WHAT'S RACE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

UNION OF JUSTICE

CLIMATE INJUSTICE IN EUROPE UNCOVERED

Contents

Foreward

This timely report by Union of Justice represents the kind of work that European countries desperately need if they are serious about effectively tackling climate change by embracing climate justice.

Through a series of roundtable discussions and interviews with non-White scholars, inhabitants and activists of 10 Western European countries and an online survey, this report constitutes, to this day, one the few comparative and European-wide studies of the relationship between climate change, race and more importantly, racism.

This timely report by Union of Justice represents the kind of work that European countries desperately need if they are serious about effectively tackling climate change by embracing climate justice. Through a series of roundtable discussions and interviews with non-White scholars, inhabitants and activists of 10 Western European countries and an online survey, this report constitutes, to this day, one the few comparative and European-wide studies of the relationship between climate change, race and more importantly, racism. Perhaps some readers would immediately wonder, at the mere sight of the title of this report, why race or racism would be relevant in dealing with climate change or even summarily

dismiss it. This is precisely why this report is not only welcome but a must-read for all inhabitants, scholars, activists, community organisers, NGOs, and policymakers alike. So, why is it important?

Before foregrounding some of the results offered in this report, let us first note that the Union of Justice had to think through and design this study's political and epistemic conditions, which underlies this first question. In other words, who can legitimately speak about the importance of racism in relation to climate change in Europe? Suffice to say that the lack of representation of non-white people –that is, people that in the modern history Europe have been portrayed and treated

Photo Credit: Benedicte Roscot

as inferior through a racialised social hierarchy enforced via such processes as the centuries-long colonisation of the Americas, Africa, Asia and Oceania, its transatlantic slave trade, and various forms of forced labour – in most of the European environmental NGOs, green political parties, and academic research centres working on climate change does not seem to provide a fair environment to grapple with this question. To that end, this Union of Justice report makes the simple claim that, perhaps, we should first and foremost hear from those who are subjected to racism in Europe. In doing so, this study shows at least three critical results across ten countries.

Firstly, as echoed in the latest IPCC report, the consequences of climate change do not affect people in an equal manner. If this argument seems easily accepted when it comes to social differences in terms of class and gender, this report points to the specificities of climate inequalities in terms of race. Non-white people are most disadvantaged. Like other forms of environmental racism, their proximity to polluted environments, the lack of guaranteed fundamental rights such as clean water, health care, comfortable housing in both in terms of space and temperature, green spaces, education, legal rights and access to the market place, leads to overexposure of racialised communities to climate change consequences including heatwaves, while having lesser economic and political means to mitigate these consequences. In that regard, the lack of adequate representation of non-white people in European environmental organisations is part of the problem.

Secondly, this report debunks a persistent myth about racialised communities, one that claims they do not care about climate change. The survey results are clear. Racialised communities are interested, engaged, and involved in addressing climate change but lack adequate access to adequate information and representation both within their respective states and the existing landscape of environmental organisations. This includes many migrant communities that clearly articulate some of the environmental catastrophes of their home countries as part of the reason for their migration.

Finally, and perhaps more importantly for Europe, this report shows that climate change will not be effectively tackled if we continue to slide race and racism under the rug and that we need the means to fight it. That includes the possibility of documenting racism with, for instance, self-declared ethnicity or race data. Out of the ten countries studied, only two allowed such data gathering. Western Europe, once the headquarters of the modern colonisation of Earth, cannot continue to pretend that race has no bearing on climate change nor sustain the fantasy that racism is effectively dealt with by preventing the statistical means to measure it. It is not just about the care and dignity rightfully claimed by part of Europe's own inhabitants that have been historically dehumanised, including those living in their 'overseas territories'. What is at stake is the possibility to collectively navigate through this deeply unequal and capitalistic climate crisis towards a horizon of both climate and racial justice. We are left with one question. Will Europe continue to turn its back on its own inhabitants, or will it embrace the challenge of making, through this crisis, a just, liveable world for all?

Dr Malcom Ferdinand

Introduction

01

The spectre of the climate crisis stalks Europe.

This has been borne out by spectacular events witnessed in recent years. European summers are becoming an annual exhibition of climate crisis-induced disasters and new records: from catastrophic floods across Germany, Belgium, and western European countries in summer 2021, to storms in central Europe amidst the July 2023 heatwave, and the grim spate of record temperatures across the continent.

But more perniciously, the climate crisis impacts Europeans' day-to-day life, through increasingly unbearable temperatures and intolerable pollution levels.

The dawning reality of climate crises has forced the topic on the worldwide political agenda and pushed discussions beyond the narrow parameters of simple environmental preservation that once characterised the climate movement.

Governments in Europe have gradually adopted socially-minded climate policies. The 2015/2016 Paris Agreement paved the way with its landmark reference to the need for *'a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs'*[1] as part of climate action, and is reflected in the establishment of the Just Transition Mechanism by

the European Commission for funding transitions to a climate-neutral economy under the EU's European Green Deal.[2] The EU's involvement in 'Just Energy Transition Partnership' development agreements with countries of the Global South has ostensibly translated the ethos of pro-worker, socially-minded climate policy into the field of development.

Yet, in a context of Europe and a European Union suffering from a deep democratic deficit, toxic social malaise, and an ironclad commitment to capitalist orthodoxy, such moves have given rise to more than a fair share of suspicions and critiques. In the near-decade since the adoption of the Paris Agreement, concepts such as 'just transition' have themselves become battlegrounds in determining the future of climate policy, pitching fossil

fuel companies, business and finance, and their allied governments against mass-based movements for systematic climate change. As we stated in Union of Justice's report *Just Energy Transition Partnerships: Market Capture Or Climate Justice?,* this tension *'underscore that the dangers in the post-Paris Agreement context go beyond simple 'greenwashing' tactics by business - but in fact amount to a wholescale usurpation of 'Just Transition' for the benefit of business and international finance capital.'*[3]

Discussions of climate justice and climate racism have reached Europe's shores following a longer lineage in the United States, albeit in mixed and uneven forms. Grappling with a framework rooted in the US context - where settler colonialism, indigenous

genocide, and African enslavement are indexed by a striking level of racialised spatial segregation, and subsequently a level of spatialised exposure to social harms not usually seen in Europe[4] - has not been without difficulties.

However, to simply point out that Europe is not the US - or for that matter, that European racism is 'not the same' as American racism - is, at this point, more of an effort in obfuscation than a meaningful analysis. Racism is a deeply European affliction, more often than not stemming from its reprehensible colonial legacies. What function does comparison to the US serve in the face of Belgium's own atrocities in the Congo under the reign of King Leopold II, of France's nuclear weapons testing in its colonial territories in French Polynesia

and Algeria, or of Germany's 'forgotten genocide' of the Herero and Nama people of modern-day Namibia?

Attempts at externalising or compartmentalising such legacies as historical artefacts are belied by the fact of migrant and asylum seekers from the Global South seeking a life in Europe, only to be greeted by its militarised borders, virulent xenophobia, and often an existence blighted by disenfranchisement, neglect, and lack of social resources to determine their own lives. It is this very blend of iniquities in which European discussions around climate racism become ever more pressing - demanding us to establish just how its racialised populations are vulnerable to, and dealing with, the growing climate crisis.

It is in this context that the current research project seeks to understand the ways in which racism in Europe operates to both expose racialised (including migrant) populations to environmental harms - such as urban heat islands, the proximity of populations to toxic waste sites and industrial zones, access to green space, intensified air pollution, and so forth - and the ways that a lack of social resources hinders attempts by racialised communities to shape climate policy within their respective countries of residence.

We begin from the premise that social policy in European countries is racialised - enforcing and reproducing racialised disparities in terms of access to social resources, work, and income, as well as policymaking. In this regard the climate crisis is not just an 'add on' but will necessarily interact with existing social disparities and vulnerabilities: those groups that are already marginalised, excluded, or exposed to harms are set to face a worse lot under climate crises. Therefore, climate policy can address these disparities and vulnerabilities - by either mitigating them, ignoring them, or intensifying them.

This research project assesses the intersection of climate policy, social policy, and race through the use of a public survey alongside a series of expert roundtable discussions with racialised activists and policy experts from across 10 western European countries with large racialised populations, forming our area of concern: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Republic of Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

Comparing ethnicity or 'race' across Europe

There are a great variety of terms used to describe 'race' and refer to communities considered 'non-white', both within and between the countries under consideration in this report. These index both distinct national and historical circumstances, as well as evolving political and discursive constructions of race.

While accepting that there is no unified or agreed-upon term that is mutually intelligible across Europe, this report uses the term **'racialised'** and '**racialised communities**'.[5] We use the verb 'racialised' as it emphasises 'race' as an *active* process shaped by social and political factors, rather than a natural, stable, or scientific category. It is therefore malleable enough to encapsulate the populations under consideration: namely people of African, Asian, Arab, and Latin American descent, as well as the Roma, Sinti, and Traveller communities.[6]

We also recognise that the migration, asylum, and refugee system - and the social status and resources conferred by residency or citizenship - is a core process in the racialisation of groups in Europe, as well as in the systems of racism that they are subject to. This research, therefore, includes migrants and asylum seekers within its scope, while noting that there are

often sharp differences between the migrants/asylum seekers from the Global South as compared to other European migrants, as well as in between experiences of native-born racialised groups and migrant ones.

We have also adopted, as an internal reference, the following working definitions from Shafi & Nagdee (2022):[7] *"Race is a social system. It marks out the structural relationship of certain social groups to power and to processes of exploitation, and indexes divisions of labour and social control. Racialisation is a dynamic process that draws on physiological, cultural, and social markers to determine the boundaries of 'races' - groups can be racialised downwardly (negatively) or upwardly, and the boundaries shift over time and space. And therefore, Racism is an active process of locking groups within a wider social structure of exploitation by maintaining and defending the system of race, through the sheer exercise of power or policy."*

Any detailed analysis or comparison pertaining to 'race' or racial groups in Europe is constrained by the uneven manner in which data related to ethnicity and/or race is coded and collected across different territories. Of the 10 countries considered in this report, only the UK and Ireland included questions in their national censuses explicitly asking for self-identified ethnic background; a

proposal to include ethnicity as a category on Portugal's latest census was rejected due to 'the complexity of the topic'[8]. On the other end of the spectrum, France famously forbids 'the processing of data of a personal nature indicating, directly or indirectly, the racial or ethnic origins of persons' and 'the introduction of variables of race or religion in administrative records' except in specific circumstances, as per a decision by its constitutional council.[9] Many other European countries collect data relating to national identity and migrant background - such as 'country of origin', 'national background', and whether individuals are 'foreign-born' - which can serve as proxies of ethnic background, albeit messy and imprecise ones, which hinder attempts at establishing causal rather than simply correlational relationships between ethnicity and social phenomena.

It should be noted that the inclusion of ethnicity/racial monitoring in national censuses and statistics does not inherently entail a more inclusive political orientation of those respective states, or for that matter a prima facie commitment to tackling racism. As Claire Alexander notes, in the context of the UK's 2001 national census, that the proliferation of ethnic categories is '*always a sign of where new "problems" were being identified […]. Such classifications can be read as*

not only reflecting the desire to know where and who British Muslims are, but concerns around the proliferation of secondary whitenesses, and the ongoing anxieties around racial mixture and transgression'.[10] This is also borne out in the response to the publication of such statistics, which, in the case of the 2021 census, saw an outpouring of racist, xenophobic, and Islamophobic fear mongering by the British right-wing.[11]

Nonetheless, more detailed population data, including ethnicity/race data, can enable more informed discussion mobilisation around issues of race/racism - when put to service as part of a general drive for pluralism and democratisation of resources in a society.

Environmental injustice in Europe

While European racism certainly has its specific roots, histories, and trajectories which must be grappled with on their own terms, 'climate racism' or 'environmental racism' should also be considered within the wider spectrum of discussion around 'environmental injustice' and environmental harms which are more widely noted and documented across Europe. As an investigation by the British newspaper *The Guardian* strikingly reported, *'98% of people [in Europe are] living in areas with*

highly damaging fine particulate pollution that exceed World Health Organization guidelines [with] [a]lmost two-thirds liv[ing] in areas where air [pollution]is more than double the WHO's guidelines'[12] with the problem being greater for Eastern Europe as well as Italy's northern Po Valley.

Environmental injustices can be indexed by air pollution, but also by noise pollution, proximity to pollutants such as waste incinerators and industrial facilities, access or lack thereof to quality green space, the presence of 'heat islands' - urban spaces which generate higher temperatures owing to their built environment and surfaces - the presence of toxins and pollutants in earth and water sources, and so on.

Yet, we are keen to stress that environmental injustice is not just defined by exposure to environmental harms but is also intimately related to the uneven distributions of resources to ameliorate and address these harms. It is therefore unsurprising that these environmental issues are compounded by and mediated through other social factors which index inequality in Europe, namely income, poverty, and geography.

Likewise, there is nothing innate in ethnicity or migration status that increases one's vulnerability to environmental harms, but it is the socio-political questions - such where racialised and migrant communities

settle, their integration often into lower rungs of the social and economic ladder, the quality and conditions of their environs, the siting of polluting facilities, access to public and welfare services including healthcare, and their ability to shape these through policymaking and democratic mechanisms - that proves most salient.

Research has identified the role of the policymaking process in engendering environmental injustices against disenfranchised communities, seen as possessing little wherewithal to push back against policy decisions, and highlighting how *'government and industry decision makers seek the 'path of least resistance' by targeting poor, rather than wealthy, communities for [polluting and deleterious] land uses'.*[13] Inversely, wealthier communities have been noted as benefitting *'disproportionately from access to information and to the political and judicial systems [which] can increase their relative power in the political decision making for incinerator location and emissions control.'*[14]
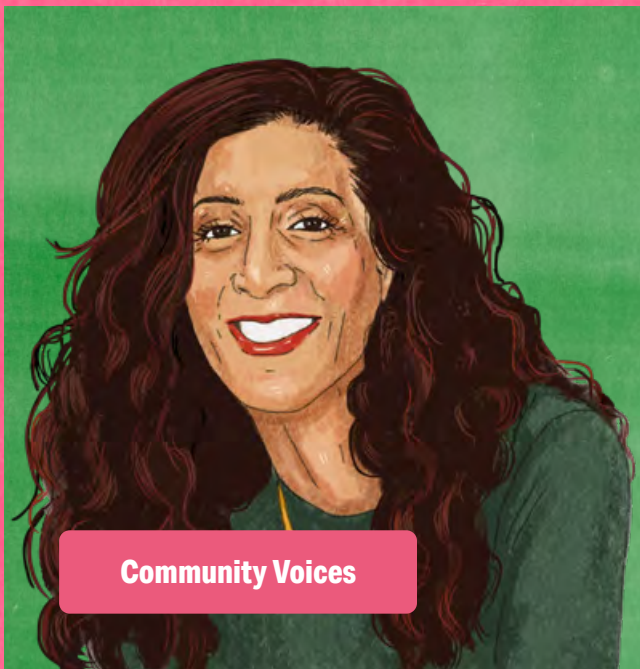
Community Voices

Overlooked and over-polluted: Racialised communities and disenfranchisement in the UK

By Zarina Ahmad

"What message does it send to people to say we don't want an incinerator in leafy Cambridgeshire, but we're happy to put it in your backyard?" – Georgia Elliot Smith, Edmonton local resident

In 2019, a proposal for an incinerator was rejected in Cambridgeshire after public objection, with the reasoning given that it wasn't in keeping with the local neighbour hood - pointing out the impact on the nearby Denny Abbey monastery attraction, and the aesthetic impact of the proposed incinerator's chimney stack.

Meanwhile, some 50 miles away in Edmonton, north London, where 65% of the population are people of colour, the rebuilding of a waste incinerator proceeded despite objections from local residents.

Residents near the Edmonton incinerator have complained about smells and sounds coming from the incinerator, often forcing them to close their windows and avoid sitting outside during the summer as temperatures rise. The area surrounding the incinerator also experiences greater vehicle traffic, with trucks bringing rubbish from other London boroughs or counties outside the city. People living near incinerators complain and object to the noise, litter, increased vehicle traffic, smells, and air pollution and the impact on their health.

The contrast between the Cambridgeshire case with that of the Edmonton community's experience cannot be explained merely through the latter's lack of historic buildings or leafy neighbourhoods. The question arises out of how policies are designed, and whose environment and whose lives are valued.

Waste and climate racism in the UK

As local authorities seek to reduce landfill waste, incineration is increasingly being used to deal with waste. By comparing demographics at incinerator sites with their local authority averages, research by Greenpeace found that more than 40% of all existing incinerators are situated in areas with greater concentrations of people of colour than the local authority's average. Twenty-eight waste incinerators are located in the 20% most deprived and ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in the UK; the richest, least ethnically diverse areas are home to less than 10% of incinerators. Sam Chetan Welsh, political campaigner at Greenpeace, said: "Incinerators are an unnecessary byproduct of our addiction to single-use, throwaway items. They stink, increase traffic, noise, pollution, and litter, and industrialise an area. You can't just dump the majority of them in deprived neighbourhoods because they're already run-down, and not expect to entrench inequalities". "We have a planning process that is systemically racist and classist, and the government and local authorities need to take action to change that".

Other studies already show that industrial build-up and air pollution disproportionately impact communities of colour. In 2023, the Mayor of London's office found that Black Londoners are exposed to higher rates of air pollution, and in 2015 research by Imperial College already

showed that air pollution is worse in diverse neighbourhoods.

This racial disparity highlights the climate injustice at play: who is being impacted the most, and whose voices hold more power and influence. Communities of colour often have less political wherewithal, political structures are not inclusive, and systemic racism and the economic status of individuals prevent them from engaging or debating politics. The obvious lack of government accountability at local and national decision-making level needs to improve.

Recognition of these racial disparities is the first step. Then, addressing and resolving this imbalance to ensure policy makers have diverse perspectives and understandings, leads to action with the best interest of all residents at its core.

Author Biography

Zarina is a PhD scholar activist at the Universlty of Manchester researching environmental sustalnability of individuals from underrepresented groups In soclety, In addition, Zarina is Head Of Programmes at Women's Environmental Network. With over 15 years of experience In climate enhagement and pollcy advocacy Zarina dedicates her work on the Intersectionality of race and gender and enables inclusionary processes for climate policies and decision making

Existing research

The growing number of studies on environmental injustice in Europe - a subset of which have also begun in recent decades to grapple with questions of race, ethnicity, and migration - is testament to how these dynamics are playing out across the continent, including in the countries of concern for this research.

In their literature review of 81 studies on Environmental inequality in Europe, Schutter, Wieland, Gözet, and Giljum (2017)[15] elaborates this across a number of European countries, for various social dimensions. According to them, *'Low income groups, children, immigrants, low educated and unemployed people all tend to be disproportionally affected by environmental pollution'*, while localised research highlighted how, for example, emissions from incinerators were disproportionately distributed among the unemployed and immigrants in France, and waste facilities were disproportionately located near populations with lower socioeconomic status in Italy and in England.[16] The studies they reviewed also found these to be unevenly distributed vis-a-vis minority groups, with Roma communities in various central and Eastern European countries being singled out in particular.

Schutter et al.'s study also emphasised the key role that poor housing quality played in increasing populations' susceptibility to the health impacts of environmental harms. This latter point adds gravity to the findings of the 'Being Black in the EU' (2018) research project by the EU's FRA (Agency for Fundamental Rights), which highlighted some of the ways in which racist discrimination against African and African-descended people in the EU confined them within the social conditions that expose them to environmental harms. Among the findings were the fact that 45% of study respondents reported living in overcrowded homes, and with 12% in substandard housing including accommodation with rot, a leaking roof, without a bath/toilet, or with suboptimal lighting.[17] This was compounded by the finding that 55% of respondents fell below the 'at-risk-of-poverty threshold' in terms of income, while on average 21% of respondents felt discriminated against in access to housing - rising to as high as 39% in Austria and Italy, as well as 33% in Germany.

Glatter-Götz, Mohai, Haas, and Plutzar (2019), pitched as the *'first quantitative national study of environmental inequality in Austria'* sought to establish the basis for establishing an environmental justice approach in Europe. Through a distance-based analysis they found that, outside of the capital Vienna, migrants from Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, and the post-2004 EU accession states disproportionately live close (within 1km) to polluting industrial facilities[18] - a trend which they did not find for Austrian-born residents, or migrants from the wealthier EU-15 states.[19] While stressing the need for an environmental justice movement within Europe, Glatter-Götz et al. also noted the limitations of existing climate justice campaigning in Austria, driven as they have been by '*mainstream environmental NGOs or local resident groups, mostly denunciating the impairment of livelihood and health, but barely linking these issues to questions of social class or race'.*[20]

Laurian and Funderburg's (2013) pioneering study into the siting of 107 waste incinerators in France - the country with the highest rate of waste incineration in Europe - since the 1960s discovered that the *'proportion of immigrants was 1.7 to 3.7 times higher in towns that received incinerators than the average of their neighbours'* and that *'each additional 1% of a town's population that is foreign-born increased the odds that the town received an incinerator by 29%'.*[21] The authors also noted that incinerators were largely located in smaller towns rather than large population centres, which they surmised may have been motivated in part by the absence of strong political opposition in those towns.

While Laurian and Funderburg focused on the demographics in French incinerator locations upon their siting, Schwarz, Benmarhnia, and Laurian (2015) provided a complimentary analysis of the ways that socially deprived and marginalised communities continued to suffer a greater health impact after the establishing of incinerator facilities. In their study they highlighted how, after being sited, *'incinerator emissions increase as municipalities have a higher percentage of unemployment, immigrants and born-abroad residents (even after controlling for population size and regional, social, and environmental characteristics)'*[22] In response to this ongoing legacy of environmental injustice, the authors invest their hopes in greater democratic decision making, including participatory democracy, to combat such injustices, while also pointing out the potential advances that could be made if French climate activists adopt a race-conscious approach to their campaigning.

Speaking to the British context, the *Confronting injustice Racism and the environmental emergency* (2022) report by the Runnymede Trust and Greenpeace document the manifold ways in which racialised populations, largely concentrated in urban areas of England and in the majority working class, are rendered vulnerable to climate harms, from bearing the brunt of a

disproportionate distribution of toxic industrial sites, waste recycling, and incinerators, to facing higher levels of air pollution and greater susceptibility to pollution-related health impacts.[23] The report also focused on air pollution in inner-city London, pointing out how the East London borough of Newham, home to the highest proportion of racialised communities in England, also saw the highest level of air pollution in the country, with residents *'exposed to a level of air pollution that is a third higher than World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines'.[24]* Not far from Newham is the South East London borough of Lewisham that used to be the home of Ella Kissi-Debrah, a nine-year old Black girl who died of an acute asthma attack in 2013 triggered by air pollution, with, as a sobering milestone, the coroner report listing her cause of death as air pollution.[25]
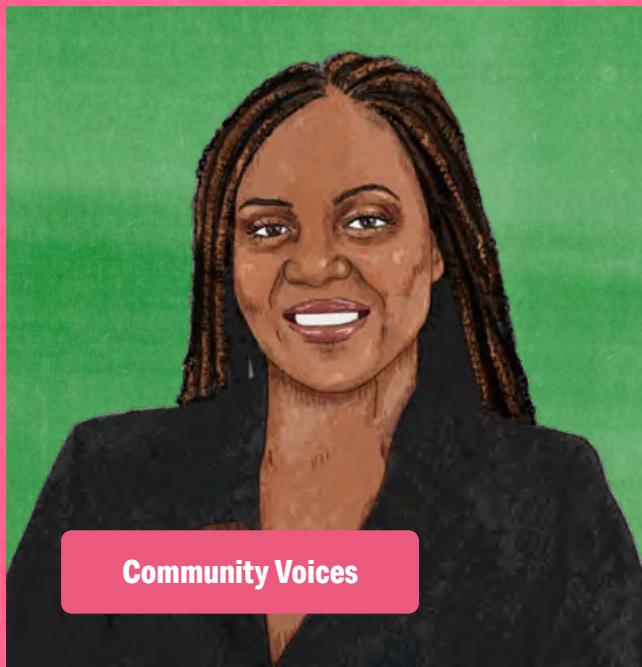
Community Voices

From recognition to reckoning: battle to put race on the agenda in Portugal

By Joacine Katar Moreira

Despite recommendations from international organisations such as the United Nations Human Rights Committee, Portugal is still yet to collect ethnic/racial data in its national census - citing reasons such as unconstitutionality, discrimination against communities, and the reinforcement or increase of racism, for its failure to do so. This is exactly the opposite of what anti-racist activists in Portugal are advocating for, especially from the Black and Roma communities who emphasise the need to collect ethnic data in order to combat racism, improve public policies, and defend the rights and freedoms of minorities.

For this reason, any statistical information that takes ethnic/racial belonging into account will need concrete data, and the lack of such data means that many inequalities and asymmetries are not statistically registered, and thus are not acknowledged, politically and institutionally.

ICOT survey

But yielding to international pressure and that of the anti-racist and immigrant rights social movements, the Portuguese State organised, for the first time in 2023, a *Survey of Living Conditions, Origins, and Trajectories of the Resident Population in Portugal* (ICOT).[26] The survey was carried out throughout Portugal, between January and August 2023, on a sample of only 3,035 accommodation units, and among other questions, asked about ethnic-racial origin. In the subsequent report we see that "*Of the total number of residents in Portugal aged 18 to 74 (7.6 million), 6.4 million self-identify with the white ethnic group, while 262.3 thousand people reported having a mixed origin or belonging, 169.2 thousand self-identify with the black ethnic group, 56.6 thousand with the Asian ethnic group, and 47.5 thousand with the Roma ethnic group*" (ICOT, p.3).

Ethnic-racial minorities are the most affected by poverty and difficult living and housing conditions; by precarious and informal jobs and those who need to work in order to study (ICOT, p.15). This is despite the fact that the "Asian" ethnic-racial group has, among all the groups present in the country, a higher level of education than the Portuguese national average (ICOT, p.5).

The ICOT is did not consider environmental and ecological issues as part of the study. However, it does reference housing conditions and thermal and energy poverty. The report points out that the "white" ethnic group is the one with the highest proportion for home ownership and thermal comfort (ICOT, p.19).

Energy poverty in Portugal

According to estimates put forward by the *National Long-Term Strategy to Combat Energy Poverty 2021-2050* (ENLPCPE), between 1.2 and 2.3 million Portuguese live in moderate energy poverty and between 660 and 740 thousand people are in extreme energy poverty. In Portugal, energy poverty affects many families and causes illnesses and deaths every year. We therefore can assume that it affects most affected families from ethnic-racial minorities, who are generally the most impoverished, bearing in mind that, according to ENLPCPE, "*low incomes, inefficient buildings and equipment, high energy costs, and low*

energy literacy are some of the factors that contribute to this phenomenon, which cannot be captured by a single indicator, but rather by a set of aspects that, as a whole, make it possible to characterize this less exposed side of poverty."[27]

Another inference we can draw from the ICOT (p.9), which is of environmental relevance is the fact that the Algarve region (with 31.0%) and the Lisbon Metropolitan Area (with 29.2%) are the regions with the highest proportions of residents with an immigrant background.

However, the Algarve region has been plagued by chronic drought, desertification, and climate change, as well as poverty and seasonal employment due to tourism.[28]

In the reasons given to explain immigration, the report overlooks environmental issues, with the main reasons given for immigration being family reunification, the search for employment or work, the violation of human rights in the country of origin, and the search for education/training.

From the list of environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGOs) and other similar organisations registered in the National Register,[29] there are no organisations led by racialised communities or people, nor are there any organisations working with and for racialised communities. However, the organisation *Anastácia - Centro de Estudos e Intervenção Decolonial*[30] seems to be opening up a new path

of understanding and intersectionality between the different struggles, dedicating part of its research and intervention to environmental justice, environmental racism, and spiritual ecology, alongside social justice, anti-racism, and decoloniality.

Reconciling the Portuguese climate movement with racialised communities

The fight against climate change has not yet been linked to the anti-racist struggle and the fight for migrant rights in Portugal, and they still operate as separate struggles. This allows us to understand why the demands of the fight against climate change are not found among the urgent issues of racialised communities in Portugal, such as the demand for decent housing, decent wages, comfort, access to healthcare, and access to official documentation in the case of migrants.

Currently, we have two environmentalist currents in Portugal, neither of which pays special attention to racialised communities, both in their forms of communication and in their forms of protest. The first is local grassroots organisations that mobilise in defence of their natural habitat, which generally organise petitions and constitute localised pressure groups. The second consists of national organisations of a more universalist nature, led by young middle-class urbanites, such as *Climáximo*, whose protest actions - occupying roads, attacking works of art and

political figures with paint, or destroying bank windows - present a potentially greater cost if carried out by racialised people, already victims of daily racism and police violence.

The apparent alienation of racialised communities from the climate emergency is nothing more than a lack of communication about environmental issues directed at them, because they are so generally treated as bodies outside the nation.

One of the ways to unite the struggles against racism and xenophobia with the struggles against climate change will be to guarantee the participation and visibility of racialised people in the latter and the recognition of environmental racism by the Portuguese climate movement.

Author Biography

A black historian, political and social activist and a speaker born in Guinea-Bissau in 1982. With a PhD in African Studies, a master's degree in Development Studies and a degree in Modern and Contemporary History from ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon. She was an independent member of the Portuguese Parliament during the XIV Legislature (2019-2022). Founder of ANASTACIA - Decolonial Center of Studies and Intervention, she recently published the book "Matchundadi/Masculinities: Gender, Performance and Political Violence in Guinea-Bissau" by the publisher Sistema Solar /Praga, which had a second edition in 2022.

A study by Fecht et al. (2015) comparing concentrations of the air pollutants of particulate matter (PM10) and nitrogen oxide (NO_2) in neighbourhoods in England and the Netherlands found that concentrations of both were *'higher in neighbourhoods with >20% non-White [residents]...after adjustment for urbanisation and other variables'*, while also noting that this was also closely associated with urbanisation and broader deprivation, and with variance between geographical levels.[31] In attempting to account for the mixed association between air pollution and class in European cities, the authors point to studies suggesting the role of gentrification, and the relocation of more wealthy citizens into hitherto more deprived and polluted urban zones who *'might tolerate higher levels of air pollution in inner city areas for the multitude of benefits association with inner city living'*. This also has direct implications when considering the exposure to environmental harms faced by white and racialised communities, who may increasingly find themselves living side-by-side in urban Europe, but whose health outcomes may diverge as the socio-political makeup of those cities transforms amidst gentrification.

Importantly, for the purposes of the present research, the aforementioned literature review by Schutter et al. defined environmental justice at large as a *'democratic process towards social justice where stakeholders reason about – and adopt - normative principles that potentially reduce environmental inequalities '*[32] - rather than as a status set of policy formulations. This element of active participation and agency within a democratic process - and inversely, of the barriers preventing such engagement among racialised populations, is central to the current research project. This consideration is particularly important given the likes of research undertaken by Mitchell, Norman and Mullin (2015) into measures to improve air quality in Britain between 2001 and 2011 - a period in which the country found itself forced to make changes after being subject to legal action by the European Commission for failure to reduce levels of toxic nitrogen oxide in the air.[33] The study found a decidedly uneven rate of improvement and regulatory compliance over the decade, biased in favour of the more wealthy and against the poor - with the latter indeed experiencing greater declines in air quality with regards to particulate pollution.[34] While going on to discuss different conceptions of justice, which offer an important corrective to purely bureaucratic-regulatory conceptions of climate justice, the authors make the prediction that health inequalities related to air quality will have grown in the decade concerned.

Focusing on the question of de facto marginalisation from the democratic processes in their report to the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Working Group on People of African Descent described how *'Environmental racism is present at both the national and international levels. At the national level, people of African descent have reduced access to information about environmental matters, to participation in environmental decision-making and to remedies for environmental harm'.*[35] It also emphasises that climate change is a consequence of a *'[capitalist] economic system that is heavily reliant on extraction, exploitation and accumulation through dispossession'* while also emphasising how the existing pattern of waste export from Europe to the Global South while the failure to effectively combat climate change impacts those very states also.

From the existing research, the picture is clear: a spate of climate injustices and environmental harms in Europe are disproportionately stacked against marginalised communities - across the axes of socioeconomic status, as well as race and/or migration status - while these same communities are denied the social and political resources to effectively challenge the political practices that inflict and maintain harm and conditions of deprivation. The present research project therefore places a large emphasis on the **politics** of environmental injustice and climate racism in Europe, by analysing the recognition, or lack thereof, of racialised environmental harms, efforts to challenge the racialised dimensions of such harms, as well as the role of racialised communities themselves in combating them, and the barriers they face both at a national level and within the climate movement in doing so.
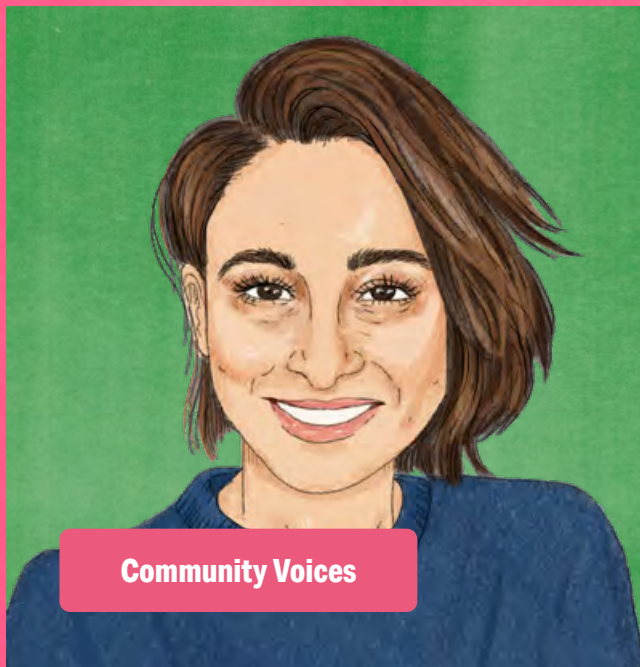
Community Voices

An overview of climate racism in Ireland

By Dr. Asmae Ourkiya

Climate racism and the intertwinement of racialised communities' experiences with racism and therefore the disproportionate environmental degradation impacts they face, has not yet been a topic of serious conversation in Ireland.

People of colour, especially migrants moving to the country are rarely - if ever - made aware of climate hazards that they should take into consideration upon moving to the Republic. To name a few, these hazards range from poor water quality, mould infestations in residential properties, to living in proximity to landfills and incinerators.

