



# HATE CRIME:

A guide for organisations supporting Eastern Europeans with racial hate crime

*Problem we want to address is loss of confidence, emotional resilience and growing sense of victimisation, which in turn results in isolation, declining mental health and negative outcomes for social integration among Eastern European communities that all stem from lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate emotional support services for Eastern European victims of hate incidents.*

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## 1. What is East European Resource Centre

East European Resource Centre is a charity (reg. no. 1114607) that provides information, advice and support to people from Central and Eastern Europe from the 2004 and 2007 EU accession countries: ***Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia***

### **Mission and vision**

Our **vision** is of London being home to Eastern European (EE) migrants where they can make choices about their families, work and homes, and live fulfilled lives as respected members of local communities.

Our **mission** is giving voice and resources to EE migrants who experience poverty, exploitation and social exclusion in order to help them to make choices about their lives and realize their potential as equal members of communities.

We support and advise people on their journey to integration in the UK, we want to develop people's skills, confidence, experience and capacity to lead fulfilled lives.

Our **key areas of work**: poverty and destitution, immigration, rights at work, welfare and housing, hate crime.

## 1.1 Work Rights Centre (WoRC)

WoRC a registered charity (No. 1165419) with a **mission** to combat in-work poverty and cultivate social mobility. Every week our multilingual team helps UK and EU nationals address severe issues of non-payment, black market work and exploitation. Our team helps British and EU nationals exit precarious work, and equip them with the tools to access fair and lawful employment.

We assist them in their journey to **employment justice** and support their professional mobility with employability and training advice. Our advice is free, confidential, and available in several European languages.

To this end, WoRC assists individual workers to understand the UK labour market and access their employment rights, but also seeks to engage local authorities, central government and civil society at large in a collaborative effort to raise the public profile of precarious work, and break the vicious cycle of insecurity and isolation which it engenders.

## 2. What is hate crime

Any incident, which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their actual or perceived race.

There is legislation which protects victims of crime where the offender is motivated by hostility or hatred towards the victim's race or religious beliefs (actual or perceived).

**Crime and Disorder Act 1998** created a number of specific offences of racially aggravated crime, based on offences of wounding, assault, damage, harassment and threatening/abusive behaviour.

**Public Order Act 1986 Part 3.** For an offence to be committed under any of these sections of the **Public Order Act 1986**, there has to be "threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour" and it has to be intended to or likely in all the circumstances to stir up racial hatred.

## 3. Eastern Europeans in the UK

Overall numbers of Eastern Europeans increased rapidly across all London boroughs and across the UK in general, this phenomenon was met with backlash from the popular media. **Eastern Europeans were, and still are, portrayed as 'invaders' from poor countries, often lacking skills and education but overall decent workers.**

This also created social tensions in local communities. After months of anti-immigrant rhetoric in the run up to EU referendum in the UK in June 2016, the number of racially aggravated offences recorded by the police in the same month was 41% higher than in July 2015 (Home Office 2016).

Little consideration has been paid to Eastern Europeans as victims of hate crime before 2016. But with the referendum, Eastern Europeans have become the racial other, the sometimes go to scapegoat for Brexit, in the populist media, of course along with other minorities.

This phenomenon has been amplified by poor or lack of provision of any services that encourage integration of newly arrived communities, such as affordable English classes or career guidance appropriate for workers with different educational backgrounds. **People often felt used as cheap labour, ostracised, being second class citizens.**

**The longer the route to integration, the less confident and more anxious our communities become.** This aggravates the sense of hostility and not being wanted. This has also a double edged sword consequence: **Victimisation and isolation leads to the radicalisation of some members of Eastern European communities**, phenomenon amplified by the rise of the far right in Europe at the moment.

We have noticed increased tensions between EE communities and other migrant communities (Asian or African), which sometimes leads to EE nationals becoming perpetrators in hate crime incidents.

## 4. Hate crime and prejudice against Eastern Europeans community

In summer 2017 we asked our community members (328) about their experience of hate crime: 70% reported feeling unwelcome, 51% reported having experienced hate incidents in work or in private life. Only 25% of users were willing to report to the police.

Our outreach show that Polish shops-keepers continue to endure hostilities including online trolling. Home Office Statistical Bulletin (October 2018) shows consistent increase in number of incidents, with 14% increase between 2017 and 2018. At the same time, lack of resources for targeted support decreased number of EE migrants confident to report.

Enquiries from victims come only if a person endured over 20 incidents and is at the breaking point. Online hate speech has become a norm, with around 90% of our constituents reporting 'discomfort' on social media.

**Often a hate crime is accompanied by other levels of discrimination that makes the victims even more vulnerable.**

We are receiving an increased number of reports of hate crime in the workplace, which is very concerning.

## 5. Barriers to accessing help for Eastern Europeans community

Because racist or xenophobic behaviours towards Eastern Europeans have been so massively naturalised, it's not a surprise that supporting victims to detect hate crime, articulate the nature of an incident and report to the police or other relevant body is a real challenge.

## **BARRIERS TO REPORTING:**

- + Feelings of embarrassment by the victim
- + Fear of reprisals from the perpetrator
- + Lack of trust in the police and the criminal justice system to treat them fairly and with respect
- + Cultural and community issues in getting the police involved. There's a great lack of trust in authority in what EE are concerned, due to Police being corrupt and violent back home, and justice being rarely an outcome.
- + Feelings of isolation and the victim fearing that they won't be believed.
- + Fear of being able to be understood because of a lack of language skills.
- + The victim may regard the incident as an everyday thing that they have to put up with.

## **6. How to report**

### **Specific issues around EE communities:**

- + low reporting
- + lack of trust in authority
- + language barriers
- + there is a mix of hate crime and discrimination

### **REPORTING TO THE POLICE**

In an emergency: **Dial 999**

In a non-emergency: **Dial 101**

Online: **[www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)**

On Public Transport: **0800 40 50 40** or text **61016**

### **GET THE EAST EUROPEAN RESOURCE CENTRE HELP:**

English and Polish helpline: **07521 857415**

English and Romanian helpline: **07730021986**

Online: **[info@eerc.org.uk](mailto:info@eerc.org.uk)**

## 7. Useful contacts

### **Galop**

Galop is the LGBT+ anti-violence charity, offering advice and support to people facing hate crime, domestic abuse or sexual violence.

**[www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk)**

**T: 020 7704 2040**

**E: [advice@galop.org.uk](mailto:advice@galop.org.uk)**

### **Community Security Trust**

The Community Security Trust is a charity working with victims of antisemitic hate crime.

**[www.cst.org.uk/report-incident](http://www.cst.org.uk/report-incident)**

**T: 020 8457 9999**

**E: [incidents@cst.org.uk](mailto:incidents@cst.org.uk)**

### **The Monitoring Group**

The Monitoring Group work with victims of racial and religious hate crime

**[www.tmg-uk.org](http://www.tmg-uk.org)**

**T: 020 7582 7438**

**E: [office@tmg-uk.org](mailto:office@tmg-uk.org)**