

R15 Decolonising Europe starts with us: Breaking the chains of colonialism within the Green movement

Proposer: FYEG
Agenda item: 1. Resolutions

Motion text

Defining decoloniality

Decoloniality as a concept, an ideology, a movement, only exists due to the entrenchment of a hegemonic system of domination and oppression, a system of colonialism and imperialism (hereinafter often simply colonialism). Although 'formal' structures of state colonialism of the Global South has - debatably - ended in the period of decolonisation of the 20th century, colonial asymmetries and inequalities, and structures and systems of subjugation, oppression, and exploitation continue to be perpetuated, if not exacerbated, through the political, social, and economic hegemony of the Global North in the neoliberal global capitalist system. Thus, the Global North - the 'core' - is able to supply its pursuit of constant economic growth through the exploitation of resources and labour of the Global South - the 'periphery'.

Is it therefore essential to acknowledge that capitalism and colonialism are closely intertwined. The roots of capitalism lie in colonial history and capitalism continues to reproduce such colonial asymmetries. The Global North's sociopolitical and economic hegemony is only made possible through the continued oppression and exploitation of the Global South. Capitalism thus relies on a system of unequal exchange, as the Global North continues to benefit from these unequal power relations and perverse international division of labour and flow of resources, at the expense of the Global South - which also experiences the worst impacts of the consequent worsening climate crisis.[1]

These colonial asymmetries are not simply between states. Within states exists a sometimes loud but often invisible status quo of White superiority institutionally, systemically, and socially. **Colonialism**, therefore, as a social definition, is the occupation, exploitation or a guardianship of these structures by specific ideas, values and principles of a more dominant class. Colonisation can take different forms: social, cultural, financial, ethnic, educational, political, etc. It is thus important to take this into account when trying to tackle decoloniality, as through its interweaving in so many facets of

30 life, it can be manifest in very subtle ways. This makes coloniality so complex
31 and difficult to see and recognise, and also what makes it such an essential
32 struggle to wage.

33 Thus, in order to truly strive for social justice and equality, decoloniality
34 must therefore be central in any effort for progress. **Decolonialism** is the
35 process of freeing an institution, a sphere of activity, and so on, from the
36 chains of colonialism, and its cultural or social effects.

37 In so doing, a complementary process of **interculturality** can be empowered, a
38 process striving towards the building of a radically different society, of an
39 “other” social ordering based on a plurinational state. A constant process of
40 dialogue and interrelation, of bottom-up structural economic, social, political,
41 and cultural transformations, for the full and permanent participation of
42 racialised and ethnic-minoritised communities.[2]

43 **What is decoloniality’s aim?**

44 The aim would then be first to recognise those beliefs and concepts that shape
45 these structures today without our being aware of them. The key notion would be
46 to understand and identify such mechanisms, to be aware of their existence, and
47 to analyse why they exist and continue to exist today.

48 The second step would be to implement actions to dismantle these mechanisms. Once
49 we understand what binds institutions to perpetuate such notions of dominance,
50 we must pursue the common objectives of breaking the chains of colonialism.

51 For example, production of knowledge has often been a tool of domination,
52 oppression, and exploitation due to unequal power relations. Western knowledge,
53 conveyed as ‘universal’ or ‘objective’ truths, imposed a monolithic worldview
54 that gave power and control to the White European. Educational institutions
55 today, from primary to tertiary education, continue to perpetuate this implicit
56 Whiteness of knowledge through the materials and methods of teaching. Thus,
57 decolonising schools and universities through incorporating knowledges of the
58 Global South in content and teachings, platforming Global South scholars, and
59 actively breaking the explicit or implicit chains of colonialism is a powerful
60 and crucial decolonisation tool for the emancipation of racialised and
61 culturally and ethnic-minoritised peoples.[3]

62 **Why do we need decoloniality in ecology?**

63 It is impossible to strive for a socially just ecology without decoloniality.
64 Acknowledging the finiteness of our planetary boundaries, an ideology of

65 capitalist expansion eventually requires expansion to the periphery and the
66 exploitation of resources and labour therein. This unequal exchange of not only
67 resources, but externalities, as mentioned above, results in the Global South
68 impacted the worst by the climate crisis. Even within Western states, indigenous
69 peoples and communities of colour are amongst those that suffer the most from
70 this crisis. [The climate crisis is inherently racist](#), and right at the forefront
71 are racialised and ethnic-minoritised communities.