Even though it has been 30 years since Ireland was required to comply with EU standards, the facts on the ground in the country speak of another reality. Youth Work Ireland stated in their climate injustice report that *"71% of landfill sites and waste incinerators in Ireland are located in areas that are below the national average of deprivation, where more people in the area, as a proportion of the entire population, are in poverty"*.[36] Meanwhile, according to a 2023 investigation report, there are *'still 26 spots around Ireland where raw sewage is pumped into the environment and 15 wastewater treatment plants that fail to meet EU standards'*.[37]

Social exclusion and climate injustice

For migrants of colour on low incomes we deal with a housing crisis and are rarely in a position to find suitable, dignified housing. Drawing from personal experience, those of friends, and a general consensus of the migrant community of colour, Irish landlords are not regulated and rent out properties that are infested with mould. Residents, due to the poorly managed housing system, have no choice but to settle for such rooms or apartments at significantly high prices.

While Irish people are aware of these matters and therefore avoid living in hazardous areas, which are now hotspots for migrant tech workers, people of colour who can afford living in Dublin - yet face significant challenges finding housing due to racist discrimination - end up opting for these newly-built apartment blocks ignorant to the fact that renting by the beach is in fact an environmental hazard.

Another issue that many migrants of colour face is the harsh and long winters in the country, often leading to extremely high gas and electricity bills. While the country has so much potential to shift to renewables, such as biogas, solar, thermal and so on, the country unfortunately still largely depends on fossil fuels for heating, rendering the most vulnerable communities susceptible to health issues such as pneumonia, which reached a peak during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The role of racism in shaping the lives and health prospects of migrants of colour in Ireland is therefore clear: with discrimination in a poorly regulated housing market funnelling migrants towards exorbitant, substandard housing that exposes them to harms like mould in their homes, and environmental dangers outside.

Reorienting Ireland's climate conversation

While climate activists have a presence within Ireland, they have yet to incorporate race-related experiences as part of a climate justice framework. The environmental movement is therefore white-oriented, trying - and failing[38] - to meet the 2030 EU emissions and energy targets, while presenting little impetus for the Irish government to address the unequal, racialised impacts of environmental hazards on its residents.

A key means through which to address these struggles is for the EU to impose stricter measures and investigate the absence of rental caps, the chaotic housing system that blatantly discriminates, and to push Ireland towards meeting EU standards when it comes to health and safety.

Ireland needs to update its climate policies by adopting a more socially expansive approach, which can be done by conducting research and collecting data from all residents regardless of citizenship, and allow migrants of colour who are not naturalised to be more involved politically, to enable us to collectively push our needs and challenges to the forefront.

Author Biography

Dr. Asmae Ourkiya (pronounced Es-muh) (They/Them) is the founder of The Ecofeminist Institute, an initiative dedicated to providing consultancy and research services to individuals and organisations by providing holistic approaches towards addressing climate change and environmental challenges. Dr. Ourkiya obtained their Ph.D. degree from Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick after successfully defending their thesis titled "Queer Ecofeminism: From Binary Environmental Endeavours to Postgender Pursuits", which has been published as a book by Rowman & Littlefield.

They have contributed to numerous platforms, books, and magazines, disseminating their research and demonstrating a commitment to promoting social justice alongside environmental concerns. Their work is grounded in the belief that climate justice cannot be attained without addressing social justice, a concept that encompasses the interconnected objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals. As an important voice in the global conversation around sustainability, gender, and human rights, Asmae continues to bridge different schools of thought to promote lasting, positive change.

Themes

02

During November and December 2023, a series of roundtable discussions and/or interviews were conducted with individuals from each country of concern in order to ground the research in the context of each country and to inform the subsequent research survey (see Section 3).

National political context (A)

This refers to the broader political climate for racialised communities in participants' countries, in terms of race/ism, vulnerability to environmental harms, and inclusion/exclusion from democratic and political processes. The physical concentration of racialised populations within the country and their proximity to environmental harms, the importance of citizenship status in determining political inclusion, and whether race/ism is part of the national discussion, is addressed in this category.

The impact of growing hard-right and far-right parties on the national political culture was a prominent feature of many of the discussions, with a number of them taking place in countries with far-right, racist, and xenophobic parties in power at various levels, rising in opinion polls, or otherwise exercising power at the street level through racist attacks.

Sub-themes within this category include

National political cotext (A)

A1

Racialisation, migrants & access

A2

Exclusion

A3

Habitation, segregation & environmental harms

A4

National approaches to race/ism

A5

Political polarisation

A1

Racialisation, migrants, and access (A1)
"Race", citizenship status (including the precarity of non-citizens, those without papers), and their impact on access to services and inclusion within democratic forms. The specific condition and experience of asylum seekers/refugees was often noted as being a key dividing line in terms of social and democratic inclusion in a country, with these groups often facing the brunt of racist and anti-migrant measures.

A2

Exclusion (A2)
Exclusion of racialised communities from social provisions as well as from policymaking, whether direct or de facto, including through an emphasis on appealing or tending to white and/or affluent constituencies.

A3

Habitation, segregation, and environmental harms (A3)
The spatial concentration of racialised communities into certain districts or neighbourhoods, the quality of their habitation, and their subsequent exposure to environmental harms as a consequence. In many countries a distinct spatial divide was noted, with racialised and/or migrant communities concentrated either within inner city districts or confined to city outskirts.

A4

National approaches to race/ism (A4)
National approaches to 'race'/ethnicity - namely, whether race, racism and racialised harms are part of the national debate, or whether anxieties over talking about race/ism or nominally 'raceblind' approaches hinder such discussions and subsequent action.

A5

Political polarisation (A5)
Polarisation across political lines on issues of climate and/or race/immigration. This usually takes the form of hard or far-right parties agitating for a cessation or reversal of climate policies, whether national or directed by the European Union, as well as sharpening racism in the public political debate, especially directed against migrants and asylum seekers.

Racialised communities and climate action (B)

This refers to the relationship between racialised communities and the question of climate action.

This includes racialised communities' orientation towards climate change and climate action in their daily lives, as well as desire for more expansive international perspectives on climate action, and the tension between 'climate action' (as broadly conceived) and other urgent or material needs that dictate their behaviour.

This theme also covers negative perceptions of mainstream climate politics, including Green or ecological parliamentary parties which were in power in governments of a number of the countries discussed.

Sub-themes within this category include:

Radicalised communities & climate action (B)

B1

Material needs and climate action

B2

Alienation and disillusionment with climate politics

B3

Importance of an international focus

B1

Material needs and climate action (B1)
The extent to which racialised communities feel that immediate, day-to-day, or material needs, such as poverty, work, and police violence, take precedent over long-term concerns about climate, and how this shapes their engagement with climate action.

B2

Alienation and disillusionment with climate politics (B2)
Racialised communities becoming

disenchanted with mainstream Green politics and Green parties, particularly over their failures to address racism, the needs of racialised communities, and for having conceded to the trappings of electoral politics.

B3

Importance of an international focus (B3)
The particular emphasis placed by racialised activists and/or communities on climate action as being necessarily international in scope, rather than limited to the confines of countries in Europe or the Global North.

Culture of climate movements (C)

This refers to the political and social culture of climate justice and climate movements within each country, including grassroots groups (for example, Extinction Rebellion) and larger NGO-type organisations.

This theme also includes the extent to which such movements are inclusive of racialised communities and their needs, and/or whether they advance a siloed form of climate activism that remains distanced from wider social issues, including those relevant to racialised communities.

Sub-themes within this category include:

Culture of climatemovements (C)

C1

Exclusionary culture of whiteness

C2

Gap between climate & social justice

C3

Recent politicisation of climate movements

C1

Exclusionary culture of whiteness (C1)
Whereby mainstream climate movements are dominated not just numerically by white citizens, but shaped by a hegemonic culture that is defined by a white and/or middle-class ethos which deters racialised people from engaging.

C2

Gap between climate and social justice (C2)
When 'climate issues' are narrowly conceived by the local climate movement rather than as holistic social movements,

and are decoupled from broader issues of inequality and social injustice, including issues of race and class, rather than directly confronting the racialised and class dimensions of climate crisis.

C3

Recent politicisation of climate movements (C3)

The extent to which local climate movements and organisations have been shaped by - or failed to respond to - recent, broader political movements and upsurges, including those led by racialised communities, such as *Black Lives Matter* and pro-Palestine demonstrations, and how this has impacted their political orientation.

Solutions (D)

This refers to the various solutions or pathways offered by participants to respond to the various issues raised during the roundtables, or descriptions of how such pathways have been attempted in their countries thus far.

This includes improving engagement with formal political structures, emphasising self-organisation among racialised people, the question of racialised people being 'represented' in politics, or seeking to change the political direction of climate discussions in a more social justice-oriented manner.

Sub-themes within this category include:

Solutions (D)

D1

Political 'Representation' and self-organisation

D2

Gap between climate & social justice

D3

Internationalism

D4

Engaging politics

D1

Political 'Representation' and self-organisation (D1)

Whereby the proposed solution lies in increasing the presence of hitherto-excluded communities in political processes and forms of organising. These took the form of either demands for greater representation of racialised people in mainstream politics elected office, or calls for greater self-organisation of racialised groups

into organisations to develop a collective voice and build power.

D2

Connecting climate and social justice (D2)

Calls to popularise and politicise a 'climate justice' framework that defies a compartmentalisation between 'climate' and 'social' issues but rather bridges the two.

D3

Internationalism (D3)

Emphasising the international dimensions of climate change and climate action, particularly placing an emphasis on the impact on the Global South, and ensuring that calls and demands for climate justice locally do not succumb to parochialism or to merely offset or offload climate action and its impacts on the Global South.

D4

Engaging politics (D4)

Various ways that racialised communities can or have sought to engage in and shape political processes, including building on existing initiatives.
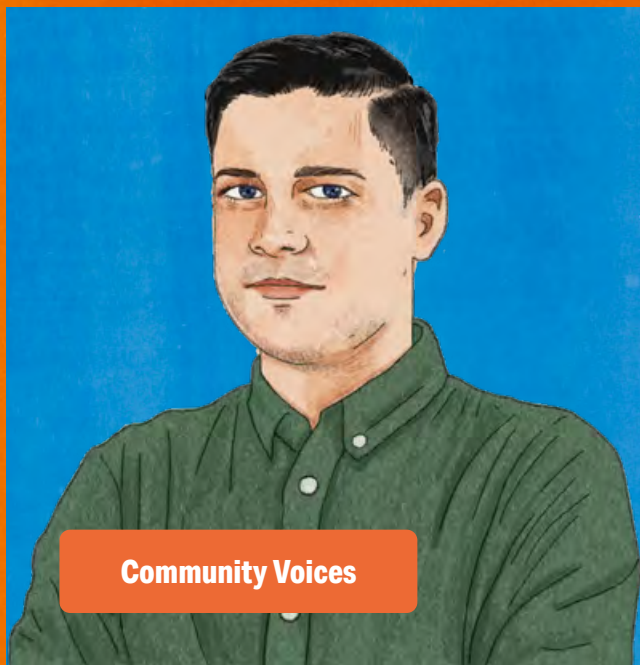
Community Voices

Travellers in France: a living legacy of de jure discrimination shaping climate racism today

By William Acker

For several decades now, France has been organising the siting of itinerant communities known by law as "Travellers" (mainly Yenish and Romani; commonly referred to as gens du voyage). These specific sites, known as "aires d'accueil", are mostly located on the outskirts of towns and cities, close to areas rendered polluted or hazardous on account of their proximity to industrial zones - of the more than 1,300 Traveller sites, 71% are isolated from residential areas - mainly in industrial or commercial zones - and 52% are in direct proximity to sources of pollution or industrial risks.[39]

Meanwhile the life expectancy of Travellers is 15 years lower than the national average. A recent study by Santé Publique France[40] also demonstrates the negative impact of the living conditions imposed on Travellers on their health. A cross-sectional participatory study was carried out between November 2019 and March 2022 in Nouvelle-Aquitaine on 1,030 adults and 337 children. The results highlight particularly worrying health indicators,[41] with the report concluding that surveyed Gypsy and Traveller populations 'faced deleterious environmental and living conditions potentially affecting their health and their use of health care, including vaccination."

The legal roots of anti-Traveller discrimination

Traveller communities have suffered de jure discrimination at the hands of the law and administration since 1912, when the French state created a specific ethnic status for "nomads". This status is hereditary, and is accompanied by specific registration mechanisms, and established the legal basis for the persecution of these families during the Second World War - including through internment, spoliation, and forced labour.

In 1969, the status of nomad was abrogated to become an administrative category of "Travellers". This new status obligated Travellers to carry specific identity documents that enabled their movements to be monitored, effectively an internal passport: the carnet de circulation. In addition, although they have been French for several centuries, Travellers have in practice not had access to the right to vote until 2012. In France, there are also maximum quotas of "Travellers" per town, which until 2015 obliged mayors to ensure that no more than 3% of their residents are "Travellers".

In 2012, the French Constitutional Council ruled that the 1969 law governing the status of gens du voyage was discriminatory. Despite this, gens du voyage remain among the most discriminated communities in France, and for years now, Roma and gens du voyage have been the communities towards which the French have declared the most hostility.[42]

In spite of this difficult context, associations representing these communities (such as ANGVC - Association Nationale des Gens du Voyage Citoyens) have been fighting for several years to change the situation, particularly in terms of environmental justice. For example, the DAS SO VAS association, formed by women living in the Hellemmes-Ronchin reception

area in northern France, has been fighting for 14 years for the relocation of this site, located in the immediate vicinity of a concrete factory and pesticide spraying zones.

Moving forward, it is necessary to prohibit the construction of reception areas near dangerous or polluted sites, and to recognise the status of the caravan as a home to enable these communities to access housing solutions that include the caravan as all or part of the dwelling. Climate movements also need to include lightly-housed or itinerant populations in their scope of action, both in terms of participation and in terms of assessing the impact of demands - as environmental protection measures are regularly used to push "Travellers" out of natural areas and cities - and also by considering "Travellers" as watchdogs at the forefront of climate upheaval.

Author Biography

William Acker is a lawyer from the Traveller community. He is General Delegate of the Association Nationale des Gens du Voyage Citoyens (ANGVC). He has conducted research into the environmental racism affecting « gens du voyage » in France. In 2021 he published "Où sont les gens du voyage?", a critical essay on the system for accommodating travellers in France, a work that won the 2022 Political Ecology Book Prize.

Roundtable discussions

03

The roundtables took the form of structured discussions, with a series of questions framed around three areas:

One

Outlining the context for racialised populations in the specified country in terms of access to state services and exposure to environmental harms.

Two

Understanding how climate-related policy has been approached in the specified country, and whether these policies have been 'race blind' or sought to tackle existing racialised disparities.

Three

Determining how much space there is within the policymaking space in the specified country for racialised communities to shape policy.

Participants were provided the questions prior to the roundtables. The roundtable discussions were hosted over Zoom and lasted up to 90 minutes. With participant consent the discussions were recorded for the purposes of reference for this report. Participants were remunerated for their time.

Below is a summary of each country's roundtable discussions and select quotes illustrating the themes described in the previous section.

Austria
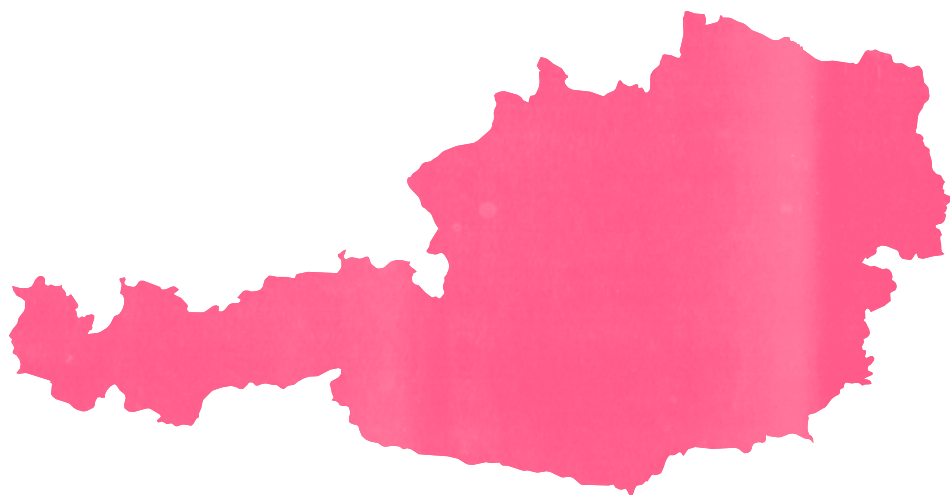
Austria is one among a number of countries of those surveyed where a Green Party was in national government, with the Austrian Greens currently in coalition with the conservative ÖVP (Österreichische Volkspartei - Austrian People's Party). This rightwing-/green political coalition was reflected by a troubling tendency in Austria of a convergence between environmentalism and reactionary politics, including strains of racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia that, according to participants, factored into a general disappointment in the Green Party Race/ism is something that Austrians avoided discussing or confronting, according to participants - something which hinders the ability to tackle some deep-seated and institutionalised forms of racism in the country.

While Austria was noted for having strong welfare measures, participants explored how the experiences of migrants and refugees undermined the robustness and supposed universality of welfare provisions and democratic inclusion. Participants noted how migrants are not well integrated into democratic initiatives, in part due to the high barrier for gaining citizenship - including prohibitive cost of preparing for citizenship tests, and the fact that Austria usually does not allow for dual citizenship - which leads to the disenfranchisement of migrants.

It was noted that cheaper places to live in Austria are those more impacted by pollution, and that consequently more migrants are affected by such pollution. Lack of access to green spaces, or the lower quality of green spaces accessible to racialised communities was another way in which they were exposed to environmental harms, according to participants. Despite this, a lack of community or forms of community organisation outside of the urban centres made it difficult for these groups to self-organise amongst themselves, or to develop a common agenda against racism.

KEY

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A1

"Racialised communities and especially migrant communities are not well-integrated into decision-making processes. When we take the example of Vienna where almost 50% of the population is migrant - either first or second generation depending on the definitions that you [use]. But then you see that, from those 50% living in Vienna, on the other side 30% of people living in Vienna cannot vote.

[...] [This is because] the barriers to becoming a citizen and to get voting rights are very high in Austria - you need to give up your old passport for example, you might have to take an integration test [which is] connected [to] a lot of costs, and it's a very extensive and exhaustive process that costs a lot of money.

A3

"There is also the issue of racialised people having less access to green spaces in general, and also lower quality of green space when the access does exist - which is [often] not looked at much from the research point of view at least. [...] They're also more likely to live closer to pollution sites, specifically in the rural parts of Austria.

I think [we also need to] take into account the fact that racialised communities, specifically migrant communities, tend to have less socio-economic capabilities, so

the areas that do have pollution or do have industrial sites [nearby], [and] have less green space tend to be cheaper to live in.

There are those two things working together, where you go to live in areas that are more polluted because you don't have the money to afford living in areas that are less polluted, or the pollution comes to you because of who you are and [because] you exist there [in impoverished, poorly-maintenanced areas]."

A3

"It's also a classism problem. So where you have little possibilities, financially speaking, you will live in areas that are affected by pollution etc. [...]. It keeps being an [issue for migrants] up until the second or third generation."

A3

From participant's experience living in two Austrian cities
"Most of the migrant populations live close to waste disposal sites which are not being treated properly, or in comparatively unhygienic places."

A4

"[In] Austria we have a deeply racist country and a deeply racist government. Structural racism is not well addressed.

You do have everyday racism in healthcare institutions [...] it goes back

to when I was in the womb until today."

B1

"There needs to be more involvement from the different communities [in climate issues] but it's really difficult to get to that involvement when you are in between finding a job, keeping job to keep your residency [...] getting food, sending money to your family."

B1

"In a lot of these communities, climate issues are seen as something to put on the backburner because [they] are trying to find food to eat and [have] 6 people living in one bedroom.

This is where talking about climate justice without talking about social justice becomes almost moot.

What the weather looks like in a few years[...]becomes of no consequences when you have such immediate basic needs not being met."

B2 **C2**

"The Green Party in Austria has formed a coalition government with the right-wing party in Austria.[43] And in central and eastern Europe there has been a rise of the interest of environmental movements and right-wing populist movements somehow meeting.

A lot of these right-wing movement have somewhat decent climate policies on certain issues - I don't want to say on everything - especially where farming and farmers and the protection of farmers are involved.

[...] [We also have] this in Austria where sometimes the right-wing populist, racist movements also have a lot of ground that they agree on with Green parties or the climate movement.

So that makes it so that you completely remove any 'undesirable populations' from this equation, because they've already agreed on things between them [selves] and basically Black, brown, migrant people are excluded from all of this and from decision making and policymaking."

B2

"I think in Germany and in Austria we have been very disappointed with the so-called Green parties [...] I think for many left [leaning] people, the party system in Austria as well as in Germany do not really reflect our demands, our utopias. It's just about [harm reduction].

C1 **B2** **A4**

On the convergence of racism and environmentalism
"It ends up a lot of the time in Austria and

Germany, and other European [countries] tying [in] with Islamophobia and this attack against Muslims, specifically for the Eid sacrifice, or the way that *halal* meat is killed - even though you don't see the same time of discussion around *kosher* for example, even though it's the same [thing].

That also [ends up with] you having a lot of Islamophobia within environmental movements, and Islamophobia of course is very much racialised in these countries.

[…] Because we've somehow created an environmental movement that does not really think about social issues - and that is why climate justice/environmental justice started as movements, to say that social issues and environmental issues cannot be discussed separately, but [we still are]. And that create space [for] racism to exist very much within climate movements and for them to because partners with the [far-right] Freedom Party in Austria.'

D1

"We need more radical resistance to the systems that are oppressing and governing us in a very undemocratic way. We need to criticise those [structures more] and bring them to the centre of the issue."

"In the long term the solution won't be to have more [people of colour] innovation or green firms governed by [people of colour] or something like that, the solution is how

do we want to have community, what is community for us…how do we want to treat our resources, [and] it goes back to a more fundamental question of 'why capitalism'?"

D1

On the importance of recognising organisations and institutions that have come before

"If this was a marathon where you give this [baton] stick to pass to the next person, we are in that. And I would [be dropping the stick] if I said there were no organisations [doing the work we are doing]."

D4

"Involving these communities in also testing out new solutions from the govt or research and industrial sector is a very good way to use intellectual capacity of these migrant populations to not only test out solutions but to build their own capacity in terms of learning and skills."

D4

"I think the solution is to be more radical in pointing out the gaps and issues that we do have [on] a day-to-day basis."

D4

"There are lot of [fields] we don't really associated with climate justice that we can really tap in to and find creative ideas."

Belgium

For Belgium, the division between those with administrative status, and those without, was noted as being fundamental in terms of individuals' experiences and the treatment they received. The federal administrative structure of Belgium also meant that there were notable political distinctions between regions, with the conservative coalition government in the Flanders division more actively pursuing anti-migrant measures.

Poorer areas, where there was less incentive from government to maintain green spaces, were subject to 'heat islands' in the summer, which led to increased smog and air pollution compounded by lack of wind: these areas correspond entirely to areas with high concentrations of racialised and working-class communities.

While progress on climate change had progressed reasonably well, a polarisation and right-wing backlash was discernible both locally - through 'culture war' campaigns against emissions calming measures by right-wing parties - and at the European level, as symbolised by French Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron's call for a 'regulatory pause' on EU environmental policies[44] in 2023.

While there is a growing intellectual culture in Belgium around speaking on racism, it was reported that Belgians are afraid of talking about race or being accused of racism, and therefore such intellectual endeavours are not received well by the mainstream population. Moreover, an anti-racist activist ethos among racialised Belgians did not necessarily translate to the sphere of climate action.

It had also proved difficult to mobilise racialised people politically, which would be necessary to challenge the informal power networks that shapes formal politics in Belgium, as well as the broader democratic deficit that is deepened by political polarisation and misinformation. Suggestions were offered for facilitating greater mobilisation and participation of racialised people in climate action, including through ensuring measures to recompense individuals organising such efforts and ensuring that such individuals were pigeonholed into discussing 'race' matters in a compartmentalised manner.

KEY

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A1

"If you don't have [your] administrative situation [as a migrant] in order, you don't have papers or whatever, it's horribly bad. I think one day we will look back in history and see blatant human rights violation which were knowingly allowed."

A2

"We have focused our way to inform people [based on] the white, richer class. So even if it's not a formal policy we are de facto excluding racialised people from being informed because we never looked at them or cared about informing them"."Now you have a big group in Brussels, specifically racialised people, that are completely misinformed and racialised and used as a tool [by the right-wing]."

A2   **C3**

"There's this focus [in] anti-racism, 'nothing about us without us', so there's a lot of ways that racialised people can have input about [issues of racism], but we don't yet have that thinking reflex for climate policy, and that's very sad.

Belgium is very diverse, but there's little to no involvement of racialised populations in climate policy, unless you first do stuff with anti-racism, then you get to have an anti-racist perspective on climate policy as an extra. In the core of climate policy and democratic consultation that is being done there's virtually none."

A3   **A1**

"A lot of people with migrant roots […]they end up building in certain areas, and these are the areas are where there is a lot less political responsibility to make sure there's enough green space, enough playing grounds etc., which also has a lot of impact on health.

In summer we have heat islands we call them in Brussels, areas where its ridiculously hot because there's no green [space], it's badly built, and you can see statistically how one group of people is the main victim of it […] all the people that are racialised, unless you are really rich, end up the direct victims of heat islands, of badly built areas, no playing grounds for kids, no green areas."

A3

"You will see the impact of heat in the summer, and sometimes you get less wind.

And less wind is actually really bad in big cities, because [of] the emission [from] cars, so you get smog.

If you analyse the air quality of certain areas you can clearly see how certain areas have very bad air quality when there's no wind, and those areas completely correspond with the areas where people who are poor and people who are racialised live".

A3

"PFOS is this substance they use in the production of non-stick pans, because PFOS[45] is hydrophobic [...] There's a big industry in the western part of Flanders. So, what happened was they realised that a huge amount of that substance which is actually toxic [to] humans and you cannot get rid of it easily, there was a huge concentration of it in the water, in people's blood etc. [...].

And the impact is way bigger on people who worked in the factories or people who live near the factories. And who worked or lived near the factories? Immigrants. [That] however is made broader because it's such a big disaster that it also harmed non-immigrants of course."

A5

"In Belgium in the last year or two, people are blaming climate ambitions on other structural problems where often there's no link at all. If anything, our fight against the climate crisis [can be economically advantageous].

[...] "Instead of seeing the opportunities [climate action] brings and how it can strengthen us, you can feel a climate sceptic pushback - like 'yeah but you know we've done enough, let's not destroy our society to save the planet', 'end of the day it's all about China anyway' - you see this very simplified rhetoric which is

gaining ground. And what I said before, on a polarised society [information] is also being used as fuel to disinform people." [...] "5 years ago most people knew that mainly richer people are going to have a car, or people who need it, which is find of course. But now it's almost like anything you do against the use of cars - if you make a street car-free - is almost seen as an attack on the freedom of the "working class."

While the reality is in Brussels, most of the working class doesn't even have a car."

A2   **A5**

On the Good Move mobility and traffic calming measure in Brussels

"It's this mobility plan that was meant to alleviate the pressure from cars in cities, by having certain streets you cannot go by car etc.

The [consultation] process didn't go well, because in full COVID times they did online stuff - of course, anybody with any social knowledge would know that that's not the way to be inclusive. But the ideas, the goals are actually very good for people, for racialised people mostly, because what you have the most in Brussels is people from outside Brussels [coming in] by car, they emit gases, they go back home where their kids are going to nice

schools in the middle of nature, while our kids they grow up with all the emissions."

[…] "But what happened there [was] the populist politicians pushed the people and made them feel like 'yeah, they're just here to take away your car' which is real misinformation.

It's a very targeted weapon of politics right now, to push people against something even if it's in their own interests, and the problem for me is that this highlights […] that we've focused our way to inform people on the white, richer class, therefore we are de facto excluding racialised people from being informed."

C1

"If I could change something by clicking my hands it would be the arrogance, the confidence that people have in the fight [against] the climate crisis, my own allies, for that matter.

[There is an attitude of] everything there is to understand they understand, and if they don't understand then it's not logical[…]I don't think there's any racialised person that would dare to think that way.

D1

"Racialised communities will have to mobilise themselves and we need to support that proactively, [including] subsidies. Make sure people who do the administrative work can have an income and pay rent. And that's actually all that is needed. If we structurally support local racialised communities to be active and have a space, then the information will be there."

D1

"If you go to a conference on climate crisis, chances are 90% of the time it will be mainly white people, and if you do see racialised people it will be a hyper-local context[…]why are the white people talking about the rest of the world?."

D1

"End of the day I do believe [things] will only change if the racialised communities themselves mobilise, mobilise in direct ways by protesting, but also mobilise in informal ways.

We need to give each other power, to be blunt. And how do we give each other power? By having networks […] these are the ways we can rival the subtle power that is there [in the political system]."

D4

"We need to be less afraid to demand more concrete stuff. Not just global visions but clear, concise demands."

France

The discussion on France was dominated by the country's refusal to recognise 'race' or minoritised ethnic groups among its population, in favour of a notion of republican universalism. This presented unique difficulties for racialised communities in mobilising around issues of race/ism, as well as for identifying basic facts and statistics about the national population and context.

Despite the refusal to recognise race, it is clear from the participants that institutional racism is pervasive, and shapes the lives of racialised communities in the country, many of whom were from populations formerly colonised by France. The issue of residency status emerged again as a key determinant of the experiences of migrant populations, while the intimate state regulation over the lives of Traveller (Roma) communities also contributed to the significant barriers they faced in accessing rights, healthcare, justice, housing, education, and work.

The spatial segregation of racialised populations was also notable, with the suburban *banlieues,* alongside Traveller 'reception areas', serving as sites of concentrated populations, squalor, and exposure to environmental harms, including air pollution and proximity to industrial sites. The particular situation of colonial French overseas territories such as Reunion, Guadeloupe, Mayotte, and Martinique was also discussed, including how the commercial exploitation of their natural resources, the use of toxic pesticides, and lack of access to water represented a particularly intense set of environmental harms to their populations, whom are scarcely factored into the French political discourse. The need to develop an anti-racist analytical frame work that incorporated both metropolitan France and its departments was evident, as part of an anticolonial political orientation.

The failure of Green parties and climate movements to bridge climate justice and social justice, particularly along the axis of race/ism, was noted as alienating, alongside a failure of grassroots climate groups to democratise power.

In closing, participants emphasised the point that recognising race and racism in France is a prerequisite to any further work campaigning against it, as well as having racialised people in the policymaking process from the beginning and adopting an integrated climate justice frame that clearly factors in 'social' issues such as racism.

KEY ▶

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A2

"French overseas territories represent 80% of France's biodiversity but we are forgotten when policy is made."

A1 **A2**

On the Travellers population

"France regulates their lives, their housing and public policies on education and health but it treats them differently, creating de facto national minority except that it does not formally recognise this minority and therefore does not offer it political representation."

A3

"There is a huge spatial segregation in France, with racialised populations in the poor neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the city. And these neighbourhoods are extremely more polluted than the white neighbourhoods[…]There [are] also chemical industries that [are] near those neighbourhoods, there are also highways that are near those neighbourhoods."

A3

"Most of the time[…]as soon as you get out of the main cities and you get to the *banlieues* you lose a lot of the governmental [presence] […]how government decides where they put green spaces…"

"Environmental policies [are] definitely mainly focused on the main areas

and the main cities not the *banlieues* or outside [of the cities]."

A3

"Reception areas [where Travellers live] that are relegated to outskirts on towns and cities are therefore often too close to polluted areas, sewage treatment plants, landfill sites, motor ways, power stations, chemical plants etc means that Travellers suffer from environmental inequalities that I would describe as environmental racism.

[…] Only 25 of the 95 French departments actually complied with the law [on establishing Traveller reception areas]. If this law is particularly poorly respected, it's because it's not popular to build a reception area. For every project to build a reception area, there is a local opposition based on the rejection of Travellers. This is the principle of *Not In My Back Yard.*

[…] "If I'm talking about environmental racism, it's because in France we have spaces specifically reserved for Travellers, these places are chosen by the state, deliberately set apart from the cities, deliberately relegated to the [inaudible], for the most part polluted. According to my studies, more than 71% of these sites are located outside of residential areas, in the majority of cases in industrial zones, forests or commercial zones.

And at the national level, 51% of these sites [are] in the direct vicinity of direct pollutants, and in some departments this figure is close to 100%."

A3 **A1** **B3**

"As we can see, it is very difficult to obtain justice in cases of environmental [harm] even when it is enormous cases like [the Chlordecone scandal].[46] I remember that the president of the Republic himself, during a trip to [French Polynesia], which is one of the overseas territories, spoke of the nuclear tests carried out [from 1966], saying they would not have been carried out in [region in metropolitan France].

This means that these territories and their minority populations are laboratory test subjects which, because they are silenced, are not seen."

A3 **B3**

"I wanted to mention [another] departmentalised, colonial territory overseas - it's Mayotte.[47]

For me it's environmental racism also, but people don't talk about the racial issue in it but for me [it is] [inaudible]. The issue of water; this island that is supposed to be French, they have a huge issue of [lack of] water there, you have French citizens [there] who can't have clear water in 2023."

B2

"The Green parties - bourgeois, white parties - none of these issues [racism/ environmental racism] are really interesting [to] them."

B2

"Ecology for [established parties] is only the climate part of ecology, all the ecological process of how we change our way of living, our way of being together… [are] not at all in their mind."

A3 **D2**

"Since the climate marches of 2018/19 there is a bit of change in the ecological movement[…]they realised that they were at the top of what they could do [at the level of] white or bourgeois activists. And they realised that with all the marches, they were huge but we [racialised people] were not there.

There is right now reflection [needed] from them to know how to address gender, class and race issues. I'm working on this with some climate movements, and they really don't know how […] there is a huge mental block [in] how to give some power to others.

[…] At least there is reflection on class and race issues in the climate movement in France right now. And we need to take advantage of this and take space.

[...] Because of the climate marches, everyone is talking about ecology, the visibility of ecology is so huge that everyone is talking about it - even the far right is saying that they are ecological. So there is a huge issue of how to politicise this issue, how to put justice in this issue."

D2

"Climate is sometimes a concept I am not comfortable with. It's a way of thinking about nature in the legitimate way of [rest country?] ...It's colonial concept. When we speak about climate justice we forget to speak about social justice.

D3

"What we need to understand is that the history of domination is not hermetically sealed between different areas [...] it's vital that the issue of environmental justice emerges and forces us to look at the problem in a global way.

There is the problem of reception areas in France [for Travellers], ok, with the explosion of the Lubrizol factory [in 2019], the issue of [inaudible] on Reunion island, the issue of chlordecone in Martinique, nickel mining in New Caledonia, access to water in Mayotte, the [inaudible] of indigenous people in Guiana for the purpose of [gold] mining, and so on.

So I think it's always very important not to focus on just one case, but to have this cross-sectional view."

D4

"There is a real challenge for us to recognise ourselves within social movements to be able to [shape the real political balance of power] that influences decision makers, because they will never agree to make decisions they don't have to.

