



All Ireland Network on Sexual Violence Research

Connecting sexual violence researchers across the island of Ireland

Newsletter July 2025

Introduction

We are delighted to welcome you to the All-Ireland Network on Sexual Violence Research (AINSVR), a Network that aims to connect scholars, practitioners and policy makers working on issues related to sexual violence across the island of Ireland.

Our newsletter provides a space to reflect on AINSVR activities and share information about

members research and other relevant initiatives.

Remember to check out our website: ainsvr.org and follow us on X @ainsvr2023.

Publications



- **McAlinden, A-M., Keenan, M. and Gallen, J.** (2025.) Transforming Justice Responses to Non-recent Institutional Abuses. Clarendon Studies in Criminology (Oxford University Press), 403pp, available open access [here](#).
- **Hayman. L.** (2025) Perspectives from Ireland: The Psychological Harms of Cyber-Located Sexual Violence, WWW '25: Companion Proceedings of the ACM on Web Conference 2025, 2782 - 2790. Available [here](#).
- **Hayman. L.** (2024) Perspectives from Ireland: Women's Responses to Cyber-located Sexual Violence (CLSV), Cyber Research Ireland Conference Proceedings, IEEE, 2024. Available [here](#).
- **Kane D, Walshe J, Richardson D, Pucillo C, Ferguson W, Connor SO,**

Maier N, Flood K, Eogan M. (2025) Genital and anal injury in women after sexual assault: prevalence rates and associated risk factors in 294 cases. Int J Legal Med. 2025 May 24. Available [here](#).

- **Kane D, Holmes A, Kennedy K, Flood K, Eogan M.** (2025) Sexual violence associated with international travel: a review of 443 cases. Int J Legal Med. 2025 Mar; 139(2):817-823.
- **Kane D, Daly R, Walshe J, Maier N, Pucillo C, Richardson D, Flood K, Eogan M.** (2025) Physical injury in men after sexual assault: An analysis of 137 cases. Forensic Sci Int. 2025 Feb;367:112340.
- **DiSantis, C. J. & Towl, G. J.** (2025). Addressing Student Sexual Violence in Higher Education: A Good Practice Guide, 2nd Edition. Emerald Publishing

Projects

Transforming Justice Responses to Non-recent Institutional Abuses. Funded by the Higher Education Authority's North-South Research Programme, the British Academy and an AHRC Fellowship.

Adopting the island of Ireland, North and South, as a twin case study, this project, led by

Prof Anne-Marie McAlinden (QUB), Prof Marie Keenan (UCD) and Dr James Gallen (DCU), critically examined justice responses to non-recent institutional abuses by church and state in both jurisdictions in a comparative, international and interdisciplinary context and explored how they can be enhanced. The final project report can be found [here](#).

DRCC Project on Attitudes to Sexual Violence in Ireland

With funding from Community Foundation Ireland, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre commissioned Ipsos B&A to examine public attitudes in Ireland towards sexual violence and consent. The findings reveal the serious and widespread nature of sexual violence, with almost three in ten adults reporting personal experience. The research shows increased public awareness and empathy toward victim/survivors but also highlights the persistence of harmful beliefs such as victim-blaming, particularly among younger men, though evident across all age groups.

These attitudes reflect the concerns many victim/survivors cite around disclosing or reporting their experiences. While this survey found 30% of adults experienced sexual

violence, CSO data from 2022 puts the figure at 40%. Differences in survey methodology likely explains the gap, but both sets of data point to the urgent need for cultural change, stronger prevention efforts and increased supports for those affected by sexual violence. Briefing available [here](#).

Attitudes of Men and Boys in Northern Ireland Towards Violence Against Women and Girls.

A research team from Queen's University Belfast, led by Professor Maria Lohan, has been commissioned by the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) team in The Executive Office (TEO) to carry out an important new study to support the delivery of the Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls, led by TEO. The research will explore the attitudes of men and boys in Northern Ireland towards violence against women and girls, with a particular focus on young men aged 16-24.

Professor Dirk Schubotz, Dr Siobhan McAlister, and Dr Mary-Louise Corr join Professor Maria Lohan as co-investigators on the project. The research team also includes Dr Aoibheann Brennan-Wilson and Alan McKinstry. Together, the team aims to better understand how masculinities are shaped and how best to engage

young men in efforts to address violence against women.

A qualitative exploration of perspectives on help-seeking for LGBTQ+ survivors of sexual violence.

Author: Ciara Buckley and co-authors: Lorraine Boran, Maggie Brennan and Áine Travers. Despite experiencing similar or higher rates of sexual violence compared with heterosexual cisgender counterparts, LGBTQIA+ people are under-served in service provision, with research documenting negative experiences with services, and subsequent disengagement from supports. Despite high levels of initial engagement with formal support organisations (i.e., help-seeking), LGBTQIA+ sexual violence survivors are often underrepresented in service data and research on recovery and survivorship. This indicates a need for development of services to enhance inclusiveness and effectiveness for sexual and gender minority survivors. This qualitative study aimed to address this gap by exploring the perspectives of LGBTQ+ survivors' perspectives on help-seeking. Results describe survivors' experiences with informal supports and support services, as well as the factors influencing decisions to

engage, abstain or disengage from formal supports. Participant preferences in terms of type of support and delivery are also explored.

