

Hate Motivation Definitions

The PSNI have adopted the definition for racially motivated incidents recommended by the Stephen Lawrence enquiry, namely 'Any incident, which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.' Additionally the PSNI also use the principles of this definition to record all types of hate incidents as listed below, along with their definitions:

Racist Incidents

A racist incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. A racial group can be defined as a group of persons defined by reference to race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins (this includes UK National origins i.e. Scottish, English, Welsh and Irish) and references to a person's racial group refer to any racial group into which he/she falls. Racial group includes the Irish Traveller community.

Homophobic Incidents (sexual orientation)

A homophobic incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person. Homophobia can be defined as a fear or dislike directed towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people, or a fear or dislike directed towards their perceived lifestyle, culture or characteristics. Sexual orientation can be defined as an individual's preference for a particular sex (be it the opposite or the same), or an individual's view of their own sexuality.

Sectarian Incidents

A sectarian incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be sectarian by the victim or any other person. The term 'sectarian', whilst not clearly defined, is a term almost exclusively used in Northern Ireland to describe incidents of bigoted dislike or hatred of members of a different religious or political group. It is broadly accepted that within the Northern Ireland context an individual or group must be perceived to be Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, or Loyalist or Republican.

Faith/Religious Incidents (non-sectarian)

A faith/religious incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the faith of the victim or so perceived by the victim or any other person. A faith or religious group can be defined as a group of persons defined by reference to religious belief or lack of religious belief. This would include Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and different sects within a religion. It also includes people who hold no religious belief at all.

Disability (or Disablist) Incidents

A disability related incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their disability or so perceived by the victim or any other person. Disability can be defined as any physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Transphobic Incidents

A transphobic incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be transphobic by the victim or any other person. Gender should not be confused with sexual orientation. A transsexual is a person who has 'gender dysphoria' or dissatisfaction with his or her own birth gender. Transsexuals may be lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual and may or may not consider an incident perpetrated against them to be homophobic.

A crime will be recorded as having a hate motivation where it meets the relevant definition provided above. Not all hate motivated incidents will result in the recording of a crime. Hate motivated crimes are classified according to the Home Office Counting Rules and form a subset of the overall police recorded crime statistics.

An explanation of what constitutes an incident and a crime is provided in Section 2.1 of the [Crime User Guide](#).