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Tackling Online Hate in Football (TOHIF)

This project will explore the potential of digital technologies to transform understanding of online hate. It aims to show how online practices and experiences have the potential to shape and influence our perceptions of matters concerning racism, sexism and sectarianism. Through analysis of online discourses, it will identify flashpoints and strategies for social media companies, policymakers and campaigners to tackle hate crime, identity politics and communication in a digital age. Critical discourse analysis on selected instances of football-related hate speech on Twitter will be paired with descriptive, content and network analysis of eight European Football Championships between 2008 and 2022. Interviews will be conducted with members of partner organisations committed to race equality, social justice and stamping out online hate. Researchers will work with partners to develop educational workshops, policies and specific machine learning procedures in which to identify and combat online hate on social media. Such initiatives and academic outputs will be disseminated with the goal of benefiting a wide number of stakeholders in a sustainable way including but not limited to social media companies, fans, football clubs/players, policymakers and anti-hate organisations/campaigns. Project partners include Sport Against Racism Ireland, Kick it Out, Football Supporters Association, Football Association Wales and Sporting Equals.