the form of accusations of having children only to attain the right of residence in Ireland. This sort of accusation closely reflects the accusations of birth tourism against African mothers that marked the debates surrounding the 1999 constitutional referendum on citizenship. A young mother described her feelings about such an incident:

> "My husband is working and am looking after our family. I am a nurse by profession and at times it hurts me that people treat other people like this. Do I have to explain to every white person that no, I am not on benefits??? What business is it to them? […] However, this is not the first time we have encountered such abuse."

Another reported "*I was told to go back to my country. Not to have children here, my son is five months.*" She felt "*awful, threatened, cornered*" as a result of the incident. Accusations of this kind are usually aimed at women on their own and could be particularly hurtful and damaging to mothers of very young babies who become nervous in using public spaces.

Incidents against children by other children are less frequently reported, usually only when they are witnessed by an adult or involve assault (as in the case of the dog attack above).

> "A young black teenager delivering advertising leaf-

lets to houses was followed from house to house by a gang of children, with some possibly about 13, 14. They engaged in silent intimidation of him by closely following him as he went about his business, standing at the entrance to each drive as he went in, and staring him down. Some of them called out things to him (which I could not hear). As he left each house to come down the drive, they blocked his path, making it difficult for him to move on to the next house. This continued for at least ten minutes. This is the second time I have seen them doing this to him, and I have not seen them do it to anybody else delivering mail. I rang police. They didn't turn up." (North Dublin, 7.30pm, reported by witness)

However children are present in many of the incidents involving adult perpetrators and targets, and are sometimes targeted by adults themselves. These kinds of incidents range from direct exclusion to harassment and violence.

> "A black father and his young son were walking along the street in the afternoon, when an Irish man placed a banana on the path in front of them." (Meath, 4pm, reported by witness)

> "Me and my son and daughter had just come out of our house. We were on our way to the library together. We closed the door and we heard shouting from across the road. Then they started to throw things at us. These small kids all about 12 or 13 were throwing apples and eggs at us and shouting bad and nasty things at us and throwing things from just across the street. I shouted at them that I knew them, because I do know them and then ran further away but kept throwing things as us. We kept walking down the road but they kept throwing things and shouting at us. A passer-by stopped the car by the boys and she shouted at them, then they ran away." (Male, South Dublin, 1.30pm)

> "My 11 year old son was spat in the face by a man age approx. 40 years old. There were other Irish adults and kids around. My son was the only black person there." (North Dublin, 9am)

> "A local man told a 12 year old boy (of Nigerian and Irish heritage) and his friends that 'there are too many of you' and that 'Muslims should go back to their own country'. This same man recently complained to the boys mum that her son had 'kicked a white boy' and again saying that there were 'too many Muslims'." (Offaly, reported by NGO)

> "A child was removed from a group of 7 children because one child in the group named […] was of African origin. The child removed was told never to play with […] again." (North Dublin, 4pm, reported by neighbour.)

Reports commonly express concern about the exposure of children to racist expressions and threat:

> "Racist graffiti was spray painted on to a sign outside a Divine Hope of Glory International Church in Kildare Town. The words were "No Blacks". This church is located beside both Educate Together and Gaelscoil National schools also where children can see it as they go to school." (Kildare, reported by local resident)

However it is clear from the reports that women and children are also particularly vulnerable to abuse from neighbours involving threats, damage and violence.

A young mother living alone with her son reported incidents of repeated harassment by teenagers who used the space outside her house for smoking and drinking (with suspected drug-taking). Harassment began with verbal abuse and repeated use of the word 'nigger' behind her back or yelled from a distance. The harassment escalated with banging on her windows and playing 'obscene' music into her windows when they saw her in the house. When she became fearful of broken windows and confronted them, the damage directed at the house escalated. Gardaí were called twice but did not respond. The woman took refuge at a friend's house with her son in fear of further escalation when more young people started to turn up. She described her understanding of the events in the following terms, identifying her isolation as making her particularly vulnerable:

> "The words they use to shout while banging at my house makes me feel like I'm being victimized solely for being black. Obviously being black female and staying alone adds to the fact that they can abuse with ease."

This kind of harassment of mothers and children at home reflects a wider pattern of neighbourhood harassment. This highlights housing and neighbourhood integration as key issues for attention. Several reports highlight the problems of neighbourhood disorder for the safe and peaceful living of Black African and other minority ethnic residents.

> "My car window on driver seat was broken in probably July 2013, my mirror was broken in March 2014, eggs were throw to mine and my other black neighbour's car and house and my car several times. First time when my car was broken, the Garda said it was a gang of boys and they did to other cars. But the fact is it only happen to 2 cars with black owners. When my neighbour heard them, they shouted at her saying "nigga", means they knew who we were. Second time when my me and my neighbour's mirrors were broke, the police said they will look at it nothing ever happen same things with the eggs throwing."
> (South Dublin, reported by Black African female 18-25 years old)

Ongoing problems of harassment can diversify into different forms, making the situation harder to contain and for public agencies to deal with:

> "Our neighbours are being racist to Africans and Romanians in our small estate i.e. 20 houses. Garda have been involved with no solution. It is now escalating. Being called nigger. Against more than 10 African and Roma neighbours." (North Dublin, reported by mixed couple, 36-55 years old).

> "Client received a complaint off a neighbour about a rodent problem. The neighbour said that the rodent problem was due to the client. The client states that there was no basis for this and believes that the neighbour's comments were racially motivated. The neighbour reported the client to the council and a representative was brought out to inspect the house." (Cork, reported by supporting organisation on behalf of Black African female, 36-55 years old).

'My 11 year old son was spat in the face by a man age approx. 40 years old. There were other Irish adults and kids around. My son was the only black person there'

10 Racism by children and in schools

Although there are disproportionately few reports of racism by children, since it can be easily brushed off in some cases as childish behaviour, where it is violent or where it is seen to be tolerated (or encouraged) by adults, it is particularly hard to ignore.

> "I was walking along the street with 2 African friends one on either side of me. The group was walking towards us and one child spat directly at my friend, it reached her hand and sleeve of her coat. When we expressed horror the adults said "He is only a child, come away from, them Black people" in a derisory manner." (Limerick, 2.30pm)

Adult witnesses in these reports were not at all sure how to deal with threats by children, particularly where parents were present and allowing racist behaviours:

> "I witnessed a small group of children approx. 10 years of age standing outside a cafe shouting, making gestures and laughing loudly at a group of black children inside the cafe who were serving themselves food. The white children were making animal type noises and one of the boys was saying in a loud voice 'Niggers'. I was walking past but decided to challenge them so I asked them what they were doing. The little girls were about to leave but the boys threatened me with their family members and accused me of verbal abuse. I left them and I am not sure if they continued to harass the people inside the café" (North Dublin, 6pm)

Several reports involve the schools attended by children of African descent, with evidence demonstrating that the responses by the school were ineffective and sometimes aggravating. Location details are protected here to ensure anonymity. Assaults by pupils on other pupils were dealt with only as bullying, and not addressed adequately to prevent recurring incidents.

> "There is re-occurring incidents of racist bullying at [...] School. An incident may happen a couple times a year and it is felt by the parents that the school is not adequately dealing with the issue. There is one particular boy in the victim's class that will use language such as 'black people are stupid', 'f**king blacks' and 'you should go back to your own country'."

> "A 9 year old girl of Nigerian descent has been experiencing bullying at school. Sometimes this bullying has a racialised element to it too. She is physically bullied at school- being pushed over as well as being called names that relate to the colour of her skin."

Stereotyping of African parents as pushy is also racialised, and allows them to be side-lined in the investigation and resolution of incidents of racism in schools. Rejecting such a racialisation and inviting parents to suggest solutions as part of a team within the school offers a more positive response from school staff, and reinforces parental confidence in the school to handle future incidents. This is at odds with the kinds of responses from schools as seen in the report below, which also details racism by teachers and staff.

> "Senior boys at [...] National School have been bullying a 9 year old Nigerian boy. The boys bullied him physically and made him feel stupid. He was very upset about this. When his mother went to address the issue with the principal of the school, she feels like she was dismissed and no real investigation into the bullying incidents occurred. In a separate incident, a teacher once said to the father of the same boy that 'your son is behaving like an animal at the zoo'. The school also called a social worker on the parents of this boy due to an allegation of hitting, however this allegation was found to be completely unfounded. The parents feel like the school is trying to intimidate them after they complained about the treatment of their son. There have also been a number of other incidents of their son feeling discriminated against at school. The parents feel that the treatment by the school is highly racist and they feel that they can't complain. They think there is a general discrimination against black families at the school."

Education policy in Ireland has no explicit anti-racist strategy, and schools decide cultural diversity approaches at a local level, while racist incidents appear to be frequently recorded simply as bullying[23]. This undermines parents' efforts to address the root of the problem and to work with school staff to raise awareness. It has knock on effects for the confidence and security of children of African descent, since they are unable to name their experiences as racism and unsupported by antiracist strategies within the educational environment. Given the extent to which children are subjected to racism outside the school on a daily basis, the ability to name one's everyday experiences is important for self-esteem and understanding. School strategies need to do more than pay lip service to anti-racism in the classroom or in school policies, but need to be incorporated consistently. Programmes are available to schools in Ireland to support them in this development[24].

23   M. Parker-Jenkins & M. Masterson (2013) No longer 'Catholic, White and Gaelic': schools in Ireland coming to terms with cultural diversity, *Irish Educational Studies*, 32(4), 477-492; D. Devine (2009) 'Mobilising Capitals? Migrant Children's Negotiation of Their Everyday Lives in School', *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 30(5), 521–535.

24   The Yellow Flag for example includes intercultural and anti-racism training for staff, curriculum aids, a review of school issues around diversity, help in adapting policies, establishing an action plan and in-school groups which can act as regular reviewers http://www.yellowflag.ie/

11 Racism and entertainment

Concerns about the reproduction of racism in interactions amongst children are also expressed in relation to the insidious and implicit ways in which it emerges in normalised activities. One example is the emergence of blackface in public performances. When a community school planned last year to put on a public performance of Hairspray, parents reported their outrage at being informed that staff would "paint 'black faces' on white students who are to play the musicals African American characters".

"Not only is this outrageous, there are other Black African/Irish students also participating in the play-and undoubtedly their parents will also be present. I am not certain of this, but I assume they are not expecting this blatantly racist situation. Also I have been informed that the school has received written authorization by the students' parents, in question, to allow the school to proceed with painting the blackfaces on the white students. I am disgruntled by this, I have Black African family myself. This is humiliating to our African community living in [...] and their children attending [...]. I hope that this behaviour does not become normalized before the Black African/ Irish children, THIS IS NOT OK. Painting black faces on white 'actors' has been deemed racist since it began with the Minstrel shows. Blackface is more than just burnt cork applied as makeup. It is a style of entertainment based on racist Black stereotypes that began in minstrel shows and apparently it continues today."

