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PRESS RELEASE

Commission welcomes report challenging myths on migrant workers

The Equality Commission has welcomed the publication of the report “Challenging Racism – Ending Hate” by “Unite Against Hate”.

“Challenging the myths which feed prejudice is an essential starting point to tackling race hate crimes and discrimination, and the Unite Against Hate paper launched today makes a welcome contribution to that task”, Dr. Michael Wardlow, Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission said.

“Hate crime is an attack on a person’s humanity, their identity as a human being, and it must be challenged”, he said. “With racial attacks on people in our community increasing, we all have to consider what role we each can play in countering the prejudices within our community which lead to such attacks – and in providing support and reassurance to its victims.”

The Commission, which deals with around 300 enquiries a year about racial discrimination, has made policy proposals and recommendations to tackle prejudicial attitudes and racial violence.

“We have stressed the need to tackle the persistence of negative attitudes towards BME groups and migrant workers; lack of participation in public life; and under reporting of hate crime.” Dr. Wardlow said. “We believe that these are critical issues which must be addressed in the Northern Ireland Executive’s revised Racial Equality Strategy.”

“Combating prejudice demands a determined effort from everyone in Northern Ireland – the Executive, government departments, employers, service providers, representative groups, the media and ourselves as individuals”.