

Leicester leads the way in most comprehensive ever hate-crime study

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Britain's most comprehensive study of hate crime is being launched this month in Leicester by a specialist research team at the University of Leicester.

[Criminologists](#) from the University are starting a major two-year project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, examining the experiences of those who are victimised because of their identity, vulnerability or perceived 'difference' in the eyes of the perpetrator.

Dr Neil Chakraborti and Jon Garland from the Department of Criminology at the University of Leicester said the research will broaden the scope of all previous studies of hate crime.

Dr Chakraborti, Principal Investigator, said: "We will be working with the widest range of victims ever covered in a single hate crime study. As well as investigating the experiences of the more 'recognised' hate crime victim communities, including those who experience racist, religiously motivated, homophobic, disablist and transphobic victimisation, we also want to hear from anyone who feels they have been a victim of hate crime including people whose victimisation often slips under the radar. That will entail us working with a very broad range of groups such as the homeless, refugees, [asylum seekers](#), Gypsies and Travellers, those with [mental health problems](#), and those belonging to alternative subcultures, amongst many others.

"This research will shed new light upon their needs and their experiences of victimisation. Throughout the two years we will be working closely with criminal justice agencies, including the police, and other organisations in a position to support victims of targeted violence and harassment because we want the research to make a real difference to policy and practice.

The research will therefore be of benefit to potential and actual victims of hate crime, community groups, networks and associations, the police, [local authorities](#), Victim Support, the Ministry of Justice and Home Office, and charities and third sector organisations. The research team also plan to post regular updates on their progress via a dedicated project website and through social networking media such as Twitter in order to make the project as accessible and transparent as possible.

Mr Jon Garland, co-investigator in the research, said: "The project will offer new perspectives of what it's actually like to be targeted because the victim is somehow "different". It will uncover the true impact of such harassment and violence and will help criminal justice agencies, both locally here in Leicester and also nationally, to understand fully the harmful impact of hate crime."

As one of the most diverse cities in the UK, Leicester offers the ideal site in which to conduct the proposed study. The research will be undertaken via an extensive online and written survey of the wide range of victim communities mentioned above, and this will be complemented by hundreds of in-depth interviews with victims. The findings will be summarised in a series of reports and academic journal articles as the project progresses.

Provided by University of Leicester

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