So there is this issue of us being in networks and connecting autonomously and at the same time having different strategies [for engaging the political sphere]."

Germany

The issue of housing, particularly for migrants and refugees, was identified as an important means through which racialised populations are exposed to environmental harms due to a combination of discrimination in the housing market, the limitations of Germany's 'tickbox' bureaucratic **approach to housing regulations, and the organic development of these communities in deprived and socially excluded locations.**

While German cities have a social housing quota to ensure affordable living, it was noted that these are often of substandard quality, and more prone to environmental, noise, and air pollution. Housing for migrants is also likely to be located in industrial zones and areas with soil and water pollution, while Roma and Sinti communities were particularly exposed to housing on toxic land. Discrimination against them had resulted in instances of them living in condemned buildings.

Participants spoke to the context in the state of Bavaria, where empty buildings in industrial zones had been converted to house new migrants, where they are exposed to high air pollution, high levels of heat, and little access to green space, leading to "bioclimactic stress", including mental health issues.

According to participants, politics in Germany was seen as an 'establishment scene' from which migrant/racialised communities are alienated. It was also reported that communities had been disappointed with the German Green Party, currently part of the federal coalition government, for having done little to address their needs and approaching climate issues without due consideration for social issues. The growing strength of the far-right AfD (Alternative für Deutschland - Alternative for Germany) party and their ability to shape political discourse in Germany around issues of race and migration coloured much of the discussion around German politics, with participants harbouring little hopes of the mainstream parties addressing these points in a progressive manner out of fear of losing votes.

A further deterrent to political engagement by racialised communities mentioned is securitisation policies by the Germany state and its threats to funding chilling political engagement, which participants noted had been used in the context of recent pro-Palestine demonstrations in Germany. Another is the state's refusal to see religious associations - such as mosque associations - as having a valid right to speak on 'political matters', thereby excluding these pre-existing nodes of community self-organisation from political engagement.

In closing, participants called for the popularisation of a 'climate justice' frame rather than a narrow climate-as-environmentalism frame, including a human or health-centred perspective. The importance of migrant communities becoming more active in the policymaking process, including through advocacy around legislation, was also stressed.

KEY ▶

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A1

"There is also a lot of securitisation policies in Germany, which affects the mental health of people so they consider engagement in public spheres as risky, and this leads to [them] staying in their own bubble.

You can see it from the latest developments in Palestine, they are kind of labelled [by the government]. So if a mosque community or a migrant community [are] in the field and protesting against the incidents there, then it is quite likely that if they attempt to do a local environmental project that they have no chance, because they are labelled by the interior ministry or other German institution.

So there is this problem of *'am I silent in this matter?' because it's a matter of justice, to gain funds in the future, or am I in the field?."*

A2

"A lot of migrant communities see politics as establishment, you cannot change anything[…]most migrant communities don't take part when a new housing project is planned because they don't see the value of it."

A2

"It's also a functional matter, because the government considers religious

organisations [as] religious organisations [as if they] are not the right person to speak on [political] matters. And if a bureaucrat doesn't see these linkages, it's very difficult to convince [them].

I know some mosque communities do some projects to have less emissions within their mosques, but they are not at all considered within the public discourse."

A3

"Here we have industrial zones and some empty buildings, so they just transform them for the arrival of [new refugees].

[There] the pollution is extremely high, so you have air pollution because of industries dealing with metals and so on, but on the other side you have a lot of concrete and asphalt, [and] in the summer it creates heat, massive heat, so you have no access to green spaces because it's an industrial zone.

So you need to walk maybe 1 or 2 kilometres to get to the next green space.

[…] This creates bioclimatic stress, which leads to mental health [issues], diseases and other sicknesses."

A3

"There's also soil pollution and water pollution that you find [in areas where migrant populations live].

In the housing sphere the [communities] that are most exposed to pollution and toxic waste are actually the Sinti and Roma in Germany.

There's lot of cases in the past few years where they have been given plots of land that were toxic landfills before, or near to rivers that are toxic."

A3

"The reasoning why they say it's ok to put refugees and refugee housing in [industrial zones] is because they say it's 'temporary.'

'Temporary' can mean up to 2, 3, 4 years though - so it's not really temporary."

A3

"[Poor people] need to be a shield or a buffer for these environmental pollutions."

A4 **A5**

"Here in Bavaria [racialised vulnerabilities] are not part of public debate, it's really about 'integration', *'migrants causing a lot of problems'*, that *'all the welfare state [provisions] in Germany are consumed by the high number of migrants'."*

A5

"Discrimination is already a topic that a lot of parties try to move away from, because of the rise of the right. They don't want to

lose voters, and if they start talking more about racism, discrimination, I think they will lose voters to the AfD, so they don't do that."

A5

"Policy-wise what we're doing in Germany [in terms of climate] I think is slightly more positive than it is negative, but I think it might take a bad turn now with the political situation.

Not just because the AfD is rising […] but I think the issue is also that we do have the Greens in power[…]and we see what policies they make which, sure [they] might be good for climate, but it's very difficult for the population."

[…] "The policies are made for numbers for statistics to show the world that 'we did this', but people are suffering."

B1

"It's not that [policymakers] are excluding migrant communities, it might also be the case that they just don't feel comfortable, but it's also that they just don't try to engage, I think they have other things to focus on like discrimination, work issues and other topics."

B1

"If we look at the biggest policies made for climate regulation, it [requires] a lot of money from communities - changing

heating systems and moving to electric cars[…]and as many people of migrant background don't have that sort of money they will have more issues. They will not be able to catch up.

B1

"I think if you just look at what the Green [party] want to do, I think it's not that different from the central parties, it's quite similar - here and there are a few more 'green' things, but migrant communities are not a topic and even the green things are not as much of a topic as I would like them to be."

B2

"The German Vice Chancellor [Robert] Habeck was in an interview [where it was stated] that [racialised communities] had big hopes that the Greens are now in the government, but now they realise it's not a matter of change because they internalised the 'state logic' where they neglect individuals or minorities in their lived realities."

C1

"In the last 10 years a lot of legislation was passed [around climate]. This also led to a lot of companies who were successful, a lot of start-ups who grew into big corporations.

D2

This led also to a shift, because now

we have a neo-ecological milieu which is elitist."

"There needs to be an agenda-setting for the aspect of environmental justice […] if you are just within your own silo mentality, you just want, say, environmentally effective houses[…]but these are tailored to specific socioeconomic groups [and then it's insufficient]."

"From an administration perspective, now we should have a social space-oriented action.

So once we do an environmental impact assessment we [should] look to social consequences and impacts.

So it's [not enough] to think in a silo mentality, because there are people who suffer from policies and decision makers need to be made aware [that] such things happen.

So it's not just about doing good for the nature but also are you affecting vulnerable communities with that."

D2

"The terminology [of] climate justice needs to be more present in state institutions, so there needs to be a push for agenda setting.

[…] In Germany it's this technological

development, bureaucratic view, but agenda-setting on climate setting would [have] a lot of benefit for the future."

D2

"I think migrant communities need to be more active in the policymaking, because there are institutional

opportunities to do this, and once the state recognises you are a valid institution who speaks [on] a right, for example environmental rights or migrants rights, you have the opportunity to respond to a specific bill[…]and affect the decision-making process."

Community Voices

Compounding harms - Belgium's toxic PFOS scandal, and an information deficit for migrants

By Jad Amine Zeitouni

Belgium, and more specifically the Flanders region, has been grappling with a huge pollution scandal over the past couple of years related to perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS). PFOS is a synthetic substance mainly produced industrially and used for their water, grease, and dirt-repelling capacities, combined with their ability to resist high temperatures. It is one of thousands of harmful PFAS chemicals (Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances).

It is used in most non-stick pans, raincoats, fast food packaging, and fire extinguishers. The substance itself does not occur naturally and is always industrially made.

The dangers of PFOS and PFAS

The very reasonas for its use are also the reasons it is so dangerous: it is very hard to get rid of PFOS once it starts appearing in nature, which gave them the label "forever chemicals". The various PFAS that are soluble in water are even more dangerous and thus often end up virtually everywhere in the areas surrounding factories.

In Flanders, while doing construction works for a different project, the so-called "Oosterweel verbinding", we found worryingly high amounts of PFOS in the ground. After some research, and despite a minister of environment deliberately hiding information from the public, we discovered that the factory of the big multinational corporation 3M in Zwijndrecht was the culpable point source.

Shockingly, the company itself had already communicated the possible risks of PFAS substances in its native US back in 1993, where employees exposed to the substance for longer durations developed more frequent prostate cancers and had a slightly lower life expectancy.

The problem here is of course broad, and is intensified by the lack of governmental control being exerted over those polluting big players that only seek profit while disregarding the possibly ever-lasting impact on locals, their living circumstances, or their health. The specific impact on racialised communities is completely overlooked.

An information deficit: failing to prevent harm

The primary impact is, of course, on people living around the factories. People within a 3 km proximity of the factories were found to have alarmingly high levels of PFAS substances in their blood. The full impact of such exposure is still not clear, but at the very least includes a lower life expectancy and increased risk of various cancers.

The government advises against various activities ranging from eating eggs produced in the area to consuming tap water or even letting kids play for long duration in the area. They have also been inviting citizens to get tested for free to be able to map the area and to make sure they would know if they were possibly at risk.

Yet, all of this was communicated exclusively in Dutch. A dedicated commissioner on PFOS was even appointed by the Flemish government, however not one sentence throughout the various reports nor in any of the conclusion with its dozens of recommendations mentioned the situation of people who do not speak Dutch well.

A factory is of course an opportunity for employment for those without degree or full mastery of the language which means those areas naturally attract a lot of first-generation migrants, often mostly comprising racialised people. So, while the whole of Flanders was aware of the dangers and how horrible they are, not once were racialised people informed; an example of a recurring intersection between environmental harms, a certain form of classism, and structural racism.

The exclusive use of Dutch language and communication channels, without acknowledgement of migrant workers and residents of migrant origin, effectively exclude them from the vital information and discourse about the life altering dangers they are exposed to. Consequently, the focus remains disproportionately or even exclusively on the impact on the non-migrant population and strategies for their information dissemination, outreach, and support.

This represents some of the most complex issues from a racialised perspective, within a broader societal fight for climate justice. Yet, we must find ways to fight to also be taken into account and not be forgotten. It is imperative to take an intersectional approach when analysing situations and to not simplify the natural complexity of our societies.

There is no such thing as "a local resident", there are local residents that are going to be diverse and have different languages, social situations, migrant backgrounds, mental wellbeing etc. As racialised people in a minority situation we must use our own networks to understand the impact of pollution, communicate internally and externally and find ways to remind policy makers we exist and we matter as well.

Author Biography

Jad Amine Zeitouni, a 31-year-old advocate for feminism and environmentalism, comes from a Lebanese and Moroccan background and grew up in Belgium. Currently, he works as a political advisor to the Brussels Minister of Mobility. He's also one of the founders of Colour in Ecology (COLECO), a grassroots organization that aims to educate and empower marginalized communities about climate issues on both local and global scales. Additionally, he freelances as a consultant, specializing in inclusive communication, tackling discrimination, and addressing toxic masculinity.

Ireland
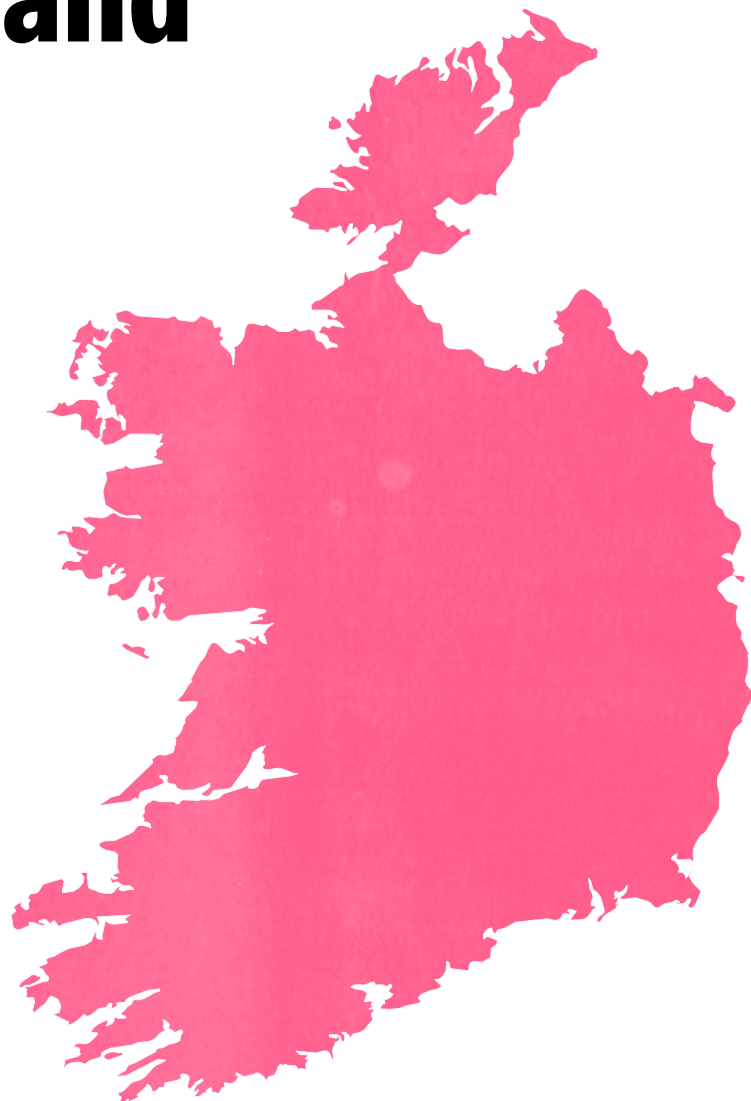
Ireland's discussion was threaded through by the fact of the recent Dublin riot which took place in late November 2023, spurred by anti-migrant agitators and the far-right, following a knife attack outside a primary school by a man of North African origin. The incident was identified as a watershed, and highlights the racism and xenophobia in Irish society that had hitherto gone ignored or unacknowledged.

In terms of housing, it was noted that there is a widespread housing crisis in Ireland, with substandard stock and unaffordable rent costs. In Dublin, a further division was identified between districts, with the 'D1' district comprising the northern part of central Dublin being marked by greater poverty, poorer maintenance and waste management, and less green space - as well as a greater concentration of racialised people.

Participants spoke of a widespread disengagement and disinterest with Irish politics which made it difficult to constructively breach issues such as racism. It was suggested that this disengagement was informed by its turbulent political history - namely that resulting from its colonisation by Britain. However, participants also mentioned some positive experiments with democracy in the country, such as its citizens' assembly initiative which

had made recommendations on the usage of carbon taxation, for example.

In summing up, participants called for Ireland to contribute more to climate reparations and loss & damage funds, moving away from its car-centric culture, and for greater transparency in the use of tax revenue by the Irish government towards progressive measures.

KEY

Use the key on pages 25–27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A1

"From my experience and the experience of other non-EU people of colour who were with me when I came to Ireland as a student, [access to state services] was almost impossible.

When you are on a student visa you do not have access to anything - nothing".

A2

"I can say that for whatever it's worth, I'm visibly not a Caucasian-Irish person, [but] I've felt very welcome in the policy discussions that I have been in. Although, on the carbon budgets working group I think I'm the only visibly non-white person, but still haven't ever felt awkward about that at all.

But for others I don't have any particular information".

A3

"If you're in Dublin 1 which is the north side [of the River Liffy] that is predominantly people of colour […]so when it comes to green spaces, you have to cross to the other side [of the river]. But on the north side, even if there were tiny, not significant green spaces, they were not well maintained."

A3

"Waste management is way better on the southside [of Dublin]. Some areas [in central Dublin] I used to go for shopping, and it is completely normalised to see trash everywhere, and the smell is not nice."

A3

"The second [issue] is the quality of housing.

In Ireland in general the quality of housing is not the best it can be for such a rich country […] It is so normalised for people in the area to accept mouldy places as normal living conditions[…]rooms without a window is absolutely normal in Dublin 1."

[…] "So you can't find somewhere in Dublin 4 or Dublin 6, the nice areas, because you automatically don't get an answer [from landlords]. So the only people who would rent out to people of colour are the people who are kind of somewhere breaching the law when it comes to living standards."

A4 **D4**

On Ireland's citizen assembly structures

"Each citizen assembly is 100 people, and each one is supposed to represent a percent of the Irish population.

No obviously they can't perfectly match, but they do try to approximate as closely as possible socio-economic characteristics. That includes for example here in Ireland the Traveller community, sometimes called the Roma in other parts of Europep…]they did include Travellers for example and I think that indicates that [the government] did take racial distribution in those samples very seriously."

"They are limited by who agrees to be part of it…

I think in principle that they did try to get in the citizens assembly good representation, so I think that that's important and I think that that's good."

A5 **A4**

On the 2023 Dublin riot

"This shows that there's been a huge amount of far-right racism that is in Ireland that wasn't acknowledged or understood by the native population, or maybe not believed.

And this makes clear that they're there, unfortunately organised, they can be very violent, they can overwhelm the local forces and this makes the situation certainly in Dublin much more fraught for people who look non-native Irish."

B2

"When it comes to green politics, I have not so far been fulfilled in a conversation with an Irish person about politics."

B3 **B2**

"I look at environmentalism from a social perspective, gender and racial, and I try to do public lectures, roundtable debates, and the turnout of people is way lower than I expect it to […]people are just not interested."

C3

"I would say the youths in school at the beginning of the Fridays For Future movement, there were some people of colour leading the movement, but then it died out, I haven't seen anything for a couple of years now."

D1

"To me if we're talking about environmental racism in policy, [then] representation is important. So it's not just talking about us, but also having us there."

D3

"I think that Ireland should contribute more to the Global South in terms of climate reparations.

Historically-speaking Ireland has burned a lot of fossil fuels and those are generating harms around the world, especially in the Global South and especially in places that are low-lying, so you think of Bangladesh, Indian shorelines.

My view is that Ireland, in view of our historical contribution, has a moral if

not legal responsibility to contribute towards addressing that[…]Ireland should contribute towards loss and damage."

D4

"Conversations about politics are absent. I am the one that steers conversations every now and again, and people do get uncomfortable talking about politics […] people tend to not care about politics, the only time where I saw people care was during the abortion referendum.

But the majority I would say, regardless of people's backgrounds educationally or professionally, there is this dormant attitude. It's like people have gone through so much in Ireland that they don't want anything that will disrupt their peace, even a conversation.

Because I tried to understand Irish politics ever since I stepped foot in Ireland[…]but in Ireland I felt like my activism went down because there isn't this [culture of] 'oh yeah let me show you the way how to do this'."

Italy

Italy was described as being marked by a significant disparity between the South and the North, in terms of wealth distribution - concentrated in the North - as well as political culture. It is the North where migrants and racialised people - largely men - come to work and live in cities in the regions of Lombardy and Veneto, often in the process ending up living near industrial zones with higher pollution levels.

The special situation of Italy's political context - hosting two far-right national parties, both currently in coalition under the government of Giorgia Meloni - was noted, as was the fact of racism in Italy being particularly explicit and 'in-your-face', even by European standards. Racialised communities were reported as being invisibilised and never considered at a policy level, much less in regards to climate; the harrowing experience of racist political harassment faced by a former Black minister was also relayed as an example of the deterrents to political engagement by racialised communities. Italian climate policy was also described by participants as being lagging behind the rest of Europe, with advances largely having been forced along by EU collective policy.

Residency status is the key dividing line determining access to healthcare and housing, and access to residency was noted as being a complicated process, exacerbated by the comparative lack of access to informal personal networks enjoyed by racialised migrant communities compared to white natives in Italy.

The question of networks also emerged in the discussion on political engagement and change, with participants emphasising the role of political networks and money in determining political representation, the character of the political system, and policymaking - with both barriers excluding racialised and working-class people from participation.

Participants stressed the importance of Italy addressing its colonial legacy, both as a matter of racial justice but also as a means through which to bridge climate justice and anti-racism in a more holistic manner. Despite the difficulties of the situation for racialised people in the country, participants described their hopes that the political opening provided by the climate crisis could give opportunity to address racial issues more effectively.

KEY

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A1

"Technically Italy doesn't have a difference in legislation for access to healthcare and public transport etc, these are all services that are [accessible] to everyone and by the constitution, so they don't discriminate if you're a foreigner or not.

But you have to have residency, and to [get] residency it's often very complicated, because you have to live in a proper house, with a proper legal contract and the house has to have some legal terms to be defined as proper accommodation [...] and that is very difficult to get even for white Italians, because landlords don't like to make a contract of their houses because they don't wanna pay the taxes, or because the place is [below norms]."

A2

"I know a lot of scholars whose work would be terribly important if read by our ministers [...] they don't even know where to find the researchers from [racialised] communities or if they know maybe they just don't include them.

If we exist it's easier for us to get heard on the European level than in the Italian context."

A2

"We are really active as activists in organisations in our communities at a [grassroots] level, but then the main problem is first to have people inside the political parties, and money."

A2

On barriers to engaging in formal politics

"The lack of networks. People our age don't have the same networks, we're not permitted access to a lot of resources.

And another aspect that hinders our communities [from getting] involved in the political sphere [is] the fact that overall younger generations are not very liked, [are] very patronised, always treated in a condescending way. And a lot of us who are active, be it in racial justice or climate justice or both - we happen to be young."

A2   **D1**

"One of the key reasons why racialised and migrant communities are absent from the policymaking area is because we are not elected. You will not see a face in the government which belongs to racialised and migrant communities.

It's a big problem, it's a root problem in the sense that in small areas, in activist groups in the cities, we are very active, but it gets to a point[..]and then it stops there."

A3

"The way in which the public system and public [services] - hospitals, schools - the way they are located in [relation to] the areas where the majority of people from racialised communities live [...] to go to a hospital, the hospital might be in the centre of the city for instance. But of course you don't get a house easily when you are from a migrant or racialised background, and if you get a house you get it from the outskirts. Then from the outskirts if you need to go to the hospital or you need to take your children to public schools, you need to take a car - but of course you don't have a car.

So you need to take a bus but bus coverage is very low in your area, because no buses go there or you might have a bus every three hours."

[...] "The way geographically services are located, it's not that easily accessible to migrants and racialised communities."

A3

"[Many] migrants are working, especially in the South of Italy, in agricultural fields and they have no proper housing, no access at all to any kind of healthcare [...]they are living, and I know it's a strong expression, they are living in slavery.

[...And] they don't have [a] voice, because the African diaspora in Italy [is small] - this is the big difference between [the] UK, France."

A3

"The North [of Italy] concentrates the most wealth and that is also why most migrant communities live in the North of Italy, because they came to work in the industries and the factories.

And these industries and factories are the places that are producing more pollution, and [near] these industries and factories are where most migrant and racialised communities live, to be closer to their job but also because clearly the houses cost less because the standard of air is really bad, and there's definitely been a lot of research about the consequences.

For example, on the Ilva factory in the South of Italy [...] many people got cancer and other things because of Ilva, and many of these people were also migrants, of course."

A3

"Migrants and racialised people live in the big cities because that is where there is work, but at the same time we know that these cities are more polluted, mainly in [Northern Italy]."

A3

"Apart from people that are residents, there are also the topic of people that are refugees in [Southern Italy], I think that they suffer a lot mainly, from what I see, in the summer, where there are many [wildfires]."

A4   **A2**

"Racism is everywhere in Europe but in Italy I feel like it's quite different as it is in your face, it's violent and I personally do not feel safe in Italy due to constant Islamophobic attacks, and other racialised communities maybe feel the same too.

I remember our minister Cécile Kyenge, she was the minister of integration a few governments ago - she was eaten alive, on national television.

Now she is one of the most qualified people to do that job and yet the only thing the public could see was the colour of her skin. So obviously how do you think that affects us?"

A4   **A2**

"Here in Italy, racialised people are not considered in any area or any topic […] so we are going to be the last people that would be considered when we have a policy [on climate]."

"We need extended and very sound cooperation between all the networks that exist and are a bit scattered.

D1

We need of course funding for racialised scholars […] not just [for qualified/ established scholars].

[…] [And then] Using that network to grant racialised people access to the higher levels of the political arena in Italy, because at the end it all comes from there."

D2   **C2**

"Italy really needs to address [its] colonial legacy, even in the environmental area, in the sense that - first of all Italy does not legacy the colonial legacy [in any sense], but when we go specifically [into] environmental policies even the vision of environmental[ism] is still very colonial and very greenwashed.

I think if we are able to start addressing that with a panoptic view, the environmental crisis can actually give us chances to address racial problems differently. Because in a society which is very colourblind and still very racist, going straight to the point [won't work].

'Everybody' cares about the planet as long as you know that in one way or another you're going to be affected then everybody's going to get interested.

Then from there, maybe we can strategically try and [intervene] on the [racial question].

Second of all we might need support from other European entities, [on a

long term basis]. I was thinking of an activists or scholars Erasmus [scheme] […] but it would be so important for other migrants and racialised people from other European countries to get to know exactly what we're talking about.

D4

"[If] the European Commission would force, somehow, the European countries to do something on their racialised communities [that would help], otherwise it would be difficult [for] change to happen."

The Netherlands

The discussion on the Netherlands was deeply impacted by the national election results of the prior week, in which the far-right, anti-migrant and

Isamophobic PVV (Partij voor de Vrijheid - Party for Freedom) party emerged with the largest number of seats, and with its leader Geert

Wilders expected to assume the role of Prime Minister. Despite issues of anti-racism recently emerging within sections of political discourse and youth-oriented climate justice movements in the Netherlands, the election results made participants more circumspect and pessimistic both about the country's prospects for advancing anti-racism, and on tackling climate change - given Geert Wilders having expressed his opposition to the government's climate ministry.

While environmental racism and exposure to environmental harms was described as being less stark than the example of the United States, racialised communities in the Netherlands are nonetheless likely to live in areas with more air pollution, in heat islands, and with less access to green space. Examples of local campaigns against industrial factories, such as the Tata Steel factory in Wijk aan Zee, and the Chemours chemical factory in Dordrecht, that had been harming local communities and the environment were mentioned. However, the lack of experience of racialised communities in campaigning against corporate and state injustice was also noted, hindering their ability to mobilise against such examples of environmental harm - something that was exacerbated by a more generalised mistrust of the Dutch government on the part of racialised communities.

In comparison to many other countries surveyed, participants described how certain climate movements in the country, including Extinction Rebellion, had begun to embrace issues such as anti-racism and Palestine solidarity - but how this positive development was tempered by divisions within the movement, which often played out along generational lines with progressive youth subject to backlash from older, middle-class professionals among their base.

A number of participants also relayed their frustrations with tokenistic approaches to diversity practised by white-led climate activists which failed to address more holistic questions about the culture of their movements and the ways in which they informally excluded racialised activists.

Finally, in light of the experiences with climate organising conveyed during the discussion and with the fragility of gains in formal political institutions being made clear by the PVV's victory, participants called for greater investment in building alternative, autonomous institutions rather than simply integrating into existing structures.

KEY

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A1 **A5**

"For undocumented migrants access to healthcare is extremely poor. And with the newly-elected government I'm fearing the worst because he [Geert Wilders] is very adamant about the status of undocumented migrants in the Netherlands."

A1

"Something that is very well known in the Netherlands is that people of colour and in particular people who have a Moroccan background have access to less good housing on the housing market, they face discrimination due to discriminatory stereotypes."

A2 **A3**

"You're seeing in Dordrecht [where] there's another factory with a big PFAS scandal,[48] with plastic pollution in the drinkwater.

We did research there in some of the areas which have a lot of people from a [migrant] background, a lot of racialised communities, and people are very scared of their health but they don't know where to file their complaints."

C3 **B1**

"An example in the neighbourhoods I did research [in] in the Hague and [inaudible], in those neighbourhoods there are [a lot of racialised communities living there] and they face a lot of health problems because of the bad conditions

of their housing and most of the houses [are] of course social housing.

So you see a lot of mould…of course they are also dealing with a lot of other things that makes their lives stressful, like getting enough money to get some food, etc.

[…] Those communities are not even aware of how to deal with climate change, it's not important because they're way too busy surviving."

A2 **A1**

"What I found talking to people in a neighbourhood in Haarlem with a lot of people of Moroccan and Somali descent is there's also a lot of mistrust towards the government, also because of the child benefits scandal which happened in the Netherlands where the tax authorities would label people who committed fraud and did not have the right to get childcare benefits - and one of the criteria that was used was where people had dual nationality, therefore a lot of racialised communities were unjustly labelled as [having committed fraud] and had to pay back their childcare benefits."

A2

"The mistrust is also from the government towards the people. If a white person applies for certain allowances they get it much more easily with fewer follow ups than if a people [of] colour or from a

Moroccan or Turkish background applies for it - so the mistrust starts from the government."

A3

"I think the examples like you see in the US where toxic waste was dumped in neighbourhoods where a lot of Black communities live, I don't think you have such a huge scandal here - at least I haven't heard mention of it.

But you do see that racialised communities live in neighbourhoods where there's more air pollution, less access to green spaces for example. These kinds of neighbour hoods are also within the urban heat islands that we see, so that people are at risk of experiencing heat stress at very high temperatures."

A5

"I would not say that Geert Wilders is a climate denier per se, but he wants to stop everything related to the climate, [and] get the Netherlands out of the EU. I think that definitely brings a lot of uncertainty to the table - ok, there have been a lot of efforts until now, but it's very uncertain what the future will look like for these climate policies, [in addition to] the efforts on poverty and justice."

B1 **D2**

"There has been research in the Netherlands where the research looked at

the difference in sustainable behaviour between Dutch citizens with and without a migrant background […] and they found that when you actually controlled for the level of education that people have had, their age, their income, whether they were religious or not, and whether they were male or female - all the differences fell away.

So unless we really talk about underlying structures that impact people in schools, on the labour market, in their [access] to housing, unless we have those meaningful conversations and we look into them - [then] you can have [a] programme on energy poverty and that's nice, but it will not benefit everybody."

C1

"I find this tokenistic diversity and inclusion actually - I'm actually a bit sick and tired of it, especially in the environmental movement.

We get so many emails asking us 'can you basically open your clan of Muslims and brown people and send us a couple of them.'

And I'm like ok but this is not how it works - maybe you should get to know your brown and Muslim neighbours first, and see how you can engage with them instead of trying to diversify your initiatives."

C1

"We noticed this in [organisation] a lot, we're overloaded by requests and people want to diversify their audience, they want to involve us in certain activist initiatives.

And then the question is 'why are you not joining these initiatives?.'

This was something which was in the media at one point, saying that as someone of colour, you have more to lose if you're involved in such acts of disobedience against the state for instance.

And I think this was picked up - not enough - but it was good to have this media attention to this aspect of activism."

C1

"There is never really [any] thinking within these activist communities [of] how can *we*, before reaching out to green Muslims or organisations, how can *we* actually change so that as a space as a collective *they* can feel they are part of this movement.

The work is directed to racialised communities and not to themselves, and it's like we should just feel comfortable there rather than them thinking that *'ok maybe there's something we need to change about the type of culture that we built around our activities.'*"

C2 **C3**

"Two weeks ago, during the climate march [in Amsterdam], which was supposedly the biggest climate march. [The] programming centred or had invited speakers that chose to speak on the subject of environmental racism and connecting climate justice to colonialism and mentioning Palestine, and there was a huge backlash [for] making the connection and people were like *'no, I came here for the climate, not to speak about politics'* and a lot of people were like *'oh you've lost my support for the climate movement.'*

For them the idea that there's a connection…[or the idea] that climate is about more than nature and animals just went beyond them."

[…] "So I think that actually showed…[how many people] perceive the very subject of climate justice, which to them I'd say [is] almost invisible, it doesn't exist."

C2 **C3**

"Activist, white organised collectives - the majority are not on the narrative of climate justice and the bigger perspective of how this affects racialised communities around the globe. But there are smaller collectives that are actually pushing for this narrative and I think [as of] recently are gaining more platform[s] and attention, however always with continuous backlash."

C3

"This year for the first time there was a collaboration between the anti-*Black Pete*[49] protest movement and Extinction Rebellion and Extinction Rebellion also used their collective to join these protests, to make them more impactful […] So that collaboration was a very positive signal for me."

C3 **D3**

"A lot of the younger generation are way more aware of how different [isses] intersect, are more honest in how they deal with different issues and so on.

Like Extinction Rebellion, they really changed a lot [in] the last 4 months, also when it comes to Palestine they really had some very good statements and joined several protests.

But the moment they started to do that, a lot of professors, lawyers, and other important people with a lot of credibility who also, by supporting Extinction Rebellion add[ed] to [its] credibility, they [distanced] themselves [in the] last months because of how they [have] include[d] other important topic in their activism."

D1

"I believe that for a very long time we have put a lot of effort [into] integrating in established systems - which is important and we should keep doing that - but I also believe that we should start to build alternative organisations, institutions, where we [make] the rules and where we manage the framework, instead of always entering the frameworks of others."

D2

"If everything that people hear is about CO2 emissions and numbers and 'we need to save the climate' they're not really gonna understand 'what's in it for me?' - I think that link needs to be made [better], especially when climate policies are presented and communicated to all people, but especially people who are vulnerable, and racialised communities."

Portugal

The discussion on Portugal emphasised the difficulty of getting issues of race/ism officially registered on the political agenda due to Portugal not collecting statistics on race/ethnicity.

Despite this it was clear from the discussion that racism is a factor shaping the lives of racialised communities in Portugal, particularly for Black and Roma communities who tend to live in the peripheral suburbs and experience housing segregation, poor quality housing exposed to weather conditions, and are increasingly facing the threat of displacement from gentrification through luxury housing development.

The class position of Black and/or Roma communities was noted throughout, and how this interacted with their status as racialised people to produce de facto discrimination and exclusion. According to the discussion, Black people can mostly be employed in the construction or service industry, and the state of public transport from the suburbs means that they are able to travel into urban centres like Lisbon, but are unable to stay around in evenings for leisure purposes, something that is conveyed as a form of social exclusion.

In light of this, climate change was described as not being on the agenda for Black communities in Portugal even despite their absence from the policy making sphere, as material needs and pressing issues such as police violence took greater precedence. Climate policy in Portugal was also depicted as lacking, with domestic policy shifts largely arising from pressure from the EU, rather than through national discussion or local pressure. Activists are likely to be dismissed as 'attention-seeking', or radicals 'without a strategy'.

From the discussion, it appeared that Portugal is suffering from a democratic deficit, within racialised communities absent from policymaking both in terms of their participation and the prioritisation of issues affecting them. Suggested paths forward including establishing quotas for the representation of racialised people in politics, as well as moving to monitor and collect data on issues of ethnicity/race, in order to begin recognising and addressing racial disparities in Portugal.

KEY

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A2

"We don't have Black people, we don't have diverse people doing politics in Portugal. So if we don't have these voices represented there, we cannot expect, unfortunately, that we are going to have our interests represented.

