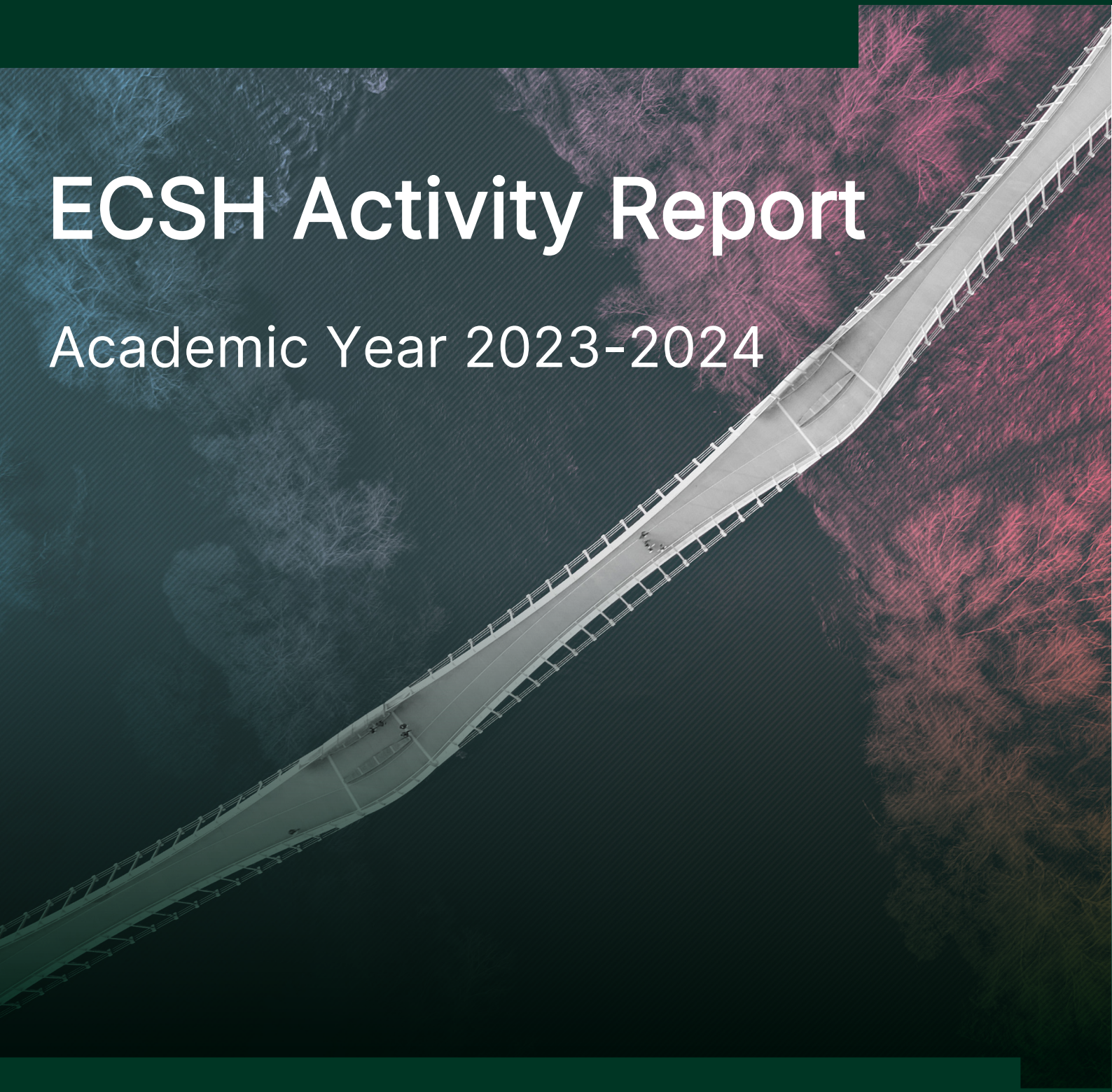
UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

European Centre for the Study of Hate



ECSH Activity Report

Academic Year 2023-2024

ECSH *Research for Action* Series: Report 2025-1

About the European Centre for the Study of Hate

The European Centre for the Study of Hate is an interdisciplinary research centre dedicated to understanding and combating hate in all its forms. Drawing cross-sectoral expertise from academia, civil society, and policy organisations the ECSH addresses the complex dynamics of hate through collaborative research, policy engagement, and research-led teaching.

