

PRESS RELEASE

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GETTING REAL ABOUT HATE CRIME

NIACRO is delighted to launch *Get Real* – a PEACE IV funded, 3-year project aimed at restoratively challenging hate crime.

Get Real supports those over 18 who are involved in hate crime, their victims, and those vulnerable of involvement in hate crime, to acknowledge the hurt and damage caused and to move forward with greater understanding and hope.

Hate crime affects many, if not all of our communities. Get Real helps to restore the relationships that have been broken in our communities because of racist, homophobic, religious, transgender, sectarian or disability hate crime.

By holding those responsible to account for their actions and enabling those who have been harmed to express how they have been impacted, Get Real identifies positive ways for those involved to move forward. Restorative practices allow those involved to safely hear of the impact, in a way suitable to them, and explore how the person responsible for the hate crime can make up for the harm caused.

Speaking at the launch, Professor Paul Iganski, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Lancaster University said: **“It is important to have an holistic approach to addressing the harm of hate crime, particularly with regard to the placing the victim's experience at the heart of the restorative process. The Get Real approach recognises the salience of the particular harms inflicted by hate crime. Get Real is providing a space for an alternative approach to hate crime and the challenges that manifest from it.”**

Get Real is a facilitated process using restorative practices where participants have the opportunity to: be heard; ask questions; take responsibility; feel empowered; explore impact; and repair harm.

This will be achieved through three strands:



- **Get Real about Justice:** restorative practice interventions with those who have offended and victims
- **Get Real about Identity:** community-based education programmes with those at risk of perpetuating hate crime
- **Get Real about Society:** diversity training delivered to criminal justice agencies across Northern Ireland and Ireland to equip public servants with knowledge and skills to work towards acceptance of diversity

Welcoming the project Gina McIntyre, CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body said: **“This project will challenge prejudice and intolerance by identifying the underlying issues which cause people to become intolerant. In doing so it will help to reduce sectarian and racially motivated crime. It also reflects the core ethos of the ‘Building Positive Relations’ objective of the EU’s PEACE IV Programme, which has been designed to help create greater levels of community cohesion.”**

Get Real works across Northern Ireland and in the border counties in the Republic of Ireland. The Get Real team are already working in Ballymena, Coleraine, Belfast, Dungannon, Portadown and Derry/Londonderry to build positive relations and to increase community cohesion.

You can find out more about Get Real at www.niacro.co.uk/get-real.

- **ENDS**

Notes to editors

- The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in Ireland.
- It is responsible for managing two EU Structural Funds Programmes, PEACE IV and INTERREG VA which are designed to enhance cross-border co-operation, promote reconciliation and create a more peaceful and prosperous society.
- The Programmes operate within a clearly defined area including Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and in the case of INTERREG VA, Western Scotland.
- The PEACE IV Programme has a value of €270 million and aims to promote peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.



- For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu
- NIACRO has been awarded up to €763,280 under the PEACE IV Programme for the 'Get Real' Project. This project has been funded by the EU's PEACE IV programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Board (SEUPB).
- Get Real will be delivered by NIACRO in partnership with Victim Support, South Belfast Roundtable, Probation Board for Northern Ireland, The Probation Service and the PSNI.
- For more information on Get Real, visit the NIACRO website: www.niacro.co.uk/get-real
- For further information on Get Real, contact Katherine McCloskey, Public Affairs and Policy Co-ordinator (NIACRO) on 028 9032 0157 or via email at katherine@niacro.co.uk