Another report mentions the persistence of 'blackface' in entertainment more generally:

"The Last Waltz is a tribute night of The Band concert happening in the Olympia. In the original, Muddy Waters performs. In the tribute, apparently a white Irish person performs as Muddy Waters in blackface. A friend told me about it. I can't believe that this is still completely acceptable behaviour in Ireland in this day and age."

The problematic nature of 'blackface' or the singling out of Black people for performance may be more obvious to those who have lived abroad, but there is also a growing awareness amongst white Irish people of the impact of racism in wider forms of entertainment in Ireland. In the case below, for example, a white Irish family member of a Black child noted the potential impact of racialised Halloween costume marketing.

"I am a grandmother, my grandsons father is Nigerian, while shopping in Heaton's I came across the

'An interactive show performer spray painted a placard [to say 'Bring Back Slavery'] and handed it to my friend's daughter who is of mixed heritage'

horror masks, one of them up for sale was just an ordinary black face, looking at the mask made me feel quite sick to my stomach, there are a lot of young African children in Letterkenny, I cannot imagine what it would do to their esteem, to see a black face and the words written above in bold lettering ...EXPRESSIONS OF EVIL .... and above that ....Midnight Creatures....it says on it adult only ...I felt like buying them all up in case a child would see them."

In another case at a family festival a 'mixed heritage' child was singled out from a predominantly white audience for the creation of a joke around race and slavery. The case was reported by a friend of the child's parents.

"During a circus performance in Muckno festival, an interactive show performer spray painted a plac-

ard [to say 'Bring Back Slavery'] and handed it to my friend's daughter who is of mixed heritage, I have made efforts to engage the organisers regards getting an explanation, the Gardaí was contacted but nobody is making any progress or attempting to. This is not only racial based but a public humiliation of a child. Very disappointed with the way this issue is being handled, because it highlights a race based negative representatives of black people's heritage."

Whilst events like this are apparently infrequent, they cannot be dismissed as entirely innocent. Ireland's entertainment history in the 19th century included regular blackface performances as well as occasional visiting human zoos (where Africans could be viewed for a price). Ireland was famously subject to a damning critique by Frederick Douglass, the famous American anti-slavery spokesman, for the popularity of blackface here, which continued in popularity particularly amongst Irish diasporas in the UK in cities like Liverpool until the start of World War 1. Orphaned children sent in the 1950s to Australia from Northern Ireland had their faces painted black to mimic indigenous Australian children as part of the on-board attractions for paying passengers on the voyage. Even as late as the 1970s, showbands using blackface and minstrelsy such as the The Zulus and the Black and White Minstrel Show on BBC television were popular with Irish audiences. Black face paint continues to be popularly sold for Halloween costumes across Ireland, and it continues to be viewed as relatively harmless, appearing in reports concerning social media as well. Unlike other European countries, Ireland has not been forced to address the politics of Blackface. These cases however highlight the start of shifting attitudes towards the practice today.

12 Discrimination and the rental housing market

Affordable housing in the Greater Dublin area is difficult to find and several reports detail the experience of constant rejection of people of Black or Black African ethnicity seeking rental housing. In some cases, these families were already restricted in the housing available to them because of the permitted discrimination against tenants with rent supplement. However the experience of discrimination is also shared amongst Black families without rent supplement.

"I called a number to inquire about the availability of a house for rent on Daft.ie the person asked me where I was from, and then said the house is not available." (No location given, reported by female, 26-35 years old)

"A black African family have been trying to find a house to rent for over 6 months. Every time they go to view the few houses that accept rent allowance, they have consistently been the family who is unsuccessful in their application for a home. This black African family can never get past the interview stage for a house - someone else always gets the house" (Meath, reported by supporting organisation)

"For 6 months now this [Black African] family of 6 have been trying to find a house to rent, but on every occasion that they view a house they are turned down and another family gets the house. While I cannot prove racism, I believe it is an issue as 6 months being turned down for a house is excessive." (Reported by supporting organisation)

"I have proof the landlady concerned denied to accept a deposit and later claimed somebody else had rented but when I pretended I needed accommodation I was offered the opportunity to view it." (Limerick, reported by family member of Black African female, 18-25 years old).

"A black woman called about renting a private house which was put up on the internet before lunch time today, when she finally got through she said she was interested in the house and coming to view it but was told the house was gone and the phone was cut off. [...] When a member of our organisation rang we were told how much the house was, how many offers there had been and were offered an appointment for viewing." (Meath, reported by supporting organisation)

"The young woman found a house on Daft and called to make an appointment to view. [...]. When we called we were told the house was available and were given an appointment to view. She felt very helpless and sad as she has been looking for over 6 months for a house, as her current place is very damp and she is expecting a baby in a few week time." (Meath, reported by supporting organisation on behalf of Black African female 26-35 years old).

Three reports concerned third party comments made about Africans living in Ireland by estate agents and landlords to other people. A single bad experience by an estate agent is sufficient to deny rental opportunities to all people of African origin. It is not clear if the same policies would apply to all people of African descent, but the language employed in these reports suggests that wider racism plays a role in the perception of African migrants as much as any professional experiences.

"Recently viewing apartments in Dublin. Landlords were happy that my partner and I were white and Irish. At one point a landlord went on a racist rant about black people in Dublin and was incredibly derogatory towards this community. Disgusted that

there seemed to be an overwhelmingly strong incidence of racism amongst white Irish male landlords. I can only imagine how difficult it is for other nationalities to obtain a rental apartment in Dublin when Irish people are favoured to that extent. They seemed entirely comfortable to make racist comments in public. The terms and language used, e.g. "nigger"" (North Dublin, reported by white Irish female)

Refusals to rent to African women who are pregnant or who have young babies is a problem well noted by researchers in this field particularly since 2004. Several reports related to either pregnant women or young families denied accommodation. The Equal Status Acts prohibit discrimination in accommodation provision on the grounds of race, gender or family status, but there is a clear pattern of discrimination in Dublin and Meath within the received reports.

13 Racism and businesses

Discrimination against consumers

Given the established centrality of pubs and bars in Irish social life, it is essential to see their inaccessibility to Black people as deeply problematic. Normal entrance to and service within public houses is important to facilitate full social inclusion especially since recent studies have noted increasing, rather than decreasing importance for the pub as social centre in many towns and villages. Interaction in public houses in Ireland is not limited to regular drinking, since birthday, anniversary, wedding or local celebrations are regularly held in such premises by default.

"After a long night of studying I decided to go out to eat something a have a drink or two. After food I walked to the entrance of this pub. As I approached the door the security guard pulled me from behind saying I am not allowed to enter. I asked if the bar is closed for the night, but he answered saying no. I then requested him to give me a reason. He shrugged and shook his head meaning none. When I insisted for a reason, and asked to see his manager, he then changed the story saying I have had too much to drink. I was very shocked at this sudden twist to his story, and asked to see the manager. A bar attendant then walked up to me, and we started discussing. He realized that I was in no way drunk/intoxicated but stated that the security guard had a right to his own opinion (cover up plan). Meanwhile there many white folks allowed in while I stood outside (some of them drunk)." (Reported by Black student, Cork)

"I met two black male friends who were over from

'I felt so bad because I was with my young daughter because she was asking "mummy what have you done, why are they talking to you like this?" I couldn't explain to her. I felt without a doubt that it was because of the colour of my skin that was the issue for this woman'

London for the weekend and decided to take them to [name removed] for cocktails. I got there early and was let in no problem. My friends had trouble finding the place so I left, met up with them and returned. The door men would not let them in. He didn't give them a reason but it was only 9.15 pm, we were sober and were all well-dressed. As we stood outside they let countless white girls and guys in - so it clearly wasn't a gender balance issue that they were trying to correct by not allowing my male friends in. I am absolutely disgusted that this would happen in 2014!" (Reported by white Irish witness, South Dublin, 9pm)

My partner and I walked into [name removed] pub. All seating at the front of the pub was taken, but we found two seats at the rear of the bar counter. Next to our seats were an elderly couple. The lady, in full view of myself and within hearing distance made a remark to the gentleman sitting next to her along the lines of "There kind isn't welcome here" and glared at me. [...] My partner and I conversed for about ten minutes, while trying to catch the attention of the barman who was obviously serving other patrons. When our signals to the barman went unnoticed (at this point I assumed he was only serving people at the front bar), I decided to go the front to order our beverages. As I stood at the bar, another lady came up alongside me and said hello. [...] As the lady stood next to me, the barman took her order, and ignored mine. This happened several times until the penny dropped. I was not going to be served. (Reported by person describing herself as 'mixed race', Newbridge, 10pm)

There is a role for businesses, particularly businesses which serve as social spaces, to address racism perpetrated against customers and other visitors. There is some evidence that bar staff do address racism where it is likely to lead to disorder from the reported cases.

enough to be heard inside the bar and a barman came out to the smoking area to ask the three individuals to leave. After quite a lot of resistance the three individuals moved on, but instead of leaving her drink on the table the lady in her 40's threw her drink at my wife as she left. The gentleman in his 40's left the scene by telling my wife that he would be looking out for her the next time she was in town." (South Dublin, 7pm)

There are of course those who are not interested in accessing premises serving alcohol for religious or other reasons, but lack of safety or fear of humiliation should not be amongst the reasons for declining to access these services.

Reports about discrimination in shops and supermarkets reinforce the inescapability of these experiences in the course of everyday activities. There are repeated instances of Black people being pushed aside in shops by staff or other customers, and being handled or put under surveillance by security.

"I bought a product online from Debenhams and they sent the wrong item to me. I called them and they told me to go to my nearest Debenhams to get a refund and re order the product. [...]The supervisor came and told me they couldn't take the product there and that I should go to another store in Dublin. Then she told me to get off the queue so she could serve other customers or she would call security to get me out. I protested, saying who am I am I not a customer. A customer then said please move you are scaring my daughter. At this point the manager came and after explaining my situation he apologised and took me to another till to give me a refund. I felt so bad because I was with my young daughter because she was asking "mummy what have you done, why are they talking to you like this?" I couldn't explain to her. I felt without a doubt that it was because of the colour of my skin that was the issue for this woman. [...] I felt humiliated and helpless and I never expected something like this to happen to me, especially in a shop. I was particularly embarrassed as there were other customers watching my treatment. I felt particularly bad when she threatened to call security for me when I had done nothing to warrant this." (North Dublin, reported by Black African female, 36-55 years old)

"[I was] waiting to use self-check service in a shopping centre. Was pushed out of the way by another customer. Security intervened when I approached the customer. Security automatically sided with the other gentleman and used abrupt and rude language. Self-check attendant queried securities response." (Cork, Black male, 26-35 years old).