We would love to be a part of the discussion, to join this discussion that the system is having about every sphere of our society but this is not the case."

A2 **D4**

"It's not possible to address disparities that we don't recognise, so we need to study, we need to collect data, we need to

acknowledge the situation that we have inequalities in our society that come from [racial differences].

After recognising this need that we have I think that it's really important to have public policies that create access for Black people and other racialised communities. I'm talking about quotas, even in politics - we need to have representation there, because our interests are not being considered, are being overlooked. [...] We need power to balance these [unjust] relationships that we [have] inherited."

A3 **A2**

"We have public housing neighbourhoods where we have segregation of the population, [where] it's mainly Black, also we have some Roma people living there in some neighbourhoods […] We lack public transport, daycare facilities, green and leisure areas, our schools are badly furnished."

A3

"We don't have decent buildings [to live in]. We are still having people living in self-constructed neighbourhoods, many of them don't [reach] minimum [standards], many of them are created in buildings that were abandoned."

A3

"When we talk about neighbourhoods that are being neglected, you don't have [community relations] that you are trying to create in the spaces that you are living, because the spaces are not beautiful, you don't want to take care of [these spaces], and there's of course this impact on our health, mental and physical that's also not being considered."

A3 **A2**

"[Black people] can go to the [city] centre from the suburban areas to work, really early in the morning, but we don't have any possibility to return if we want to enjoy Lisbon, we don't have this possibility. Because the public transportation ends too early.

It starts early so that we can go to the centre and [get everything working], but at the end we can't return just to enjoy our life. Because the message is you are not welcome here, [unless] you are working, if you are cleaning."

A4

"We don't collect data on race or ethnicity in Portugal so it is impossible to [fully] understand how unsupportive [state] institutions are towards racialised communities, but of course they are unsupportive, and this is something that I as an anti racist activist, as a Black person, I can perceive this."

A4

"I would say the main picture of Portugal in terms of race [is] this idea that we don't have a problem, this denial of the problem. And if we are not recognising that we have a problem, it is impossible to tackle all the layers that are related to this race question.

So we are far behind [on] the discussion that we need to have."

A4 **A2**

"Talking about this reality of Black people and Roma communities[…] we don't have [social] protection from the state, but we have a lot of security forces[...] which send the message that we are dangerous communities, [that] we don't need to be protected but [others] need to get protection from us. This is the message that is always there."

B1

"So climate change, I don't think that this is even a question that we are having as Black people [in Portugal], because we need to tackle so many issues before that we just can't see how important climate change is for everyone."

D4

"We are trying, but it's really hard to do it, to build something that will allow us to collect data on race and ethnicity that is grounded in our neighbourhoods.

I am also involved in this process to see how we can make it work, because I think that we need to construct these narratives [on race/ism], we need to own these narratives that 'we are [however many] Black people living in this neighbour and our conditions are like this - so prove me wrong.'
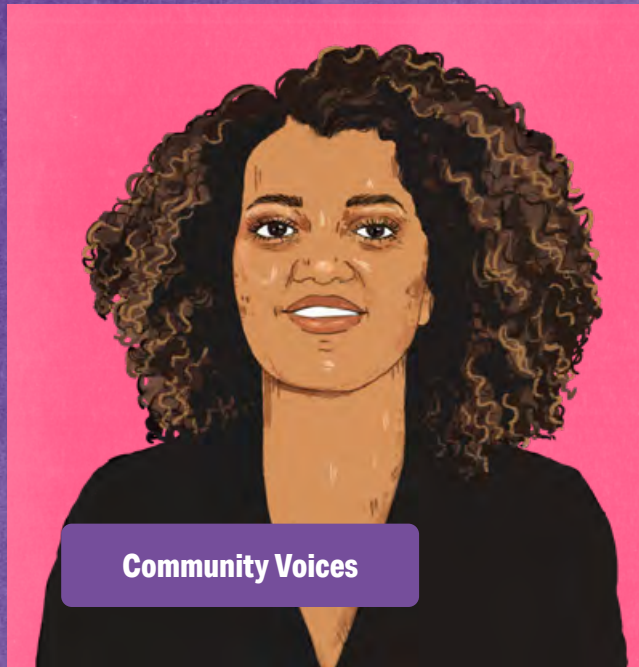
Community Voices

Ilva and the tensions between social justice and climate justice in Italy

By Kwanza Musi Dos Santos

ILVA is the largest steel company in Europe, providing steel for various enterprises in Italy and internationally, from construction to the automotive industry. ILVA contributes up to 3 billion euros to Italy's GDP and employs 15,000 people. The company's location in Taranto, a small city in the south of Italy, is significant because most industries in Italy are located in the North. In fact, the country has seen a constant internal migration of workers from the South to the North, while the presence of immigrants is also much higher in the Northern regions.

At present, specific data regarding immigrants and racialised communities living in the area and/or employed in the plant are very difficult to find, but it is important to underline the socio-economic precariousness affecting the South of Italy, which also plays an important role in this complex situation. Throughout the years, many immigrant workers joined the Unions, some of them also managed to reach higher positions of representation, while others created small cooperative enterprises in order to create a concrete alternative to environmental and social exploitation.

A brief history of Ilva

The story of Ilva begins in 1965 as a public company under the name Italsider, leading to an economic boom for the locals: during the '70s the average income of a person from Taranto was one of the highest in the whole country. In 1988 the company was bought by the Riva family who also gradually transferred most of the production from Genova to Taranto.

In 2012, after many years of investigations, disregarded requests for environmental adjustments, and the temporary closure of 3 blast furnaces, the Attorney of Taranto declared a seizure of the company with official accusations of environmental disaster, food poisoning and wilful failure to take precautions in the workplace.

However, due to the high number of employees who would find their incomes at risk, the government promptly intervened with two decrees known as "Salva-Ilva" ('save Ilva') and avoided immediate closure of operations. The Riva family was investigated and later condemned, while Ilva kept functioning under the temporary control of the Italian state.

In 2017 the government issued a call for public procurement that was finally won by Arcelor-Mittal, an Indian-British-owned company situated in Luxembourg.

The contract between the government and Arcelor-Mittal

In 2018 the Italian government signed a contract with Arcelor-Mittal establishing that the latter would pay rent on the plant until the final acquisition, while creating a new company called Acciaierie d'Italia, with Arcelor-Mittal retaining 68% of total profits. The company also agreed to maintain the employment situation and to invest over 1 billion euros into the 'greening' of ILVA.

However, in 2019 Arcelor-Mittal declared their intention to terminate the agreement in a letter sent to the Italian commissioners,

where they spoke of a general hostile attitude on the side of the Italian authorities and institutions, which through various initiatives, had supposedly "compromised trust in the industrial project, fueling the general climate of mistrust and hostility of workers and other stakeholders as well as hinder[ing] the plant's activity and distract[ing] key resources from the realization of the project". In particular, the government had initially promised a criminal immunity for the current managers of Arcelor-Mittal on matters that concerned the previous administration, but many changes among the government members affected the reliability of this promise, raising uncertainties about whether it could be honoured. Another crucial factor was the expected re-opening of the seized blast furnace 2 within the factory, which in the final instance was never authorised by the Procurement, resulting in an additional loss on the profits for the company.

Consequently, activists, unions and economists have called for a solution that could contain the damage for the environment, the workers, and the health of people living in Taranto. At the moment, the negotiations to establish terms and conditions of this termination are still ongoing, while the government is already looking at other potential investors.

Legal challenges against the plant

As a result of the government decrees that kept the plant functioning, but didn't implement any significant measure to protect public health, nor the environment, in 2013 doctor Daniela Spera brought together 52 Italian citizens based in Taranto and presented an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights. In particular, they accused the Italian state of violating the articles 2 (Right to life), 8 (Right to respect for private and family life) and 13 (Right to an effective remedy) of the European Convention on Human Rights. Two years later a larger group of 133 citizens presented a similar appeal to the same Court, with the Court deciding to combine them into one appeal. Finally, in 2019 the Court confirmed the violation of all three articles and, in the final sentence, demanded the Italian state to pay 5000 euros to each citizen and to immediately provide clear information on the status of public health and environmental protection measures related to the plant's ongoing activities.

Moreover, a movie by Michele Riondino tells the story of Palazzina Laf (acronym of Laminatoio a freddo, a room within the factory), the place where in 1997 employees, including Riondino's father, who protested against a new policy of contract level downgrading, were being held in isolation. In November 1998 the responsible managers were finally condemned.

From the perspective of local citizens and the ECHR ruling, it seems that the Italian Government took its decisions on ILVA in the name of relevant risks of unemployment, economic development, and territorial competitiveness. The Italian Government adopted several practices relating to governance to make these risks more salient, while overshadowing the environmental and health risks that would otherwise have highlighted the unsustainability of the business activities at the plant.

Meanwhile, in 2020 the mayor of Taranto once again ordered the closure of the steel plant to protect public health, but the tribunal of Taranto postponed the decision, while the COVID pandemic restrictions hindered the implementation of additional protecting measures. This resulted in extending the exposure of the local population to toxic substances released into the atmosphere, according to the appealing citizens.

Balancing social costs

Closing ILVA today would certainly incur social costs, including an increase in the amount of imported steel, up to 7% decrease on the total income of southern Italy, and up to 15,000 worker redundancies. However, the

procurement of Taranto recently estimated that more than 11,550 people in the area around the plant have died due to emissions, in particular from cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory causes, while other researches show an alarming trend of significant lower intellectual performance of kids living in the area close to the steel plant.

Peacelink, an association fighting for social justice in Taranto, in a recent letter to the minister of economic development called for a plan B to be quickly developed and implemented by the government, looking towards the permanent cessation of the steel plant.

According to Legambiente, an Italian environmental association, one solution could be to calculate in advance the maximum amount of steel that could be produced within the limit of major environmental damages, while finding other allocations for the remaining workers that would necessarily be transferred.

The story of Ilva is an example of the tensions and contradictions present within attempts at securing environmental justice in Europe. Balancing the social cost faced by the livelihoods of workers against that of the truncated lives of locals makes for a morbid arithmetic, and underscores the necessity of grappling with the social dimensions of a transition away from pollution-laden industries towards a new paradigm.

Author Biography

Kwanza Musi Dos Santos, Italian and afrobrazilian raised in Rome, is an expert of Diversity Management, Equity and inclusion with a special focus on antiracism, gender equality, environmental justice and intersectionality. Currently she is working as consultant and trainer for both enterprises and ngos.

She is also co-founder and activist of "QuestaèRoma", an Association led by young italians of colour to fight any form of discrimination through culture and art. Recently, she wrote the chapter dedicated to "Black Rome" featured in the anthology "Mapping Black Europe".

Spain
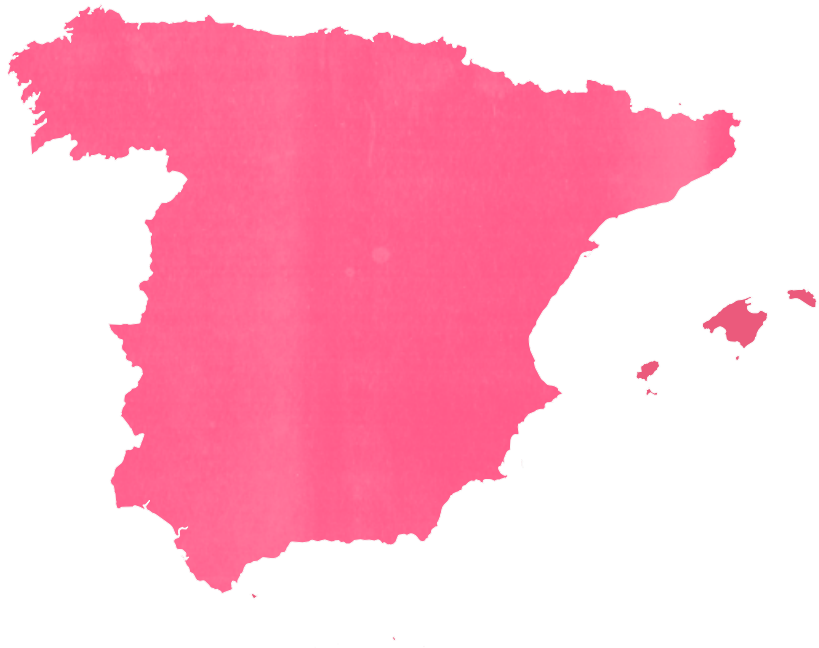
The discussion for Spain focused largely on the situation of migrants without status and asylum seekers, who face de facto and de jure discrimination and barriers in Spain, including in accessing healthcare and social rights in addition to language barriers.

The capital city Madrid is surrounded by towns where racialised communities were reported as being concentrated. Those towns tended to also be where industrial zones are concentrated, with little green space and higher pollution and noise pollution, which make summers particularly difficult. Housing in those towns was noted as often being built between the 1950s-'70s, and poorly insulated.

Heatwaves in summer were pointed out as being particularly hazardous for those living in densely-populated urban areas which often host heavy industries or major highways, with pollution exacerbated by heat. Migrants and asylum seekers living in immigration reception areas are especially vulnerable to environmental harms, as well as mental health issues and physical illness arising in part from the social exclusion of the areas,

There were positive developments noted in terms of climate policy, including transition plans put in place for the closure of its coal mines in recent years, and the role played by the EU's climate policy. Yet it was pointed out that corporate power - as well as the business and finance sector - has undue influence on and are restraining climate action, while many climate measures are too piecemeal and failed to tackle structural determinants of the climate crisis. With regards to issues of race/ism in Spain, however, participants were less positive: race only appeared to them to crop up in the public debate as scandal, when migrants or racialised could be associated with criminality, and such.

In order to address the reality that racialised communities and migrants were locked out of the political system in Spain, participants spoke of the need to cultivate migrant leadership on climate issues alongside a more general drive for diversifying political representation.

To facilitate this would include expanding the sphere of rights for migrants to enable their political participation, and infusing principles of internationalism, social justice and human rights into climate action to deepen climate justice.

KEY

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A1

"[Within] the concept of 'migrant' [we should] make three [distinctions]: migrants who [are] in irregular administrative situations, migrants with a work permit, with residency permit, and migrants with Spanish citizenship.

And these three kinds of migrants [experience differences] in how the healthcare law is taking care of them."

11 years ago, the Mariano Rajoy government took the responsibility to limit the universal healthcare for migrant people with a law in Spain."

A2

"When we're talking about migrants in Spain there's a huge barrier when it comes to accessing things like healthcare, access to social rights.

It's the language barrier[…]from official bodies, I think the only body that has interpreters is the police, not health services or anything else and I think that is very telling."

A2

"I think in some cases indirect measures such as complex bureaucratic requirements or [inaudible] restrictions can disproportionately affect these communities, limiting their access to social and state services."

A3

"In many societies racialised communities [are exposed to a high proportion] of environmental harms.

So in Spain as in many other places, these communities tend to be more vulnerable to certain environmental impacts, experiencing with greater intensity the negative effects of pollution, environmental degradation, lack of access to green and healthy spaces.

And high pollution is a clear example, and tends to be more severe in densely-populated urban areas where these communities are often concentrated, and these locations are often more susceptible to the presence of heavy industries or major highways, contributing to greater exposure to toxic particles and harmful emissions.

For example I have seen this in the city of Alicante […] so it's a really clear example."

A3

"When it comes to housing there's a huge issue there.

For example in the suburbs of Madrid - Madrid is surrounded by several big towns which are the most industrial in the region - and they are the regions in which more racialised or migrant communities live.

In those areas housing is [of low quality], there are houses that were built more or less between the '50s and the '70s, which means they are poorly insulated, they are [in very bad condition]."

[…] "When it comes to ventilation in the summer it becomes really really challenging, and also there's pollution, noise pollution…[and] for many people, air conditioning is not an option.

It's […] a really big issue, especially when every summer we are reaching new peak high temperatures."

A3

"People who live in the [migrant reception areas], they can contract many [issues from] environmental harms.

It can be mental health, because when you are living in the [reception areas] they are disconnected.

The first social exclusion [for migrants] is letting them live in a [reception areas], where they can find food contamination, [without] clean water […] they can [develop] cardiovascular and respiratory diseases."

"Normally the migrant situation is [in] the public debate, but only in [a particular way].

When they say 'migrants take [Spanish citizens' jobs]' it's public debate. Also, it's public debate when they say 'migrant people [are] collaps[ing] the health/medical centres" or "migrants are criminals" - yes it's the public debate.

But if migrant people that are in the [reception areas face] social exclusion, then they don't care about them."

A4

"I would say that in Spain we're still quite far from acknowledging the issues faced by racialised and migrant communities. And I think that in the past when it comes to climate change measures these things haven't been acknowledged.

[…] As far as I've read when it comes to the measures that are gonna be implemented with the new funds from the European Commission that are going to be injected into Spain, I haven't seen any dimension covering these issues [facing racialised populations]."

A5

"The previous government [in Valencia] was quite progressive so they did quite a lot on [climate].

But when we [change] governments, some advances get stopped and we go back, and that's a big issue that we have.

In Spain climate change is very [much] associated with the left, politically speaking. So whenever the right come into power they usually try to stop the advances in this field."

B1   **B2**

"I think the climate measures implemented, on the one hand have been quite broad, and secondly very embedded within the neoliberal capitalist system - embedding money into the economy for digitalisation, energy transition, building digital toolkit, giving subsidies for people to buy electric cars which, you know, so many racialised people and migrant communities can't [even] afford regular cars."

B2

"I am part of *Fridays for Future* and with the perspective of social movements [we] take intersectionality into account.

When we meet at some institutional event, we discuss these issues but honestly for the political sector, I don't see, in my point of view, it as a priority.

[...] "For Fridays For Future, we work everyday to talk with the political sector, and sometimes we have the big opportunities to talk with them.

But I don't know, I think, I consider myself a justice activist, and it's really hard for the young people to work with them because it's like [older people] that work in politics have [a particular] perspective, you know?"

B2

"In my experience, migrants aren't that inclined to participate in democratic processes in Spain. I think that in general many don't feel included, others don't have [status] and they're not maybe allowed to, and others simply don't believe in the system.

So I think that there's a lack of motivation there, caused by their own experiences and I think partly because of that, [and] the past that we have in Spain there [is] very little diversity in politicians and policymakers in Spain and only now we're starting to see one or two politicians from people of colour backgrounds that are putting diversity on the table when it comes to parliamentary discussions, but the progress is very slow and achieved as a slow pace."

D1

"A lot of political parties have migrant or racialised [people represented] only to show diversity, but they don't have any kind of voice inside [the party]."

D1

"We need to empower migrant leaders, because leadership is one [of the] things we can relate to climate justice.

We empower migrant leaders, we empower migrant communities.

Migrant communities need resources, but they also need training, education.

[then] you can [tell] the European Commission and European Union [that] it's very important to support the migrant communities and organisations."

D1   **D2**

"We need to increase diversity in political representation, and we need people who raise the voice of migrant people and racialised communities at a political level. And we also need to reform the current migration laws in Spain to ease access to housing, to healthcare, to education for migrants so that they are more integrated in society and then can actively participate in political and public life."

D2

"While Spain has implemented to address the climate crisis, not all of these measures have been specifically designed to address the particular vulnerabilities that [racialised] communities face in relation to environmental impacts, with pollution and everything.

For example, for climate policies to be more effective and equitable for these communities a more comprehensive strategy that considers social and environmental disparities is required.

D2   **D3**

"I always see [climate change] from the international and the community perspective, so I see [both positives and negatives in Spain's approach to climate change]. For example, I relate the energy crisis in Europe caused by the war between Russia and Ukraine, so [...] the climate change [incorporates] all factors, the economy, people and everything, so all the factors are related to the climate crisis, and I think it's a job that we have to do together [alongside] the political sector, policymakers and organisations."

D4   **D2**

"Right now, I think [with the current situation] civil society is the better way [than the political system] to fight the climate change as well [as] linking climate change and justice for migrants and racialised communities."

UK

The UK roundtable discussed the ways racialised communities and organisers have been asserting themselves in the field of climate justice in recent years, as a corrective to a climate movement which had until recently been hegemonically white and centred on more parochial environmental issues.

This hegemonic whiteness was noted as being built into and perpetuated by NGOs and civil society organisations that populate the climate movement, with recent movements like Black Lives Matter and youth-led climate strikes often being a catalyst in challenging this in the sector compelling them to embrace a more expansive, anti-racist and internationalist vision.

This had come about through either forcing change within those organisations themselves, or through forums of self-organisation, where for example racialised climate activists would organise among themselves to develop a common agenda - a tactic that had wider political resonance and applicability.

In comparison, dissatisfaction was registered with regards to governmental initiatives around climate action. Recent rowbacks on national climate policy stand at odds with the British government's self-promotion of its climate credentials, with existing policies around pollution suffering from a lack of clear enforcement mechanisms. This accountability gap being noted with regards to the death of Ella Kissi-Debrah, triggered by air pollution; as of time of writing, the Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill (dubbed 'Ella's law), introduced by Green Party representatives, is being discussed in Parliament which would place requirements on the national and local governments to monitor and enforce air quality in line with standards of the World Health Organisation.

A 'low hanging fruit' approach to community engagement initiatives in Scotland, meanwhile, often means that racialised communities were scarcely represented in such initiatives, or drowned out and problematised if they were.

It was pointed out that districts with high racialised and working-class populations are offered less robust public consultation on matters that could negatively impact their local environments - but how these very communities are simultaneously framed as 'problem populations' in terms of inaction on climate. Interrogating the focus on access to green spaces and bureaucratic, functionalist approaches towards mapping green space in urban zones, participants described how for racialised communities, particularly migrants and Muslims, green spaces were not necessarily safe to access - often becoming the site of racist attacks.

The issue of gentrification, and the displacement of racialised communities from places of historical settlements, was raised, as were examples from London where there is a stark disparity between Black and white people in temporary accommodation arrangements, underscoring the theme of housing precarity.

Finally, the international dimensions of climate justice were also discussed, as captured in the discomfort noted around the framing of 'Green New Deals' and its Eurocentric connotation.

It was also mentioned how the issues of decarbonisation and carbon offsetting took up disproportionate space on the political agenda for climate action, without taking into consideration how this offsetting is often offloaded onto the Global South.

KEY

Use the key on pages 25-27 to help navigate sub themes throughout this section.

A2

We look at any urbanised area: who has access to green spaces?

It's very limited.

And yet, speaking to migrant communities there is this disconnect to land when they come here [to Britain], and in the environmental justice sector that's really important because we talk about connection to land, but people have come from places where they have that connection to land, access to land, access to growing spaces regardless of their social class.

And yet they come to the UK and the terms that have been used is that they're put into little boxes, and they don't have access to land to grow their own food.

So that further puts people into food poverty."

A2 **B1**

"I think that when we talk about policymakers and the decisions that are made in these very bureaucratic systems.

Civil society [organisations] that exist and lobby on behalf of society and communities that they are said to represent, the people at the very top of those conversations are white, middle class, and don't understand the lived experiences of the communities they're representing or working [on behalf of].

So the priorities that they set are almost always exclusionary.

[…] Like Ella's law - Ella Kissi-Debrah's death and how, essentially, the levels of pollution that is illegal under WHO, under the Gothenburg protocol, still continues to happen.

So we operate specifically in boroughs where communities are [largely] working class, majority Black communities, the level of air pollution is at illegal levels but nobody's held anybody accountable because we don't have the metrics to be able to hold people accountable.

But the reality is that those people on the ground are actually fighting for survival, so

it's a constant battle; a community that's neglected in every single way through every system can barely fight for clean air, because there are other systemic issues that they're working towards."

A2 **A3**

"[The city of Bristol] has been above the legal limits of [air] pollution for 26 years, and it's meant to be causing 5 premature deaths every week.

One of our most affected is Lawrence Hill which is a very multicultural area, and they've got one of the worst levels of air pollution in Bristol.

There's also a level of hypocrisy around how this is addressed.

[…] Even within the solutions to this problem, there's still a centering of white communities and what they need.

For example, in Barton Hill which is another quite multicultural area there's been almost a bit of an experiment by the council in terms of how they can pedestrianise the area, divert traffic etc, but there wasn't community engagement in that.

So speaking to the residents of Barton Hill they're really upset and it ties into a history of lack of consultation in that area."

A2 **A3** **A4**

"We can talk about flood risk areas, we can talk about housing and mould, hypothermia and energy efficiency, all these areas demonstrate and we can get the research to show us how people from migrant communities and people from different marginalised, racialised communities are impacted.

But I just wanted to pick up on what [participant] was saying about the hypocrisy.

Because there was a waste incinerator that was going to be [placed] outside of Cambridge, and there was community consultation.

And that community consultation showed that the community was in uproar about it. They didn't want it - [it] got moved.

It got moved to an area in East London, no consultation, very racialised community, who got no say in where this incinerator was going and how it would have an impact on them.

And to make it worse, these are the communities that get labelled as 'not eco conscious', 'the ones that are further harming the environment', 'they're the ones that produce waste' […] 'they are part of the problem.'

And we see this across many cities, that where there aren't services, these are the communities that then get labelled as problem communities.'

A2

"A lot of the times the feedback that I get while sitting on these stakeholder feedback groups is that they go for the low-hanging fruit, the easiest targets, the target where they can make a difference. They [Scottish government initiatives] don't want to do the outreach work because that just opens up a can of worms - they have to invest more, they have to put in more resources, and they just don't have the finances to do that."

A2 **A3**

"Similar to the consultation issues [mentioned by another participant] we have the same in Hackney,[50] especially where I know the local politics really well, and in other areas across East London where there's a big rush towards Low Traffic Neighbourhoods [51]- as a general thing I'm for reducing traffic and air pollution - but then again, the lack of consultation.

Even the London Mayor's own report has signified that it's these areas with Black and brown communities and people of colour that are being impacted most by increased air pollution, and then these Low Traffic

Neighbourhoods policies that are coming in are often redirecting traffic to the poorer areas[...]and those poorer areas are more likely to be populated by people of colour."

A2 **D1**

"If you have people that engage with policy and are from racialised communities, they're very quickly invisibilised - their voices are lost, they'll be the one [racialised person] out of like a hundred and that voice disappears. And they get pigeonholed, or they get labelled as being the troublemakers because they're raising an issue that others don't want to hear.

The second thing is that, if you have politicians [from a racialised background], they don't get the link between environmental justice and racial justice."

C1 **D1**

"I remember during COVID specifically, having conversations with local communities around accessing green spaces, specifically in the North [of England], where we do have a lot of green space luckily.

And actually a lot of those green spaces are seen as unsafe to migrant communities, it's where a lot of [racist] incidents happen.

It's interesting having a conversation of how these parks and open spaces that

often wider civil society[organisations] talk about as these free and open spaces are actually very worrisome to a lot of migrant communities."

A3 **C2**

"On maybe a positive note, one of the things we've been involved in is the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) and an inquiry set up into racism and the environmental emergency, which was set by the AAPG and the Green New Deal [Group], [consisting of] predominantly Labour MPs, a few [Conservatives] and [Green Party MP] Caroline Lucas as well.

Within this inquiry which is being run by the Runnymede Trust it's looking in detail around links between institutional racism both within the UK and also across the world and the Global South, and how that links to what they term as 'the environmental emergency', but essentially the climate crisis.

I think that's a really positive piece of work and that inquiry is still ongoing now.

[...] Similarly, with the APPG on Reparations, which is going from strength to strength and held their first conference a couple of months ago in which the environmental impact in what's termed climate reparations was clearly on

the table and was being discussed by policymakers and activists and from [Members of Parliament] there as well.

So I do think that while enough has not been done in the past, I do take a bit of hope from [these] APPGs that are looking in some way to address the links between race and the climate crisis."

C1

"[According to research] something like 7% [of staff] out of 90-something [climate] organisations were people of colour.

And a large percentage of those people aren't full-time staff- so they're temporary, consultant staff.

So there's a consistent conversation of why people of colour don't engage and why people of colour aren't a part of the climate space, climate conversations.

And I think honestly a lot of it is to do with systemic structures of racism in this spaces, they're very elitist, very difficult to navigate.

[...] It's a space where it's really difficult to navigate by yourself because it does feel very lonely for people of colour, my own personal experience [attesting to it].

[...] As people of colour [in the climate movement] we always get pigeonholed into very specific conversations.

So I remember being pigeonholed into conversations about migration when it came to climate policy, because it's something we had to consistently defend and speak for, as people of colour, as migrants.

And there is a complete ignorance within the climate space of its own flaws, its own failures. There's this inability to recognise how actually a lot of these big climate organisation continue to perpetuate the problems that they're trying to fix, often coming up with policies that are problematic.

It's very exhausting being a person of colour in the climate space in general, I think it's even more exhausting trying to take a set of belief into these policy conversations."

A4 **B3**

"[In] terms of the experience of being within climate movements, I do think it is a wellbeing issue.

It is people of colour being fearful to engage [at] that grassroots activist level climate action, whether that be because of the [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts

Act 2022[52]] that's just passed [...] and that's on a practical level, as well as the more cultural level in terms of the culture of whiteness that exists in activism.

There's quite a hierarchical nature, I think, in climate activism in terms of this idea that people need to be arrested to be a true activist. But that comes with different associations for people of different backgrounds.

And then the same things feed into climate action on an [institutional] level, so what we're talking about in terms of the alienation, but also in terms of the types of conversations that crop up - language and the jargon that's used, how that feeds into alienation.

[Also] the topics and solutions that come up - say, solutions around [carbon] offsetting being quite prevalent, but the discussions around what areas are actually hosting this offsetting - there's no discussion around villages in Zimbabwe being burned down just so that trees can be planted for business in the UK."

C1

"Similar to [participant's] point around our transitions, a lot of Green New Deals, especially when they're just focused on Global North countries or across the EU, they're not taking into regard that global

cost. So you speak about 'transitions' or 'just transitions', but a lot of our transitions are just moving into green colonialism, where us richer Global North countries benefit from exploiting poorer Global South countries' resources under the pretext of environmental benefit - like mining materials, cobalt and lithium to build up [solar] panels or power our electric cars. One of the things that's really important within any Green New Deal or a Global Green New Deal that's actually just is changing from the systems that we have.

And the last 500 years of capitalist and colonialist logic of exploitation of people and limitless extraction of resources that fuelled slavery, colonialism and created that unequal system with roots in racialised and gendered injustices, and as we move into a new system [to] try and solve climate crisis, and we're trying to get these [Green New Deals] forward, the underlying message is we can't move from one system where we've just exploited people and extracted everything we can from areas across the Global South to then moving into more extraction of new resources to fuel the Global North's transition. For us in the way we try and approach a Green New Deal is that it has to be a Green New Deal that benefits everyone, and even then having a bit of an introspective look around the terminology that we use,

because actually we found [from] the partners that we work with and the communities, 'Global Green New Deal' or anything around a 'Green New Deal' just sounds like another Eurocentric, [Global] North term that we use [to impose] things on people."

C1 **B3**

"I think there's huge difficulties in actually influencing policy [by] people of colour, whether it's climate policy or otherwise.

I do think there has been some improvements in that field, not significant but I do think there has been some, and I guess that's largely down to the work of so many different groups, Black-led and people of colour-led organisations that have had to fight to get their voices heard."

B3

"I think the [Black Lives Matter] movement was a huge impetus to the environmental justice sector, there just seems to be a bit more of a connection [being made] with race and climate justice.

That's been a really positive thing."

C3

"I think young people, young climate strikers have radically changed the conversations. We've seen that through the [Black Lives Matter] campaigns and

the protests, the Gaza [school] strikes and how young people are walking out of school.

Youth activism has really changed a lot of the conversation within a lot of civil society [organisations], a lot of NGOs, the work that they do, and I think has forced them to become slightly more radical than they were.

[...] Also I think the exciting thing is [that] a lot of young people of colour have started creating alternative spaces, which I've never seen before [and] which is very very powerful. And also [they're] creating spaces [to hold] organisations accountable. [...] And I think that's allowing people of colour to now feel more comfortable and more [inaudible] within those spaces."

D1 **D2**

"Something that I've noticed crop up as a reaction to [alienation from climate spaces][...] is giving people the option [during a wider campaigning meeting] to call at any point a group to be formed of a certain demographic - so that might be trans person, working class people, or people of colour - for a meeting to be formed after that large meeting so that there is a safe space to debrief, regulate emotionally.

So that's something I've noticed, more on a grassroots level that I think [...] could actually have quite a big impact."

D3

"Ensuring that policymaking in the UK and at the global level is bringing forward those voices [who have] and are still being most affected, [including] marginalised communities and communities across the Global South who have been affected now for a long time.

And understanding that the climate crisis is not something that *could* happen to us, [but] is something that has been happening to us for a very long time to communities across the Global South [who] have had done the least to cause it.

So actually embedding [those] voices and embedding those experiences and those struggles within any Global North policymaking is key to actually addressing the climate crisis.
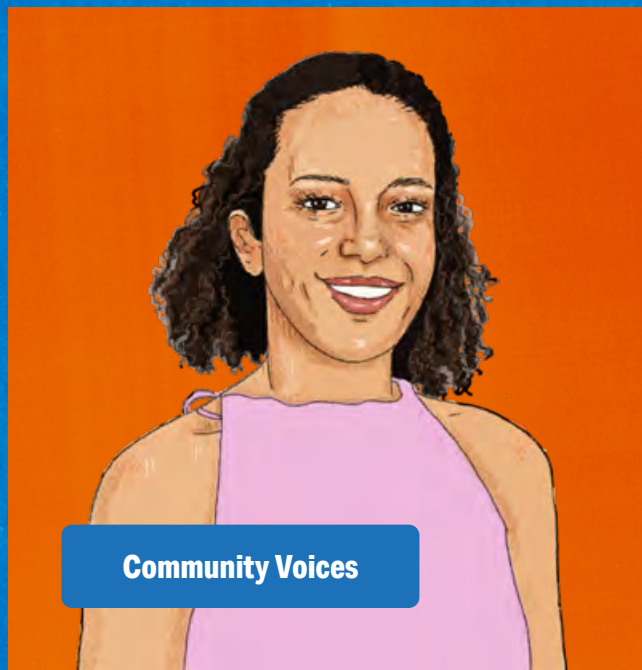
Community Voices

Racism, climate catastrophe, and the overlooked intersection in Spain

By Viviane Ogou

In Spain there is not yet a widespread consciousness around the interplay of power structures, privilege, and discrimination in exacerbating the impact of climate change on racialised communities. Rather, racism and the climate catastrophe are accepted at face value as being disconnected, discrete phenomena. This may be linked to the Spain's lack of recognition of its colonial history and its disastrous consequences. The discussion still focuses on the supposed 'civilising' effect of coloniality.

Intersectionality, as defined by Humphrey (2021), is a lens through which we can examine how characteristics like race, age, gender, and geography intersect and interact with power structures, creating and reinforcing power, privilege, disadvantage, and discrimination. It offers an antidote to narrow, parochial ideas within the mainstream climate debate which sever environmental issues from social issues such as racism.

