



**Draft**

**Title:** **#BrusselsSoWhite: The EU has a diversity and inclusion problem. It's high time for a change. Let's be that change!**

**Tabled by:** Young European Greens (FYEG)

**Draft text**

1 **There is no climate justice without racial**  
2 **justice**

3 The consequences of the climate crisis as we know it threatens the future of  
4 Europe and of humanity as a whole - but already is and is increasingly becoming  
5 the lived realities of many communities of the Global South.

6 This inequality of impacts is due to an ingrained system of unequal exchange and  
7 power relations rooted in colonial history and perpetuated through unfettered  
8 neoliberal capitalist exploitation. The Global North benefits from a  
9 sociopolitical and economic hegemony only made possible through the continued  
10 oppression and exploitation of the Global South. This hegemony is built upon  
11 this unequal exchange, through the continued exploitation of and perverse  
12 international division of labour and flow of resources. This unequal exchange  
13 between states is not only of power, resources and labour, but of responsibility  
14 and externalities, resulting in the Global South impacted the worst by the  
15 climate crisis despite the Global North being responsible for 92% of all excess  
16 emissions.[1, 2]

17 Even within Western states, indigenous peoples and communities of colour are  
18 amongst those that suffer the most from this crisis due to deeply entrenched  
19 structural and systemic inequalities.

20 Racialised and ethnic-minoritised communities continue to be subject to such  
21 inequalities through the historical entrenchment and contemporary perpetuation  
22 of a system of institutional, systemic, and social racism. This unequal exchange  
23 of power, resources, and labour, whether with intent or unconscious neglect,  
24 manifests similarly within Western states, intertwines climate change with  
25 racism and increasingly exposes racialised and ethnic-minoritised communities to  
26 environmental devastation and health risks.[3]

27 The reality we must acknowledge and confront is that the climate crisis is  
28 inherently racist.[4] And yet, indigenous peoples and communities of colour  
29 continue to not only be unheard or forgotten,[5] they are often erased from the  
30 climate movement.[6] We must acknowledge the reality that the history of  
31 environmentalism is racist,[7] and that striving for ecological sustainability  
32 without first prioritising decolonial justice perpetuates these neocolonial  
33 asymmetries through imperialist environmentalism. Without the reversal of this  
34 unequal exchange and perverse flow of resources, we end up powering the Global  
35 North's transition through continued exploitation of the Global South or at the  
36 expense of racialised communities in the Global North.

37 We see this for example through the extractivist projects in indigenous Sámi and  
38 Inuit lands, often even portrayed as 'green' initiatives to mitigate emissions  
39 or power the transition, which threaten or actively destroy their lands,  
40 livelihoods, communities, and wellbeing.[8] In metropolitan France, hazardous  
41 sites like incinerators and waste management facilities are more likely to be  
42 located near towns with higher immigrant populations, and racialised suburbs or  
43 districts of larger cities are often closer to large ring roads and  
44 intersections known as échangeurs - thus disproportionately exposing racialised  
45 communities to higher pollution and risks of health hazards.[ibid]

46 Thus, there is no climate justice without racial justice, and it is impossible  
47 to strive for a socially just ecology without decoloniality. **Indigenous peoples  
48 and communities of colour are at the forefront of the climate crisis: they  
49 should be at the forefront of the Green movement.**

## 50 **Pursuing a Green movement for all in EU24**

51 The Green movement, including us in the European Greens, has a diversity and  
52 representation problem,[9] stemming from its problems of inclusion. As we  
53 criticise #BrusselsSoWhite, we must acknowledge our role in perpetuating this.

54 In the past, the European Greens have presented manifestoes and resolutions that  
55 only mention racialised and ethnic-minoritised minorities and the Global South  
56 with regards to asylum and (social) discrimination.[10] The issues and interests  
57 of racialised and ethnic-minoritised minorities and the Global South go much  
58 further than this, and are intertwined with many other issues. Moving forward,  
59 we hope to see a much more intersectional focus, an acknowledgement of present-  
60 day colonial asymmetries, and the culpability and responsibility of Europe to  
61 confront them. Thus, as we head into these elections, we need meaningful  
62 substantive representation - the incorporation of racial justice and the  
63 interests of racialised and ethnic-minoritised peoples within party manifestos,  
64 campaigns, and the agenda of European politics.

65 At the same time, we need descriptive representation. 96% of Members of the  
66 European Parliament are White, and much of the rest of its apparatus. Studies  
67 show politicians of minoritised identities are more likely to advocate for the  
68 rights of minorities.[11, 12, 13] We see this to be true in the European  
69 Parliament, as after six decades, it was Green MEPs of colour Alice Kuhnke who  
70 tabled the report and [resolution on intersectional discrimination](#), one of the  
71 first of its kind, and Romeo Franz who tabled the report and [resolution on Roma  
72 equality, inclusion and participation](#), one of its firsts, and S&D MEP Evin Incir  
73 who tabled the first ever report and [resolution on anti-racism](#). However,  
74 regardless of this point, people of colour deserve to see themselves reflected  
75 in the political structures that represent them. While the Green Group in the  
76 European Parliament is relatively the most diverse, much more must be done to  
77 improve representation across the European Parliament and its apparatus.

## 78 **Therefore, we, the European Green Party and** 79 **Green Parties of Europe, commit to:**

### 80 **Politically:**

- 81 • **Increasingly include, platform, listen to, and work more closely with**  
82 **racial justice organisations and activists** in Europe and from the Global  
83 South. We should actively strive to collaborate with and highlight the  
84 work of indigenous activists and greens of colour at the forefront of this  
85 movement, especially those in the Global South;
- 86 • **Incorporate and emphasise racial justice, inclusion, representation, and a**

87 **broader decolonial framework of thinking** in setting up their campaigns and  
88 manifestos for EU24;

- 89 • **Actively encourage bold greens of colour** to run for the European  
90 Parliament via their respective member parties, taking into consideration  
91 the disparities and barriers to accessibility faced by people of colour in  
92 politics, and, where possible, accounting for this in such efforts.