Another report, also from Cork, described *"Being constantly followed around numerous supermarkets by staff when trying to do grocery shopping. With the intimation that I am going to steal something."*

My wife arrived home this evening in a distressed state. She is from Brazil and has African ancestry. She went into town today to meet a friend of hers who arrived in Ireland at the weekend. She showed her friend around some of the sites and they decided to stop for a drink. They sat at a table located in the smoking area beside the footpath on Dame Street. A lady in her 60's came out to smoke and was soon joined by a man and a woman in their 40's, my wife thinks these two people were her son and her daughter in law. There were two tables in the smoking area, one was occupied by my wife and her friend and the other was vacant. While she was out smoking the lady in her 60's decided that wanted a table in the smoking area where she could also drink. Instead of using the vacant table the lady in her 60's asked my wife to remove her things off the table that she was sitting at because she wanted to use it for her drinks. My wife told her there was a vacant table in the smoking area that she could use. At this point the lady in her 60's asked my wife if she thought she could tell her what to do because she was black. At this point the two individuals in there 40's decided to join the conversation by backing up the lady in her 60's with insulting comments related to her skin colour; at this stage not only did they want my wife to leave the table but wanted her to leave the country too. The volume of their comments were loud

Employees experiencing workplace abuse

Staff who are racially abused at work by customers or colleagues are in a particularly difficult position, and cannot respond to the abuse without raising concerns about their employment. Security guards feature in several reports as experiencing racist verbal abuse and violent threats at work from customers. These are invariably reported by witnesses, mostly other customers or passers-by.

> *"The person was working as a petrol pump attendant and was filling a woman's tyres with air. A white Irish man came into the station demanding that his car be filled with petrol. The victim said he was with another person at which point the older man became angry and called him a F**king black monkey and said that he shouldn't be in this country anyway. He felt embarrassed, sad, bullied and helpless as he needed the job and couldn't talk back to the customer."* (Meath, reported by supporting organisation about experience of a Black-African male, 26-35 years old)

Just over five percent of reports concerned staff abused by customers or colleagues. Workplace abuse by colleagues appears with regularity in the reported cases, although not with frequency. Workplace harassment is often termed 'bullying' by others, but rarely by those people targeted by it, and its renaming can undermine effective responses to it. It can include verbal abuse, repeated social situations of exclusion and mockery, lack of job security, refusal of promotion and illegal workplace practices.

Workplace abuse sometimes includes direct physical abuse, or the threat thereof, but this is rare, since it is more likely to result in dismissal for the perpetrator. There are, nonetheless, serious physical consequences of workplace abuse, since targeted persons are repeatedly pushed to work harder and longer than their colleagues under conditions of isolation, denigration and severe stress[25]. Because of this, some reports are lengthy and detail a range of experiences of victimisation over an extended period of time.

> *"I was bullied at work by a colleague that was promoted a level above me and made redundant in a role that still existed when I spoke out. The [project] was to set up a team but because of my excellent records from my previous employee and the fact that I knew the job hands-on, the MD and the operations manager started manipulating [me] to do all the job myself. I inherited two unskilled employees that were already there. The two of them were uncomfortable for an African person to be their boss and were reluctant to have team meetings. I somehow overcame that with some managerial skill before they started*

25   For more on workplace racism and its effects, see M. Mistry and J. Latoo (2009) 'Uncovering the face of racism in the workplace', *British Journal of Medical Practitioners, 2*(2), 20-24, and

Workplace harassment is often termed 'bullying' by others, but rarely by those people targeted by it, and its renaming can undermine effective responses to it

> *plugging their ears and playing loud music such that if I call out they don't hear me even though we are in the same room. When I couldn't cope I complained to the operations manager who did nothing, undermining my position. This said manager has been uncomfortable with me from day one [...] and despite the fact that we were both managers he would try to bully me by raising his voice, sometimes shouting even in front of my team when he didn't understand something I was doing. One day the chairman called in and said due to ill health he'll not be able to be that active with the running of the business and that the operations manager would now be promoted to a director - I knew that was it. [...] The occasional bullying didn't stop and it graduated to him sneaking into my systems before I get to work in the morning. At that point I drew the line because that was a serious security breach which I was not taking lightly because money was involved. So I raised the matter to the chairman and obviously he had made his untrue case behind my back before the Monday after a weekend that passed and the chairman sadly said, well...he was sorry it didn't work out and that he will make me redundant just after three months of full-time employment from a previous employment. I am still looking for work since then with no luck yet."*

For others, it is too emotional to repeat the details, but they concisely reflect the breadth of the problem for a targeted person, like this one from Limerick. Two other colleagues of African descent had previously left the same company because of similar conditions.

> *"Active prevention from promotion and access to further education/ career break, harassment, exclusion, ganging up, making rules that affect me negatively in many things when it is my turn e.g. extra work, reference."*

Workplace racism which is Afrophobic also occurs in the absence of persons of African descent as colleagues, but in front of Irish and foreign national colleagues. It can come to occupy a central place in office culture unless challenged, as in the case below.

> *"Someone circulated a photo via text that showed a child with Downs' Syndrome wearing a t shirt that*

said 'at least I am not a nigger'. When this was cir-
culated to the group of workers on this building site
everyone laughed and thought it funny. My partner
who works with this group of men regularly chal-
lenged them and pointed out that it was not only
racist but also offensive to people with a disability.
They refused to listen and told him he had no sense
of humour. He threatened to send the image to the
guards and this made them stop joking. The follow-
ing day they apologized!" (Dublin, reported by sec-
ondary witness)

Employers are responsible for the harassment and vic-
timisation of their staff during working hours, and can
already access a range of supportive training and work-
place measures on racism and equality. Encouraging re-
porting within the workplace is only effective if there are
appropriate measures in place to address the victimising
behaviour comprehensively and protect and support the
targeted person.

14 Public transport

Racism in the Taxi industry

Racism amongst Irish taxi drivers and against Black Af-
rican taxi drivers has been well noted in recent years[26],
attracting widespread media attention in 2012 and an
order from the National Transport Authority for drivers
to remove green lights which were used to indicate Irish
drivers.

Taxi drivers are frequently reported by white Irish wit-
nesses as shouting at other taxi drivers while driving,
thumping or kicking their cars, shouting abuse at them in
the street and in traffic, shouting at Black drivers of other
vehicles.

> "I observed a taxi driver at the taxi rank on Grafton
> street approach another, black, taxi driver and heard
> him say inter alia the words "you dirty black pig".
> (South Dublin, 1.30pm)

> "Leaving the Gate Theatre, an Irish taxi driver was
> using abusive and threatening language to a black
> taxi driver and, at the same time, thumping on the
> window of the taxi and kicking the door. The lan-
> guage and threatening behaviour of the Irish taxi
> driver were frightening. Even if the black taxi driver
> had pulled in in front of the taxi rank, the behaviour
> of the Irish taxi driver was appalling. We now live
> in a cosmopolitan society and this incident made me
> ashamed to be Irish." (North Dublin)

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26   V Jaichand (2010) *Riding Along With Racism? Research on the
Galway Taxi Industry: Employment Opportunities, Patterns of Public
Use and User Perceptions.* Galway: Irish Centre for Human Rights.

A black taxi driver made a U-Turn on Nassau Street.
The driver of another Taxi was approaching from be-
hind the other taxi. He sounded his horn aggressive-
ly (and unnecessarily), stopped his car, rolled down
his window and started to abuse the other taxi driver.
In the course of this abuse he clearly called the black
taxi driver a "Monkey". (South Dublin, 12.30pm)

"I was walking to work and had arrived at the pedes-
trian crossing opposite Becky Morgan's pub. There
was a momentary traffic jam and a taxi driver who
was at the head of the road became quite agitated
[...] In particular, he took out his anger on a white
truck which had two black males in the cab. [...] He
shouted "you dirty rotten black bastards" at the two
men. Subsequently, when the road cleared, he drove
off like a lunatic blowing his horn and roaring. I was
so disgusted by the incident." (South Dublin, 8am)

A number of reports describe white taxi drivers warning
passengers not to take a taxi driven by a Black African.
These stories are described by some witnesses as 'fright-
ening'. One report from South Dublin in particular stands
out as fear mongering:

> "He advised them that when they are in the city,
> they shouldn't get in with a Black taxi driver. He said
> there is often one driving and one in the boot ready
> to pounce. That there is a massive criminal element
> with the Black taxi drivers and they can't be trust-
> ed. He said he especially wouldn't let any young girl
> get into a taxi with a black driver. My relatives were
> shocked but they didn't know what to do. They were
> very upset and it left a bad taste after what had been
> an enjoyable night out."

Violence against Black taxi drivers by passengers is also
a common fear. One woman reported an incident occur-
ring in South Dublin at 2am:

> "My husband is a taxi driver and his 3 passengers
> physically attacked him. One passenger wasn't hap-
> py a black taxi driver was driving he was drunk and
> didn't realise this until half way through a journey.
> Then the incident took place."

Accusations of fraudulent charges are commonly levied

at Black taxi drivers, and reports describe conversations in which Irish people describe a 'feeling' that they had been overcharged as the reason for not taking taxis driven by Africans.

> *"When talking with a woman who works in a training organisation, about [...] the levels of racism encountered by black taxi drivers, she defended the right of Irish people not to travel with black taxi drivers as she herself would not, following a feeling that she had once been cheated on a journey." (Meath)*

Racism and public transit

Recent campaigns by ENAR Ireland network members (including the Immigrant Council of Ireland and other organisations) have highlighted the problems of racism encountered on public transport. iReport.ie shows these incidents continuing regularly across the period, against both passengers and staff. As well as the two incidents of assault discussed earlier in the report, just under ten percent of reports concerned verbal abuse and harassment on public buses, trains and trams or at stations.

> *"Two what appeared to be white Irish addicts where racially abusing a black African woman on the Luas. Telling her they should be kissing their feet for being allowed in to Ireland. And, there taking their jobs and sponging off the social welfare. [...] The Luas security intervened on the scene at time because the driver called them." (Dublin city centre, 1.30am)*

> *"A group of young males* [under 15] *were being loud and intrusive on the Luas and as one got off he shouted nigger and black bitch at a black woman* [18-25] *on the Luas beside me." (South Dublin, 5pm)*

> *"Group of males, under 15. Harassing Asians on Luas, then finally got off Luas. Began shouting racist words at 2 black girls on Luas. Nobody said anything (we were starting to move off) but everybody was very uncomfortable." (Dublin South, 5pm, targeted at 18-25 year olds)*

> *"A bunch of drunken teens boarded the Maynooth bound train in Broombridge. An African woman (25-35) complained to the security guards present that the kids were being disrespectful. They began to make monkey noises, used the N-word, called her Mandela, made fun of her for wearing a wig." (*North Dublin, 9.30pm)*

Bus drivers are particularly vulnerable to abuse and attempted assault from passengers, although it is unclear whether they are likely to report all cases to their employers. Recent campaigns in collaboration with the transport companies has encouraged this in Dublin[27] – wider efforts

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27   This included a specific campaign to encourage incident re-

by employers and experiences of staff around the country are not known.