72 And yet, indigenous peoples and communities of colour continue to not only be
73 [unheard or forgotten](#), [they are often erased from climate movement](#). We must
74 acknowledge the reality that the [history of environmentalism is racist](#), and that
75 striving for ecological sustainability without first prioritising decolonial
76 justice perpetuates neocolonial asymmetries through imperialist
77 environmentalism. Without the reversal of this unequal exchange and perverse
78 flow of resources, we end up powering the Global North's transition through
79 continued exploitation of the Global South.

80 **Why do we need decoloniality in the Green** 81 **movement?**

82 In short, there is no climate justice without racial justice.

- 83 • We need a critical decolonial framework to broaden our 'core'
84 (Eurocentric, Western, White) perspectives towards those of the
85 'periphery', and to broaden our understanding of environmentalism through
86 knowledges and understandings from the Global South.

- 87 • We need to truly listen to those most impacted by our histories, by the
88 neo-imperial system of capitalism today, and by the climate crisis - to
89 platform and fight for their voices and interests to be heard in the Green
90 movement.

- 91 • We need to accept that we may need to critically analyse and rethink much
92 of what we thought to be true about the world and what it means to be
93 inclusive, and reckon with the roles we have played in perpetuating
94 exclusion, discrimination, or inequality, within FYEG, within the Green
95 movement, and within broader society.

96 **Why do we need decoloniality as we head into** 97 **EU24?**

98 #BrusselsSoWhite.

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- 100 • As we head into these elections, we need substantive representation - the
101 incorporation of racial justice and the interests of racialised and
102 ethnic-minoritised peoples within party manifestos, campaigns, and the
agenda of European politics.
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- 104 • At the same time, we need descriptive representation. 4% of Members of the
105 European Parliament are White, and much of the rest of its apparatus.
106 Studies show politicians of minoritised identities are more likely to
107 advocate for the rights of minorities. In any case, people of colour
108 deserve to see themselves reflected in the political structures that
represent them.

109 **Therefore, the Racial Justice Task Force demands**
110 **that FYEG and its Member Organisations:**

111 **Politically:**

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- 113 • **Increasingly include, platform, listen to, and work more closely with**
114 **racial justice organisations and activists** in Europe and from the Global
115 South. We should actively strive to collaborate with and highlight the
116 work of indigenous activists and young greens of colour at the forefront
of this movement, especially those in the Global South;
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- 118 • **Incorporate and emphasise racial justice, inclusion, representation, and a**
119 **broader decolonial framework of thinking** in setting up their campaigns for
EU24;
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- 121 • **Actively encourage bold, young greens of colour** to run for the European
122 Parliament via their respective mother parties, and to provide sufficient
support and mentorship to do so and to be placed in electable positions;

123 **Organisationally:**

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- 125 • **Take steps to assess the practices, policies, and cultures of their**
126 **internal organisation** and on how this excludes or fosters an atmosphere of
exclusion for people of colour;

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- **Work more actively to make their organisations more inclusive**, for example by working on meaningful diversity and inclusion plans that address the lack of young greens of colour in their respective organisations.

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We demand that FYEG:

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- **Ensures diverse representation of young greens of colour in the Young Candidates Platform**, to the extent possible.
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- **Especially considers the disparities and barriers to accessibility** faced by young greens of colour in politics, and, where necessary and possible, to ensure the Young Candidates Platform considers these intersectionalities in the support and trainings it provides young candidates of colour.
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We urge that:

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- **This be the first of one of many future steps** to expand FYEG's work on decoloniality, interculturality, racial justice, representation, and inclusion as we work towards making FYEG a Federation that is truly antiracist, racially just, and inclusive.
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- **Future steps actively expand on decoloniality, interculturality and racial justice** in specific areas of policy, where possible.
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- **All components of FYEG** aim to place decoloniality, interculturality, and racial justice at the very heart of our collective movement.
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Last words

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Decoloniality and interculturality is more than social justice. It is a constant process in envisioning a different world - anti-colonialist, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-segregationist, with a different social ordering and relationship between peoples.

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We do not want this resolution to use decolonisation as a metaphor, but a

153 starting point for radical change. "[Decolonisation is not an 'and'. It is an](#)
154 [elsewhere](#)." [4] As a progressive organisation, it is about time we work to create
155 this 'elsewhere.'

156 References

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Reason

This resolution was drafted by the Racial Justice Task Force. It aims to be a starting point for FYEG and for any mainstream political organisation to tackle decoloniality, and to set the foundation for future work on decoloniality within FYEG. Decoloniality is an important, essential, and necessary framework of antiracism, and part of FYEG's efforts to make FYEG truly a Federation of antiracism and racial justice, one in solidarity with and inclusive for racialised and ethnic-minoritised communities.