Exploring experiences of disclosing and reporting sexual violence and harassment to higher education institutions.

A HEA-funded study led by Professor Patricia Mannix McNamara generating qualitative research data to inform the national framework for Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Higher Education. Further information about the study is available [here](#).

The team are currently undertaking interviews with staff/students/contractors who may have experienced, reported or disclosed sexual violence and harassment in a HEI in the past four years. Please visit link above for more information and to register to participate above. If you have any questions with regards to this research, please feel free to contact the Principal Investigator at Patricia.M.McNamara@ul.ie.

The ECHO Project

Dr Áine Travers and team have launched a large-scale longitudinal study of intimate partner abuse in the LGBTQIA+ community in Ireland and the UK. All LGBTQIA+ adults in the UK and Ireland are eligible to participate. To learn more, visit the website [here](#).

Nexus Northern Ireland and The Pledge

Danske Bank has become the first organisation to take the Pledge; a specialist training and development programme offered to businesses and charities to help End Violence Against Women and Girls in Northern Ireland. The Pledge tackles the root causes of violence against women and girls by challenging misogyny, promoting gender equality, and equipping organisations with the policies and processes to end violence against women and girls.

In the next 12 months, Nexus is inviting 30 businesses, charities or public sector organisations to take the Pledge and become equipped with the knowledge and tools to play an active role in ending violence against women and girls. Nexus is delivering the specialist programme with support from The Executive Office's Change Fund, a regional initiative which is enabling eight organisations to deliver specialist interventions designed to prevent violence against women and girls in line with the Office's Strategic Framework to End Violence against Women and Girls

Recent Events

University of Limerick Student Webinar on EU Directive on Violence against Women

On 9th April, a group of fourth-year Law Plus students from the University of Limerick hosted a webinar for some AINSVR stakeholder members to showcase their research on the EU Directive on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

Led by Dr Susan Leahy, the group has been researching the likely impact of the Directive for Irish DSGBV law and policy. The students presented their preliminary findings to members of the network, including the network directors (Dr Susan Leahy and Dr Eithne Dowds (QUB)) and representatives from a range of stakeholders including Cuan, Adapt Domestic Abuse Services and Rape Crisis MidWest. The group also completed a written report which measured the likely impact of the Directive on Irish law and policy on violence against women and domestic violence, identifying the potential reforms required to meet Ireland's obligations in this area.

Congratulations to the student team - Bevin, Claudia, Daniel, Kate, Lauren and Niamh - on their impactful and excellent research.

Conference: Reforming Legal and Policy Responses to Investigating and Prosecuting Sexual Violence 19th and 20th June 2025.

On 19th and 20th June 2025 Queen's University Belfast hosted a two-day conference dedicated to an in-depth multi-jurisdictional discussion of the ongoing complexities surrounding reform in the area of sexual violence. The conference was organised by Dr Elizabeth Agnew (Queen's University Belfast), Dr Eithne Dowds (Queen's University Belfast), Dr Susan Leahy (University of Limerick), Dr Siobhan Weare (Lancaster University).

The conference was sponsored by the Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA), the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice, Queen's University Belfast and the School of Law SWAN Committee, Queens University Belfast, and received invaluable support from the School of Law, Queen's University Belfast and the Centre for Public Policy.

Invited speakers included:

- Her Honour Judge Patrica Smyth (Recorder of Belfast)
- Professor Julia Quilter (University of Wollongong Australia)
- Professor Clare McGlynn (Durham University)

- Professor Vanessa Munro (University of Warwick)
- Professor Penney Lewis (Law Commissioner for Criminal Law England and Wales)
- Dr Dominic Willmott (University of Loughborough)

There were also 24 presentations across the two days from academics and practitioners exploring areas including, defining sexual crimes, rules and procedure in criminal trials, sexual violence against young people and technology facilitated sexual violence. A conference report will be published in due course.

Upcoming Events

Consent, Sexual Violence and Harassment: Practitioner Skills and Practice. Sept-Nov 2025

Successful completion of this postgraduate micro-credential module results in the award of 10 ECTS at Level 9, accredited through the University of Galway. The module is open to educators and professionals in a variety of

fields, including student services, college administration, counselling and wellbeing, academic programme management and research, and organisations relevant to education and research.

Clarissa J. DiSantis, Education & Training Lead, Active* Consent, explains that while the content will specifically target the education and post-primary sectors, the team welcome participants who are working in areas such as youth work, community organisations, the Defence Forces, An Garda Síochána, etc. The module will be delivered part-time from September to November 2025. The delivery format is hybrid: six online 3-hour sessions, with one in-person full-day session at the end. All sessions will be interactive, with participation and group discussions integrated throughout. The deadline to apply is the 8th of August 2025 at 5pm. See further [here](#).

Other News

The Network would like to congratulate **Professor Anne-Marie McAlinden**, who was admitted as a member of the Royal Irish

Academy in May 2025, in recognition of her outstanding achievements in the humanities and social sciences. You can view Prof McAlinden's profile [here](#).

The [Royal Irish Academy](#) is an all-island independent forum of peer-elected experts. Membership of the Academy is the highest academic honour in Ireland. The Academy has been honouring Ireland's leading contributors to the world of learning since its establishment in 1785.

Many congratulations Prof McAlinden 🎉

If you have an idea for an event or want to collaborate in some way please do get in touch with us at ainsvr2023@gmail.com