> *"I was waiting to get the bus into town from Inchicore. There was a group of* [white Irish 25-35yrs] *lads waiting at the bus stop too, and being rowdy. When the bus pulled up, the bus driver (who was black) had to lower the ramp to let a wheelchair user on. The group of lads wanted to get on first, but the bus driver told them to wait until the wheelchair user had gotten on. They then started calling him a "dirty nigger" and "f**k off back to your own country". The bus driver wouldn't let them on, and called the base to ring the guards. The lads then ran off." (South Dublin, 5pm).*

Just two cases of violence against staff were reported to iReport.ie by witnesses, although several more were documented in the media during the same time-period.

15 Racism and public services

The provision of public services are subject, more than any other sector, to equality legislation. A public sector equality and human rights duty was introduced by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. As a recent report described, "Public bodies are not simply providers of services, they play a central role in what is often referred to as 'place-shaping'"[28], because public services heavily symbolize who is entitled to the benefits of citizenship, and public bodies can be involved in "promoting the feeling of belonging to local areas, strengthening notions of citizenship and celebrating values of diversity".[29]

Public sector duties set out in legislation recognise this role for public bodies, and adopt a position that public bodies must go beyond simply avoiding discrimination, and proactively implement policies and procedures which will promote equality. Public bodies include all state departments, semi-state bodies, and local authorities, as well as chartered bodies acting on behalf of the state, or companies which are majority owned by the state. Schools and universities, the Health Service Exec-

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porting to the Immigrant Council, whose reporting statistics are not included here. This has been given a wider launch in 2015. http://www.bitc.ie/2015/06/transdev-ireland-action-on-diversity-and-anti-racism-receives-interest-at-european-level/

28   Equality and Rights Alliance (2015) *A New Public Sector Equality & Human Rights Duty*. Paper 3 of series: Setting Standards for the Irish Equality and Human Rights Infrastructure. March 2015. Available at: http://www.eracampaign.org/uploads/A%20New%20Public%20Sector%20Duty%20March%202015.pdf

29   Z. Haque (2010) 'The Changing Landscape of Equalities, Cohesion, Human Rights and Public Services', in *2020 Public Services Trust at the RSA: Equality, Cohesion and Public Services*, London: Public Services Trust.

A young boy was denied medical treatment in A&E by a doctor on duty because he was believed to be Nigerian. The doctor treated the boy some hours later and admitted his discrimination to the family while apologising for the delay when he discovered they were not Nigerian

utive, RTE, and state-owned transport bodies are all included in the duty. As we have seen above, there is much evidence to suggest that eliminating discrimination and ensuring safe environments are important first steps.

There are three further examples which demonstrate the need to address Afrophobia in public services. The first relates to the provision of medical care on behalf of the HSE, and was reported by a witness to the event.

A female resident of a Direct Provision centre went to the onsite medical centre with severe pains, which she considered to be an emergency. With no appointments available, staff turned the patient away. When the patient refused to leave without accessing treatment due to the severity of the symptoms, staff called Gardaí and filed assault charges against her. Witnesses report that the response to the problem was overly aggressive and needlessly involved Gardaí. The assault charges are contested.

This example is worth considering, because it reflects the way in which people of African descent are repeatedly subjected to policing during routine activities. Staff in emergency public services have long been known to be at a high risk of aggression and violence[30]. They may be more likely, as a result, to call police when they perceive aggression in conditions of stress. One important aspect of stereotyping of people of African descent, however, is the perception of aggression. This can result in significant over-policing of those people and a failure to properly respond to their health needs, as it has in other jurisdictions[31].

There are further cases of medical staff explicitly discriminating against patients on the grounds of their perceived ethnicity, in addition to the assault on a hospital visitor by hospital security described earlier in the report.

A young boy was denied medical treatment in A&E by a doctor on duty because he was believed to be Nigerian. The doctor treated the boy some hours later and admitted his discrimination to the family while apologising for the delay when he discovered they were not Nigerian.

A nurse refused to provide a confidential treatment room for a woman and her baby despite the concerns of a support worker present with the patient.

The second and third example relate to the discriminatory treatment of people of African descent while accessing social protection.

A man attended the Welfare office with his Stamp 4 after an asylum process lasting eight years. The officer asked him in a sarcastic voice, "how did you get to Ireland from your country - did you walk or by sea, or by bicycle or by plane". He demanded to know the basis upon which the Stamp 4 had been issued by the Department of Justice before proceeding with the payment. The applicant left feeling 'rejected' and 'ashamed' as a result of the encounter.

When a man of African origin was signing on to receive benefits, staff insisted on him answering questions which he could not answer as he found them 'culturally offensive'. The staff member told him he was in a 'Catholic country' now. He explained that he was Catholic, but still found the question uncomfortable and unnecessary (which it proved to be, since it was later deemed unnecessary). The staff member told him that he should consider 'moving country'. The witness who reported the incident felt 'Physically ill, angry, upset and powerless' as a result of the incident, but was afraid to report the officer in case it impacted on his own case.

Further examples relevant to the public sector duty are contained within this report in the sections on schools, the Gardaí, and transport. In total, there were eight reports against Gardaí, one against a local authority, one against the Coroner's office, four against schools, one against a judge, four against public health providers and three against the Department of Social Protection. Just three of these cases follow the 2014 Act, but as a whole, the cases indicate the challenges faced by public bodies in eliminating discrimination.

30   M.G. Jenkins, L.G. Rocke, B.P. McNicholl and D.M. Hughes (1998) 'Violence and verbal abuse against staff in accident and emergency departments: a survey of consultants in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', *J Accid Emerg Med*, 15(4), 262-5.

31   The connection between health problems and overpolicing for BME people is exemplified well by the documentation by the Institute of Race Relations of UK deaths in custody, available at http://www.irr.org.uk/news/black-deaths-in-custody/ See also NACRO (2007) *Black communities, mental health and the criminal justice system*, London: NACRO.

16 Incitement to hatred

Two key arenas for incitement to hatred appear in the submissions made to iReport.ie. These relate to social media, and graffiti. Both forms of communication send highly visible messages to a wide audience about the presence of people of African descent in Ireland and their undesirability as citizens and neighbours.

Web and Social Media

Two openly racist websites are cited in several reports. The first, which features jokes and 'rants' about people of African descent describes its membership as people who "correctly understand that [black people] are not human and treat them accordingly". It is largely white nationalist in tone, and features a range of discriminatory discourses. The second, which referred to people of African descent as 'chimps', was one of the most popular sites of its kind before it was closed in 2015. This contained much more extreme racialising comment about people of African descent in calling for them to be seen as inhuman. Both were easily found by internet users, and both contained content submitted by forum users about people of African descent in Ireland. Other websites of established supremacist groups were also reported.

The ease with which social media can be used to make racist comments both about racialised groups in general, and particular individuals, makes it difficult to keep track of the frequency of racist expression and incitement to hatred in this context.

Below are a sample of the 98 reports received about racism on the web and in social media. People of African descent in Ireland receive racist comments on their social media accounts (e.g. Twitter and YouTube) on a frequent basis. These are reported both by the account owners and by witnesses. In addition, racist and xenophobic comments posted to the Facebook pages of ENAR Ireland's member organisations were also reported and these included specific references to people of African descent alongside other ethnic and national groups.

"A Social Media Group on Facebook called 'British First' posted an image of numerous Black men outside a Subway with a caption stating ""Welcome to Ireland, Or Nigeria...Who knows anymore"". This image has over 1,649 shares and 1,305 comments, most of which are of racist nature. "

"A video about an African woman was posted on a Facebook group called 'Spotted: Louth'. There were 1,600 comments on this video altogether and many of these were racist in nature. There were also many derogatory comments about immigrants in general- some of the post were so severe as to call for immigrants to be shot, maimed, murdered and sent home."

"A tweet at a well know British football player from a lad based in Ireland. "@stancollymore Dirty black big lipped tree swinging banana eating marathon running cotton picking cunt. Niggers like you should be executed"

"[Name removed], a pub in cork, posted a tweet that was in my opinion very racist. The tweet was removed after a few mins. The reason for this is due to a display monkey was removed from the premises and thrown into the river. The tweeted image suggests that the monkey was replaced with a black person, which is very wrong!"

"I saw a conversation on Twitter where an account [name removed] was making racist remarks. I clicked on to the account and saw the user had a consistent history of racist commentary and idolization of Hitler. The remarks are extremist, violent and disgusting." (The account regularly refers to 'niggers', laziness as a trait in people of African descent, illegal immigration, "cockroaches" and sterilisation of ethnic minorities.)

Comment sections on popular websites also provide a forum with a wide audience for the expression of racist hostility. Racist comments are also posted on websites advertising and reviewing businesses belonging to people of African descent.

Graffiti in public and private spaces

Although racism on social media can feel more invasive because of our engagement with social media in private spaces, and the difficulty of reporting and blocking persistent harassers, racist expression which is displayed in public spaces can cause an increase in tension across a whole neighbourhood or local community. Its presence suggests a level of intolerance among the present population and risk of discrimination or violence in the vicinity. The prompt removal of graffiti is key to ensuring that it is seen infrequently and is not seen to be condoned. Graffiti containing racist expressions against people of African descent appears in iReport.ie submissions in a variety of sensitive places (including schools and community centres), as well as high traffic areas (like public transport). Graffiti appeared in central and south Dublin, Kildare, Cork, and Limerick, with the highest number of reports from Cork.

"Racist graffiti was spray painted on to a sign outside a Divine Hope of Mercy International Church in Kildare Town. The words were "No Blacks". This church is located beside both Educate Together and Gaelscoil National schools also where children can see it as they go to school."

"I noticed new racist graffiti at Horgan's Quay in Cork city. It says "Cork says no blacks" and has a

cross in a circle symbol beside it."

"While waiting at a Luas stop I saw an image of a Black woman with racist graffiti on it."

"Racist graffiti painted on streets around Wellington Road / York Hill area. 'Blacks Out' 'Islam Out' 'Islam Out of Eire'."

"Racist graffiti near Kent Station - photos taken 4th and 6th April 2015 'Islam out of Eire', 'Islam Out', 'Nigga Out', 'Blacks Out'"

"The offensive graffiti was found on dock road in Limerick city."

More temporary graffiti was also reported on vehicles and windows.

"I drove past a parked car where I spotted racist remarks wrote on the two passenger windows. I was unsure what had been written so I drove back up by the car where the words 'Nigger' was scribbled on one window and 'packies' [sic] was scribbled on the other."

