

**Reported Incidents
Related to Racism and
strategic responses from the
NCCRI**

January- June 2008

**National Consultative Committee on
Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI)**

NCCRI Report of Incidents Related to Racism

Draft January – June 2008

Introduction

In May 2001, The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) established a system for recording incidents related to racism in Ireland.¹ Incidents are analysed and compiled into six monthly reports.² This is the fifteenth report which covers the period January – June 2008. The report aims to:

- Provide an overview of racist incidents reported to the NCCRI in the given six month period
- Draw out the key issues from the incidents logged
- Make recommendations to a range of relevant actors.

The incidents included in this report have been forwarded by victims, witnesses and non-government organisations on behalf of the victims, including key organisations working with Travellers, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. In some circumstances, the victims met with the NCCRI directly to report the incident.

The data that is generated by this reporting system is primarily qualitative and indicative of key issues that need to be addressed. This report does not aim to provide a comprehensive list of every racist incident that happens in Ireland. Indeed evidence from other countries tends to reveal, that with all such reporting systems, whether statutory or voluntary, there is likely to be a significant under-reporting of incidents. However, the NCCRI reporting mechanism plays an important role in complementing other systems such as the Equality Authority casework and Garda records³.

Organisations and individuals reporting racist incidents to the NCCRI have been encouraged to report the incident to the relevant authority responsible for investigating and addressing the complaint, for example, the Gardai (racist crime), the Equality Authority /Equality Tribunal (discrimination in the workplace, discrimination in the provision of goods and services etc.) and local authorities (graffiti, harassment on local authority housing estates etc.). In addition, the

¹ Reporting forms can be accessed through the NCCRI website www.nccri.ie

² The six monthly reports are also available on the NCCRI website <http://www.nccri.ie/incidents.html>

³ For official statistics regarding racially motivated crime, see Garda Annual Report. See Garda Annual report 2007 at www.garda.ie

NCCRI also encourages individuals and organisations to report articles or broadcasts in the national, regional or local media which they consider to be offensive to minority ethnic groups. In a small number of instances, those involved in or reporting the incident only want the incident to be logged by the NCCRI with no further action taken. These requests have been respected.

The NCCRI focus on a policy response to the racist incidents identified. We do not purport to respond to every incident reported to our office but to highlight the issues such as gaps in service provision and we seek to encourage a national and localised response to incidents.

Analysis of Data

- There have been 50 racist incidents reported and compiled by the NCCRI between January- July 2008.
- Over half of all incidents reported to the NCCRI occurred in the greater Dublin area
- 10% of all incidents reported related to Taxi services
- The majority of incidents were targeted at adults, mostly male 60% and female 32%. 8% of the racist incidents were targeted at families. There was one specific incident where the victim was ten years old.
- Racism on the internet remains a significant issue with 20% of all cases reported relating to this form of racism
- The breakdown shows that the most significant victims of racist incidents were Black Africans, constituting 41% of all incidents reported. Eastern Europeans accounted for 11% of all incidents recorded. People of Asian origin as well as Jewish, Muslim, Roma, British and Traveller communities also reported experiences of racism to the NCCRI.

Number of Incidents reported

Reports since 2005	Period covered	Number of Incidents Reported to the NCCRI
1	January – December 2005	119
2	January – December 2006	65
3	January – December 2007	99

The incidents are divided into the following:

- Assaults, abuse and harassment
- Discrimination in the workplace and the delivery of public and private services
- Misinformation and the circulation of offensive

1. Assaults, Abuse and Harassment

There have been a number of incidents reported to the NCCRI in relation to racist abuse and harassment. The following serve as examples:

- A Muslim family reported numerous incidents of damage to property, threatening behaviour and racist verbal abuse perpetrated by their neighbours. One neighbour threatened the family that they would break every window in the house and hold a gun to the father's head.
- In Tuam, a Jewish man's property was vandalised with the words "Go Home Jew" and swastikas were spray painted on the windows and driveway wall of his home. His car has also been targeted in two separate arson attacks.
- A British gentleman living in Dingle continually is subjected to racial and cultural abuse from one of his neighbours. He has repeatedly been told to go back to his own country.
- A ten year old boy was playing on a local green when two young boys started to make racist jeers and comments to the boy. The older of the boys then attacked the ten year old boy. The 10 year old boy tried to defend himself by fighting back. When the father of the two boys who started the aggression was called to the scene, he told his sons to "Beat up the Black kid".