Despite climate change disproportionately affecting people of colour (POC) compared to white populations, most prominent environmentalists in the Global North are white. This disparity is rooted in a history of economic inequality, including slavery, discrimination, and unequal civil rights. The wealth divide resulting from this history has compounded over the years, exacerbating the impacts of climate change. Studies in the United States reveal that through the existence of urban heat islands, poor, segregated neighbourhoods can be 15 to 20 degrees Fahrenheit hotter in summer than wealthier areas,[53] with racialised communities suffering more due to limited resources and infrastructure.

The Spanish context

Turning our attention to Spain, a country which professes to be highly concerned about climate change, specific studies on the intersection of POC communities or migrants and their relation to climate change are lacking. This gap may be attributed in part to the absence of data compilation based on race or ethnicity in Spain.

Spain's climate movements mainly revolve around ecological transition, recycling, raising awareness about the climate catastrophe, and engaging in direct actions. Despite linking climate change to capitalism, they often overlook colonialism and its impact on the root causes of the movement. There is a noticeable lack of effort to include racialised communities, despite an awareness of their exclusion and the role of resource exploitation in contributing to their mobilisations. The marginalisation and precarisation faced by these communities also hinder their participation in society, often directing their focus towards organisations with a cultural agenda rather than self-organisation for climate action or other political issues. Despite this, there are POC individuals within the climate movement and POC climate activists in Spain.

On the other hand, anti-racist activism in Spain primarily concentrates on migrant rights and equal access to opportunities. Those marginalised communities which also

self-organise include those working in the agricultural sector who live in shelters due to housing racism or irregular administrative situations. The demand for a process of regularisation through a Popular Legislative Initiative has been among their key milestones, collecting 500,000 signatures, which is being debated in the Congress of the Deputies in Spain.

They have also helped mobilise two massive demonstrations: after the murder of George Floyd in 2020, and the massacre of Melilla in June 2022. Unfortunately, not even institutional support, in the form of Rita Bosaho - with an activist background herself - becoming Director-General for Ethnoracial Diversity, and maintaining several meetings with them, could usher in major transformations to their situation.

The international dimensions of the climate crisis

Historically, environmental injustice has been intertwined with racial injustice. Centuries of exploitation by outsiders and colonists have resulted in irreparable harm to foreign lands and indigenous peoples. For instance, the World Bank pointed that Latin America is experiencing an unprecedented wave of migrations linked to climate disasters, and that in the next thirty years, the region could register 17 million climate refugees.[54]

The consequences in affected countries range from hazards associated with drilling, mining, dam construction, deforestation, pollution from factories, large-scale agriculture, and other destructive activities. Unfortunately, defending their lands can be dangerous, and these situations are often underrepresented in the media. A primary example is the Congo, where the which has witnessed a devastating fight among foreign-backed militias since 1996, claiming more than 6 million lives. This struggle revolves around critical raw materials used in technologies primarily utilised in the Global North, while the Global South often relies on second-hand or low-quality technologies.

Tellingly, within the Spanish Climate Movement, there is no specific focus on Africa, even though environmental degradation and climate-related conflicts contribute to international migration to Spain. The anti-racist and decolonial movements, however, acknowledge the exploitation of resources, with the anti-colonial Latin American movements being the ones that mostly explicitly advance discussions about the land, indigenous communities and the direct exploitation of resources.

A crucial need exists to raise awareness of intersectionality and how challenges related to climate change will drive migration as a primary adaptation mechanism, eventually affecting communities in the Global North. Addressing this requires a holistic approach, with educational communities, media, and

research playing key roles. Informing the public about the impact of climate change in the Global South and identifying its differentiated impact on low-income communities, while also linking it to racialisation, is essential. This effort should be supported by national education laws promoting decolonisation and incorporating a global history approach from a decolonial perspective.

On a broader scale, the European Union should initiate discussions on climate refugees. The EU's New Pact on Migration and Asylum must recognise the growing dynamic of climate-related migration, and all actors involved in migration management should be trained to identify and acknowledge it, ensuring the right to asylum-seeking for those affected.

Author Biography

Viviane Ogou is the founder and President of La Puerta de Africa, an organization that seeks to promote youth empowerment, research and outreach around the African continent. Researcher and award-winning emergent civil society leader, she holds a degree in International Relations and a Master's degree in International Security from the IBEI.

Summation

While necessarily offering partial accounts, and speaking to participants' own experiences and perceptions, the roundtables provided an eye-opening insight into the condition of racialised people in Europe, both vis-a-vis climate justice and more broadly.

There were clear differences between national contexts, but based on the discussions, no country gives much reason for celebration. Racism is deeply rooted in Europe and the field of climate action - whether at the governmental level, or at the level of grassroots activism - is far from insulated from this social malaise. Few participants reported feeling positive about climate action and policies being undertaken by their governments, and none believed that climate policies were attentive to the specific issues affecting racialised communities.

Even those instances where more robust action was noted, such as in the Netherlands and Germany, these cases were overlaid with anxieties about the sustainability of such measures, especially in the face of a growing far-right, climate backlash, and government impotence in the face of mounting challenges.

Certain themes were shared or repeated between national examples which warranted further attention.

Housing and environmental harms

For the purposes of climate justice, the issue of housing/settlement of racialised and/or migrant populations is perhaps most salient; as Schutter et al. noted in their literature review on Environmental inequality in Europe, *'Housing quality is shown to be a critical factor in relation to the potential impact of environmental exposure; people with poor housing quality and/or living in poor neighbourhoods show to be most susceptible to air and noise pollution'.*[55]

In nearly every country, participants pointed to the spatial concentration and/or segregation of racialised communities into areas disproportionately exposed to environmental harms and hazards, from heat islands to industrial zones and their related pollutants, waste incinerators and/or lack of green space, and often living in substandard housing conditions that offered little protection from these hazards.

While it is beyond the scope of this research project to undertake a precise geographical exercise mapping out the proximity of racialised communities to pollutants and causes - something complicated greatly by the very uneven recognition and surveying of ethnic groups by European governments themselves – the **political** factors that maintain these conditions of harm for racialised people are of particular interest to us.

These areas with large racialised populations were usually concentrated either within urban zones or on city outskirts, and the settlement of racialised populations there was often inextricably bound up with the class position of those populations - often impoverished labouring classes living near places of manual or service-sector employment - which went hand-in-hand with limited social outcomes in other spheres of life, including access to healthcare, education, and substandard housing.

Also relevant is the pattern of migrant settlement which has led to the organic growth of migrant/migrant-descended communities in certain areas, which bespeaks the distinct post-war histories of those countries: whether that be the Parisian *banlieues* or the spaces of urban settlement in sections of inner-city London and metropolitan England.

As indicated in the roundtables, these largely working-class communities were often 'overlooked' by the local government when it came to the enforcement of housing and environmental policy, as the roundtables for France and Germany illustrated.

They were also de-prioritised when compared to more affluent white constituencies, while avenues for accountability were limited; these were illustrated most starkly by the example of Traveller reception areas in places like France, the housing of Roma and Sinti communities in almost-condemned buildings near toxic land in Germany, or the immigration reception areas in Spain - where the physical separation of those communities physically demarcates their social exclusion.

The question of housing is thus integral to the question of climate justice in Europe, as a frontline in daily exposure and battle against climate crisis-induced environmental harms, while also being bound up in much larger social questions that cannot be neatly siloed off.

Racism, the European far-right, and climate action

These communities also often found themselves excluded from the political process either by active disenfranchisement - as in the case of migrant and migrant-descended communities in Austria subject to its onerous citizenship process - by the penalties imposed by their social precarity, or by the social force of racism itself turning politics into a minefield for racialised communities.

This was reinforced by the fact that a number of countries in discussion had seen recent electoral breakthroughs of far-right parties or growing momentum among them, which had a discernible impact on the political climate and on prospects for climate justice and anti-racism.

The threat of the European far-right for racialised communities - in particular, migrants and Muslims - goes without saying: Islamophobia and anti-immigration animus cohere the political projects of Italy's far-right coalition government under Giorgia Meloni, Geert Wilders' PVV in the Netherlands, which won the largest number of seats in the 2023 national elections, Portugal's *Chega*, which quadrupled its seats in the 2024 snap elections, Germany's AfD, which has consistently commanded a second place in public

polling since mid-2023, and so on.

There is a clear climate-sceptic bent to many of these groups, including the likes of the AfD, described as '*among the most climate-sceptical of European populist parties*'[56], while the European Union's centre to far-right have also galvanised a backlash against policies such as the EU's flagship Green Deal and regulatory measures associated with it.[57]

But participants in our Austria discussion, for example, related examples of far-right groups in the country with rhetorically decent stances on climate and the environment - at least when taken in isolation from their broader social vision.

A prominent example of this is also seen in the rebranding by Marine Le Pen of France's *Rassemblement National* (National Rally) towards a pro-environmental orientation fused with their more traditional nativism, in what has been described as an approach that '*combines environmentalism with identitarianism*'[58], or as '*carr[ying] strong overtones of ecofascism*'.[59]

This particular brand of socially regressive but 'climate conscious' right-wing politics, is in one respect an exercise in opportunism and political expediency. Italy's Giorgia Meloni has been noted, for example, as offering decidedly contradictory messages on climate policy

depending on whether her audience is international or domestic, as well as before and after assuming power.[60]

Meanwhile the European Parliament's EPP (European People's Party) has moved from backing the European Green Deal to leading the charges to limit measures in the deal, competing with the European far-right to benefit from popular backlash against the policies.[61]

However, the more troubling point remains that the political space available for certain elements of the European far-right to claim pro-climate credentials exists due to the parochial conception of climate and climate action widespread across much of Europe.

This space has in turn been enabled by the cynicism of mainstream climate politics: government greenwashing tactics and allowing polluting corporations and fossil fuel companies to steer climate action on terms amenable to themselves,[62] has offered Green politics little defence from a surging far-right offering perverse solutions to real, material social plights.

A movement for climate action absent of a notion of social justice, has paved the way for a climate movement comfortable with the maintenance of gross social iniquities - including those perpetuated against racialised populations in Europe.

This was related by participants in the German and France roundtables, on the failure of their respective Green parties to inspire confidence among racialised communities or to stem their disillusionment with politics more broadly. An example is well captured when a climate marcher stormed the stage at a 2023 Amsterdam climate rally in protest at the 'politicisation' of climate: namely, the invocation of the Palestinians of Gaza suffering an onslaught at the hands of Israel.

These underscored how untenable it is for a climate movement to exist hermetically sealed from the struggle for broader social and economic transformation, and therefore of the importance of a 'climate justice' framework, which the roundtable discussions indicated had been adopted and embraced very unevenly.

Where some positive advances have been made, such as in the UK and the Netherlands, this appeared to have been down to those national climate movements' embrace of recent mass social movements, such as *Black Lives Matter* and the youth climate strikes.

The path forward

The future of a progressive, robust climate movement in Europe depends

on their ability to learn, draw from, and build durable solidarity with communities in struggle against social, economic, and political injustice - including racialised and migrant communities.

More specifically, it is vital that these movements build with those communities on equal terms, and accept some direction from their leadership where fitting.

Participants offered different perspectives on how racialised communities could be better incorporated into the political discussions around climate action. Some emphasised greater representation of racialised communities within elected roles, for example through the cultivation of migrant leaders in Spain, or with the Portugal discussion proposing ethnic quotas towards this end.

Others emphasised forms of independent or autonomous organising by racialised communities, through the establishment of their own institutions and networks, or through organising in fractions or caucuses within wider movements - these emerged strongly in the discussions in Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK.

There is an implicit tension between these two calls, with the former call for electoral representation centred effectively on an external locus of change - the formal political system,

with all its associated trappings and lack of direct accountability - with the latter centred on an internal locus rooted within community networks.

There is certainly no automatic connection between having racialised people in elected office and progressive climate, social or anti-racist policy. The example of the UK, which has for a number of years featured prominent non-white Cabinet members in senior roles of the Conservative government - often pushing deeply reactionary politics - attests to this.[63]

One way to potentially bridge these two directions is by emphasising the forms and practice of self-organisation. This offers a more democratic solution, whereby racialised activists and communities are able to develop and democratically organise a collective agenda, including through those aforementioned networks and caucuses, before engaging with fields like the electoral arena, or other means of influencing policy.

Proposals such as those from the Belgium discussion to remunerate individuals for their time spent organising, offer practical steps. As do the salient warnings from the Netherlands discussion about the limitations of tokenistic 'diversification' initiatives. Such moves to support

self-organisation are not possible without tackling the structural barriers, such as precarisation of migrant communities, which breeds their social and political exclusion. And, as reported in the UK discussion, existing forums of self-organisation among racialised activists - even informal caucuses - has proved an antidote to alienation from the climate movement there.

Building a political system and climate movement inclusive of racialised and excluded communities is essential to repairing this democratic deficit, and as a remedy to their social and political exclusion.

It is also central to the defence against divisive, polarising politics favoured by the far-right. This would form part of a wider approach which understands that racialised communities, as with the rest of the population, should be approached as participatory agents for driving climate action rather than just 'service users' of policies.

A climate agenda that is seen to be imposed from the top-down while also being blind to real social difficulties faced by ordinary people is likely to run into the same political quagmire currently facing the European Green Deal, with decreasing political legitimacy in the face of a popular backlash.

Thus, we come full circle: practical moves to expand the sphere of climate action to address the harms faced by racialised communities necessitates broadening the sphere of popular democracy, in the process offering a path to defend against reactionary political projects seeking to shape Europe in their image.

Community Voices

Climate justice means popular democracy: securitisation policies and exclusion in Germany

By Burak Barut

In 2022, 80% of the German population lived in cities. While cities hold the promise of abundant opportunities, they also present inherent risks such as constrained living spaces, heightened levels of air and noise pollution, increased exposure to temperature changes, and limited access to green spaces and nature.

Within urban environments, exposure to these risks occurs on a spectrum, creating disparities among neighbourhoods, particularly in suburban areas. These disparities often result in the creation of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, a phenomenon particularly experienced by migrants and ethnic minority populations.

This neighbourhood disadvantage is exacerbated in cities where far-right, anti-migrant sentiments are strong, fuelling discriminatory practices in the housing market against minority groups. These dynamics are further compounded by the ongoing challenges posed by climate change. As climate change intensifies, the quality of life for minorities in these segregated neighbourhoods deteriorates, eroding their right to social participation.

Research indicates a causal relationship between prolonged exposure to environmental risks and various aspects of well-being, including physical health, mental wellness, educational outcomes, and financial independence. Additionally, these spatial disparities contribute to a vicious cycle of social exclusion and structural discrimination.

Germany's repressive turn: securitisation against popular will

To address these challenges, German governing bodies have adopted a more stringent stance against what they term *"Parallelgesellschaften"* (parallel societies). This approach involves implementing further securitisation policies and periodically reassessing integration laws. Public discourse has also centred around the concept of *"Leitkultur"* (guiding culture) and alongside recent amendments to deportation policies, reflect ongoing attempts to address these issues.

Germany's climate goals cannot be achieved without the full participation of all its population. Yet Germany's securitisation policies often view protests - a legitimate expression of democratic will - with suspicion. These repressive tendencies have increasingly come to bear on organisers for climate justice, particularly in light of the broader shift to direct action tactics and disruptive strategies gaining purchase in recent years.

In Germany, disruptive tactics undertaken by the group 'Last Generation' have provoked allusions and accusations of terrorism from parliamentarians to the chair of the federal police union[64], and has seen patterns of police repression such as home sweeps of activists.

Activists from minority backgrounds, particularly those employing more confrontational tactics, are often profiled as potential security risks. This not only undermines the legitimacy of their

concerns but also creates a chilling effect, discouraging others from participating for fear of state scrutiny.

Dismantling the securitisation framework that disproportionately targets minority groups is a democratic necessity. This would be part and parcel of a shift towards fostering open dialogue, recognising the legitimacy of diverse voices, and creating avenues for dissent.

However, addressing these trends requires an integrated approach that goes beyond simplistic solutions. Rather than attributing social vulnerabilities as innate to ethnic backgrounds or migration status, a holistic understanding of environmental justice is crucial. This approach provides a rational framework for improving the social engagement of minorities by dismantling the vicious cycle of discrimination and exclusion.

In summary, addressing the challenges faced by minorities in Germany's urban areas requires acknowledging the complex interplay of environmental, social, and political factors. By adopting an integrated approach rooted in principles of environmental justice, policymakers can work towards creating more inclusive and equitable communities for all residents.

Author Biography

Burak recently concluded his studies in human geography and urban studies and currently working as an urban environment policy advisor in Germany. He enjoys Ottoman poetry & music, third-wave coffee, gardening and DIY stuff.

Survey

04

The roundtables provided an illuminating snapshot into the national contexts across the 10 countries of concern, with a number of shared themes emerging between countries. In order to explore these themes on a more scientific basis, we developed a survey directed at racialised people across those countries.

Review of recent European climate attitude survey

In developing the survey, a number of existing Europe-wide and/or international survey and data sets were reviewed, to gauge reported attitudes on climate change and climate action of the wider populations in our respective countries of concern.

These included:

- **Special Eurobarometer 538 (European Union, 2023)**[65]

- **EIB Climate survey Edition V (European Investment Bank, 2023)**[66]

- **Eurotrack climate change survey (YouGov, August 2023)**[67]

- **Allianz Climate Literacy Survey (Allianz, 2023)**[68]

- **People's Climate Vote (United Nations Development Programme, 2021)**[69]

- **Earth Day Survey (Ipsos, April 2023)**[70]

These surveys were reviewed in relation to their geographical scope - i.e. whether participants were drawn from our selected countries of interest.

They were also reviewed for survey questions that could be considered as broadly related to the three themes of our own survey - namely, where they addressed: Concerns and prioritisation of climate; Satisfaction with their government's action or communications around climate; Perceived ability to shape climate plans.

Subsequent to this 'filtering' process, questions from a subset of these surveys are analysed below. Our own survey and approach follows in section 3.2.

Special Eurobarometer 538 (European Union, 2023)

The Special Eurobarometer survey on climate change sought to determine the attitudes of Europeans on the severity of climate change, as well as on issues pertaining to responsibility for tackling climate change, policy measures towards addressing it, and European's exposure to environmental harms.

The survey, conducted by Kantar, spanned the 27 EU member states.

The questions we will be reviewing are QC1, QC2 and QC7.

Respondents were asked to rank the severity of 11 given issues facing the world today (QC1).

By proportion, the survey found that 'climate change' (17% across the EU) was ranked by respondents as the third most serious problem, after 'poverty, hunger, and lack of drinking water' (20%) and 'armed conflict' (19%) - with the latter rising from the eighth most serious issue in 2021 to second in 2023 in light of the Russo-Ukraine war.

The proportion of respondents ranking climate change as the most important issue varied between EU states, with a high of 41% in Sweden and a low of 4% in Latvia (where 'armed conflict', 'the economic situation' and 'poverty, hunger and lack of drinking water' ranked as the top 3 issues).

- For the countries of concern in our research,[71] the proportions of respondents ranking climate change as the most important issue varied from 35% from the Netherlands to 11% from Portugal. The Netherlands (35%), Ireland (24%), Germany (22%),

Belgium (20%), Austria (18%) and Spain (17%) all fell on or above the EU average (17%), while France (16%), Italy (14%) and Portugal (11%) fell below.

In another question, respondents were asked to rate the seriousness of climate change on a scale from 1-10 (QC2). Scores 1-4 were aggregated as 'Not a serious problem', 5-6 as 'A fairly serious problem, and 7-10 as 'A very serious problem'.

- The survey found that climate change was universally regarded as either 'A very serious problem' or 'A fairly serious problem' across the EU (77% and 16% respectively), with over two in three respondents rating it between '7' and '10' ('A very serious problem') in all but six countries surveyed: Slovakia (64%), Austria (62%), Latvia (54%), Romania (54%), Czechia (48%) and Estonia (45%).
  - For our countries of concern, the proportions of respondents rating climate change as 'A very serious problem' varied from 89% in Portugal to 62% in Austria.

  - Portugal (89%), Spain (86%), France (85%), Italy (83%), Netherlands (80%), Ireland (78%) and Belgium (77%) fell on or above the EU average (77%) in believing that their governments were doing 'Not Enough'. Germany (71%) and Austria (62%) fell below it.

A further question asked participants whether they believed that their governments were doing 'Enough', 'Not Enough' or 'Too Much' to tackle climate change (QC7).

- 67% of respondents across the EU believed that their governments' efforts were 'Not Enough', with a majority of respondents in every country bar Finland (38%) and Estonia (37%) selecting this option.

  - For our countries of concern, the proportions of respondents rating their governments as doing 'Not Enough' varied from 80% in Spain to 51% in Austria. Spain (80%), France (75%), Italy (74%) and Portugal (74%) were above the EU average (67%) in believing that their governments were doing 'Not Enough'. The Netherlands (66%) and Belgium (66%) fell just below the average. Ireland (62%), Germany (52%) and Austria (51%) were further below the average

As a broad-ranging and authoritative survey, the **Eurobarometer research underlined that Europeans indeed view climate change as among the most pressing issues facing the world today, while being largely dissatisfied with their national governments' steps to tackle the issue.**

There were clear variances between countries, which appear, to a degree, to be shaped by geography: outlier response rates tended to come from those to the EU's eastern states and/or those neighbouring Russia and Ukraine, whose war will have cast a shadow over respondents' beliefs and priorities.

Our countries of concern, however, largely tended to consider climate change a priority issue at a rate around or above the EU average, while offering a more mixed picture in terms of their satisfaction with their governments' actions to tackle climate change - though all expressing a majority feeling that they were doing 'Not Enough'.EIB Climate Survey Edition V (European Investment Bank, 2023)

The European Investment Bank's Climate Survey edition V assessed respondents' views on the impact of climate change on their lives, and their perceptions of their governments' current actions to tackle it, and their beliefs on various solutions relating to energy consumption.

The survey, conducted by BVA, gathered responses from across the EU, the UK, the United States, and China.

The questions we will be reviewing are 1, 2 and 3.

The survey asked respondents to select the 'three biggest challenges that people in your country are currently facing' from a list of 11 options, as well as an option for 'Other' and 'None of the above' (question 1).

Included in the 11 options were two related to climate: 'Climate change' and 'Environmental degradation', which were coded as 'Environmental'.

Across the 27 EU member states, 41% of respondents placed 'Climate change' within their top three challenges, second overall to 'Financial crisis' (45%). In the UK this figure dropped to 32% of respondents, with the issues of 'Increased cost of living' (79%) and 'Financial crisis' (60%) taking precedence.

The accompanying report, *Government action, personal choices and the green transition*[72] noted that climate change tended to be of lower priority for Eastern European countries in the EU at the time of the survey.

- For the countries of concern in our research, the proportions of respondents including 'Climate change' in their top three varied from 57% in Germany to 31% in Ireland.

- Germany (57%), France (47%), Austria (47%), Belgium (44%) , Italy (44%), Netherlands (44%) all had more

respondents ranking 'Climate change' in their top 3 than the EU average (41%). Spain (39%), Portugal (37%), UK (32%) and Ireland (31%) all fell below the EU average.

- In the latter four countries, issues coded as 'Economic and financial' took precedence over Climate change as an issue: namely 'Increased cost of living', 'Financial crisis', 'Unemployment' and/or 'Access to healthcare'.

Question 2 in the survey asked whether respondents 'feel that climate change has an impact on your everyday life?' (Q2). Respondents could select the options of *'Yes, very much so', 'Yes, somewhat', 'No, not really'* or *'No, not at all'.*

Across the EU states, 80% of respondents answered with either 'Yes, very much so' or 'Yes, somewhat' to this question. The report noted that Southern and Southeastern European countries felt this impact more strongly, with Hungary (91%), Italy (91%), Malta (88%) and Romania (88%) reporting the greatest proportion of 'Yes' responses while Estonia (46%), Latvia (57%), Sweden (58%), Denmark (59%), Finland (59%) and Netherlands (59%) registered the lowest proportions.

- For our countries of concern, respondents overwhelmingly selected 'Yes' choices to this question.

- Italy (91%), Spain (83%) Portugal (82%) and France (80%) were in line with or above the EU average (80%). Austria (74%), Germany (79%), Belgium (73%), Ireland (71%), UK (65%) and Netherlands (59%) were below the EU average.

The survey also asked participants how much they agreed with the statement that 'Governments are too slow in acting against climate change and environmental degradation'.

Respondents could select the options 'Strongly agree', 'Somewhat agree', 'Somewhat disagree', 'Strongly disagree'.

There was overwhelming agreement with the statement across the EU, with an average of 87% of EU respondents selecting either 'Strongly agree' or 'Somewhat agree'.

- For our countries of concern, respondents overwhelmingly selected 'Agree' choices to this statement, and there was less variance compared to the previous questions. Italy (93%), Portugal (93%), Spain (92%) and France (87%) responded in line with or above the EU average. Ireland (86%), Belgium (86%), UK (85%) Germany (84%), Austria (82%) and the Netherlands (79%) fell below the EU average.

By and large, **the questions from the European Investment Bank's edition V climate survey, reviewed here, indicate concern for climate change and for the insufficiency of government action on it, but given the context in which the survey was taken - in August 2022, when concerns about the cost of living crisis and energy were particularly acute in Europe - it is understandable that immediate economic concerns took precedent.**

This particular tension, between the necessity of climate action and material needs, echoes themes raised in the roundtable discussions about the priority afforded to racialised communities in various countries amidst their own immediate necessities.

While the remainder of the report analysed belief on various solutions, these centre largely on consumer-side solutions to reduce energy consumption (such as energy price indexing and taxation) or the diversification of energy sources, and comparatively less on structural solutions which target major polluters.

In this context it is perhaps also rather tone deaf to, as the survey does, query ordinary people about their feelings on what a 'minimum

temperature would still be acceptable for you and your family' in the winter.

Eurotrack climate change survey (YouGov, August 2023)

The polling company YouGov carried out a survey on concerns about climate change, support for policies to tackle it, and willingness to adopt lifestyle changes to address climate change.

The survey included a number of countries within the scope of this project: France, Germany, Spain, Italy and the UK[73], as well as Denmark and Sweden - which will not be discussed here.

The survey asked respondents to indicate how worried they currently felt about climate change and its effects. The options were grouped into 'Worried' responses ('I am currently very worried about climate change and its effects' and 'I am currently fairly worried about climate change and its effects') and 'Not worried' responses ('I am not currently very worried about climate change and its effects' and 'I am not currently worried about climate change and its effects at al')

- Our countries of concern recorded a strong majority of respondents selecting a 'Worried' response.

- At least two in three respondents in each country selected either 'I am currently very worried about climate change and its effects' or 'I am currently fairly worried about climate change and its effects': Italy (82%), France (79%), Spain (79%), Great Britain (67%) and Germany (66%).

A further question probed respondents on their perceptions of the feasibility of averting the worst effects of climate change. It asked participants to select which of the following statements most aligned with their own view: 'It is already too late to avoid the worst effects of climate change', 'We are still able to avoid the worst effects of climate change but it would need a drastic change in the steps taken to', 'We will be able to avoid the worst effects of climate change if we broadly carry on with the steps currently being taken', or 'Not applicable – climate change is not an issue'.

The moderately-'optimistic' option of 'We are still able to avoid the worst effects of climate change but it would need a drastic change in the steps taken to' commanded a majority of responses in each country of concern: Britain (54%), France (53%), Spain (67%), Italy (62%), with only Germany (46%) falling short.

However the 'pessimistic' option of 'It is already too late to avoid the worst effects of climate change' also draw a

significant minority of responses, and usually commanded a higher proportion than the 'optimistic' option of 'We will be able to avoid the worst effects of climate change if we broadly carry on with the steps currently being taken'.

This was the pattern in Britain (15% pessimistic vs 12% optimistic), France (25% pessimistic vs 13% optimistic), Germany (19% pessimistic vs 14% optimistic), Spain (12% pessimistic vs 11% optimistic) and Italy (18% pessimistic vs 10% optimistic)

The survey again reinforced that climate change is a strongly-felt issue among Europeans, as well as underlining that status quo 'solutions' being pursued by European governments do not inspire confidence in their populations.

However, without discounting the role that certain consumption and lifestyle changes would play in the Global North, in particular, as part of a comprehensive strategy against climate change, the survey's emphasis on individualistic or consumerist solutions – such as asking how willing respondents would be to 'Switch to an electric car', 'Have fewer children than I would otherwise like' or 'Create green space in your home' – are very limited.

Such approaches do little to provide insights regarding more systematic, or

drastic changes to tackle climate change which this survey indicates is desired among its respondents. Moreover, such framing approaches respondents largely as individual rational consuming agents, or trickle down beneficiaries of policy, rather than engaged political actors, which is the approach we believe must be taken to help close Europe's democratic deficit, and to avoid resignation over tackling the climate crisis.

Earth Day Survey (Ipsos, April 2023)

The IPSOS Earth Day research surveyed adults across 29 countries to gauge their perceptions regarding their governments' plans for tackling climate change

Including among its sample are a number of countries of concern for this project, including Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain and the UK.[74]

The survey asked respondents the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that their government *'has a clear plan in place for how government, businesses and people themselves are going to work together to tackle climate change'*.

While there was a great degree of variance in responses to this question across the populations surveyed, from an inordinately high rate of agreement in India

(67%) down to a low in Japan (14%), no country's respondents recorded a majority in agreement, other than Singapore (51%) and the aforementioned India.

- In our countries of concern perspectives were generally bleak, with rates of disagreement consistently exceeding low rates of agreement. These rates were also universally less than the average rate of agreement across all countries (31%), and usually above the average rate of disagreement (34%)

- Belgium (19% agree vs 39% disagree), France (25% agree vs 38% disagree), Germany (27% agree vs 42% disagree), Italy (29% agree vs 32% disagree), Netherlands (23% agree vs 42% disagree), Spain (26% agree vs 36% disagree) and Britain (27% agree vs 41% disagree).

A further question asked respondents the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that 'the negative impact of climate change is too far off in the future for me to worry about'.

For this question respondents from India were again the outlier, with 62% agreeing with the statement - compared to the average 23%.

- The countries of concern in this research showed similar trends

with one another, all recording disagreement rates above the average (52%) and with no country having more than one in five respondents agreeing with the statement, other than the Netherlands (22%).

- Belgium (14% agree vs 61% disagree), France (15% agree vs 62% disagree), Germany (20% agree vs 55% disagree), Italy (16% agree vs 57% disagree), Netherlands (22% agree vs 55% disagree), Spain (19% agree vs 54% disagree) and Britain (19% agree vs 54% disagree).

Further on, the survey reported a noticeable reduction in the proportion of respondents placing responsibility on various actors (individuals, governments and businesses) to act immediately to combat climate change compared to previous years of the survey.

It also noted that increasing proportions of respondents believed that the economic cost of climate change exceeded the cost of mitigation measures (42% globally / 40% across the EU). The inverse belief, that mitigation measures would incur greater cost than climate change itself was held by a significant minority (26% globally / 27% across the EU), while there was also a significant minority believing that there was 'little difference' between the two costs (23% globally / 23% across the EU) - a potential 'swing

constituency' that could turn away from supporting climate action.

Finally, the survey reported a perception gap, noting that respondents 'tend to perceive many actions as having a far greater impact on reducing emissions than they actually do', while also 'often under-estimat[ing] the contributions of the highest emitting sectors'.

In combination this research indicates the risk that the consensus on the importance of immediate climate action could slip further, and fall victim to Europe's growing right-wing convulsions. It has already been noted that the so-called 'Green wave' seen during the 2019 European Parliament elections has made way for a reactionary backlash.[75]

To us, the emphasis on piecemeal *individualistic* solutions that we have noted in a number of these surveys, in addition to decreasing public confidence in *government* action, provides fertile ground for climate fatalism to set in, which has damaging prospects for climate action across the board.

They therefore underscore the need for a greater commitment to mass popular education about systematic solutions and strategies for tackling the climate crisis across Europe, as well as in taking European populations as agents of change.
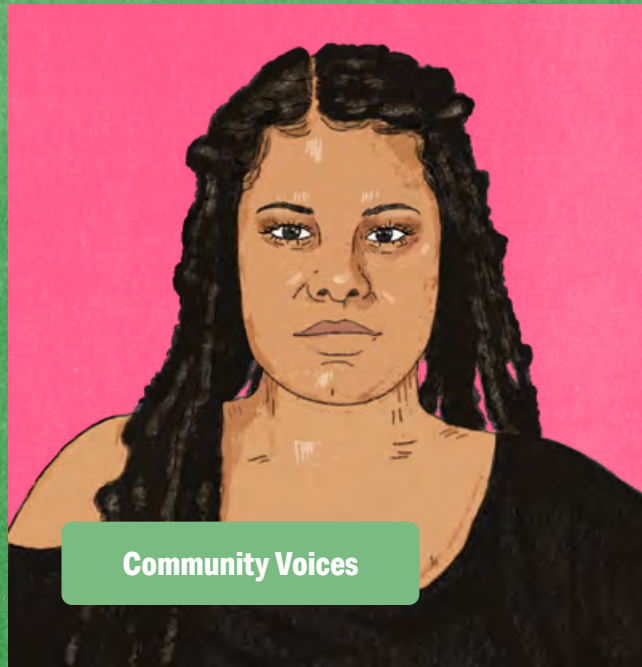
Community Voices

A challenge for the Austrian climate movement

By Camila Schmid Iglesias

Austria is a country in which structural racism is deeply felt at all levels of society: interpersonally, culturally, and institutionally. In 2023 the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published their second report "Being Black in the EU – Experiences of people of African descent"[76] which positions Austria right at the frontline of

EU countries that have major issues with anti-Black racism and *white*-Christian supremacist structures in general.

Many of the struggles that BIPoC[77] individuals are confronted with are shared across a diverse number of communities, including the Muslim community or the Sinti and Roma community. Our struggles remain mostly invisible although there are initiatives such as the Black Voices Referendum, Migrantifa Vienna, Re-Define Racism or D!SRUPT Verein relentlessly working against this invisibility.

With all these aspects taken into account one can already deduce that the voices of racialised people, their struggles and demands regarding climate change remain largely unheard, unseen, and uncared for. In order to better understand this invisibility, we need to take a closer look at two pressing questions: *"Who is able to participate in the struggle?"* and *"Who is being fought for?"*.

Let's start with the first: "Who can take part in the fight for climate justice in Austria?".

In principle, most climate activists would probably shout out loudly at this point: *"Everyone, of course! The more, the better!"*. In practice, however, things look very different when you consider that racist structures within our social movements and organisations function as barriers to participation. These

racist structures concern, on the one hand, the reproduction of racism within groups on an interpersonal level. Based on experience, the resulting conflicts are difficult for the affected BIPoCs to bear and resolve, as their comrades first have to work through their own internalised racisms in order to even understand that violations have occurred.