Inaugural lecture by Dr Sindy Joyce, Lecturer in Traveller Studies

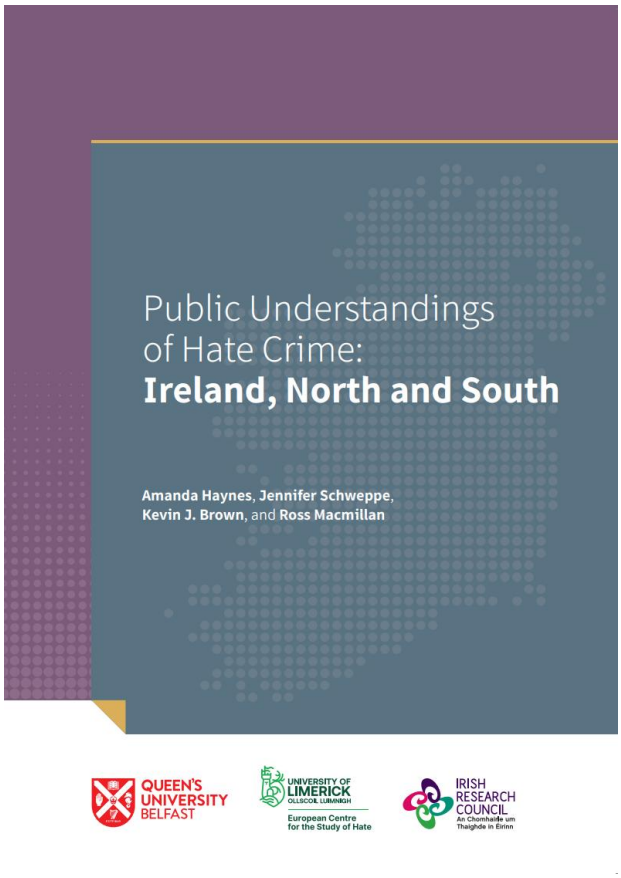
The ECSH is privileged to have Dr Sindy Joyce as one of its members. Dr Joyce was appointed by President Michael D Higgins as a member of the Council of State, is an internationally recognised human rights defender, was the first Traveller in Ireland to be awarded a PhD, and was the first person in Ireland to hold the position of Lecturer in Traveller Studies.

Dr Sindy Joyce gave her inaugural lecture, **Indigenous Criminology: A New Agenda for Europe** at an ECSH Showcase event at the University of Limerick Research Week 2024. Her paper, which was extremely well received, was followed by a response from Professor Zoë James, Professor of Criminology, University of Plymouth.

A recording of the lecture and Dr James' response are available to view here.



Public Understandings of Hate Crime



The Public Understandings of Hate Crime: Ireland, North and South project, is funded by the Irish Research Council New Foundations programme and the Department of An Taoiseach Shared Island initiative.

Responding to increases in recorded hate crime as well as policy attention to this pressing social issue, this research provides a timely investigation into the beliefs of the general population with respect to hate crime legislation, and attitudes to some of those communities often included in such legislation as "protected groups".

The report "Public Understandings of Hate Crime: North and South (PUHC)" provides baseline data regarding the public's understanding of the construct of hate crime, its dimensions, and its distinguishing features on both sides of the border. It further establishes the public's perception of the prevalence of hate crime on the island of Ireland, the physical and emotional harms of hate crime, the impact on minority communities, extant reporting mechanisms, and the role of legislation in addressing hate crime.



The PUHC report was launched in December 2023 at Queen's University Belfast by Mr Justice Desmond Marrinan, with opening words of welcome by Professor Aoife O'Donoghue.



The PUHC report had immediate impact., being cited by the Minster for Justice Helen McEntee in Dáil Éireann as evidence for public support for hate crime legislation.

The report is available here for download.

Hate crime legislation



Research by the European Centre for the Study of Hate (ECSH) at the University of Limerick informed the introduction of hate crime legislation in Ireland, which was realised through the introduction of the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act 2024. Before this, the hate element of a crime was not recognised consistently in Irish criminal justice. The ECSH team provided clear evidence of gaps in the system, challenged the intransigence of the State on the issue, and in doing so, worked closely with policymakers, civil society organisations, and international bodies. The Centre's research helped shift public policy, shape new legislation, and strengthen protection for individuals targeted because of their identity.

For over a decade the ECSH worked with civil society organisations and the Coalition against Hate Crime to support advocacy efforts and co-develop an evidence base for legislative refom. By maintaining continuous dialogue with policymakers, responding to consultations, participating in public hearings, and supporting civil society organisations, the researchers ensured that their findings remained influential throughout the legislative process.

The culmination of these efforts was the enactment of the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act 2024. This law marks Ireland's first dedicated legal framework for prosecuting hate crimes, strengthening protections for individuals targeted based on their social identity.