17 Policing and discrimination

Racism against people of African descent is also evidenced in public services including Social Welfare and An Garda Síochána. Many of the incidents described here are clearly influenced by public discourses of illegal immigration and undeserving refugees. These affect employees in state institutions as well as other citizens, affecting the way they perceive and respond to people of African descent in Ireland.

Discriminatory and disproportionate policing
In reviewing other themes throughout this report, there are numerous quotes presented from incident reports which mention reasons for reluctance to involve An Garda Síochána. Policing is a contentious area of politics where racism is concerned. As well as equipping policing organisations to process racist incidents appropriately, senior members of any police forces must recognise that there is a particular need for police officers to build trust with persons of ethnic minorities who come into contact with them for whatever reason. This requires an organisational drive towards recognising the additional linguistic and cultural reasons why people from minority ethnic backgrounds may already be reluctant to call upon police forces for help. There are clear challenges for An Garda Síochána in training staff to recognise the need for these efforts and to demonstrate fairness in their dealings with the public.

At a much more basic level, however, police forces must recognise that aggressive policing of ethnic minorities will have a significant impact on the trust levels which are necessary for peaceful and orderly policing. Reports of Gardaí threatening to arrest Black individuals on the street without just cause included the following two cases.

One young woman reported being singled out of a small crowd outside a restaurant during a private birthday party, accused of public drunkenness (despite not drinking), and asked for public identification. She was then warned of future surveillance and threatened with arrest if she responded. She was not aware of any incident that caused the Garda car to pull up at the restaurant and approach her.

A Black African man married to a white Irish woman was arrested while driving her car, and brought to a Garda station. While in custody, he was severely physically abused as well as verbally abused. A Nazi sign was made by Gardaí during the incident. He was later taken to hospital. His heavily pregnant wife was also racially abused when she visited the station, called a 'nigger' and a 'crack head lover', causing deep distress. A written complaint to the Superintendent received a response written entirely in Gaelic from the same, which the victim interpreted as an attempt to intimidate him.

Other events with less serious consequences still had significant impact on those witnessing them. One woman (a white foreign national) described the inappropriate behaviour of a Garda who, while stamping documentation for a Black Somalian family in her local Garda station, also stamped their child's hand several times jokingly. She described how she was prompted to report the behaviour because it was apparent to her that this was a mocking behaviour, and her own child had asked why they and the Black Somalian family were treated so differently.

Incidents like these demonstrate a marked determination on the part of Gardaí to police difference and to signify to ethnic minorities not only that they are not entitled to equal protection from An Garda Síochána, but that they should expect any interactions with the organisation to be detrimental to them. Knowledge of these incidents amongst ethnic minority groups, as accounts told through families or friends, reduces the likelihood of all ethnic minorities to call upon An Garda Síochána when a racist incident is perpetrated against them. As is evident in the above reports, however, ethnic minorities experience worse outcomes from Garda involvement even where the racist incident is perpetrated against them and, should they call out the behaviour of the perpetrator, they are more likely to be considered suspected of instigating the incident.

Failure to respond to racist incidents against people of African descent

It is clear from the reports that neither people of white Irish nor Black-African ethnicity trust that the Gardaí take cognisance of the real impact of racist incidents. There is evidence that Gardaí do not apply the definition adopted in 2001 by An Garda Síochana which describes as a racist incident "Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person."[32]

Of the assaults described early in this report, there are few positive comments about Garda responses. In these cases, there are failures to attend the scene of an assault, to appropriately gather evidence from witnesses and victims, and to update the victim on the investigation. In several cases, the victim was persuaded at the scene that no response was possible, or that it was unwise to seek prosecution, as with the violent attack (described in Section 5 above) on a man and his wife walking home from the mosque.

> *"The Garda took my details and few witnesses' details and promise they will be looking at the bus CCTV for their investigation and they will get back to me. Unfortunately I haven't heard back from them. But what I can say is that from the behaviour of one the Garda, I do not expect much from them as he was putting things as the woman might be drunk or a junky which was like telling me if she was, there is nothing that could be done. One of the male witness on the bus told the Garda that the woman was well known to [local] police for her racism behaviours and that he had witness many times of her racism attack to foreigners. He said to the Garda that her attack to me was exaggerated and ever seen." (Assault on bus)*

> *"The Gardaí that attended the scene advised me to contact [local] community Gardaí, all effort to reach him have been unsuccessful, I went to [another] Gardaí station yesterday when I cannot reach him on phone and he did not return my calls but I was told he will be on duty from 6pm." (Assault in back garden)*

> *"I rang the guards, they said they would come to the road. They didn't."*

> *"My wife received some calls from the police enquiring to know if I'm still a resident of Ireland. That all they wanted to know."*

> *"I phoned the Guards and they said they were sending someone to address the issue, but no one arrived and the woman walked off the bus. "*

32   An Garda Síochána (no date) 'Your Police Service in Intercultural Ireland', http://www.garda.ie/Documents/User/racial%20and%20intercultural%20english.pdf

Knowledge of these incidents amongst ethnic minority groups . . . reduces the likelihood of all ethnic minorities to call upon An Garda Síochána when a racist incident is perpetrated against them

Responses to other kinds of cases including repeated harassment and criminal damage are similarly disappointing.

> *"Very contradictory and very uncooperative. They have been making things up and complicating things rather than facilitating the matter. So disappointing as we are wondering if there is anything gain in doing so or to punish the body or his relatives…*

> *First time when my car was broken, the Garda said it was a gang of boys and they did to other cars. But the fact is it only happen to 2 cars with black owners. When my neighbour heard them, they shouted at her saying "nigga", means they knew who we were. Second time when my me and my neighbour's mirrors were broke, the police said they will look at it nothing ever happen. Same things with the eggs throwing."*

Repeatedly, persons who have had racist incidents perpetrated against them describe being told by Gardaí that they would be called back with a response, but have received no calls. Calling the stations to contact the relevant Gardaí is also repeatedly described as unsuccessful in securing updates on the relevant cases. This reinforces the impression that Gardaí are unwilling to deal with racist incidents which do constitute criminal offences, as well as other incidents that do not reach the criteria for criminal offences, but which should be recorded to monitor escalating cases. All of the incidents against people of African descent reported to iReport.ie which were notified to Gardaí by them or by witnesses have been reviewed and all appear to have warranted recording or investigation by Gardaí. There is no evidence of over-reporting, and significant evidence of under-reporting and reluctance to report future incidents.

Twenty eight cases included reports to Gardaí, of which 24 involved criminal offences exceeding verbal abuse. These included persistent harassment, assaults, criminal damage, and arson. Just three of these expressed confidence in the willingness of Gardaí to investigate the offence.

> The most common reasons for not reporting were 'I did not think the police could or would do anything', 'I didn't think I would feel comfortable talking to the police about it', 'I have reported incidents previously to police in Ireland and have had negative experiences', and 'The incident is too common an occurrence to report'

Understanding non-reporting of racist offences to An Garda Síochána

Acts of racist speech or gesture are rarely reported to Gardaí, unless they take the form of speech directed at a large group of people. Acts of racist speech against individuals are rarely actionable. This review of the reports shows that none of these incidents were reported to Gardaí and were recognised by the reporting party as unlikely to be actioned upon by Gardaí.

However, there were multiple incidents which warranted reporting to Gardaí which were not reported. In the absence of explicit legislation on racist incidents, there are a number of sections of the criminal law which could apply in these situations. Racist speech or gestures could be addressed through the application of Section 6 of the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 1994, which makes it an offence for any person in a public place to use threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour with the intention of causing a breach of the peace. Assault, which includes fear of violence, and harassment can both produce prosecutions under Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act, 1997. Spitting at a person, throwing items at them (whether or not they produce injury) using threatening language, or following a person in a threatening manner may all be considered as criminal offences under the law. Amongst the incidents which were not reported to Gardaí:

> *"My 11 year old son was spat in the face by a man age approx. 40 years old."*

> *"I was at a bus stop at Mountjoy Street waiting for a bus and an African young girl originally from Somalia was called nigga and spat by two Irish ladies in their 40s. The lady was standing just behind me and*

> *the two Irish ladies were passing by and suddenly I heard the abusive language which called my attention."*

> *"He parked his car in front of me and started talking to me about having sex with me because he never had sex with a black woman and started following me and say you bitch will not do it for free. I will give you food because that what you came for in our country."*

In addition to these incidents, it is clear that other incidents described above, such as the throwing of a drink over a Black Brazilian woman in a Dublin bar, should be reported to Gardaí.

In January 2015, the iReport.ie survey was amended to specifically include a question about factors that would influence victims or witnesses to report or not report incidents to An Garda Síochana (see Appendix 1). Of 29 reports of racist incidents reported in the 6 month period which may have constituted criminal offences (11 clearly did so)[33], only 8 were reported to Gardaí. Of those who did not report to Gardaí, the most common reasons for not reporting were "I did not think the police could or would do anything", "I didn't think I would feel comfortable talking to the police about it", "I have reported incidents previously to police in Ireland and have had negative experiences", and "The incident is too common an occurrence to report". Those who felt that the incident was too common to report had experienced mainly verbal abuse and one assault without injury.

Other reasons given included the time taken to report the incident and impact on the victim of doing so, concern about reprisals or retribution from the perpetrator(s), fear of not being taken seriously or believed, and discomfort with disclosing personal details. Just one was deterred by embarrassment, and one by negative experiences with police in another country.

Most of the respondents who did not report criminal offences felt that they would be encouraged to report by the availability of self-reporting forms which could be sent to police, and by the availability of people other than police officers who could pass the information on to police and give support to the victim. A smaller number wished to report offences anonymously or report to a police officer who identified as a member of the targeted social group.

Advice from An Garda Síochána is significant in influencing future reporting of racist incidents. Attribution of violence or harassment to drugs and alcohol (as in the case

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33   The level of detail in the survey does not always permit a clear judgement about whether a racist incident is prosecutable, particularly in relation to threatening behaviour. Analysis is provided here in relation to those which potentially constitute a criminal offence under the law, and the lower figure is provided to distinguish those which included violence and damage which are more easily evidenced.

of a bus assault), and discouraging of complaints against perpetrators under the age of 18, means that a significant number of incidents would not be reported in future.

> "The victim reported the incident to the Police and 2 female Officers arrived within 25 minutes to take details. They suggested that the incident was anti-social behaviour by young people and was motivated by the fact that the victims' house has a distinctly different design from other houses in the area. They inquired about whether or not similar incidents had occurred previously and when the victim outlined the extent of these from previous occasions they suggested the family applied for a transfer with the Local Authority. No other advice was provided to the victim.
>
> The Police Officers said Community Police would be in contact again at 9am the following day. This did not happen so the victim attended [the] Garda Station at 2pm the following day. The Police Officer he spoke to could not find a record of the incident recorded by the Officer the previous night, so another incident report was provided by the victim. [The victim] requested a letter from the Police as evidence of the incident when applying to the Local Authority for a house transfer and an application to cover some of the repair costs. This was provided the following day. There has been no contact with the Police since then."