In most cases these conflicts lead to the affected BIPoCs having to undertake exhausting and retraumatising educational work or withdraw. On the other hand, this first question also concerns aspects such as a lack of sensitivity to multilingualism, a lack of resources within migrant communities or a lack of awareness of the danger of racist police violence during protests - just to name a few examples. These barriers to participation lead to exclusions, which in turn mean that the perspectives of migrants and racialised people have little to no space in Austrian climate movements. So no: not all people are enabled to participate in the struggle.

And that brings us directly to my second question: "Who are the Austrian climate movements actually fighting for?".

Here, too, the answer is disillusioning. Greenwashing, green capitalism, and the fear of one's own future vulnerability to the climate crisis characterise the discourse in Austria. There is no talk of a climate crisis in

the sense of an ongoing threat to human life. *White*-Christian people in Austria are much more afraid that they will soon no longer be able to ski or, even worse for them: that climate catastrophes could drive more and more refugees to Austria.

Of course, these narratives are not the driving force behind all climate activists' struggles in Austria, and yet they are often at the forefront given airtime. Only slowly do existing social movements and organisational structures seem to be increasingly engaging with decolonial perspectives on the climate crisis. There is still a long way to go until we can say that Austrian climate activism seeks justice for all.

But until there is no justice for all of us, there will be no peace.

Our Lives Matter.

Author Biography

Camila Schmid Iglesias, BSc. is a political educator, content creator and researcher with a focus on anti-racism, feminism, intersectionality, decoloniality, social movements, diaspora and Cuba. She writes texts, holds lectures, facilitates workshops and supervises anti-discrimination processes. As an activist, she organizes herself both online (@camelanin on IG) and offline and creates critical spaces as well as educational work with Re-Define Racism, RAGE Kollektiv and D!SRUPT Verein, among others. Camila can be reached at the e-mail address camila@ragekollektiv.org.

Survey methodology

Methodology

The survey was developed to address 3 themes:

1. **Subjective perceptions of the importance and priority of climate change as an issue**

2. **Satisfaction with their government's communication around climate action plans**

3. **Perceptions of barriers to engaging with and shaping climate policy**

The full list of questions can be found in Annex B.

- The majority of respondents were recruited through a targeted social media campaign. Collectively our social media adverts reached over 1,435,532 accounts online. This generated over 7943 click-throughs which led to the completion of 3,510 surveys with unique IDs.

- In order to safeguard data integrity and participant confidentiality, the survey was anonymised and completed electronically, thereby minimising potential risks associated with data breaches or privacy infringements.

- Respondents to the survey were asked some demographic questions at the beginning of the survey, to register their **Age range** (optional)**, Gender, Country of permanent residence, Ethnicity** and **Religion** (optional).

- Respondents who responded to the screening question *Which country do you live in permanently?* with a country other than the 10 countries of focus were offloaded from the survey, and those registering their response to the screening question *What is your ethnicity/ethnic group? as 'White'* were also unable to answer further questions in the survey.

- The survey received **3,510 initial respondents** in total across all 10 countries. After filtering out responses from those registering themselves as being of a White ethnicity, as well as obvious examples of spam or abusive respondents, **3,131 valid responses** remained.

A breakdown of response rates per country, and response rates by gender can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Breakdown of survey respondents, including by gender

	Austria			Belgium			France			Germany			Ireland		
Total samples	183			295			474			361			183		
Gender: Male/Female/Other	89	81	13	132	142	21	209	253	12	187	154	20	81	92	10

	Italy			Netherlands			Portugal			Spain			UK		
Total samples	200			325			246			224			640		
Gender: Male/Female/Other	75	90	35	164	159	12	107	103	36	84	129	11	254	322	54

Survey results

QS1: Importance of climate change as a national issue

In order to gauge perceptions of the importance ascribed to climate change as a socio-political issue, respondents were asked to rate their response to the question '*How important do you consider climate change to be as a national issue?'*.

Responses were given on a rating via Likert scale (1: Very Unimportant, 7: Very Important; 4: Neither/Unsure). Ratings 1-3 were aggregated as 'Unimportant', and ratings 5-7 were aggregated as 'Important'.

The proportions of aggregated responses are provided in Table 2. Graph 1 represents the proportion of aggregated responses for respondents across each country.

Graph 1: Aggregated responses to QS1 'How important do you consider climate change to be as a national issue?', by country

Table 2: Aggregated responses to QS1 'How important do you consider climate change to be as a national issue?', by country

	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK	Average
Agree	76.50%	85.08%	77.22%	81.44%	78.14%	61%	76.62%	75.20%	70.54%	86.72%	78.66%
Disagree	18.58%	12.88%	19.62%	15.51%	19.13%	29%	19.96%	17.07%	25.45%	8.91%	17.06%
Neither/Unsure	4.92%	2.03%	3.16%	3.05%	2.73%	10%	3.69%	7.72%	4.02%	4.38%	4.28%

Findings

- Respondents **overwhelmingly rated climate change as an 'Important' national issue**, with proportions of 'Important responses exceeding 75% in all but two of the countries - **Italy (61%)** and **Spain (70.54%)**.

- Other than **Italy (29%)** and **Spain (25.45%),** no country registered more than 1 in 5 respondents rating this as an 'Unimportant' national issue, although **France (19.62%)** and **Netherlands (19.69%)** came very close.

- Respondents from **Italy** were the clear anomaly, with the proportion of respondents rating climate change as 'Important' as a national issue well below the overall mean average for that aggregated category (78.66%), and the proportion rating it as 'Unimportant' as a national issue well above the mean average for that category (17.06%).

- Respondents from the **UK** and **Belgium** had the highest proportion rating climate change as 'Important' as a national issue (**86.72%** and **85.08%** respectively), and the lowest proportion rating it as 'Unimportant' (**8.91%** and **12.88%** respectively).

- From this question it is evident that racialised people surveyed in this survey found climate change

to be a pertinent issue, in line with the general trend reported by polls across Europe on the climate.

QS2: Importance of climate change as an issue for respondents and their communities

- As the roundtable discussions sometimes noted a disconnect between climate change as an

objectively important issue, and how much importance was ascribed to them by racialised communities amidst other immediate material concerns, respondents were then asked to rate their response to the question *How important do you consider climate change to be for you and your community in particular?.*

- As with question QS1, responses were given through a rating via Likert scale

(1: Very Unimportant, 7: Very Important; 4:Neither/Unsure). Ratings 1-3 were aggregated as 'Unimportant', and ratings 5-7 were aggregated as 'Important'.

- The proportion of aggregated responses are provided in Table 3, across all countries. Table 4 provides a side-by-side comparison of responses for this question and QS1. Graph 2 represents the proportion of aggregated responses for respondents across each country.

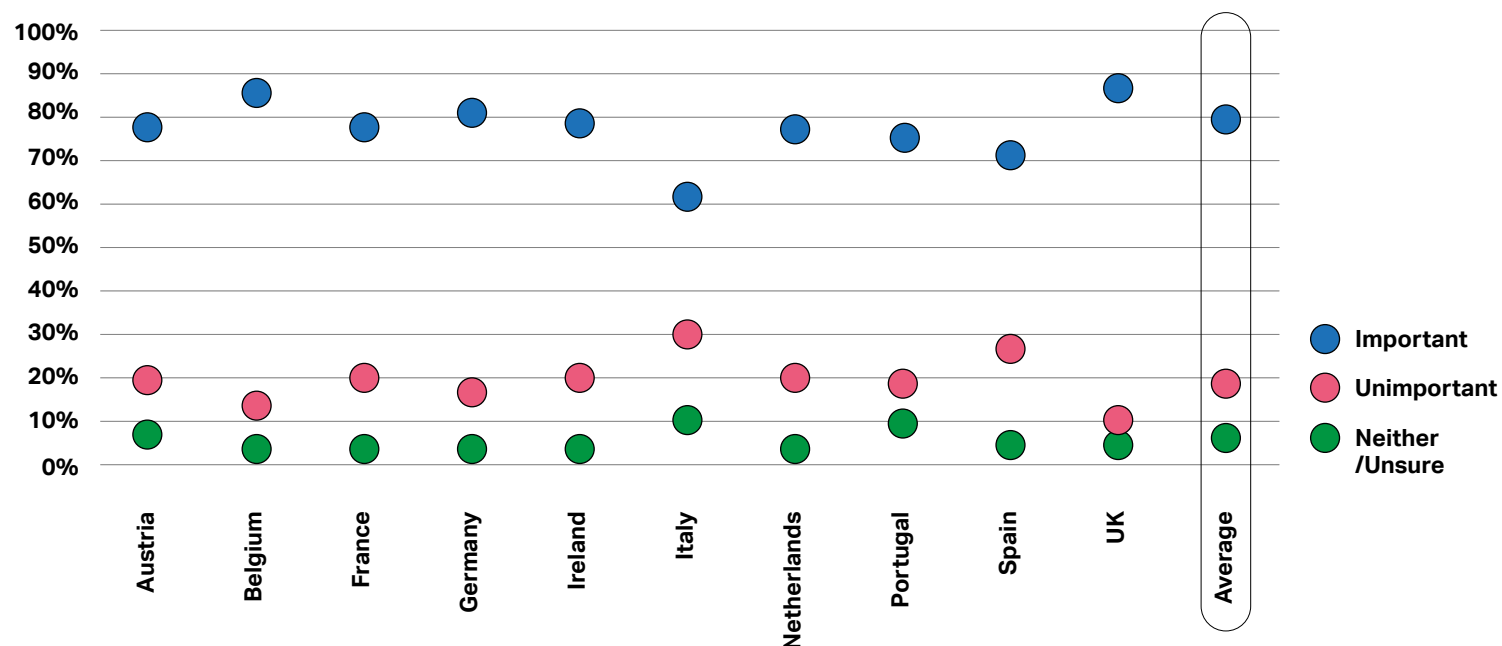**Graph 2:** Aggregated responses to QS2 'How important do you consider climate change to be for you and your community in particular?', by country.
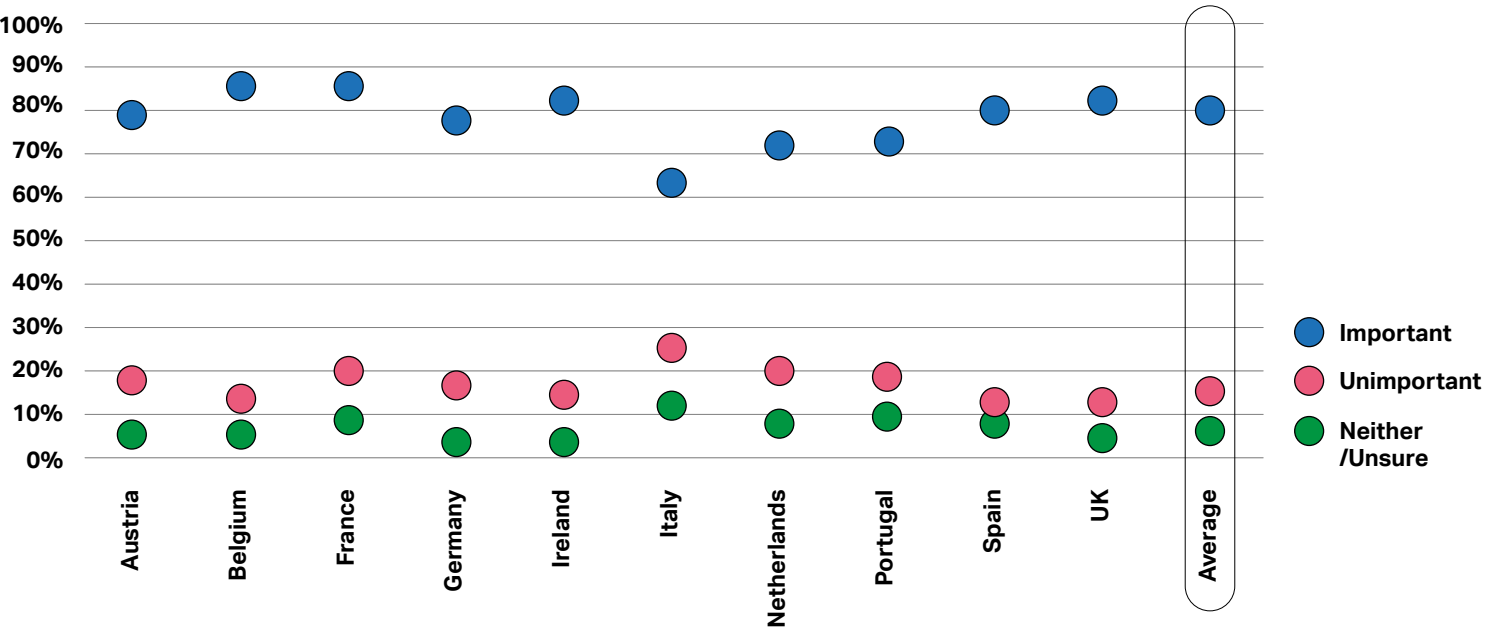
Table 3: Aggregated responses to QS2 'How important do you consider climate change to be for you and your community in particular?', by country.

	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK	Average
Agree	**79.23%**	**86.10%**	**85.44%**	**76.73%**	**81.97%**	**63%**	**71.38%**	**71.95%**	**80.36%**	**81.72%**	**78.86%**
Disagree	16.39%	9.15%	6.33%	18.84%	13.11%	24.50%	21.23%	16.67%	11.16%	12.34%	14.12%
Neither/Unsure	4.37%	4.75%	8.23%	4.43%	4.92%	12.50%	7.38%	11.38%	8.48%	5.94%	7.03%

Table 4: Comparison between responses to QS1 and QS2, by country.

	Austria		Belgium		France		Germany		Ireland	
	National	Community	National	Community	National	Community	National	Community	National	Community
Important	**76.50%**	**79.23%**	**85.08%**	**86.10%**	**77.22%**	**85.44%**	**81.44%**	**76.73%**	**78.14%**	**81.97%**
Unimportant	18.58%	16.39%	12.88%	9.15%	19.62%	6.33%	15.51%	18.84%	19.13%	13.11%
Neither/Unsure	4.92%	4.37%	2.03%	4.75%	3.16%	8.23%	3.05%	4.43%	2.73%	4.92%

	Italy		Netherlands		Portugal		Spain		UK		Average	
	National	Community	National	Community	National	Community	National	Community	National	Community	National	Community
Important	**61%**	**63%**	**76.62%**	**71.38%**	**75.20%**	**71.59%**	**70.54%**	**80.36%**	**86.72%**	**81.72%**	**76.77%**	**77.71%**
Unimportant	29%	24.50%	19.69%	21.23%	17.07%	16.67%	25.45%	11.16%	8.91%	12.34%	18.67%	15.06%
Neither/Unsure	10%	12.50%	3.69%	7.38%	7.72%	11.38%	4.02%	8.48%	4.38%	5.95%	4.56%	7.23%

Findings

- Respondents again **overwhelmingly rated climate change as an 'Important' issue for themselves and their communities**, albeit in slightly different proportions to their response to the question regarding its importance as a national issue.

- **In all but 3 countries, 75% or more of respondents rated it as an 'Important' issue for themselves and their communities;** the exceptions being **Italy (63%)**, **Netherlands (71.38%)**, and **Portugal (71.95%)** - with **Spain (80.36%)** clearing the 75% mark and the 78.86% mean average this time, unlike for question WS1.

- Only **Italy (24.50%)** and the **Netherlands (21.23%)** saw more than 1 in 5 respondents report climate change as 'Unimportant' for themselves and their communities.

- Respondents from **Belgium** and **France** had the highest proportion rating climate change as an 'Important' for themselves and their community (**86.10%** and **85.44%** respectively), and the lowest proportion rating it as 'Unimportant' for themselves and their community (**9.15%** and **6.33%** respectively).

Comparisons: National issue vs Respondents and their communities

- A side-by-side comparison between responses for the previous question and this question provided mixed outcomes.

- **Six of the ten countries** (Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Spain) saw a greater proportion of responses for **'Important' for themselves and their communities (QS2) in comparison to national importance (QS1)**, though these were usually slight differences.

- **Four of the ten** (Germany, Netherlands, Portugal and UK), however, saw the opposite, with a greater proportion of responses reporting climate change as an **'Important' national issue (QS1) as compared to its importance for themselves and their communities (QS2)**.

- The differences in the proportion of 'Important'/'Unimportant' responses between QS1 and QS2 were analysed for statistical significance, with a confidence level of 95%.

- There was a **statistically significant difference between reported Importance of climate change as a national issue compared to its Importance for respondents themselves and their**

communities for three countries: **France, Spain** and **the UK.**

- **In each case this statistical significance was seen in both directions: for both 'Important' rankings and 'Unimportant' rankings.**

- Text responses given to an optional follow-up question, asking of respondents: *Please could you explain your response for the previous question [QS2]?*[78] provided some insight to explain the significance.

- A selection of the responses given by participants are given below. The quoted participants' scores for QS1 and QS2 are given as in the format [QS1] - [QS2].

Double penalty

- Some respondents pointed out climate change should be a matter of additional concern to them, whether on account of being from racialised communities facing greater vulnerability from pollution and climate change, or as people from or with family in the Global South, which again is set to face the brunt of climate change.

- These respondents usually ranked both scores equally, or scored **higher**

for QS2 concerning the Importance of climate change for themselves and their communities.

Responses to question: Please could you explain your ranking for the previous question [QS2]?

"Our very homes in the Caribbean are at risk of deluge. Our ancestral homes in Africa are already raided for resources and this will become worse as climate pressures create desperation among Western nations."
– *UK, Female, Black Caribbean,7-7*

"Africa where I come from and where my family still live, is the most challenged by environment [al] issues, the same inequalities occur for people from suburbs [in France]"
– *France, Female, Arab/North African, 7-7*

"The climate crisis is on-going colonialism, as colonized people living in the Global North it impacts us more because of the policies that induce segregation and inequity amongst communities."
– *Belgium, Female, South Asian, 7-7*

"We are disproportionately impacted by air pollution as non-white people in Britain, as well as coming from countries that are impacted more harshly by the climate crisis."
– *UK, Female, Black African, 7-7*

"Viet Nam is one of the countries most impacted by climate change. The intersectional impact of it is even more severe. Witnessing the white-washed narratives on climate change and the undermining struggles of [people of colour], I need to act on this."
– *Spain, Female, South East Asian, 7-7*

"I'm Brazilian, at the moment Brazil is being especially affected by global warming, heat in winter, extreme heat in summer and in some regions like the Amazon rainforest, the sky is even changing colour due to so much burned forest."[79]– *Portugal, Male, Latin American, 7-7*

"My family are from Bangladesh so we know what the impacts are. I also did my Masters in Climate Change so I personally have a good understanding of how bad the situation is and future outcomes."
– *UK, Female, South Asian, 7-7*

"Statistically, minority communities are more vulnerable to the negative impacts of global warming/ climate change"
– *France, Female, Black African, 6-6*

Differential responsibilities

- In other instances, respondents didn't negate the importance of tackling climate change per se, but highlighted that there were differential levels of responsibility for tackling it.

- These include differences between governments and their populations, between corporate actors and individuals, as well as differences in terms of countries of the Global North most responsible for emissions - a sentiment keeping with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

- These respondents **tended to provide a lower score** for QS2 asking about the Importance of climate change for themselves and their communities when compared to their score for QS1 (national importance).

- Some of these respondents articulated these points in terms of a feeling of powerlessness; that given the lack

of meaningful action being taken to address climate change by powerful actors such as governments and fossil fuel companies, *"it feels like we are powerless and nothing we do as individuals will make a difference"*.

- While the responses listed below are taken as subjective and anecdotal, rather than the basis of our analysis, it is very likely that this sentiment is shared by many other people in our societies, whether racialised people or white natives, and may be read as indicating 'apathy' or fatalism towards the burning issue of climate change/action.

- In the context of this research project, **this reaffirms our emphasis on approaching the matter of climate action as a political matter, and collective endeavour in which ordinary people are agents, able to shape a common political agenda** - rather than as individual 'service users' or downstream beneficiaries of high-level policy change.

- This latter approach is something we have noted as being an issue in surveys that merely assess respondents' participation in, for example, recycling initiatives.

- More broadly, **this sentiment speaks to the wider perception and reality**

of a democratic deficit in European societies, whereby the gulf between governments and populations grows wider as their needs and concerns are not responded to, and populations feel unable to have their voices heard on account of various barriers to collective action.

- **It is important that these sentiments are not read simply as 'apathy' or a disinterest in climate change/action, or used to problematise or castigate already-marginalised communities such as racialised people.** This issue of barriers to collective action is explored further on in the survey.

Responses to question Please could you explain your ranking for the previous question [QS2]?

"I think there is so much going on in the world [that] the environment has been lost as an issue. Also government inertia means it feels like we are powerless and nothing we do as individuals will make a difference."
– *UK, Male, South Asian, 7-5*

"I think it's important but at the same time I don't believe that individuals can really make the

change that is needed. So I vote accordingly, [besides that] I think it needs international politics for the change needed."
– *Germany, Female, Mixed ethnicity, 5-4)*

"Born Peruvian in Portugal where I grew up, now living and working in Belgium. I see floods in the North, less fish in Peruvian coast, social unrest in [the Global] South due to Lithium. All environment[al] issues caused by Global North."
– *Belgium, Male, Latin American, 7-7*

"I think climate change is an issue for everyone. However, it's not the only problem we are facing right now. Additionally, there are countries that contribute to climate change much more [than others] but don't do anything."
– *Germany, Female, Latin American, 5-5*

"Climate change is a global risk for which rich nations should bear greater financial responsibility. But I believe that my community in Africa struggles with more immediate issues such as tribal conflict and governance".
– *Netherlands, Male, Mixed ethnicity, 6-3*

"Although we should all act, people who are respons[i]ble [for] the negative impact on climate change should do more [towards] efforts (i.e. white, rich, Europeans, industries, government)".
– *France, Male, Turkish, 7-3*

"Our local carbon footprint is small in comparison to what changes the government could make by limiting subsidies to fossil fuel compan[ies]".
– *Netherlands, Male, Latin American, 5-3*

"People consider it to be unfair to ask Global South countries to slow their development while Western ones are responsible for global warming".
– *France, Male, Black African 7-3*

"We are small fish, [climate action] needs to tackle the super-rich and industries".
– *Germany, Female, Mixed ethnicity, 7-4*

Other concerns taking precedent

- Finally, some respondents stated how, while climate change was objectively an important issue, **other immediate needs were more pressing for their own communities and therefore took priority, especially as climate change was seen by some as a distant, 'future issue', compared to other day-to-day needs.**

- These respondents **tended to provide a lower score** for QS2 asking about the Importance of climate change for themselves and their communities when compared to their score for QS1 (national importance).

- These sentiments map onto themes raised in a number of our roundtable discussions, of racialised communities apportioning greater priority to needs - such as housing, food, income, and work - which are seen as more pressing, especially for the working class and/or precarious racialised communities.

- **They also affirmed the importance of the theme, also raised during the roundtables, of developing a climate justice framework that is inclusive of the social issues and concerns of racialised and /or working class communities**, rather than a climate movement that privileges the environment in isolation.

- **Without this climate justice framing, the perception of climate change/action as disconnected to - or worse, mutually exclusive from - addressing communities' material needs can harden and provide fodder for growing climate sceptic movements across Europe.**

Responses to question Please could you explain your ranking for the previous question [QS2]?

"Whilst we all recognise the impact that climate change is and will have on society as a whole, that makes it a problem for society as a whole, not just us. As such, we must also focus on issues unique to us as well as climate issues."
– *UK, Male, Mixed ethnicity, 7-5*

"Climate Change is a very important topic that must be attended to. But there are also other topics that need attention, not only climate change."
– *Austria, Other gender, Black African, 5-5*

"The timespan for the difficulties faced by climate change is

still longer than the immediate difficulties faced. For example, lower incomes affecting the quality of life faced by our children - the food they eat daily, the places they live."
– *UK, Female, Mixed ethnicity, 7-5*

"Most people in [the] community have to care about everyday problems / topics, rarely interested in far-fetched goals."
– *Germany, Male, Turkish 5-3*

"Climate change is a global risk for which rich nations should bear greater financial responsibility. But I believe that my community in Africa struggles with more immediate issues such as tribal conflict and governance".
– *Netherlands, Male, Mixed ethnicity, 6-3*

QS3: Satisfaction with government communication about climate action plans

- We wanted to probe into the point raised above about the 'democratic deficit' in relation to climate change, in order to assess whether respondents felt well-informed about their governments' strategies for addressing climate change - something that had implications both for democratic involvement in climate action, and for developing climate preparedness among their populations.

- Question QS3 was therefore formulated to gauge how satisfied and engaged regular, lay, racialised individuals were with their respective governments' communications regarding national climate action plans and policies

- Participants were asked to score how much they agreed with the statement: *'I feel that my government keeps me*

well informed about their plans and policies for tackling climate change'

- Responses were given through a rating via Likert scale (1: Completely Disagree, 7: Completely Agree; 4: Neither Agree nor Disagree/Unsure). Ratings 1-3 were aggregated as 'Disagree', and ratings 5-7 were aggregated as 'Agree'.

- The proportion of aggregated responses are provided in Table 5, across all countries. Graph 3 represents the proportion of aggregated responses for respondents across each country.

Findings

- Respondents **were mixed on this question**.

- There was a **clear general tendency to Disagree with the statement posed**, with **every**

country except Ireland (49.18%) recording a **majority of over 50% of respondents Disagreeing** with it.

- Only four countries recorded **more than one in five respondents registering Agreement** with the statement: **Ireland (32.79%), Netherlands (27.08%), France (25.53%)** and **Italy (20.50%)**, with a mean value of 17.76% between countries.

- The **proportion of Disagreements varied vastly** between countries, however, with a **range of 26.02%**. The **highest proportions of Disagreement** came from **Portugal (75.20%), Germany (75.07%)** and **Spain (73.66%),** with **a mean value of 65.28%.** The **lowest proportion of Disagreement** came from **Ireland (49.18%), Netherlands (58.46%), Italy (58.50%)** and **France (58.44%).**

Table 5: Aggregated responses to QS3 'I feel that my government keeps me well informed about their plans and policies for tackling climate change', by country.

	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK	Average
Agree	10.38%	6.78%	17.93%	5.54%	**33.33%**	16.00%	25.23%	8.94%	2.68%	19.84%	15.14%
Disagree	75.96%	72.88%	69.20%	82.27%	33.33%	57.00%	56.31%	70.73%	79.02%	62.19%	67.84%
Neither/Unsure	13.66%	20.34%	12.87%	12.19%	12.57%	27.00%	18.46%	20.33%	18.30%	17.97%	17.02%

Graph 3: Aggregated responses to QS3 'I feel that my government keeps me well informed about their plans and policies for tackling climate change', by country.

Legend:
- Agree (blue)
- Disagaree (pink)
- Neither /Unsure (green)

Examples are provided in the Box below.

- While the number of respondents choosing the answer **'Neither Agree or Disagree/Unsure'** which opted to explain their responses in the follow-up was very small, the responses did suggest that their response was informed by **Mistrust of their governments' and the claims regarding climate policies** - including concerns of greenwashing - or their beliefs on the **Disconnect between the rhetoric of their government and the reality of implementation of climate policies**.

- **These both feed into the wider issue of a disillusionment with mainstream politics that is expressed through the idea of a democratic deficit in Europe and European policymaking.**

Responses to question: Please could you explain your ranking for the previous question [QS3]?

"Political communication is in general flawed and prone to lies and greenwashing."
(Austria, Female, Mixed ethnicity)

- Also noticeable was the **high proportion of respondents answering 'Neither Agree or Disagree/Unsure'** (score '4' on the scale). In **most countries the proportion of respondents answering 'Neither Agree or Disagree/Unsure' exceeded the proportion answering that they Agreed**. This was the case in **Austria (15.3% Neither/** Unsure vs 14.21% Agree), Belgium **(18.98% Neither/Unsure vs 16.61% Agree), Germany (18.56% Neither/ Unsure vs 6.37% Agree), Italy (21% Neither/Unsure vs 20.50% Agree), Portugal (17.89% Neither/Unsure vs 6.91% Agree),** and **Spain (18.30% Neither/Unsure vs 8.04% Agree).**

In order to try and gain an insight into the motivations for respondents choosing the answer **'Neither Agree or Disagree/Unsure',** we reviewed those respondents' answers to an optional follow-up question, asking of respondents: *Please could you explain your ranking for the previous question [QS3]?*.

"While they constantly speak about how important the climate crisis is, they do very little in my community to help us deal with the impacts (air quality, water quality, social inequity)."
(Belgium, Female, South Asian)

"Even having the Green Party in coalition in the [Belgian government] I feel like the environment is not a priority for politicians. The world is ending and they don't care. No official channel with worthwhile info[rmation], only crumbs."
– Belgium, Male, Latin American

"Although Germany's policies are aimed at a globally warming world, the political situation is volatile and the status quo could change in the next elections."
– Germany, Male, South Asian

"They're vague and don't really have solid plans and some plans are announced but I don't see any change".
– Ireland, Female, Mixed ethnicity

"Due to "greenwashing" it is difficult to know if something is really environme[n]tal".
– Netherlands, Male, Mixed ethnicity

"The Dutch government has recently lef[t] behind a 12-year period of neoliberal governing that to me did not succeed in translating their plans properly to the public. Neither do I have con[f]idence in the current government formations."
– Netherlands, Male, Latin American

"They provide standard updates, however many of those updates have been to tell us what they're scrapping and what science they've decided they're not going to listen to."
– UK, Female, Black African /Caribbean

QS4: Opportunity for shaping climate policy

In order to more directly assess the factors impacting political engagement, the survey asked respondents' to report on their feelings on the level of opportunity available to them, as a racialised person, to shape climate policy in their country when compared with a white person.

Question QS4 asked to score how much they agreed with the statement: *'I feel that people of a 'non-white' background in my country have just as much opportunity to influence its climate policies as people of a white background'**

Responses were given through a rating via Likert scale (1: Completely Disagree, 7: Completely Agree; 4: Neither Agree nor Disagree/Unsure). Ratings 1-3 were aggregated as 'Disagree', and ratings 5-7 were aggregated as 'Agree'.

Graph 4: Aggregated responses to QS4 'I feel that people of a 'non-white' background in my country have just as much opportunity to influence its climate policies as people of a white background', by country.

Table 6: Aggregated responses to QS4 'I feel that people of a 'non-white' background in my country have just as much opportunity to influence its climate policies as people of a white background', by country

	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK	Average
Agree	10.38%	6.78%	17.93%	5.54%	**33.33%**	16.00%	25.23%	8.94%	2.68%	19.84%	15.14%
Disagree	75.96%	72.88%	69.20%	82.27%	33.33%	57.00%	56.31%	70.73%	79.02%	62.19%	67.84%
Neither/Unsure	13.66%	20.34%	12.87%	12.19%	12.57%	27.00%	18.46%	20.33%	18.30%	17.97%	17.02%

- The proportion of aggregated responses are provided in Table 6. Graph 4 represents the proportion of aggregated responses for respondents across each country.

Findings

- There was a **clear general tendency to Disagree with the statement posed**, with a majority scoring between 1 and 3 on the question. Responses varied between countries over the extent of Disagreement, however, with a range of 27.94%.

- The highest proportion of respondents Disagreeing with the statement could be found in Germany (82.04%), and the lowest proportion in Ireland (54.10%), with an overall mean value of 67.84% between countries. Five of the countries recorded over 70% of respondents registering Disagreement with the statement: Germany (82.04%), Spain (79.02%), Austria (75.96%), Belgium (72.88%) and Portugal (70.85%).

- Only two countries recorded **more than one in five respondents registering Agreement** with the statement: **Ireland (33.33%) and Netherlands (25.46%). The UK** (19.97%) came close. **Spain (2.68%)** saw the **lowest proportion**

of respondents registering Agreement, followed by **Germany (5.80%), Belgium (6.78%)** and **Portugal (8.91%).**

- Ireland was the clear anomaly for this question, with more than twice the proportion of respondents registering Agreement with the statement than the overall mean average, as well as the lowest proportion of Disagreement (54.10%) and the highest proportion of **'Neither Agree or Disagree/ Unsure' (27%)** of all the countries.

- As with QS3, there was a notably **high proportion of respondents answering 'Neither Agree or Disagree/Unsure'** (score '4' on the scale). In **most countries the proportion of respondents answering 'Neither Agree or Disagree/Unsure'** again **exceeded the proportion answering that they Agreed**. This was the case in **Austria (13.66% Neither/Unsure vs 10.38% Agree), Belgium (20.34% Neither/Unsure vs 6.78% Agree), Germany (12.15% Neither/Unsure vs 5.80% Agree), Italy (27% Neither/Unsure vs 15.50% Agree), Portugal (20.24% Neither/Unsure vs 8.91% Agree),** and **Spain (18.30% Neither/ Unsure vs 2.68% Agree).**

Gender

- As this question struck at the heart of the question of barriers and exclusion from the political process, we wanted to investigate whether there were gendered differences between respondents' registering Agreement or Disagreement to QS4. In order to do so, samples within each country were divided by gender into data sets. Due to the small sample sizes of people registering their gender as 'Other', and because of the variances in whether/how each country monitors gender in their population data, responses for 'Other' and 'Female' have been combined when comparing Gender differences in responses for this question.

- Data sets were also weighted according to the overall proportion of Male/Female members in the population of each country, based on the latest census data available. The differences in the proportion of 'Important'/'Unimportant' responses between Male and Female/ Other respondents to QS4 were then analysed for statistical significance with a confidence level of 95%. The proportion of Agree/Disagree scored by gender can be found in Table 7.