Number 41 *of* 2024

Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act 2024

European Understandings of Hate



Professor Jennifer Schweppe's work as an Independent Expert member of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Hate Crime finished in 2024.

During the biennium 2022/2023, the Committee of Experts was tasked with preparing a comprehensive Committee of Ministers Recommendation on combating hate crime.

The recommendation was drafted by the Committee of Experts on hate crime (PC/ADI-CH) under the joint responsibility of the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) and the Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI).



Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 on Combating Hate Crime was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 7 May 2024. This non-binding standard sets out what should be done by member state institutions and other key stakeholders to effectively prevent and respond to hate crime within the framework of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.



Irish Travellers' Access to Justice

Launched in 2022, and funded by the COALESE programme through the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the Irish Research Council,the Irish Travellers' Access to Justice project documents Travellers' perceptions of, and experiences with, the criminal justice process, specifically policing and the courts system. The research team spoke with 1 in every 60 adult Travellers in Ireland for the study, which was described by the Commissioner of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission as "ethically grounded in human rights principles of participation", "a landmark study in both its conduct and findings", and "an empirical leap in delivering an authoritative analysis and evidence-based recommendations for measures to tackle the institutional racism in the criminal justice system towards Travellers."

In recognition of their work, Dr Sindy Joyce, Professor Amanda Haynes, and Professor Jennifer Schweppe, were awarded the Interdisciplinary Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Output Award at the recent President's Research Excellence and Impact Awards in 2023.

For the period 2023-2024, the ITAJ team continued to ensure that the findings of the research are not left on the shelf, but used for policy change. In this period the team presented to :

- Council of Europe Advisory Group of the Framework Convention on Minority Rights
- National Traveller and Roma Integration Strategy
- The Policing Authority
- Annual meeting of District Court Judges
- Centre for Crime, Justice and Victim Studies.





Student project

School of Law students in UL produced a report, "ECRI Good Practices in Combating Hate Crime: A Mid-Cycle Analysis" as part of their final year Advanced Lawyering programme. The "Good Practices in Combating Hate Crime" project was run in 2024 with four students: Isobel Heffernan, Jenna O'Brien, William Ryan, and Rory Shanahan.

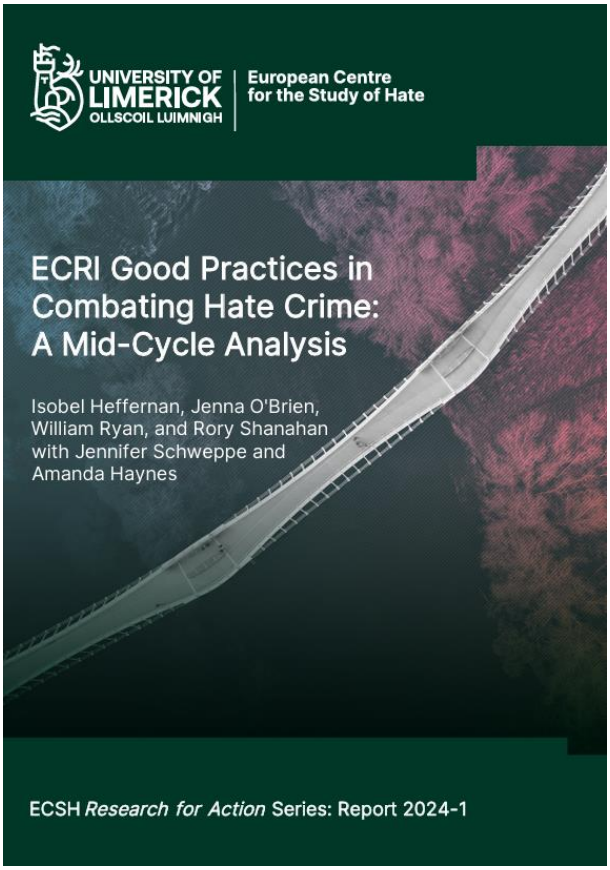
As part of the project, students reviewed 23 published country monitoring reports of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance as part of its sixth monitoring cycle, and identified good practices in place across member States with respect to combating hate crime.

The Report seeks to gather together good practices identified by ECRI as published in the country reports with respect to combating hate crime as it reaches the halfway point of its monitoring cycle. It is hoped that the Report will assist member States, civil society organisations, NHRIs, and international organisations in introducing good practices for addressing hate crime.

Students presented the findings of the report at the University Research Week ECSH Showcase in 2024, where the report was formally launched.

You can watch the event here.





ECSH Global Visitors Programme

At the heart of the ECSH is the ECSH Global Visitors Programme. This programme brings people working against hate in the academy, practice, and policy, to the University of Limerick for mutual learning opportunities.