It is unclear from the report submitted whether any further action was taken by Gardaí in this case. As with other cases, when there is no further information given to victims of crime about the next actions in investigation or prosecution, the assumption is that no further action was taken. This undermines confidence in Gardaí ability or willingness to deal with ongoing harassment by a single or multiple perpetrators.

18 The impacts of Afrophobic racism

Impacts on people targeted by Afrophobia

There is evidence in these cases of significant impact on the quality of life experienced by people of African descent in Ireland. Physical ill health resulting from Afrophobic racism included a variety of health problems and symptoms, from sleeplessness, anxiety, depression and recurring nausea to extreme fear with similarly extreme physical symptoms. There are serious mental health consequences of the incidents reported in these cases.

Racism, regardless of its form or severity, affected each of the targeted people in a variety of ways. This is partly dependent on the individual, but most of these impacts could be reasonably foreseen. Exposure to racism over

time reduced the reporting of shock, but increased the reporting of overall ill health and stress.

Of those targeted by racism, 21 percent reported shock and a further 33 percent reported physical symptoms or ongoing mental health problems as a direct result of the event.

> "I feel so so bad to what happened to me, I am left shaken, humiliated, shocked and completely devastated. Since, I have been dealing with days and nights headaches and now so scary to even get on the bus or sit even close to someone else. I have been left so devastated and unable to sleep and have been having panic attacks as I feel my life does not have a meaning anymore"
>
> "I felt so scared that I been crying and shaking after he left. I been crying and shaking for the best part of the night."
>
> "Agitated, scared to come out of my own house, paranoid to anyone looking at me"
>
> "Scared alone, helpless. You can fight other things but you can't fight skin that God gave you"
>
> "I felt humiliated and helpless and I never expected something like this to happen to me, especially in a shop. I was particularly embarrassed as there were other customers watching my treatment."
>
> "Traumatized, angry and desperate to kill myself or someone in order to bring attention to institutionalised racism in Ireland"

Those that reported injuries or avoidance behaviour tended not to describe the immediate impact which is likely to have included shock. In addition, witnesses who were of other ethnicities tended to report their own shock rather than that of the targeted person, and to describe only injuries or criminal offences they could objectively observe in the targeted person. We should expect therefore that the number of people experiencing shock, including severe shock resulting in persistent health problems, is much higher than the numbers reported.

Families experiencing ongoing harassment reported some of the worst ongoing symptoms amongst adults and children, including severe psychological problems, chronic sleeplessness and severe physical ill health. Similar responses were reported by people experienced harassment in the workplace.

> "I felt isolated, damaged, belittled, tearful, depressed, undermined, threatened, hopeless and defenceless. I could feel the hatred everyday"

Three people also referred to the way in which the impact

of the event intensified the impact of previous incidents, sometimes more violent and abusive. For several others, the frequency with which they experience racist events led to them suppressing their responses over a long period of time.

> "This is not the first time we have encountered such abuse. If we have to report every single incident it will be everyday but I just block it from my mind and tell myself there are sick people in this world."

'I felt sick to my stomach to be honest, my daughter is with a black guy and they have a beautiful 3 year old daughter (my granddaughter). I'm so angry for that poor child today'

Everyday fear

On top of health impacts, targeted people reported lack of confidence in occupying public spaces, engaging with strangers, fear for their children and partners, and anxiety about going to new places or joining new groups, all as a direct result of the Afrophobic racism that they experienced. There is evidence of significant patterns of avoidance leading to non-participation in local social life and self-restriction in routine activities such as walking children to school or shopping, with further impacts on experiences of education, work and community participation. A single quote is selected here to highlight the impact of these incidents, although there are multiple similar cases.

> "I felt worth less than a human. The day the guy threw the rock at me, the only thing I could do, after entering the bus, was cry. I have never felt so lonely, so afraid and so humiliated. I was called nigger in several occasions, including by the people who work at the building I live. People who ignore me, people who look down on me in all places, just because I'm different. I can't even go to the supermarket, because the area nearby where I live has a lot of young people who love to throw things at people, like tomatoes, eggs, onions, potatoes, even a Haribo was threw at me once, and an iron bar was thrown at a friend of mine. I feel constantly threatened in this country, which has the fame of being so warm and open with foreigners, but it is just "the land of hate". I know I should not generalize, and that there are people who might not like me, but they at least let

me be; nevertheless, especially where I live, Dublin 7, things couldn't be worse. I even started to see a psychologist, because, on top of all the problems I had, I was feeling so scared that I didn't want to leave my apartment. I am constantly afraid living in this neighbourhood, but, unfortunately, it is what I can pay. I wish I was getting everything people think I get from the Irish government, then my life would be so much easier and I would be able to live wherever I wanted. I am sorry for the outburst, it is just that I was holding these things for so long, that everything came out at once." (EU National, North Dublin)

Assertions of rights

Repeated throughout the reports received at iReport.ie are assertions of the legal rights which are made meaningless by these experiences. Citizenship was made central to the sense of outrage and disappointment evident in some reports. This included the right to expect due process and protection from An Garda Síochána, non-discriminatory treatment in public services and private sector businesses, workplaces, schools and community organisations, and the right to safety and dignity in public places.

> "I felt like we were being punished because we were African and the child could have gotten worse in the period of waiting unnecessarily. We wondered if we were Nigerian and seriously sick how would we have been treated. Felt shocked at this behaviour."

> "I felt like a second class citizen in my own country."

> "I supposed they expected me to accept the racial abuses and shut up, the couple were Irish and they have the right to rain racial abuses on me no matter what."

> "We don't feel safe at all because the people who are put there to be protecting us are the ones that did this to us."

Those who experienced discrimination rather than abuse or violence were included in those that reported shock and disgust. However, parents who experienced discrimination in front of their children reported sadness that their child was exposed to racism that they did not understand. Other forms of discrimination prompted feelings of anger and humiliation. The sense of being alienated from other people by the racism they encountered produced a sharp feeling of isolation in many of the respondents. This was particularly the case when racial epithets are used.

Western Afrophobia

The impact of racism on those who do not fit the stereotype of the 'immigrant' is also strong. It can be very surprising for people of African descent to encounter racism in their

professional role, or when they have lived in Ireland for some time without encountering it. This is frequently the case for people of African descent who are professionals, students or tourists from non-African countries.

> "An old man approached my friend, who is black, after he played a gig in a local pub in Wexford. The old man began conversing with him and it eventually led onto to the older man saying "the best thing you can do is leave the country, ya f**king black". I and my friend were shocked and it took a lot for me to refrain from hitting an old man. My friend has lived in Wexford for 3 years originally from America. This is the first instance he has been treated in a racist way." (Reported by white Irish witness, Wexford)

So well established is the idea of the 'right kind' of Black[34], that being abused for being African can be deeply surprising to European and American visitors who are Black. For them, the experience of being of African descent is distinct from the experience of being a migrant from Africa, and therefore they do not expect to be mistaken for Africans. Black Americans or Europeans (who may be professionals, students or tourists) are no less prone to imagining contemporary African migrants in unfavourable terms too. Their self-perception of their Black identities within Western nations, and their experiences of moving easily between countries and in interracial/public spaces, allows them to expect similar easy movement in Ireland's diverse city spaces. It is also worth remembering that their Black identities are not necessarily at the forefront of their interactions with others, since they are acting also from national, gendered and class identities in their interactions in Irish society.

One report from a Black student in Cork suggested that it was his national identity which was, for him, of primary consideration in his interactions.

> "I know that not everybody like French people because of this or that but I never thought being dark skinned would have been a problem, especially in 2014."

An American visitor likewise noted his surprise. The interpretation that we can draw from this is that these individuals assumed either that there was little likelihood of encountering racism at all in Ireland (or at least in the spaces they moved in), or that they less vulnerable to it, having the protective characteristics of nationality with which to defend against any accusations. In short, that they represented 'the right kind' of Blackness.

These experiences, although relatively few in the con-

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34   The concept of Blackness has developed along particularly Anglo-American lines, influenced by a politics of assimilation dividing the descendants of slaves in Europe and America from other African migrants. This has deeply affected how people of African descent position themselves vis-à-vis other people of African descent.

The findings on this aspect of Afrophobia suggest that reporting of racism by public servants could be made easier, and guidance for witnesses on what to do in the case of racist verbal abuse or violence would be useful

text of the overall number of reports, are important in the context of Ireland's position as a destination for tourism from the USA and Europe, and as a destination for international higher education study.

Impact on witnesses to Afrophobia

The overwhelming feeling reported by witnesses was that of disgust. Almost a third of witnesses described this response. Fifteen percent experienced significant shock, and seven percent reported significant fear.

Many people reported feeling physically ill during or after the event. Some attempted to address the situation by speaking to the victim, reassuring them that the perpetrator was not supported by others around him/her, and apologising that the incident had occurred. Asked how the incident made them feel, the answers varied little, as this selection shows.   The similarity of responses from witnesses is remarkable since the survey question did not offer any prompts or options to these descriptions of events.

> "I felt sick to be honest. I was in shock."

> "Disgusted, shocked and angry."

> "Disgusted. I was genuinely stunned at the level of racism and disrespect coming from such young children."

> "I felt sick to my stomach to be honest, my daughter is with a black guy and they have a beautiful 3 year old daughter (my granddaughter). I'm so angry for that poor child today."

> "I was shocked and horrified, I felt that the child was acting out the attitude of the parents."

> "I was so shocked, I've never seen anyone do that before and I still can't believe it."

A quarter of witnesses reported feeling angry in response to the event, and a quarter reported feeling frustrated or powerless. Many reported being anxious about their own safety when intervening when they witnessed verbal abuse or violence, and even discriminatory practices. In some cases, those fears are reasonable, given the events described earlier.

> *"Powerless as the racist woman seemed so violent I didn't know what to do. Then annoyed."*

> *"Ashamed but didn't feel like getting stabbed."*

> *"Helpless. I could not do anything to help. Felt horrible for the boy"*

> *"Anxious, cause I thought I may have to intervene"*

> *"Very angry, I wanted to challenge them but was afraid to. After the incident I asked them if they were ok as did other people on the bus."*

However, in a significant number of cases, witnesses report that they regretted their failure to intervene to prevent or stall the racist behaviour they saw and some asked for guidance on how to respond in future.

> *"I felt ashamed because I didn't do anything to stop the racist abuse."*

> *"I am still quite shaken after the event. I was repulsed to see a man - regardless of his colour or birthplace - being subject to such abuse. I was horrified to see the girl's friends stick up for her, and not quieten her down. However, I am more upset at myself for not saying something."*

Fifteen percent of witnesses reported feeling embarrassed or humiliated. Some felt that their sense of feeling Irish had been very damaged by the claims to Irishness made by the perpetrators.