- There were 5 countries where we found a statistically significant difference in the proportion of 'Agree' or 'Disagree'

responses in terms of gender. In **France**, **Male respondents (74.16%)** were significantly more likely to **Disagree** with the statement posed in the question than **Female/Other respondents (65.28%).** n **Germany**, **Male respondents (87.17%)** were also significantly more likely to **Disagree** with the statement than **Female/Other respondents (77.01%)**. Meanwhile Female/Other respondents (16.67%) were significantly more likely to respond that they **'Neither Agree or Disagree/ Unsure'** than Male respondents (8.02%) In **Italy**, **Male respondents (21.33%)** were significantly more likely to **Agree** with the statement than **Female/Other respondents (12.80%)**. Meanwhile Female/Other respondents (30.40%) were significantly more likely to respond that they **'Neither Agree or Disagree/Unsure'** than **Male respondents (21.33%)** And in the **UK**, **Male respondents (24.02%)** were significantly more likely to **Agree** with the statement than **Female/Other respondents (17.10%)**. Meanwhile **Female/Other respondents (20.21%)** were significantly more likely to respond that they **'Neither Agree or Disagree/ Unsure'** than **Male respondents (14.57%) Additionally, in Portugal Female/Other respondents (23.74%)** were significantly more likely to respond that they **'Neither Agree or Disagree/ Unsure'** than **Male respondents**
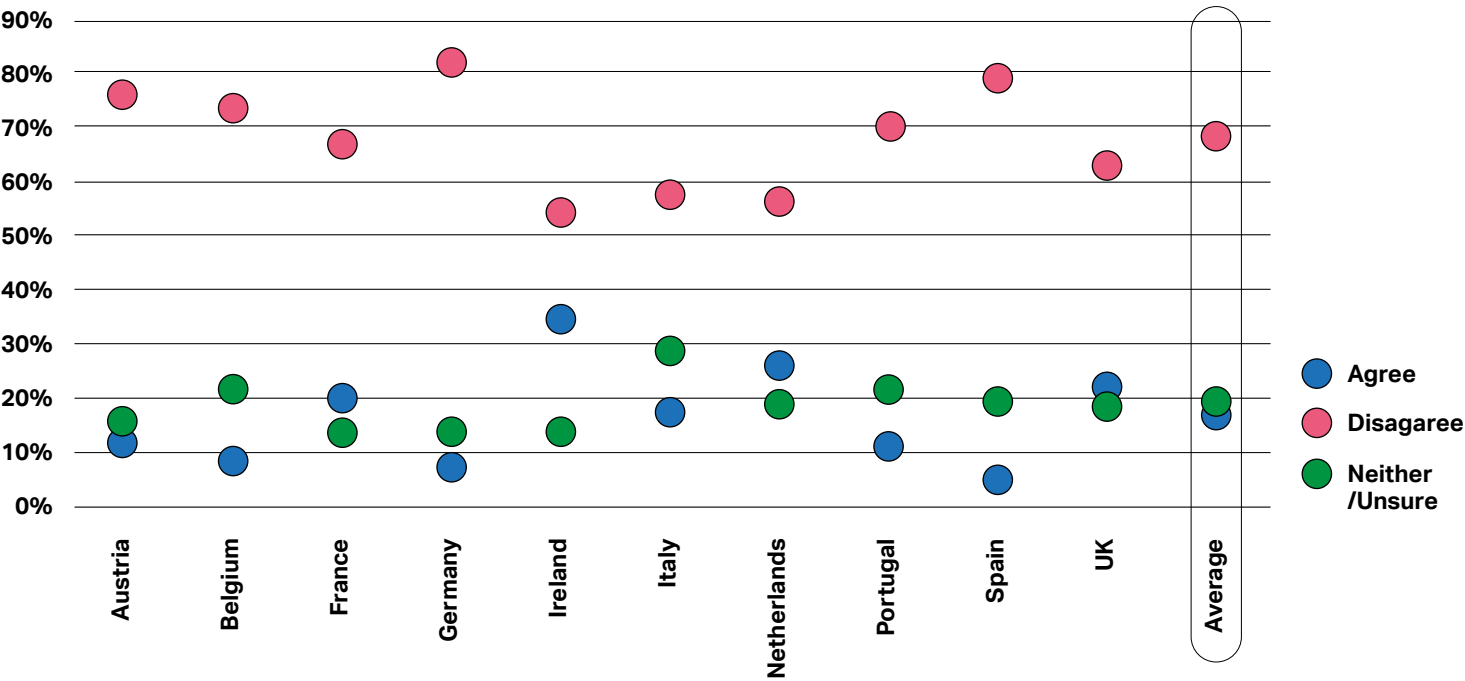
Table 7: Aggregated responses to QS4 'I feel that people of a 'non-white' background in my country have just as much opportunity to influence its climate policies as people of a white background', by gender. Statistical significance between gender responses included.

	Austria			Belgium			France			Germany		
	Male	Female	Significant difference?	Male	Female	Significant Difference?	Male	Female	Significant Difference?	Male	Female	Significant Difference?
Agree	8.99%	11.70%	No	7.58%	6.13%	No	15.31%	20%	No	4.81%	6.32%	No
Disagree	77.53%	74.47%	No	75%	71.17%	No	74.16%	65.28%	Yes	87.17%	77.01%	Yes
Neither/ Unsure	13.48%	13.83%	No	17.42%	22.70%	No	10.53%	14.72%	No	8.02%	16.67%	Yes

	Ireland			Italy			Netherlands			Portugal		
	Male	Female	Significant difference?	Male	Female	Significant Difference?	Male	Female	Significant Difference?	Male	Female	Significant Difference?
Agree	33.33%	33.3%	No	21.33%	12.80%	Yes	26.62%	23.98%	No	11.21%	7.19%	No
Disagree	53.09%	54.90%	No	57.33%	56.80%	No	56.49%	56.14%	No	72.90%	69.06%	No
Neither/ Unsure	13.58%	11.76%	No	21.33%	30.40%	Yes	16.88%	19.88%	No	15.89%	23.74%	Yes

	Spain			UK		
	Male	Female	Significant difference?	Male	Female	Significant Difference?
Agree	2.38%	2.86%	No	24.02%	17.10%	Yes
Disagree	83.33%	76.43%	No	61.42%	62.69%	No
Neither/ Unsure	14.29%	20.71%	No	14.57%	20.21%	Yes

(15.89%) - but no statistical significance was seen in scores for **Agreement or Disagreement.**

- Overall, **while there were some statistically significant gender differences in terms of respondents' likelihood of Agreeing or Disagreeing with the statement, the instances of statistically significant differences did not follow a clear gendered trend in this particular sample set, and so no clear conclusions can be drawn from it.**

QS5: Barriers in shaping climate policy

- Having established through responses to QS4 that respondents largely felt there to be less opportunity for racialised people to shape climate policy in their country than their white counterparts, QS5 sought to gain a greater insight into the type of barriers faced by racialised communities.

- A set of possible barriers was formulated based on themes that emerged during the roundtable discussions. These included four choices that

were centred around the theme of **social and political exclusion**:

- Racial discrimination preventing engagement (coded: "Racial discrimination")

- Fear of engaging with politics ("Fear")

- Feeling excluded from the process ("Excluded")

- Feeling that they won't be heard ("Won't be heard")

A further three choices focused on **limitations within the sphere of climate action**:

- Values/priorities of climate discussions not in alignment ("Values")

- No opportunities provided to do so ("Opportunities")

- Language barriers to engagement ("Language")

And two choices focused on **personal or individual constraints**:

Table 8: Proportion of respondents selecting choices for QS5 'What would you consider the main barriers for 'non-white' communities in influencing climate policy in your country?', by country.

	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK	Average
Language	38.25%	33.56%	40.08%	40.72%	22.40%	39%	33.54%	25.20%	21.43%	32.81%	**33.66%**
Lack interest	28.96%	21.36%	25.32%	29.64%	29.51%	23.50%	20.92%	24.39%	21.43%	28.75%	**25.68%**
Lack time	40.44%	29.83%	36.50%	41.55%	30.05%	32%	31.38%	33.74%	31.70%	34.53%	**34.53%**
Excluded	44.81%	48.14%	49.16%	46.54%	40.44%	51%	43.69%	47.15%	48.66%	46.72%	**46.85%**
Won't be heard	42.62%	43.73%	41.98%	34.63%	35.52%	40%	36.31%	33.74%	37.95%	37.66%	**38.42%**
Racial discrimination	51.37%	62.71%	64.35%	61.77%	32.24%	58%	49.85%	62.60%	65.18%	56.41%	**57.65%**
Values	20.22%	17.29%	22.57%	14.40%	22.95%	14.50%	16.31%	14.63%	17.41%	17.50%	**17.82%**
No opportunities	33.33%	40.68%	32.91%	34.07%	19.13%	39.50%	27.08%	35.77%	37.50%	35%	**33.79%**
Fear	26.23%	22.71%	17.09%	23.27%	19.67%	25%	18.15%	23.17%	18.75%	20.94%	**21.02%**
Other	1.09%	1.36%	0.21%	1.94%	1.09%	2%	4.31	1.63%	0%	2.97%	**1.82%**

- Lack of interest ("Interest")

- Lack of time ("Time")

A final option was given for "Other", where respondents were invited to list barriers not listed,

- This question asked respondents *What would you consider the main **barriers** for 'non-white' communities in influencing climate policy in your country?*

- Responses were given through multiple choice selection, where respondents were asked to indicate as many options as had a bearing on the difficulty for racialised communities in their country to shape climate policy. There was no ranking for their selection.

- Table 8 provides a breakdown of the proportion of respondents selecting each option as one of their choices. Graph 5 portrays the mean average selection rate for each choice.

Graph 5: Average selection rates for QS5 'What would you consider the main barriers for 'non-white' communities in influencing climate policy in your country?', across all countries)
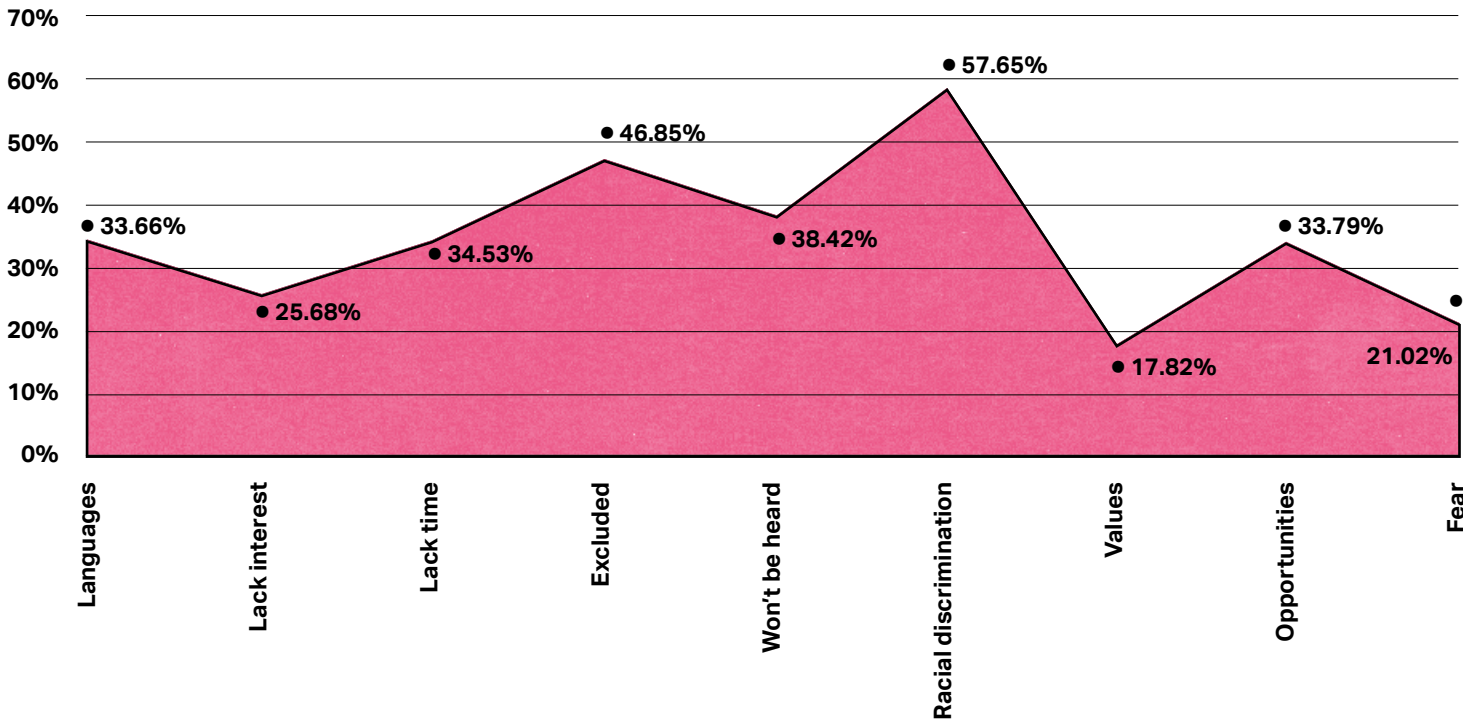

Findings

- Six options were selected by at least 1 in 3 respondents, on average:[80]
  - Racial discrimination preventing engagement (average: 57.65%).
  - Feeling excluded from the process (average: 46.85%)
  - Feeling that they won't be heard (average: 38.42%)
  - Lack of time to participate (average: 34.53%)
  - No opportunities to engage (average: 33.79%)
  - Language barriers to engagement (33.66%)
- A closer look at some of the national selection rates makes for sobering reading.
  - **Racial Discrimination**: Almost two thirds of respondents in **Spain (65.18%)** selected **'Racial discrimination'** as a barrier for racialised communities in their country, followed closely by

similarly high rates in **France (64.35%)**, **Belgium (62.71%)** and **Portugal (62.60%)**. **Ireland** was an outlier with **32.24%** reported.

- **Excluded**: Slightly over half of respondents in **Italy (51%)** selected **'Excluded'** as a barrier, followed by just under half in the case of **France (49.16%)**, **Spain (48.66%)** and **Belgium (48.14%)**.

- **Won't be heard**: A significant proportion of respondents from **Belgium (43.73%)** selected the feeling that they **'Won't be heard'** as a barrier for racialised communities in their country, with similarly high rates for **Austria (42.62%),** and **France (41.98%)**.

- **Fear:** Over a quarter of respondents from **Austria (26.23%)** selected **'Fear'** of engaging politically as a barrier for racialised communities there, followed by a quarter of respondents from **Italy (25%)**, and similarly high rates from **Germany (23.27%)** and **Portugal (23.17%)**.

Graph 6: Selection rates for option 'Racial discrimination' in QS5, across all countries.
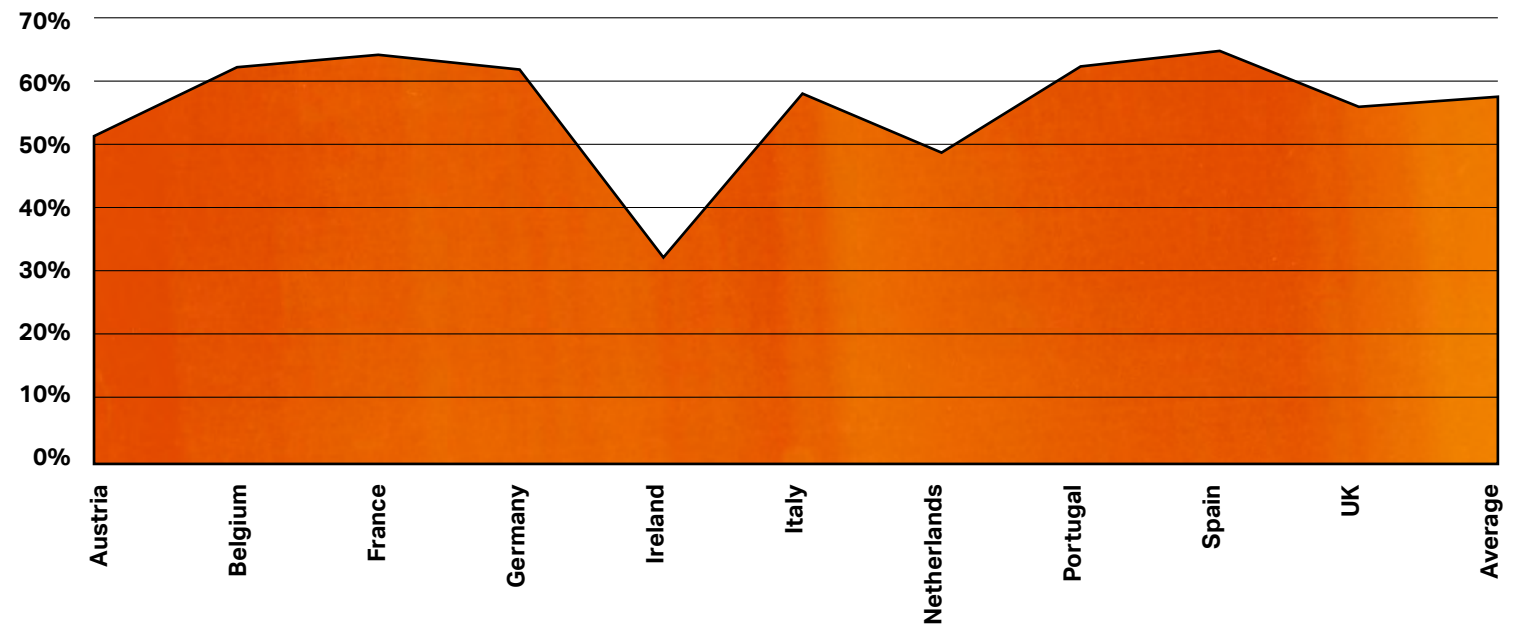
	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK	Average
Racial discrimination	51.37%	**62.71%**	**64.35%**	61.77%	32.24%	32.24%	49.85%	62.18%	**65.18%**	56.41%	**57.65%**

Graph 7: Selection rates for option 'Excluded' in QS5, across all countries.
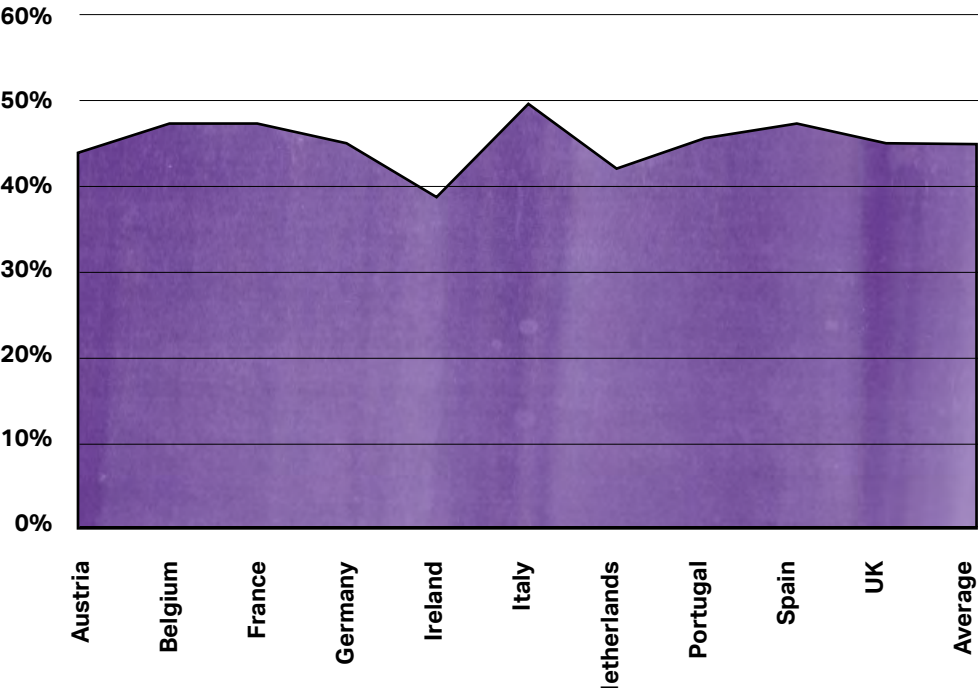
Graph 8: Selection rates for option 'Won't be heard' in QS5, across all countries.
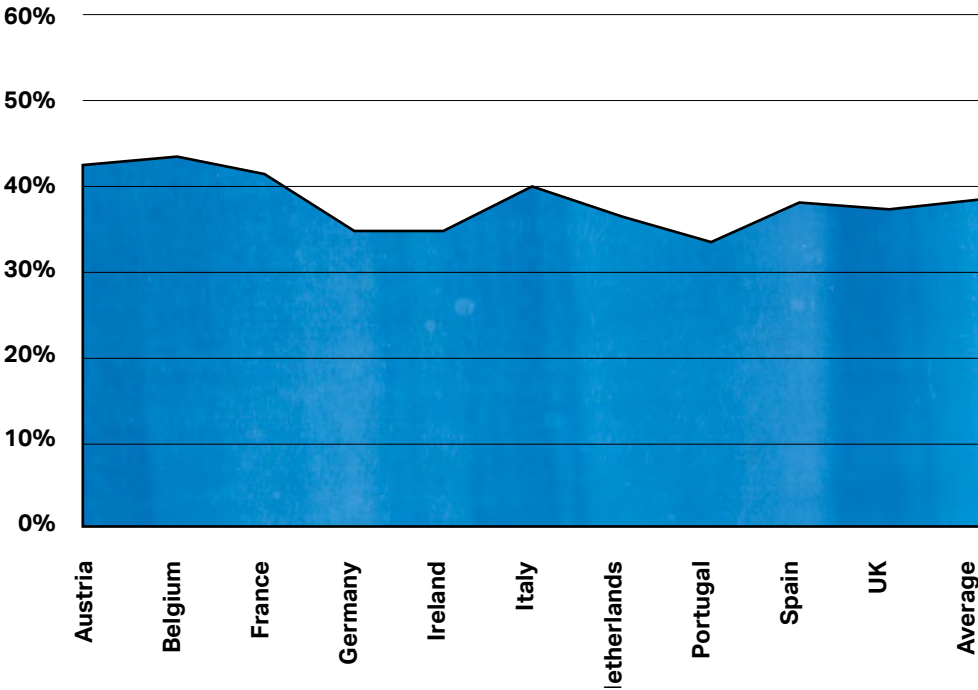
	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK	Average
Excluded	44.81%	48.14%	49.16%	46.54%	40.44%	51%	56.69%	47.15%	48.66%	46.72%	46.85%

	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK	Average
Won't be heard	42.62%	43.73%	41.98%	34.63%	35.52%	40%	36.31%	33.74%	37.95%	37.66%	38.42%

Summary

In summary, respondents to our survey overwhelmingly rated climate change as an 'Important' national issue [QS1], with proportions of responses indicating it as 'Important' (score 5 to 7) exceeding 75% in all but two of the countries - Italy (61%) and Spain (70.54%).

Other than Italy (29%) and Spain (25.45%), no country registered more than 1 in 5 respondents rating this as an 'Unimportant' national issue (score 1 to 3).

Respondents also overwhelmingly rated climate change as an 'Important' issue for themselves and their communities [QS2].

In all but 3 countries, 75% or more of respondents rated it as an 'Important' issue for themselves and their communities (score 5 to 7), with the exceptions being Italy (63%), Netherlands (71.38%) and Portugal (71.95%).

Only Italy (24.50%) and the Netherlands (21.23%) had more than 20% of respondents report climate change as 'Unimportant' for themselves and their communities (score 1 to 3).

Regarding their governments keeping them well informed about their plans and policies for tackling climate change [QS3], respondents showed a clear general

Graph 9: Selection rates for option 'Fear' in QS5, across all countries.
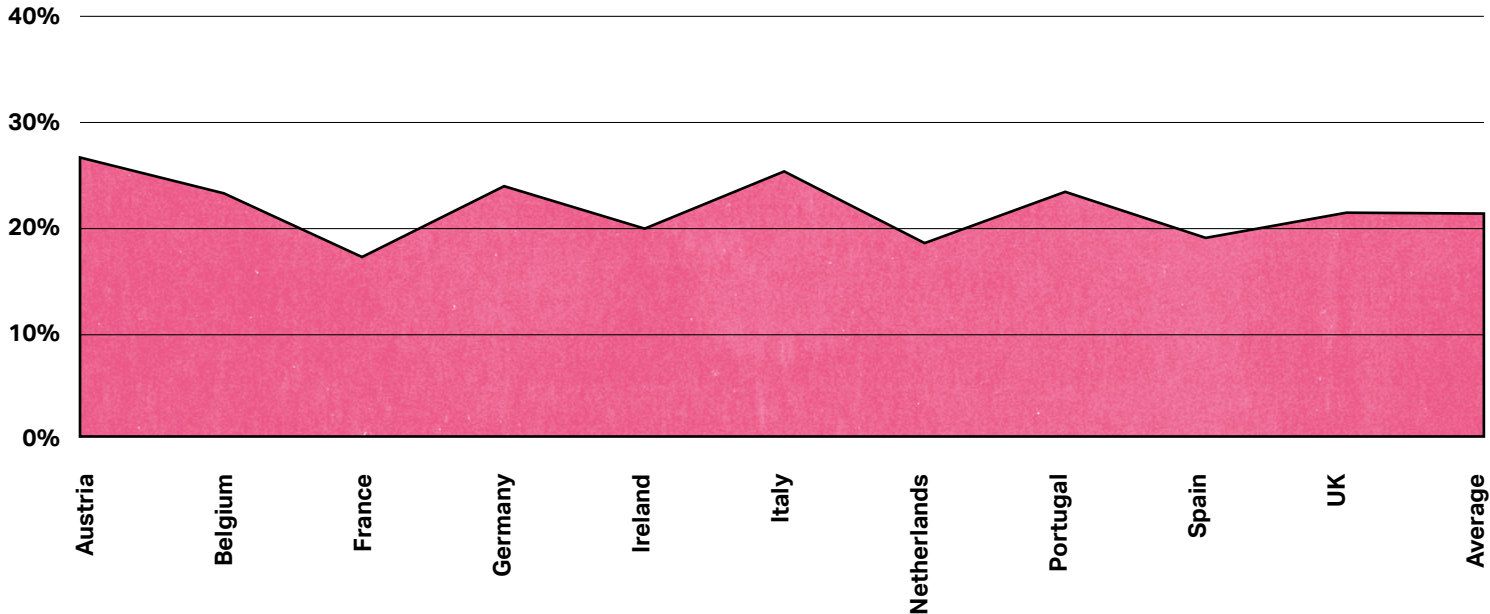
tendency to Disagree with the statement, with every country except Ireland (49.18%) recording a majority of respondents selecting a score indicating Disagreement with the statement (score 1 to 3).

The high proportion of respondents answering 'Neither Agree or Disagree/ Unsure' (score 4) was also notable.

And when asked whether respondents felt that people of a 'non-white' background in their country have just as much opportunity to influence its

climate policies as people of a white background [QS4] there was a clear general tendency to Disagree with the statement posed, with a majority scoring between 1 and 3 on the question.

The highest proportion of respondents Disagreeing with the statement could be found in Germany (82.04%), and the lowest proportion in Ireland (54.10%), with an overall mean value of 67.84% between countries.

The most prevalent barriers to such

opportunities [QS5] across the 10 countries were reported as being:

- Racial discrimination preventing engagement (average: 57.65%)

- Feeling excluded from the process (average: 46.85%)

- Feeling that they won't be heard (average: 38.42%)

- Lack of time to participate (average: 34.53%)

Table 9: Ranking of countries, Net 'Agree' rates for questions QS3 and QS4.

QS3										
Country	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Median	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK
Net agree	-56.28%	-47.80%	-32.91%	-68.70%	-16.39%	-38%	-47%	-31.38%	-68.29%	-65.63%	-49.53%
Ranking	-3	-1	+2	-6	+4	+1		+3	-5	-4	-2
Score	-6	-2	4	-12	8	2	0	6	-10	-8	-4

QS4										
Country	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Median	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK
Net agree	-65.57%	-66.10%	-51.27%	-76.73%	-20.77%	-41%	-53%	-31.08%	-61.79%	-76.34%	-42.34%
Ranking	-2	-3	+1	-5	+5	+3		+4	-1	-4	+2
Score	-4	-6	2	-10	10	6	0	8	-2	-8	4

- No opportunities to engage (average: 33.79%)
- Language barriers to engagement (33.66%)

Ranking

In order to compare survey findings between countries we developed a scoring and ranking system for questions QS3, QS4 and those responses from QS5 pertaining to the theme of social and political exclusion.

For questions QS3 and QS4 the formula used was as such:

i) The Net rate of 'Agree' responses was calculated[81];
ii) The median Net 'Agree' was calculated;
iii) Each country Net 'Agree' rate was compared to the Median Net 'Agree'. Countries with Net 'Agree' higher than the Median were assigned a positive ranking based in order, with a higher ranking corresponding to a high Net 'Agree'; Countries with Net 'Agree'[82] lower than the Median were assigned a negative ranking based in order;

iv) To apportion greater weight to these two questions, this ranking was multiplied by 2 to give a final score
The results can be seen in Table 9.

For QS5, the following selection choices were assessed, coded as barriers for 'social and political exclusion':

'Excluded'

'Won't be heard'

'Racial discrimination'

'Fear'

Scores were calculated as such:

i) **The Median selection rate for each choice was calculated;**

ii) **Each country's selection rate was compared to the Median Countries with selection rates higher than the Median were assigned a negative ranking based in order, with a higher ranking corresponding to a higher proportion of participants selecting this barrier; Countries with selection rates lower than the Median were assigned a positive ranking based in order, with a lower ranking**

Table 10: Ranking of countries, selection rates for 'social and political exclusion' barriers for QS5.

QS5: Excluded										
Country	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Median	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK
Selection	44.81%	48.14%	49.16%	46.54%	40.44%	51%	46.94%	43.69%	47.15%	48.66%	46.72%
Score	+3	-2	-4	+2	+5	-5	-	+4	-1	-3	+1

QS5: Won't be heard										
Country	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Median	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK
Selection	42.62%	43.73%	41.98%	34.63%	35.52%	40%	37.80%	36.31%	33.74%	37.95%	37.66%
Score	-4	-5	-3	+4	+3	-2	-	+2	+5	-1	+1

QS5: Racial discrimination										
Country	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Median	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK
Selection	51.37%	62.71%	64.35%	61.77%	32.24%	58%	59.89%	49.85%	62.60%	65.18%	56.41%
Score	+3	-3	-4	-1	+5	+1	-	+4	-2	-5	+2

QS5: Fear										
Country	Austria	Belgium	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Median	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	UK
Selection	26.23%	22.71%	17.09%	23.27%	19.67%	25%	21.82%	18.15%	23.17%	18.75%	20.94%
Score	-5	-1	+5	-3	+2	-4	-	+4	-2	+3	+1

corresponding to a lower proportion of participants selecting this barrier;

iii) **No extra weighting was applied to this question, so rankings were taken as scores.**

The results can be seen in Table 10.

Each country was given a baseline score of 50, with the respective scores for each question added or subtracted accordingly.

The final score was allocated a 'grade', using the following system:

Score 90+: Exemplary
80–89: Satisfactory
70–79: On the Right Track

Score 60–69: Needs Improvement
Score 50–59: Serious Improvement Needed
Score: 0–49: FAIL

		QS3	QS4	Excluded	Won't be heard	Racial discrimination	Fear	Total	Grade
	Score table								
Country									
	Austria	-6	-4	+3	-4	+3	-5	37	Fail
	Belgium	-2	-6	-2	-5	-3	-1	31	Fail
	France	4	2	-4	-3	-4	+5	50	Serious Improvement Needed
	Germany	-12	-10	+2	+4	-1	-3	30	Fail
	Ireland	8	10	+5	+3	+5	+2	83	Satisfactory
	Italy	2	6	-5	-2	-1	-4	48	Fail
	Netherlands	6	8	+4	+2	+4	+4	78	On The Right Track
	Portugal	-10	-2	-1	+5	-2	-2	38	Fail
	Spain	-8	-8	-3	-1	-5	+3	38	Fail
	UK	-4	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	55	Serious Improvement Needed
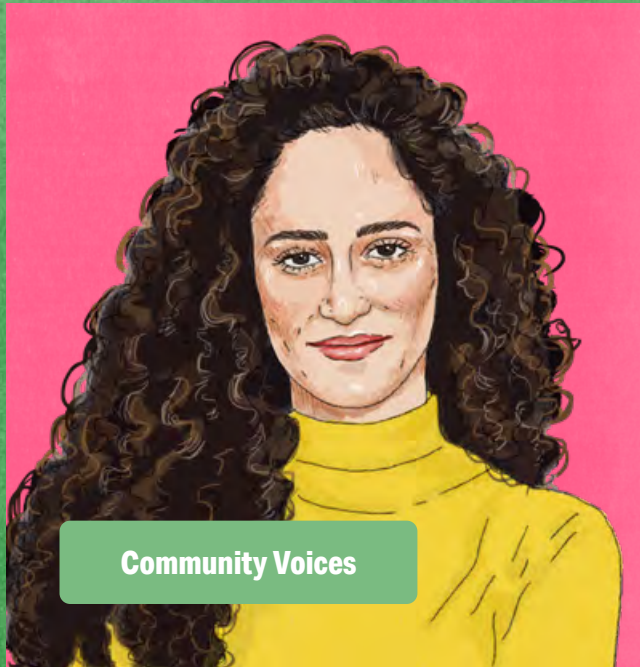
Community Voices

Contradictions within the Dutch climate movement come to the fore: climate justice, race and Palestine in 2023

By Alina Jabbari

As the winner of the PAX Peace Prize 2023, Dutch-Afghan activist Sahar Shirzad was invited as a speaker on stage during Amsterdam's climate march on Saturday November 12th, 2023.

Recognising the interconnectedness of ecocide and genocide, she decided to give her speaking time to a Palestinian activist named Sarah. Once Sarah drew parallels with climate activism and anti-militarism, and spoke out against Israel's genocide in Gaza, including the statement "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free", the microphone was silenced, and security removed them both from stage.

Later, when the climate activist Greta Thunberg appeared on stage, she decided to give the microphone back to Sahar Shirzad. Once Greta herself drew parallels between genocide and ecocide in her own address, a marcher in the audience climbed on stage and snatched her microphone stating, "I came here for a climate march, not for a political view". Whereas earlier security had taken Sahar and Sarah off stage, they provided no protection to Greta, leaving it to Sahar and Sarah to help her get her microphone back from the man. Only after that, was he carried off of stage. Greta continued by chanting "No climate justice on occupied land!".

Sahar Shirzad has since revealed that she was the only speaker at the demonstration who received instructions on what **not** to speak about: while she was invited to speak about "war and peace" in general terms, she was not supposed to mention the words "genocide" or "ethnic cleansing" - clearly silencing her ability to address the wanton violence being inflicted upon the Palestinian people at that very moment. She was also required to stress that her position did not reflect that of the organisers.[83]

An emblem of tensions within the Dutch climate movement

Both the shocking incident on-stage, and the march organisers' pre-emptive attempts at censoring Shirzad, reflects the level of discomfort within the Dutch climate movement to address issues of race, racism, and anti-colonialism - which itself reflects a wider tension within climate movements in the Global North.

This corresponds with Bolivian-Dutch artist and climate organiser Chihiro Geuzebroek's extensive piece on her experience as well as that of other people of colour in the Dutch climate movement.[84] Herein she explains the systematic exclusion of people of colour in the movement, the way they are made to feel unsafe within the movement, as well as how realities such as environmental racism or colonialism are minimised, denied, and excluded as important dimensions in the climate movement. Geuzebroek recounts how for fourteen years she heard that "now is not the time" to speak about climate racism and the gatekeeping that happens to systematically exclude indigenous voices in the Dutch climate movement. For example, when a collective requested to join the climate march with a bloc for Palestine, the organisations in charge rejected their application.

Additionally, in a further piece documented three people of colour-led initiatives sharing their experiences of exclusion in the climate movement, all the while actively fighting for climate justice in their respective communities.[85] These included Raki Ap of the Free West Papua campaign, Inge Pierre of the Surinamese Kaikoesie Foundation, and Brian Hukom of the BAMM Project (Beta Alifuru Maluku Melanesia).