2. Discrimination in the Workplace and the Delivery of Public and Private Goods and Services

Discrimination in the workplace and the delivery of public and private services were the most common incidents reported to the NCCRI for this period.

Examples:

- A French man of African origin alleged he was fired from his position as waiter in a busy Dublin restaurant when the owner became aware a Black person was working in his restaurant. The French man had been working in the restaurant for six months before he came to attention of the owner. NCCRI supported the victim to seek redress from the Equality Tribunal.
- An African man working on a construction site in Dublin continuously is subjected to racist abuse and name calling by colleague. The colleague also refuses to cooperate with him on work related tasks. The man made a complaint to his manager but no action was taken.
- NCCRI received a complaint staff in a Tesco branch in Dublin are continuously subjected to racial abuse by customers. NCCRI contacted TESCO Human resources at head office and informed them of the complaint.
- An employee of Dublin Bus claims has been subjected to racial abuse and threatening behaviour by other staff members. He feels there has been a lack of support on the issue from his employers.
- A Polish salesman alleges he was dismissed from his job with a tile company after a dispute with his manager arising from his treatment and the treatment of an African customer. NCCRI met with the gentleman and informed him of his rights under the Equality Legislation.
- In the greater Blanchardstown area, a group of Travellers (seven adults and eleven children) contend they were refused service at a local pub which they went to celebrate their daughter's communion. No sufficient reason was given and the guards were called. The manager of the pub informed the guards he did not have to give a reason why the Traveller family were refused service and the Traveller group had to leave the premises.

- Two Nigerian men claim they were refused entry to a busy city centre pub in Temple Bar by the doormen. The doormen claimed the pub was full. The Nigerian men witnessed other people allowed access to the pub after they were refused.
- An African man travelling with Bus Eireann on the Dublin – Drogheda route contends he was refused by the bus driver to disembark from the bus at a particular Bus Eireann bus stop. He had to remain on the bus and travel onwards past his destination. On a previous journey, the man had witnessed the bus driver treat an African woman and her two children in the same way. A complaint was made to Bus Eireann. The man received a complimentary bus ticket but no apology was issued.
- In Galway, a woman who was standing in a queue for a taxi was called over by a white Irish taxi driver to take his car and not to go with Black African taxi drivers.

3. Misinformation and the Circulation of Offensive Material

- The NCCRI received complaints about an antiques shop in County Louth selling Nazi memorabilia and reproductions including material related to the SS.
- “Niggers Out” was scrawled in very large lettering on a hoarding in South County Dublin
- NCCRI received a complaint about a racist website. The website includes specific targeting of a prominent member of the Jewish community in Ireland, demanding she go back to Israel. The website also hosts a discussion forum allowing space for racist commentary and opinion. NCCRI made an official complaint to www.hotline.ie , a website for reporting illegal content on the internet.

Recommendations and Further Action

The NCCRI would make the following recommendations based on analysis of reported racist incidents between January– June 2008

- NCCRI has arranged a meeting with the Gardai and Dublin City Council in relation to a family being victimised in their own home. The meeting assisted the family to identify local community supports to help redress the racism they are experiencing.
- NCCRI will host a North – South Intercultural Forum on Reporting Racist incidents in Ireland. The Forum will focus on reporting mechanisms and support structures for victims of racism. The Forum will take place in Derry in September
- NCCRI in partnership with the National Women’s Council of Ireland host a Muslim Women’s Group monthly. The group has a focus on identifying gender specific forms of racism towards Muslim Women and identify strategies for addressing these forms of racism.
- The NCCRI will work with the City and County Integration Strategies to help develop regional and local responses to addressing incidents of racism. It is hoped a number of Regional Interagency Racist Incident Forums will be set up in a number of focus areas around the country. There is currently an interagency racist incident forum operating in Dundalk with the support of the NCCRI.
- NCCRI forwarded the complaints to Dublin Bus Equality Section in relation to a number of complaints we received in relation to employees and customers experiencing racism.