> *"Shocked, upset, sickened, ashamed to be Irish. Concerned for the victim."*

Those who witnessed discriminatory behaviour in service provision by state employees described themselves as particularly uncomfortable, particularly if they felt that they were an intermediary in the event.

> *"Embarrassed as my 12 year old also picked it up and asked me, why did he treat us differently than the black people?"*

> «*I felt embarrassed and uncomfortable in the situation and shocked by the negative attitude of the nurse*».

The impact was greater on those who wanted to report public servants for their racist behaviour, but felt that

It may prove significant in the coming centenary celebrations of 2016 if racist incidents connected to expressions of nationalism actually undermine the sense of pride citizens feel in their Irish identity. Evidence from previous iReport analysis reports have highlighted the connection between St Patrick's Day events and assault of minority ethnic people in the city centre

they were not able to report because of the possible consequences for themselves, like this Dublin man.

> *"Physically ill, angry, upset and powerless. Because I am signing on, I am afraid to report this directly to the Social Welfare Office. I felt upset for the man it happened to, if I had seen him afterwards I would have tried to offer him support but he was gone."*

The findings on this aspect of Afrophobia suggest that reporting of racism by public servants could be made easier, and guidance for witnesses on what to do in the case of racist verbal abuse or violence would be useful. The anger which witnesses feel is an important motivating factor which encourages them to invest their own time and energy in accurately reporting racism they see. This has been significant in producing data with iReport.ie and produces valuable data about how racist events are interpreted by onlookers and how they choose when to intervene.

The sense of embarrassment which witnesses report is also interesting. It may prove significant in the coming centenary celebrations of 2016 if racist incidents connected to expressions of nationalism actually undermine the sense of pride citizens feel in their Irish identity. Evidence from previous iReport analysis reports have highlighted the connection between St Patrick's Day events and assault of minority ethnic people in the city centre[35].

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35   L. Michael and S. O'Curry (2014) *Reports of racism in Ireland: 3rd Quarterly Report of iReport.ie.* Dublin: ENAR Ireland.

19 The role of witnesses

Interventions by witnesses

Help can be offered in a variety of forms, from intervention at the time of the event to support after the event by witnesses, or by professional organisations like NGOs or An Garda Síochána. Help of any kind was offered either during or after racist experiences in just over a fifth of reports[36]. The low figure is only partly attributable to the frequency of racism in the media, social media, and in third party experiences (where no person of African descent is present). Overall, there is a tendency for witnesses not to intervene during racist incidents.

We turn our attention here to interventions and support offered informally by witnesses at the time of the reported event. This is most likely to occur in incidents of verbal abuse and harassment, but is equally offered by strangers and people known to the targeted person(s).

In cases of verbal abuse, witnesses successfully halted incidents by challenging the perpetrators, usually resulting in the perpetrator leaving the area. Calling the police to report racist abuse may not always be successful, but it is a strong deterrent to perpetrators in most cases. In cases of aggression, witnesses were also able to intervene, although usually to protect the targeted person from any likelihood of violence from the perpetrator, rather than to stop the incident. Support for the perpetrator from other witnesses made this more difficult. Cases of discrimination by public bodies were more easily dealt with, where witnesses were confident that they would not be discriminated against as a result.

The overpolicing and surveillance of people of African descent and the difficulties this causes with routine activities is evident to witnesses and is the area in which witness intervention is strongest. This is reflected in cases reported concerning immigration, social protection, housing, health and schools.

> *"I was assisting an Irish citizen originally from Africa and her two citizen children to get off the plane. She was on her own and had a heavy bag. When we were going through immigration she was asked to produce the birth certs for her children. She asked me to assist her at this stage in her discussion with the immigration officer. I asked him why she had to produce the birth certs as they all had Irish passports. He said 'have you heard of Madeline McCann'. He went on to say that the children did not have the same surname as the mother. I told him that any time I travelled with my own children who have a different surname to me we were never asked for birth certs. I asked him where was the law that stated that birth certs have to be produced. He then waved us on."* (Dublin Airport, reported by witness)

Fear for their own safety or fear of other negative consequences is the largest deterring factor for witnesses that is mentioned in the reports. There were two cases of assault against witnesses, both on Dublin buses. In one case of verbal abuse against a young woman, the witness who was assaulted was an older male. The second case has been described earlier in the report, and involved assault of a male victim by a female perpetrator, and then the assault of a female witness who intervened. A third case of verbal abuse against a Dublin bus driver resulted in threats towards an older male witness who challenged the young male perpetrators.

20 Conclusion

The narratives of people of African descent and witnesses to racism here testify to the currency of Afrophobia in Ireland today. In presenting these detailed accounts of Afrophobia, this report has sought to investigate the nature and impact of discrimination and hate crimes which are perpetrated against people of African descent who are both recent migrants and refugees, and long-time residents of Ireland, and their children.

The impact of Afrophobia

Significant impacts on the health and quality of life of people of African descent are noted in this report. In addition to these harms, racist harassment of people of African descent has the effect of marking them out as being out-of-place in Irish work and leisure spaces, isolating them from the wider communities in which they live. While racism of this kind becomes 'everyday', in the sense that there are routine situations in everyday life in which it occurs repeatedly, it produces a distinctly abnormal and inhumane experience of life in Ireland.

Afrophobia in Ireland is highly consistent with other forms of everyday racism. It is marked by the constant targeting of people of African descent by both strangers and acquaintances, and is recognisable through the repetition of familiar patterns of discrimination and violence, including repeated verbal abuse, bullying, offensive jokes and graffiti. In these reports, it has been observed in a wide range of social situations, including on buses, in schools, takeaways, taxis, state offices and neighbourhoods, at all times of day, against and by men, women and children of all ages.

What is remarkable about Afrophobia in Ireland is the public shaming of people of African descent, which is

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[36]   People reporting racism in 2013 and 2014 were asked 'Did anybody try to help?', and they responded yes in 18 percent of answers. The revised survey in 2015, added options to answer 'Yes, informally (witness, friend, neighbour, community)', 'Yes, formally (Garda, medical staff or NGO)', and 'No'. Thirty-four percent of responses indicated yes, with a quarter being informal means of support.

both frequent and highly visible, and operates simultaneously with overt surveillance of Blackness in public spaces. The construction of Blackness as out-of-place is used to justify the exclusion of Black citizens from the public sphere in general, through accusations of birth tourism against women, references to dirt, disease, pollution, laziness (representing bodies alleged not fit for public spaces), and animalistic sounds or gestures.

Afrophobia, in these reports, illustrates that attitudes towards people of African descent and discriminatory behaviour towards them are learned in our society, and they are frequently ignored or denied because they are so widespread that we become accustomed to seeing them in everyday life.

Making sense of Afrophobic harassment

A particularly difficult aspect of the forms of harassment most frequently reported to iReport.ie is the way in which it impinges on routine activities. Racial conflict and harassment are sometimes dismissed as being the result of alcohol or drugs, but the majority of incidents reported here take place in the daytime rather than at night, with few incidents connected to intoxicated perpetrators, and affect daily routines such as going to work or school, shopping, visiting family or friends, and enjoying public spaces.

The ways in which victims of harassment relate their experiences are informative. The ability of the targeted person(s) to rationalise the racism that they encounter does not appear to lessen the negative impacts of the event, but rather impact the level of reporting. Significant under-reporting is related both to the frequency with which people of African descent encounter discrimination and experience criminal victimisation, and the frustration that they feel based on their experiences of trying to seek justice for those wrongs. For some, reporting produces further stresses, particularly where staff receiving reports are not appropriately sensitised to the wider impacts arising from these experiences. Victims are not always able to identify available and appropriate remedies and rely on the expertise of those to whom they report racism, particularly within public bodies like a local authority, Department of Social Protection or An Garda Síochána.

For most people targeted and victimised by harassment which is Afrophobic, there is both frustration and anxiety. Too few solutions are available to address neighbourhood patterns of escalating harassment, and victims bear the burden of having to move their homes and families, if they can afford to do so, or continue experiencing harassment and violence if they cannot. Single incidents of violence or harassment in public spaces are more difficult for victims to address safely without the intervention of supportive witnesses and cooperation of the Gardaí. Despite how effective reported witness interventions can be, these are apparent in too few of the incidents reported

here, and unsurprisingly lead later to heightened anxiety and illness for the targeted person(s).

Afrophobia in an Irish dialect

Understanding the language of racism used by perpetrators of racist abuse during acts of discrimination or violence helps us to situate them vis-à-vis the targeted group and better understand the way in which they are reflecting particular hostilities towards the targeted group. While the cause of the hostility is mediated by the predisposition of the individual towards those messages, the analysis of racist language nonetheless allows us to trace the way in which ideas about 'race' and targeted groups circulate in contemporary Irish society. It is possible to see, for example, the way in which Irish media forums contain contributions using racist language which is highly reflective of American and British white supremacist websites.

Leaving those aside, one of the key justifications offered by perpetrators for their racist behaviour towards people of African descent is related to the impact of recession on the jobs market and the emigration of young Irish people. Yet people of African descent in Ireland, despite having much higher qualifications than other migrants statistically, are offered far fewer employment opportunities commensurate with their education because of widespread Afrophobia. They have also been severely affected by the recession, and some have sought temporary employment overseas to support their families in Ireland. This too however has been framed in Afrophobic terms and underpins some harassment of those families.

The victimisation of women and children as seen in this report offers us a glimpse of a particularly Irish anxiety. Incidents of racism against women and against family groups reflect the longevity of the Afrophobic discourses circulating in the run up to the 2004 referendum, which continue to be used to interpret the presence of African women or children in Ireland, and to justify harassment and abuse against them.

Racism is not, however, new to Ireland, and the strong construction of Irish identity as an established form of whiteness by perpetrators in the reports reflects this well. It is clear that people of African descent, through the attribution of blackness, are subjected to formal and informal surveillance, constructed as aggressive and challenging when they query discrimination, deprived of privacy and dignity in public spaces and in their homes, and blamed for the inequality that faces them.

The nature of Afrophobia in Ireland is highlighted by the distinction between Black cultural influences in Ireland and Black populations, with racist harassment of African-Americans and Black Europeans as well as African people and their Irish families. We see, too, from the wider set of reports submitted to iReport.ie the applica-

While racism of this kind becomes 'everyday', in the sense that there are routine situations in everyday life in which it occurs repeatedly, it produces a distinctly abnormal and inhumane experience of life in Ireland

tion of specifically Afrophobic terms to other minority ethnic and national groups as racial abuse. The primary discrimination is based on appearance, and secondary discrimination based on national stereotypes, with both supported by global discourses of racism which permit no negotiation of Black identities. Thus while the problematisation of Africans in Ireland is initially associated with recent migrations and the political debates around those, the framing of African and other minority ethnic populations in terms more similar to 'old racism' is more closely influenced by wider global racist ideologies and their influence today through a variety of forms of media.

