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“Racism figures double last years.”

The Irish Network Against Racism (INAR) today released figures for racist hate speech, hate crime and discriminatory incidents recorded through its iReport.ie racist incident reporting system in the first Quarter of 2020.

Overall racist incident figures for 1st Jan- 31st March 2020 show more than a doubling of the average reporting rates per quarter for 2019. This increase is largely attributable to a fourfold increase in reports relating to online and media content in these three months. But crime and discrimination reports had also risen, by 63%, with violent assaults up by 33%.

The vast increase in reports relating to media and online content was in the first instance prompted by social media posts and election literature by far-right candidates and supporters during the General Election. A significant number of reports were also made in relation to the online ‘commentary’ following Ryanair boss Michael O’Leary’s assertions associating Muslims with terrorism. Reports were also made in relation to an online video stereotyping Romanians. At the end of the period a significant number of reports were made in relation to Coronavirus-related comments against minorities and the circulation of memes which were derisory Chinese people. INAR will be bringing out a dedicated COVID19 themed report in early May.

In relation to crimes, while reporting rates to An Garda Síochána are still low overall, it should be noted that in this quarter twice as many victims of assault reported to Gardaí as in 2019. If this trend continues, it may be an early indication of increased confidence by minorities in An Garda Síochána following the publication of the force’s Diversity Strategy in late 2019. However, in cases of serious crime and harassment, victims experienced continued problems with waiting times to give statements.

Commenting on her analysis of the data, Dr Lucy Michael said: “We are seeing a significant rise in online racism, even before the coronavirus encouraged people to stay home. The data shows clearly that this is driven by the ease with which racist materials circulate on major social media platforms. The continuation of the upward trend in assaults is also worrying, and we had hoped we would see that be stemmed. However the increase in assault reports to Gardaí is an opportunity now for the Gardaí, DPP and courts to provide more effective responses to violent racism.”

ENDS

INAR is a national network of organisations working collectively to highlight and combat racism in Ireland.
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REPORT RACIST INCIDENTS AT: www.iReport.ie



Notes to Editor:

The Irish Network Against Racism [INAR](#) (formerly ENAR Ireland), who coordinate a network of 104 civil society organisations in Ireland, have pioneered the [iReport.ie](#) racist incident reporting system since 2013, logging thousands of incidents, and producing from their data cutting edge reports and policy submissions to national and international reporting bodies, government and media. Its complete periodic reports on racism can be found [here](#). INAR is also an active member of the European Network Against Racism ([ENAR](#)), a network of 160 organisations from 30 European States. INAR submits data reports and other submissions to Government, National Authorities, European Union, OSCE, Council of Europe and UN bodies on racism and discrimination in Ireland. INAR prepared and presented the Irish Civil Society collective Shadow Report to the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination hearing on Ireland in November 2019.

In this period, INAR have also developed the capacity of their network members to support people to respond to racist incidents including the [“Responding to Racism Guide”](#), a highly accessible 226 page directory of institutions, public bodies and their procedures with regards to racism and discrimination. These resources are also now brought together in a new iReport App, available for Android and iOS devices on the new [INAR](#) website. The App is aimed at members of minority groups who experience racism, as well as their allies and advocates, encouraging the latter to ‘speak up’ and make racism visible. The **iReport.ie App** is available to [download here](#).

iReport.ie and the work of INAR are made possible by:



Riailtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

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