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EVR PRESS STATEMENT ON OUR 2018-2020 HATE CRIME DATA RESEARCH



"Since End Violence and Racism Against ESEA Communities (EVR) began our work over a year ago, we have been running into systemic issues of missing data, inconsistent reporting formats and weak or non-existent engagement with communities. Driven by our mission, we were determined to ascertain the volume and types of reported hate crime affecting East and Southeast Asian (ESEA) communities, information which should be routinely collected and disclosed by police forces across the UK. This was to help us to build a picture of the scale of racially targeted violence and discrimination affecting ESEA communities today.

Of the 65% of forces who came back to us, over 60% of them reported an increase in reported anti-ESEA hate crimes. 16 out of 46 forces either gave us unusable/unclear data, did not provide data, or did not even respond. And disgracefully, the Met Police still uses the colonialist term 'Oriental' to report the appearance of victims – which is not just incidental but part of their internal reporting tool (from their notes: "the data extraction was filtered using IC5 to include only victims who have South and South East Asian ethnic appearance which is classified as Oriental on SAP BI").

The results we have received are incomplete and almost certainly understate the true levels of anti-ESEA hate crime. They show at least a 27% rise in reported anti-ESEA hate crimes for the whole of 2019 to 2020 - not just for the first quarter of the year - and a nearly 50% rise in reported hate crimes across the UK, from 2018 to 2020. This will not surprise anyone who has been paying attention. It is furthermore an affirmation of the need for the work that EVR and our sister organisations do.

The question is: why would ESEA people report hate crimes and incidents to the police when reporting systems are so unfit for purpose? Community members have told us that they fear being re-traumatised or even criminalised. Many live in distrust and/or fear of the police and authorities, and experience being neglected by them. How can we encourage any member of the public to report, if we cannot be confident that they can be supported? This is especially pertinent in the wake of indefensible revelations of gendered and racialised violence in the Met Police, which have much damaged police-community relations.

We believe the solution is not 'more police', but rather to implement measures such as better data recording, including appropriate disaggregation of ESEA ethnic groups beyond 'Chinese', 'Asian-Other' - and 'Oriental'. More reliable and inclusive data would improve how we understand and respond to the problem of violence and discrimination against ESEA communities, working together as part of a wider coalition against all forms of injustice.

EVR calls on the Government to act to address racial violence and discrimination targeting ESEA communities in every region and at local, national and global levels. This means ending the hostile environment, regularising undocumented migrants' statuses and welcoming refugees. This means ensuring everyone has basic human rights as a bare minimum. And it further includes but is not limited to: prioritising resourcing and support given to community groups, elder and youth centres, businesses and schools; mandating ESEA histories on the National Curriculum; and recognising ESEA Heritage Month as an annual observance. We demand accountability, follow-through and will challenge any gaslighting or blaming of our communities for the racism they are forced to suffer, every step of the way."