### 93 **Organisationally:**

- 94 • **Take steps to assess the practices, policies, and cultures of their**  
95 **internal organisation** and on how this excludes or fosters an atmosphere of  
96 exclusion for people of colour;
- 97 • **Work more actively to make our member parties more inclusive**, for example  
98 by working on meaningful diversity and inclusion plans that address the  
99 lack of people of colour in our respective parties and the internal  
100 structures thereof.

### 101 **We, the European Green Party further commit to:**

- 102 • **Incorporates the development or expansion of diversity and inclusion**  
103 **assessments, policies, and practices** with regards to our internal  
104 organisation within future Activity Plans;
- 105 • **Provides a report on our progress regarding diversity and inclusion** with  
106 regards to initiatives carried out, assessments thereof, and progress  
107 made, in our Activity Report;
- 108 • **Encourages people of colour to apply** for positions within its internal  
109 political organisation and staff, and where possible and necessary,  
110 evaluates our hiring processes to ensure their accessibility and  
111 inclusivity.

### 112 **We urge that:**

- 113 • **This be the first of one of many future steps** to expand the European

114 Greens' and its constituent member parties' work on decoloniality,  
115 interculturality, racial justice, representation, and inclusion  
116 politically and within our internal organisation.

- 117 • **All components of the European Greens**, politically, within our  
118 international organisation, and through our member parties, aim to place  
119 decoloniality, interculturality, and racial justice at the very heart of  
120 our collective movement.

## Background

## References

[1] Silva, G. T. (2022). An overview of strategies for social-ecological transformation in the field of trade and decolonialisation. In Barlow, N., Regen, L., Cadiou, N., Chertkovskaya, E., Hollweg, M., Plank, C., Schulken, M., & Wolf, V. (Eds.), *Degrowth & Strategy: How to Bring about Social-Ecological Transformation* (pp. 375-382). Mayfly Books.

[2] Hickel, J. (2020). Quantifying national responsibility for climate breakdown: an equality-based attribution approach for carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the planetary boundary. *Lancet Planet Health*, 4(9), e399-404. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(20\)30196-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(20)30196-0).

[3] These processes and systems of unequal exchange, exploitation, and oppression are, in short, reproductions of colonial asymmetries, manifested in different forms: social, cultural, financial, ethnic, educational, political, etc. Through its interweaving in so many facets of life, often structurally, it can manifest in very subtle ways – through conscious intent or unconscious neglect. This makes coloniality so complex and difficult to see and recognise, and also what makes it such an essential struggle to wage as we strive for a decolonial ecology. See also: Mignolo, W. D., & Walsh, C. E. (2018). Interculturality and Decoloniality. In *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis* (pp. 57-80). Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv11g9616.7>.

[4] Williams, J. (2022, January 27). Why climate change is inherently racist. *BBC Future*. <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20220125-why-climate-change-is-inherently-racist>.

[5] Agyeman, J. (2022, October 6). People of colour have been shut out of the climate debate. Social justice is the key to a greener world. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/oct/06/colour-climate-social-justice-green-environmental>.

[6] Lakhani, N. (2022, September 17). 'Africa is on the frontlines but not the front pages': Vanessa Nakate on her climate fight. *The Guardian*.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/sep/17/vanessa-nakate-climate-activist-africa-cop27>.

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[8] See detailed information on these case studies and other case studies in Europe in: Ramanujam, A. & Asri, N. (2022). *The Climate Crisis is a (Neo)colonial Capitalist Crisis: Experiences, Responses and Steps Towards Decolonising Climate Action*. European Network Against Racism. [https://www.enar-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/2022\\_report-climatechangeandrace\\_final.pdf](https://www.enar-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/2022_report-climatechangeandrace_final.pdf).

[9] Edkins, D. (2021, March 26). Does the climate movement have a diversity problem? *The Big Issue*. <https://www.bigissue.com/news/environment/does-the-climate-movement-have-a-diversity-problem/>.

[10] In the [2019 elections priorities](#) 'What European Greens fight for' and manifesto 'Time to renew the promise of Europe', fighting racism is only brought up with regards to migration and refugees, and discrimination and hate crimes. Chapters dedicated to 'Shared prosperity' and 'People power' lack any further mention of racism or racial justice, even in a subsection dedicated to inclusion and cohesion. Similarly, the chapter on a 'Clean and safe planet' lacks any mention of inequalities and power- and capacity-differentials faced by the Global South, nor acknowledgement of Europe/Global North's culpability and responsibility in this. The chapter is further completely deracialised, even in a subsection dedicated to environmental justice, with no mention or implication of climate racism or the protection of indigenous communities and lands. Likewise, in the resolution '[Hope in challenging times: Let's make a green future possible in the 2024 European elections](#)' adopted at the 36th Council (now Congress) in Copenhagen in December 2022, racialised and ethnic-minoritised minorities and the Global South (implied through 'globally committed') are only mentioned with regards to fundamental rights, refugees, and being aware of our colonial past and responsibility for justice.

[11] Lowande, K., Ritchie, M., & Lauterbach, E. (2019). Descriptive and Substantive Representation in Congress: Evidence from 80,000 Congressional Inquiries. *American Journal of Political Science*, 63(3), 644-659. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12443>.

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