However, there is also evidence for a public aversion to racism in Ireland and sympathy with victims which is evident through the reporting process itself. A significant number of the incidents described in this report were not reported by the person(s) targeted, but by people who witnessed the incident instead. It is notable that witnesses felt a moral compulsion to intervene even where they were sometimes nervous for their own safety, and that where they did not intervene, they experienced feelings of guilt and regret. Several reports asked for education in effective and safe forms of intervention, and campaigns addressing this point might well prove successful in facilitating greater communication between witnesses and the targeted persons, facilitating new relationships and reducing the isolation felt by the person experiencing racism.

Hate Crimes

There is currently no legal definition of a hate crime to date in Ireland, with the exception of offences under the Incitement to Hatred Act 1989[37]. There is however clear evidence of a range of offences within these cases from iReport.ie that would meet the criteria for hate crimes as they are usually defined in other jurisdictions, as a crim-

inal act motivated by bias or prejudice. These include the offences of assault, arson, and criminal damage which have clear evidence attached of the bias motivations. Where reported, evidence has been provided above of all factors indicating hostility towards the targeted person(s) on account of their ethnicity.

The failure of legislators to address this issue effectively to date, and the ineffective measures available in the cases of repeat and escalating harassment, leave people of African descent in Ireland exposed to violence and fearful for their own lives. The removal of people victimised in their homes from their own neighbourhoods (through fear or strategic rehousing), where they have settled and built networks of family and friends, engaging in local communities, schools, workplaces and leisure spaces, as a default, reinforces the idea that people of African descent are out of place in Ireland. Children are particularly vulnerable to the messages of exclusion sent by these everyday incidents, seeing their parents subject to abuse and discrimination as well as being subject to it themselves. A number of reports surprisingly reveal racist abuse and violence directed at Irish children of African descent by adults they encounter in public spaces.

These kinds of crimes are unique amongst offences because the violence that is performed out of hate or hostility to a group is excessively brutal, and produces higher levels of depression, anxiety and anger than other types of crimes[38]. Crimes which are perpetrated out of hatred or hostility for a particular group have an *in terrorem* effect on communities, that is that they terrorise the target population[39].

The impunity with which speech inciting hatred can circulate is another significant challenge. When Afrophobic attitudes and behaviours are clearly learned in our society, and become ignored or denied because they are unremarkable, the language which justifies them must be addressed directly. There are clear examples of publication of written material which are threatening, abusive or insulting and are intended, or, having regard to all the circumstances, are likely to stir up hatred. Despite this, there have been few prosecutions under the Incitement of Hatred Act, which is the sole piece of criminal legislation directly addressing hatred and hostility based on 'race' or other identity grounds.

Hate crime laws are a useful and important means of sending messages of disapproval to perpetrators and the wider community and in reducing the isolation felt by the targeted community as a result of those crimes. They establish a benchmark for tolerance and respect for differences which communicates to perpetrators

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37   The effectiveness of current legislation in Ireland to address hate crimes has been recently reviewed in order to facilitate the drafting of hate crime legislation. J. Schweppe, A. Haynes and J. Carr (2015) 'Out of the Shandows: Legislating for Hate Crime in Ireland', Limerick: HHRG/ICCL.

38   P. Iganski (2001) 'Hate crimes hurt more', *American Behavioral Scientist*, *45*(4), 626-638.

39   B. Perry & S Alvi (2012) 'We are all vulnerable': The in terrorem effects of hate crimes', *International Review of Victimology*, *18*(1), 57-71.

and victims that which is unacceptable. There are further challenges, however, for creating an effective process for securing justice for victims of Afrophobic racism. Failure on the part of An Garda Síochána to investigate and to prosecute in incidents of harassment and violence which is clearly motivated by racism, despite the presence and willingness of victims to corroborate accounts, and in one case, an attempt to dissuade a victim of a brutal assault from pressing charges because the perpetrators were minors, suggests that the introduction of hate crime laws is a single step in a range of actions that need to be taken to properly address the victimisation of people in Ireland on the basis of their racialised identity or ethnicity.

Discrimination

Discrimination is reported here in a range of areas affecting quality of life, in both private and public sectors. Legislation in Ireland on discrimination prohibits discrimination both in employment and in the provision of goods and services[40].

Private housing, service in shops, restaurants and bars, and service by public bodies all appear in reports on discrimination against people of African descent who are their consumers or clients. Incidents range from the refusal of service, which is illegal if on the grounds of 'race', to the disproportionate surveillance and in some cases assault of customers, which are more difficult to address. The provision of rented accommodation is also considered a service under the Equal Status Acts, but despite this, the reports show how frequently people of African descent are discriminated against. Most reports submitted to iReport.ie in relation to housing reference multiple and repeated acts of discrimination by landlords and estate agents against people of African descent, and several reports from witnesses demonstrate that those informal policies are communicated easily and frequently to white Irish clients, leading them to believe that there is no fear of legal action. Discrimination also clearly operates in the refusal of entry to licensed premises of people of African descent and reports show that this discrimination occurs even where there are witnesses to it who are of other ethnicities particularly white Irish.

Direct discrimination in the provision of public services (including health and policing) is notable here, especially because of the additional duties in legislation which oblige public bodies to proactively implement policies and procedures which will promote equality. Discrimination by public institutions is commonly reported, with Irish citizens of African descent being refused service or given poor service. Witnesses to incidents like this report intervening to insist that public officials apply the same standards, but in some cases are afraid to do so if they are reliant on accessing particular services. The report

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40   Employment Equality Acts 1998–2011 and the Equal Status Acts 2000–2012.

It is clear from the iReport.ie data that the debates around the 2004 Constitutional Referendum on citizenship have produced particular local discourses around African women in Ireland which have been long-lasting

also exposes the slowness and ineffectiveness of many organisational responses to racist incidents and abuse, with staff often unaware of what procedures to follow. Anti-racist work also needs to be done within schools to produce effective responses to racist bullying, identifying the risks of escalation, stemming persistent harassment and properly supporting pupils, teachers and parents in that process. Addressing racist attitudes and behaviours in schools with local communities is an important step to building a cohesive society which will not tolerate racist discrimination and violence in future, but moreover it has an important immediate effect in building strong relations within those local communities which in turn will reduce isolation and vulnerability.

Discrimination in the workplace by employers, colleagues and customers is also impacting on the ability of people of African descent to participate fully and equally in employment in Ireland. In several reports, this had resulted in redundancy, lack of promotion opportunities and increased workloads, as well as resulting health problems, making work pay significantly less in real terms for those employees. People of African descent are disproportionately employed in the security and health sectors, where they may be vulnerable to abuse from customers and clients during their normal working activities. Employers are obliged to protect employees from racist harassment in the workplace under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011 and also have a duty to ensure the health and safety of their employees in the workplace under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Employees however are unlikely to report harassment if they perceive that their employment would be at risk as a result, and this is particularly the case when they perceive that their racialised identity will make it more difficult for them to acquire new employment easily. People of African descent are, therefore, particularly vulnerable to workplace harassment by both customers/clients and by colleagues.

Meeting the challenge to address Afrophobia

This report points clearly to the need for action in 6 key areas highlighted by the United Nations Programme of

activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent.[41]

Challenges in the area of Justice include a need to address racial profiling and the elimination of institutionalised stereotypes which support profiling and undermine the right to the presumption of innocence (A/RES/69/16: 17a, 17h), applying appropriate sanctions against law enforcement officials who act on the basis of racial profiling (17c), ensuring access to justice including effective protection and remedies (17d), preventing and punishing human rights violations including those by state officials (17f) and combating incitement to hatred and the spread of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred (17e).

Evidence in the area of Education suggests that the state must confront discrimination and exclusion of children of African descent in schools by peers or teachers, and provide effective training and sensitization to combat direct and indirect discrimination (A/RES/69/16: 22b). Evidence from iReport.ie in the areas of Employment, Health and Housing (A/RES/69/16: 23-25) points to a need to secure access to workplace remedies, quality health services, and to secure housing conditions, and further, our reports suggests that this arises out of the failure of application of existing legislation and mediation processes to address discrimination practices.

Finally, there is significant work to be done to address the way in which people of African descent experience multiple or aggravated discrimination and violence which arises from the intersection of sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, birth, and disability with their ethnicity.

In relation to gender in particular, as a focus of the UN agenda, it is clear from the iReport.ie data that the debates around the 2004 Constitutional Referendum on citizenship have produced particular local discourses around African women in Ireland which have been long-lasting and continue to influence the perception of African-Irish citizens as illegitimate participants in Irish society. Women of African descent are subject to greater surveillance, deprived of their dignity and privacy and exposed to much greater risks of harassment, violence and resulting health problems and isolation. That they and their children are subject to such risks must be of particular concern, and point to a need address these grounds for social exclusion with urgency.

Strong future social cohesion and a truly inclusive social agenda both require a serious assessment of these risks to individuals and to the wider Irish society as a result of their isolation.

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41   United Nations General Assembly resolution 69/16, *Programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent*, A/RES/69/16 (18 November 2014), available from undocs.org/A/RES/69/16.

Appendix 1
Survey questions on reporting to police and other organisations

In order to capture better data on patterns of reporting to An Garda Síochána and other bodies, the iReport.ie survey was revised from January 2015. The new question facilitates the analysis of reasons given for not reporting as well as factors which might persuade victims or witnesses to report future incidents. This data is analysed to aid the development of reporting systems within public bodies in Ireland.

2013-2014

1.   Has the incident been reported to An Garda Síochana (The Police) or any other organisation or authority?

2.   What was their response?

3.   If the incident was reported to An Garda Síochana (The Police), were you given a Crime Number (this is optional)

New questions from January 2015

1.   Has the incident been reported to An Garda Síochana (The Police) or any other organisation or authority?

2.   What was the response of the police?

3.   What would have encouraged you to report this incident? (tick all that apply):

      a.   If other, please specify here:

4.   If the incident was reported to An Garda Síochana (The Police), were you given a Crime Number (this is optional)

5.   If you didn't report this to the police, why was this? Please select as many as apply.

      a.   If other, please specify here:

6.   Did you report the incident to another organisation or authority?

Afrophobia in Ireland

This timely and essential report by Dr Lucy Michael of Ulster University interrogates the nature and extent of racism against people of African descent in Ireland. It is the first of a series of thematic reports published by ENAR Ireland using data from the iReport.ie racist incident reporting system. Neighbourhood harassment, violence, abuse and discrimination in the public and private sectors are each explored to help understand the key challenges today for Irish government and society.

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"iReport.ie is very well done. It gives a thorough insight into the current situation and challenges and on top of that it is well written and accessible. I look forward to see how the project develops further and seeing its impact."

Morten Kjaerum, Director, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

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