ECSH Global Scholars are typically faculty members from outside Ireland who spend up to four weeks in residence at the ECSH at the University of Limerick working with a faculty member in developing a scholarly research output.

In 2024, the ECSH introduced a new programme, the ECSH Global Fellows programme. ECSH Global Fellows will typically work in civil society, or be on secondment from a government department. They will engage with the ECSH on policy issues of mutual interest, and utilise facilities in the Lab to support their work to produce evidence-based policy recommendations. At the end of their time, ECSH Global Fellows can expect to have co-produced a ECSH Research for Action Briefing Paper, or have initiated work on an ECSH Research for Action Policy Report with an ECSH faculty member. The ECSH is particularly interested in hosting Human Rights Defenders as ECSH Global Fellows.

Our first ECSH Global Fellow was Dr Christina Jura, bureau member of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and board member of the National Council for Combatting Discrimination (NCCD) in Romania from September 4th to 8th. During this visit, Dr. Jura co-presented a panel discussion with Dr. Sindy Joyce, ECSH member, on Traveller and Roma Rights and Representation. He provided a workshop to PhD students from across the faculty working in the fields of human rights and equality. Dr. Jura also delivered a seminar on the functions and operation of ECRI and NCCD.



Selected Publications

- Garratt, L., Haynes, A., & Schweppe, J. (2024). 'I felt . . . caged': Victims of hate crime and their negotiation of space. Criminology & Criminal Justice, 0(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/17488958241276180
- Henry, S., Bryan, A., & Neary, A. (2023). Up Schitt's Creek? Comedy as a Slantwise Pedagogical Encounter with Queerness. Teachers College Record, 125(10), 81-101. https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681231219317
- Haynes, A., Schweppe, J., & Garland, J. (2023). The production of hate crime victim status: Discourses of normalisation and the experiences of LGBT community members. Criminology & Criminal Justice, 0(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/17488958231160252
- Gearty, M. R., Schweppe, J., Haynes, A. & Joyce, S., (2024). Irish Travellers' Access to Justice: Are you the Fairest of them all?. Irish Judicial Studies Journal. 8(2), 94-109. https://www.ijsj.ie/assets/uploads/images/2024%20edition%202/7.%20Gearty%20and%20Ors.pdf
- Schweppe, J.; Haynes, A., MacMillan, I.R., Brown, K. (2023). Public Understandings of Hate Crime: Ireland, North and South. University of Limerick. Report. https://doi.org/10.34961/researchrepository-ul.24720459.v1
- Haynes, A., Schweppe, J. (2024). Criminal Justice (incitement to violence and hatred and hate offences) Bill 2022: a pragmatic proposal for the passage of hate crime legislation. University of Limerick. Report. https://doi.org/10.34961/researchrepository-ul.25674060.v1
- Schweppe, J., Haynes, A. and Joyce, S. (2024) Mincéirs/Travellers in Garda Custody. In *Police Custody in Ireland* (pp. 190-216). Routledge.

- Henry, S., Bryan, A., & Neary, A. (2023). Up Schitt's Creek? Comedy as a Slantwise Pedagogical Encounter with Queerness. Teachers College Record, 125(10), 81-101. https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681231219317
- Haynes, A., Schweppe, J., & Garland, J. (2023). The production of hate crime victim status: Discourses of normalisation and the experiences of LGBT community members. Criminology & Criminal Justice, 0(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/17488958231160252
- Schweppe, J.; Haynes, A., MacMillan, I.R., Brown, K. (2023). Public Understandings of Hate Crime: Ireland, North and South. University of Limerick. Report. https://doi.org/10.34961/researchrepository-ul.24720459.v1

- Schweppe, J.; Haynes, A.; Neary, A. (2025). Submission to the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance as part of its Sixth Monitoring Cycle Country Monitoring Work: Ireland. University of Limerick. Report. https://doi.org/10.34961/researchrepository-ul.28248752.v1



Eagna chun Gnímh, or in the English language, "Wisdom for Change" is the motto of the University of Limerick. The European Centre for the Study of Hate advances evidence-informed dialogue at European and national levels on challenging hate towards those who are marginalised or stigmatised. The ECSH is the nexus for research-policy-practice linkages, producing translational interdisciplinary European scholarship on one of the most important issues facing Europe today. Known for the production of scholarly research which has real world impact, the "ECSH Research for Action Series" is a series which will publish research for policy and practice, translating scholarly findings into practical actions for change. It produces long policy reports and short briefing papers, all of which are available on our website.

ul.ie /ecsh