Above all, these reflect a failure of the Dutch movement to properly embrace the concept of climate justice. In fact, the term 'climate justice' itself is rarely heard outside the more activist circles.

The larger climate debate is dominated by apolitical views on the environment, represented as a matter of mere statistics. Consequently, this detachment with, for example, the impact of war on the climate mirrors a wider perception that various issues stand in isolation from each other, making it easy not only to problematise people of colour as the ones causing the 'polarisation' of the movement, but also leading to a failure to draw parallels between the plight of refugees and the climate, or poverty, racism and overexposure to air pollution.

In order to address this divide within the Dutch climate movement, it is critical that movements for climate justice such as

Extinction Rebellion collaborate more with indigenous and racialised communities standing for climate justice. In November 2023, a first step was already made when Extinction Rebellion worked together with the collective fighting against the racist blackface figure/tradition 'Black Pete' in the Netherlands, with XR utilising their methods of disruptive actions to disturb the racist festivities. I believe it is only through building such collaborations that an actual sustainable, principled movement can be built to fight climate injustice in the Netherlands.

Finally, I believe a lot can change when the stages during the climate marches are used to reflect the realities confronting racialised and colonised people, enabling the development of greater solidarity, an exchange of knowledge, and a deeper commitment to justice. As Chihiro Geuzebroek states: *"If they truly understood that Indigenous peoples protect eighty percent of the remaining biodiversity, perhaps they would have committed to dedicating eighty percent of the speaking time on the stage to Indigenous climate justice struggles. Then, they could have learned a lot about Palestine because Indigenous environmental groups like The Red Nation, Indigenous Climate Action, or Indigenous Environmental Network all express solidarity with Palestine through actions, banners, statements, and podcasts. Why? Because they recognize themselves in the genocide taking place there, and recognize that this is scorched-earth colonialism, which was invented with the colonization of the Americas."*

Author Biography

Alina is an interdisciplinary scholar who is passionate about creating decolonial inclusive communities and envisioning practical ways to manifest transformative justice. Her research interests are in the field of religion, power, collective memory and resistance, asking how individuals navigate scripture amidst their daily reality in structures of oppression and violence. She currently works as a Grant Advisor for the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

Conclusion & Recommendations

05

The picture we have found is that racialised communities in western Europe, in line with wider populations in Europe, are overwhelmingly concerned about the climate crisis, but negative about their governments' communication regarding climate action plans and, more importantly, about their ability to shape the climate agenda in their countries.

There are certainly limitations to the present study - more pertinently, we would encourage future research to build upon the insights we have offered, including through larger and more representative sample sets.

Yet these findings reveal a disturbing level of disenfranchisement and exclusion among racialised communities in Europe, which has ramifications not just for climate action, but for democracy more broadly.

As we have pointed out throughout this report, the scale of racism in Europe is not just a social crisis, but a political crisis.

The picture we have gotten from our research is therefore that racialised communities are:

- Stigmatised and excluded in European society,

- Bearing the brunt of racial and class injustices which confine them to settlement in zones of squalor and environmental harms,

- Excluded and marginalised from spaces to shape and influence climate policy, and therefore

- Drawing little benefit from mainstream climate initiatives. Below we outline steps that can be taken by the EU, national governments of the countries we have addressed, as well as their local climate movements, can take to build a robust climate justice movement that meaningfully addresses the intersection of climate policy and race/ism.

Healthy environments: Monitoring and tackling exposure to climate harms

The policies governing settlement and the spatial concentration of racialised communities in European cities is a key factor in their exposure to environmental harms. This also intersects with an array of policy areas and social phenomena - including social housing, and the factors which compel racialised and migrants to settle near to one another for support - which we would not be able to provide generalisable recommendations for.

Nonetheless it is not acceptable that socially excluded populations should therefore be excluded or 'overlooked' from protection against the clear and present danger of environmental harms. As our roundtables and literature review established, disenfranchised communities often face a penalty through policy decisions, such as the placement of polluting infrastructure, over which they are afforded little consultation or democratic accountability despite the harm incurred.

Exposure of populations should be monitored and the cumulative environmental impact on communities should be tracked. Moreover laws such as the proposed Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill in Britain's Parliament, which would mandate the British government to act to bring air quality to the minimum standards of the World Health Organization, and to set up a commission to oversee government progress towards this, should be replicated.

Recommendations

European Union

1. Provide comprehensive reports on the cumulative environmental impacts on marginalised communities, on a bi-yearly basis.

2. Mandate member states to ensure that the siting and implementation of known pollution sources - such as industrial zones and factories, waste incinerators and waste sites - are subject to proper democratic consultation with impacted local communities prior to implementation, and that information on the pollution and harms from such sources are communicated openly in multiple languages.

3. Mandate member states to report progress made on environmental justice every two years. All surveys and research must be co-produced with marginalised communities.

4. Support the establishment of a comprehensive and inclusive national public transportation systems across member states that are accessible, well-connected, integrated, and affordable, prioritising the needs of racially marginalised communitie, addressing historical inequities and systemic barriers faced by people of color in the next iteration of the EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy.

5. Mandate member states to ensure that the siting and implementation of known pollution sources - such as industrial zones and factories, waste incinerators and waste sites - are subject to proper democratic consultation with impacted local communities prior to implementation, and that information on the pollution and harms from such sources are communicated openly in multiple languages via the new iteration of the Green Deal Industrial Plan.

6. Integrate mitigations of the adverse impacts of climate change on racialised populations within the implementation of the revised Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).

7. Launch an extensive housing retrofit of homes across member states, aiming to decrease emissions and utility costs, with particular attention to addressing historical disparities and systemic barriers faced by marginalised racial communities via the revised EPBD.

National Governments

1. Implement legislation enshrining a national obligation to ensure that air quality is within World Health Organisation limits, with clear mechanisms of accountability and repair for authorities where this is not met.

2. Implement legislation to ensure that the siting and implementation of known pollution sources - such as industrial zones and factories, waste incinerators and waste sites - are subject to proper democratic consultation with impacted local communities prior to implementation, and that information on the pollution and harms from such sources are communicated widely, including in alternative locally-spoken languages were necessary.

4. Guarantee that all communities, regardless of race, have access to well-maintained public green spaces,

in accordance with World Health Organization guidelines stipulating that every individual resides within 300 meters of such areas.

5. Prioritise community involvement and consultation in the planning and development of public green spaces to ensure they meet the gender and racial specific needs and preferences of diverse communities.

6. Ensure that access to well-maintained, public green space is available and accessible to all according to World Health Organization recommendations that all people reside within 300 metres of green space.

7. To collect data on environmental quality, pollution, and public health outcomes disaggregated by race to identify disproportionately affected communities. Work with institutions led by marginalised and racialised communities to ensure that this information is disseminated widely, and translated into alternative languages were necessary.

8. Endeavour to make public transportation accessible and affordable for all.

9. Ensure that racialised communities receive significant public education, technical assistance, as well as generating public-facing data and platforms to help communities learn about the impacts of the climate emergency.

10. Ensure equitable access to safe, decent, and affordable housing in alignment with the latest UN guidelines, with a focus on recognising sufficient housing as a fundamental human right.

11. Integrate mitigations of the adverse impacts of climate change on racialised populations within the EU Buildings Directive.

12. Set up a dedicated fund to remediate environmental damage in racialised neighbourhoods, with priorities based on community feedback. Fund should also support the creation of new green spaces and sustainable community projects led by local residents.

Climate movements

1. To campaign for the implementation of legislation enshrining a national obligation to ensure that air quality is within World Health Organisation limits, with clear mechanisms of accountability and repair for authorities where this is not met, akin to 'Ella's Law' proposed in Britain.

2. Campaign for the establishment and proper implementation of housing regulation, rather than allowing them to become 'tickbox exercises'.

No climate justice without social justice

There must be greater political recognition of race/ism as important determinants in both environmental harms, and in the lack of social resources to ameliorate these harms.

The political substance of climate action is decidedly mixed across Europe. As this research has illustrated, a climate movement in Europe is untenable without a commitment to social justice principles, not least on questions of race/ism and international justice which take a global view of climate change.

This goes beyond simple obligations around 'inclusivity': a narrow climate-as-climate movement and will only serve to harden contradictions and divisions between social justice-oriented campaigning and climate campaigning, while contributing to the perception of European climate organising as an 'elitist'

or parochially Global North movement.

Moreover, such a parochial conception of climate action would enable governments to continue the status quo approach of corporate-friendly climate policies, by balancing climate obligations against corporate interests in a manner that perpetuates racial, class and other oppressions, or 'offload' climate obligations on to marginalised or excluded populations through forms of non-progressive taxation while leaving big polluters unscathed.

While climate campaigners especially should attend to this as a matter of priority - as without this, they will be unable to mobilise or harness the organising potential of marginalised people who fail to see their democratic aspirations included within climate organising - governments should also be pressured to adopt social justice-oriented and socially equitable approaches to their climate policies, beyond token gestures around 'Just Transitions'.

This would ensure that climate policies adopted and advanced by them are grounded in the social realities of marginalised communities vulnerable to climate change.

Recommendations

European Union

1. Establish an office of Climate Justice Accountability within the European Commission, which will identify and eliminate barriers to inclusion, investigate dubious practices, monitor the progress of the green transition and require all environmental legislation or regulation introduced by the European Union to receive an equity score created by climate experts and community organisers. It will also make sure that all facets of the EU commission are being held accountable for climate equity.

2. To ensure the integration of the impact of climate related racism into EU-mandated National Action Plans Against Racism (NAPAR) to address systemic injustices faced by racialised communities in member states.

3. Mandate that all European Green Deal initiatives undergo Racial Equity Impact Assessments to identify potential disparate impacts on racialised communities. Recommendations from these assessments should be integrated into policy development to ensure equitable benefits and mitigate adverse effects.

4. Require cultural competency training for all individuals involved in implementing Green Deal initiatives, focusing on understanding the cultural, social, and economic contexts of racialised communities. This training should be developed in collaboration with civil society organisations from these communities to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

5. The Green New Deal must prioritse the funding of capacity building and leadership development programmes designed to prepare racialised youth for roles in environmental policy-making and sustainability leadership. These Programmes should include mentorships, fellowships, and placements within European institutions and NGOs focused on environmental policy.

6. The EU Innovation Fund must specifically support sustainability projects led by racialised communities, fostering local solutions to environmental challenges. These funds should encourage experimental approaches and community-led research into sustainable practices that can be scaled and replicated.

National Governments

1. EU mandated Multilevel Energy and Climate Dialogues must actively include communities of colour as a key stakeholder in public participation and analysis of the member states National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) and national Long Term Strategies (LTSs).

2. Ensure that relevant 'just transition' processes are inclusive of informalised workforces and racialised communities, so that they are not left out of such transition initiatives.

3. Push the European Parliament to ensure the integration of the impact of climate related racism into EU-mandated National Action Plans Against Racism (NAPAR) to address systemic injustices faced by racialised communities in member states.

4. Push the European Parliament for the establishment of an office of Climate Justice Accountability within the European Commission.

5. Tackle economic disparities, especially wage and pension gaps, exacerbated by systemic injustices. Empower marginalised communities, particularly people of color, to navigate and counteract climate crisis impacts. Implement policies recognising and addressing race and economic inequality, ensuring equitable participation in climate resilience efforts.

6. Quotas or targets must be implemented for the employment of racialised individuals in new green jobs created by Green Deal investments, especially in sectors like renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and green construction. Efforts should be made to partner with vocational schools and universities to create pipelines for racialised students into green jobs, including internships and apprenticeships with green companies.

7. Regulations must be introduced that prevent displacement of racialised communities as a result of urban greening projects and gentrification. Policies should ensure that improvements in housing energy efficiency and urban redevelopment directly benefit the current residents, with rent controls and right-to-return policies if relocation is necessary.

8. A comprehensive health monitoring framework must be devleoped in racialised communities to assess the impact of environmental changes brought by Green Deal initiatives. This framework should facilitate

rapid health interventions and adjustments to policies if negative health trends are detected

Climate movements

1. Adopt a climate justice framework and ethos, and seek to build a climate movement that has antiracism, migrant justice and internationalism as its cornerstones, by integrating climate campaigns with struggles against poor and unregulated housing, anti-migrant policing, racism, Islamophobia and fascism.

2. Campaign actively for the exclusion of far-right parties and groups from participating in climate campaigns and rallies, to preclude them 'greenwashing' their image.

3. Pledge to adopt a racial lens to all forms of research and advocacy undertaken by organisations within the movement.

Battle Europe's democratic deficit

As illustrated numerous times in this report, Europe is suffering a deep democratic deficit. In the face of upcoming European Parliament elections, the EU too suffers from the perception - and to a large extent, reality - of being an undemocratic institution guided disproportionately by the whims of the European Commission. This deficit expresses itself as a deep scepticism of policy delivered by national governments and the EU, leaving them vulnerable to the kind of right-wing anti-climate backlash currently being witnessed across Europe and against the European Green Deal.

Therefore, tackling barriers to political engagement is essential. In this respect, tackling the exclusion of racialised populations in Europe - especially migrant and refugee populations - is of paramount importance. The social and political exclusion of these populations is at the fulcrum of far-right mobilisations across Europe, and addressing through concerted, meaningful action can be the antidote to the growing strength of reaction across Europe.

A basic, but vital, pre-requisite to this includes a commitment to monitor statistics around race/ethnicity in Europe, with a view to be able to better identify the distribution of social and environmental harms facing racialised populations.

Racialised communities, as with the rest of the population, should be approached as collective, participatory agents for climate action rather than just 'service users'. Various barriers exist to hinder this: including racial discrimination, the culture/priorities of existing climate action initiatives, and practical barriers to political engagement. Social and physical exclusion breeds political exclusion of racialised communities, with undocumented migrants/asylum seekers subject to these in their most intense forms through both de jure/de facto discrimination.

Government-level initiatives must seek to cultivate and protect the political and social participation of racialised and disenfranchised communities. This can include positive action and, where fitting and lawful, positive discrimination and guaranteed representation to foster participation in relevant political forums. Governments should also meaningfully engage the institutions in which racialised communities are already self-organising on matters of climate: the example of faith institutions, like mosques, should not be precluded from engaging and advising on issues such as climate and social policy, as roundtable participants have described.

So too must we seek to extend the practice of popular democratic forms, beyond the formalities of state institutions. This report has attested to the positive experiences and appetite among racialised groups for forms of self-organisation, rather than simply incorporating excluded groups into 'mainstream' institutions where they have become tokenised or marginalised in other forms. These forms of self-organisation, through caucuses or the establishment of entirely new organisations led by racialised people, should be something welcomed as a step towards more meaningful, durable relations and collaboration between social groups on a more equal footing - rather than simply written off as examples of 'separatism'. Support for resourcing such initiatives is also vital, and climate movements should be attentive to the need, directing funding opportunities towards such climate initiatives where available.

Therefore, aspiring to these forms of rooted, popular democracy and self-determination are not abstract demands, but cut to the heart of the democratic deficit that we have encountered throughout the roundtables. These would create the conditions for the broader engagement of racialised communities in the political sphere, their absence from which is often bemoaned without being fully grappled with.

Recommendations

European Union

1. Establish a European-level interagency process to ensure that marginalised communities are consulted and actively involved in

carrying out the implementation of the European Green Deal.

2. Scale the European Climate Pact into a mass citizen consultation where voices from marginalised communities are supported and amplified.

National Governments

1. Foster and support the participation of those self-organised and/or informalised institutions of racialised communities, such as faith institutions, to engage in policymaking discussions and processes around climate.

2. Foster and support the participation of racialised communities in democratic forums and processes relating to climate policy including, as and where applicable and lawful, through positive action, positive discrimination and/or guaranteed representation. Ensure that amnesty is provided for any undocumented migrants that are encouraged to engage in such processes also, so that they are not deterred by fear of repercussion.

3. Endeavour to actively carry out democratic forums and processes such as consultations and assemblies, are carried out in districts and

areas known to be populated by racialised and migrant populations.

4. Make available ringfenced, unconditional grant funding for civil society organisations led by racialised groups working on climate to support their work.

5. Include voluntary ethnicity monitoring in census and other population-mapping exercises to better map the distribution of racialised communities, and to enable more informed national discussions on the impact of environmental harms upon them. France: Amend the 1978 law of information and freedom to make lawful the collection of ethnicity data.

6. Ensure all communications, public consultations, and educational materials related to the Green Deal are available in the predominant languages of racialised communities within each member state. Digital platforms should be developed that offer interactive and community-specific guidance on engaging with Green Deal initiatives.

Climate movements

1. Seek to develop networks of mutual solidarity with other movements, campaigns and civil society organisations in your countries that

tackle issues relating to race/ism, migrants' rights and climate justice in the Global South, particularly those self-organised by racialised groups. Recognise where a division of organising labour may need to be negotiated with such groups to enable racialised individuals to participate in climate action without exposing them to undue risk of repression.

Annexes

06

Annex A: Roundtable questions

1) Priorities

a) **What is the level of support or coverage of social/state services for racialised populations** (e.g. access to healthcare, public transport, housing) compared to the white-native population?

  i) Have there been any moves to narrow or restrict access to these services, directly or indirectly, for racialised communities in recent years?

b) **What environmental harms are racialised communities particularly vulnerable to/impacted by** (for example, living in high pollution zones, concentrated near toxic/waste disposal sites?)

  ii) Are these racialised vulnerabilities part of the public debate around policymaking in the country, or are they downplayed/ignored?
  iii) Have there been any important incidents/scandals regarding climate harms and racialised communities in your country that we should note?

2) Policy

a) What major pieces of policy/legislation have been passed in your country to respond to the climate crisis within the past 10 years?

i) To what degree, if any, were the needs of racialised communities actively incorporated into these policies?

b) Has the direction of travel of climate policy in your country moved in a *positive* or *negative* direction in the last 10 years, in your opinion?

  i) Why do you believe so?
  ii) Have there been any major faultlines to climate policy, or climate sceptic parties gaining strength?

c) Do you believe that climate policies in your country are fit to deal with the specific harms and vulnerabilities impacting racialised communities?

  i) If not, what would need to be done to make them so?

3) Political engagement

a) To what degree would you say that racialised communities have a say in shaping climate policy in your country?
b) Have there been important milestones or incidents in your country regarding racialised communities or anti-racism and the climate that should be noted?
c) What, in your opinion, is needed to meaningfully address the racialised disparities in the climate crisis?

Annex B: Survey questions

- This survey seeks to explore perceptions among populations considered 'non-white' about climate policies in Western Europe.

- Our target group for this survey are people that are **racialised** as 'non white' in Europe, and who live in the following countries: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the UK

1) We would like to know a bit about you
1a) What is your age?
1b) Please state your gender
1c) Which country do you live in permanently?
1d) What is your ethnicity/ethnic group?*
1e) What is your religion?

Now we would like to ask you some questions about your opinions on climate change and climate policies in your country
QS1) How important do you consider climate change to be as a **national issue?*** *(Do you believe it is a matter your government should be spending their time on?) (1: Very Unimportant 7: Very Important 4: Neither/Unsure)*

QS2) How important do you consider climate change to be for **you and your community** in particular?* *(Is climate change a matter of concern among yourself, your family or community - or not?) (1: Very Unimportant 7: Very Important 4: Neither/Unsure)*

a) Please could you explain your response for the previous question *(What are the main reasons for your ranking?)*

QS3) How much do you agree with the following statement: *'I feel that my government keeps me well informed about their plans and policies for tackling climate change'* (1: Completely Disagree - They **don't inform me** at all about their plans 7: Completely Agree - They keep me **fully and actively informed** about their plans 4: Neither Agree nor Disagree/Unsure)

a) Please could you explain your ranking for the previous question? *(What does your government do to make you believe this?)*

QS4) How much would you agree with the following statement: *'I feel that people of a 'non-white' background in my country have just as much opportunity to influence its climate policies as people of a white background'* (1: Completely Disagree - They have **far less** opportunity 7: Completely Agree - They have **full and complete** opportunity 4: Neither Agree nor Disagree/Unsure).

QS5) What would you consider the main **barriers** for 'non-white' communities in influencing climate policy in your country?*
(Please tick as many as apply)

A: Language barriers to engagement

B: Lack of interest

C: Lack of time

D: Feeling excluded from the process

E: Feeling that they won't be heard

F: Racial discrimination preventing engagement

G: Values/priorities of climate discussions not in alignment

H: No opportunities provided to do so

I: Fear of engaging with politics

J: Other reason (Please state)

9) What other barriers do you think are preventing 'non-white' communities from influencing climate policy?

Endnotes

07

1   Paris Agreement text (2015). United Nations. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

2   The Just Transition Mechanism: making sure no one is left behind (nd). European Commission. https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/finance-and-green-deal/just-transition-mechanism_en

3   Just Energy Transition Partnerships: Market Capture Or Climate Justice? (2023). Union of Justice. https://www.unionofjustice.com/s/JETP-Market-Capture-or-Climate-Justice.pdf

4   Glatter-Götz, Helene & Mohai, Paul & Haas, Willi & Plutzar, Christoph. (2019). "Environmental Inequality in Austria: Do inhabitants' socioeconomic characteristics differ depending on their proximity to industrial polluters?". Environmental Research Letters. 14. 10.1088/1748-9326/ab1611.

5   Guest contributions in this report have made use of other terms, for example 'people of colour' or 'ethnic minorities'

6   It is of course necessary to point out that this is a shorthand; every individual and group is by definition 'racialised', including those considered 'white'. Therefore, in the questionnaire which formed part of this project we used the longer term 'people that are racialised as 'non white''.

7   Shafi, Azfar & Nagdee, Ilyas (2022). Race to the Bottom: Reclaiming Antiracism. Pluto Press: London

8   European Commission (2019). Portugal's Census 2021 will not ask about ethnicity. Available at: https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/news/portugals-census-2021-will-not-ask-about-ethnicity_en

9   Ethnic-based statistics. Insee. https://www.insee.fr/en/information/2388586

10   Alexander, Claire. (2018) Breaking black: the death of ethnic and racial studies in Britain, Ethnic and Racial Studies, 41:6, 1034-1054, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2018.1409902

11   Hamdache, Benali (2022). Distorted reporting of the 2021 census echoes a racist conspiracy theory. Open Democracy. Available at: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/2021-census-great-replacement-theory-racist-data-media-white-christians-england-wales/

12   Taylor, Matthew & Duncan, Pamela (2023). Revealed: almost everyone in Europe is breathing toxic air. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/sep/20/revealed-almost-everyone-in-europe-breathing-toxic-air

13   Schutter, Liesbeth & Wieland, Hanspeter & Gözet, Burcu & Giljum, Stefan. (2017). "Environmental Inequality in Europe." Wien: Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte für Wien.

14   Schwarz, L., Benmarhnia, T., & Laurian, L. (2015). "Social Inequalities Related to Hazardous Incinerator Emissions: An Additional Level of Environmental Injustice". Environmental Justice, 8(6), 213–219. doi:10.1089/env.2015.0022

15   Schutter, Liesbeth et al. (2017). "Environmental Inequality in Europe."

16   ibid

17   Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey - Being Black in the EU (2018). European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-being-black-in-the-eu_en.pdf

18   Glatter-Götz, Helene et al. (2019). "Environmental Inequality in Austria: Do inhabitants' socioeconomic characteristics differ depending on their proximity to industrial polluters?".

19   Consisting largely of the states of Western and Central Europe: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the UK

20   Glatter-Götz, Helene et al. (2019). "Environmental Inequality in Austria: Do inhabitants' socioeconomic characteristics differ depending on their proximity to industrial polluters?". Environmental Research Letters. 14.

21   Laurian, L., & Funderburg, R. (2013). "Environmental justice in France? A spatio-temporal analysis of incinerator location". Journal of Environmental Planning and Management, 57(3), 424–446. doi:10.1080/09640568.2012.749395

22   Schwarz, L., Benmarhnia, T., & Laurian, L. (2015). "Social Inequalities Related to Hazardous Incinerator Emissions: An Additional Level of Environmental Injustice". Environmental Justice, 8(6), 213–219. doi:10.1089/env.2015.0022

23   Kapoor, Alba & Hood, Simon & Youssef, Nannette (2022). Confronting Injustice: Racism and the environmental emergency. Runnymede Trust/Greenpeace. Available at: https://www.runnymedetrust.org/publications/confronting-injustice-racism-and-the-environmental-emergency

24   ibid

25   Ella Kissi-Debrah death: Air pollution recorded as cause of nine-year-old's death in first ever case for UK. Sky News. Available at: https://news.sky.com/story/ella-kissi-debrah-death-air-pollution-recorded-as-cause-of-nine-year-olds-death-in-first-ever-case-for-uk-12164155

26   More than 1.2 million people have been discriminated against in Portugal - 2023 (2023). Statistics Portugal. Available at: https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaques&DESTAQUESdest_boui=625453018&DESTAQUESmodo=2

27   Pobreza Energética. https://pobrezaenergetica.pt

28   Correia, Sara (2024). Seca no Algarve: um problema que exige soluções urgentes e integradas. zero. Available at: https://zero.org/blog/seca-no-algarve-um-problema-que-exige-solucoes-urgentes-e-integradas/29 Lista das ONGA e equiparadas registadas no Registo Naciona. Available at: https://apambiente.pt/sites/default/files/2021-06/Lista das associações%20 registadas no RNOE.pdf

30   See: www.anastacia.pt.

31   Fecht, D., Fischer, P., Fortunato, L., Hoek, G., de Hoogh, K., Marra, M., Hanneke K., Vienneau, D., Beelen, R. & Hansell, A. (2015). "Associations between air pollution and socioeconomic characteristics, ethnicity and age profile of neighbourhoods in England and the Netherlands". Environmental Pollution, 198, 201–210. doi:10.1016/j.envpol.2014.12.014

32   Schutter, Liesbeth & Wieland, Hanspeter & Gözet, Burcu & Giljum, Stefan. (2017). "Environmental Inequality in Europe." Wien: Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte für Wien. (Emphasis added)

33   Environment: Commission takes action against UK for persistent air pollution problems (2014). European Commission. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_14_154

34   Mitchell, Gordon & Norman, Paul & Mullin, Karen. (2015). "Who benefits from environmental policy? An environmental justice analysis of air quality change in Britain, 2001–2011". Environmental Research Letters. 10. 105009. 10.1088/1748-9326/10/10/105009.

35   Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (2021). Environmental Justice, the Climate Crisis and people of African descent A/HRC/48/78. Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session48/Documents/A_HRC_48_78.docx

36   Youth Work Ireland (2020). Climate Injustice Report. Available at: https://www.youthworkireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Youth_Work_Ireland_Climate_Injustice_Report_Final_1.pdf

37   Chambers, Alice (2023). Swimming restrictions hit over half of all Irish bathing waters this summer. Noteworthy. Available at: https://www.noteworthy.ie/red-flag-6186539-Oct2023

38   O'Doherty, Caroline (2024). Ireland will not meet 2030 emissions and energy targets, EU assessment warns. Irish Independent. Available at: https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/ireland-will-not-meet-2030-emissions-and-energy-targets-eu-assessment-warns/a1316931982.html

39   Acker, William (2021). Où sont les « gens du voyage » ? Inventaire critique des aires d'accueil. https://www.editionsducommun.org/products/ou-sont-les-gens-du-voyage-william-acker

40   Mondeilh A, Brabant G, Haidar S, Saboni L, Ruello M, Lesieur S, Castor C, Autes-Treand E, Le Strat Y, Vandentorren S. "Health status, healthcare use and child MMR vaccination coverage in Travellers according to their environmental and living conditions in Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France, 2019-2022." Eur J Public Health. 2023 Dec 9;33(6):1194-1199. doi: 10.1093/eurpub/ckad175. PMID: 37889591; PMCID: PMC10710340.

41   Bulletin épidémiologique hebdomadaire (BEH) n°4

publié le 20/02/2024 par Santé Publique France

42 Roma and Travellers in six countries (2020). European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2020/roma-travellers-survey

43 The Austrian government has since 2019 consisted of a coalition with the Austrian Green Party (Die Grünen Die Grüne Alternative - The Greens The Green Alternative) as junior partners with the conservative ÖVP (Österreichische Volkspartei - Austrian People's Party).

44 Di Sario, Federica & Leali, Giorgio (2023). Macron's calls for 'regulatory pause' in EU environmental laws wink at conservatives. Politico. Available at: https://www.politico.eu/article/emmauel-macron-the-eu-sophies-choice-moment-juggling-growth-and-the-environment/

45 PFOS (Perfluorooctane Sulfonate) is a type of PFAS (Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances), a set of synthetic 'forever chemicals', which when released as part of industrial waste can contaminate soil and water and have deeply damaging effects on human health.

46 Chlordecone is a pesticide used in banana plantations in the French territories of Martinique and Guadeloupe despite being classified as potentially carcinogenic by WHO since the 1970s. Through usage it has passed through the food chain to contaminate almost the entirety of the territories: with over 90% of the human population being subject to contamination.

47 An island off the east coast of southern Africa that forms part of France's overseas territories.

48 The factory in question, the Chemours (formerly Du Pont) chemical plant in Dordrecht set up in 1962, was held liable by a Dutch court for releasing PFAS which contaminated the groundwater supply of residents, despite the company being aware of its toxicity since the 1960s. See: Dutch court holds chemical factory accountable for leaching PFAS (2023). igrac. Available at: https://www.un-igrac.org/stories/dutch-court-holds-chemical-factory-accountable-leaching-pfas

49 Black Pete/Zwarte Piet is companion of Saint Nicholas, and a Christmas tradition in the Netherlands involves wearing black face paint, red lipstick and curly wigs to represent Black Pete as a Moor; in a manner very similar to racist 'blacking up' in US minstrel shows. Antiracist campaigners in the Netherlands have long been battling against the tradition.

50 A historically working-class borough in East London, with a high proportion of Black residents.

51 Traffic-easing schemes to re-route vehicles away from certain streets.

52 A law introduced partly as a response to climate justice actions and Black Lives Matter demonstrations, which seeks to criminalise forms of protest in Britain.

53 Cohen, Li. (2023) U.S.The "heat island effect" traps cities in domes of extreme temperatures. Experts only expect it to get worse. CBS News. Available at: https://www.cbsnews.com/news/heat-island-effect-dome-extreme-temperatures-experts

54 Gilbert, Abel (2024). América Latina vive una oleada sin precedentes de migraciones por desastres climáticos. El Periodico. Available at: https://www.elperiodico.com/es/sociedad/20240303/america-latina-refugiados-climaticos-desplazamientos-98770044

55 Schutter, Liesbeth, Wieland, Hanspeter, Gözet, Burcu & Giljum, Stefan. (2017). "Environmental Inequality in Europe." Wien: Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte für Wien.

56 Wehrmann, Benjamin (2019). Germany's AfD among most hardline climate sceptics of all European right-wing parties – study. Clean Energy Wire. Available at: https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/germanys-afd-among-most-hardline-climate-sceptics-all-european-right-wing-parties-study

57 Keating, Dave (2024). EU climate policies in peril as parliament faces shift to the right. Energy Monitor. Available at: https://www.energymonitor.ai/policy/green-deals/eu-green-deal-in-peril-as-parliament-faces-shift-to-the-right-elections; Guillot, Louise (2024). Right wing takes yet another stab at killing EU nature law. Politico. Available at: https://www.politico.eu/article/

third-times-charm-right-wing-takes-another-stab-killing-eu-nature-law; Right-wing Europe on a hunt to kill the remains of the Green Deal (2023). Corporate Europe Observatory. Available at: https://corporateeurope.org/en/2023/06/right-wing-europe-hunt-kill-remains-green-deal

58 Mazoue, Aude (2019). Le Pen's National Rally goes green in bid for European election vote. France 24. Available at: https://www.france24.com/en/20190420-le-pen-national-rally-front-environment-european-elections-france

59 Aronoff, Kate (2022). Marine Le Pen's Climate Policy Has a Whiff of Ecofascism. The New Republic. Available at: https://newrepublic.com/article/166097/marine-le-pens-climate-policy-whiff-ecofascism

60 Giordano, Elena & Mathiesen, Karl (2023). Beset by fire and heat, Meloni's government flirts with climate denial. Politico. Available at: https://www.politico.eu/article/bgiorgia-meloni-italy-heat-summer-wildfires-climate-change-climate-denial/

61 Henriques, Filipe (2023). Europe

on the Ballot: How the EPP Turned Against Climate Politics. European Climate Journal. Available at: https://www.greeneurope-anjournal.eu/europe-on-the-ballot-how-the-epp-turned-against-climate-politics/

62 Smyth, Jamie & Wilson, Tom (2023). Big oil welcomes COP28 call to move away from fossil fuels in 'orderly' way. FT. Available at: https://www.ft.com/content/6034f475-e1d5-47e1-9456-afb540bd9702

63 Mohdin, Aamna (2021). Equalities minister under fire for writing she does not 'care about colonialism'. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/sep/23/kemi-badenoch-equalities-minister-reportedly-wrote-i-dont-care-about-colonialism

Sawer, Patrick (2023). Sajid Javid breached human rights law when stripping Shamima Begum of citizenship, court hears. The Telegraph. Available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/24/shamima-begum-british-citizenship-fight-court-of-appeal

Thomas, Tobi & Syal, Rajeev (2023). Suella Braverman accused of fuelling far-right violence near Cenotaph. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/nov/11/suella-braverman-accused-of-fuelling-far-right-violence-near-cenotaph

McDonald, Andrew & Boscia, Stefan (2023). Kemi Badenoch woos Tory members with culture war attacks on Labour. Politico. Available at: https://www.politico.eu/article/kemi-badenoch-uk-conservative-labour-culture-war

64 Kopelke: Bündnisse sollen zu friedlichem Protest zurückfinden (2022). Gewerkschaft der Polizei. Available at: https://www.gdp.de/gdp/gdp.nsf/id/DE_Kopelke-Buendnisse-sollen-zu-friedlichem-Protest-zurueckfinden

65 Special Eurobarometer 538 Climate Change (2023). European Union. https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2954

66 Climate Survey Resources. European Investment Bank. https://www.eib.org/en/surveys/climate-survey/all-resources

67 YouGov / Eurotrack Sur-

vey Results (2023). YouGov. https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/m9qycnaech/Eurotrack_ClimateChange_Apr23_W.pdf

68 Allianz Climate Literacy Survey 2023 (2023). Allianz. https://www.allianz.com/en/economic_research/insights/publications/specials_fmo/2023_11_29-Climate-Literacy.html

69 The Peoples' Climate Vote (2021). United Nations Development Programme. https://www.undp.org/publications/peoples-climate-vote

70 Bailey, Pippa (2023). Earth Day 2023 – Is concern and focus slipping on climate change?. IPSOS. Available at: https://www.ipsos.com/en/earth-day-2023-concern-and-focus-slipping-climate-change

71 Barring the UK, which was no longer a member of the EU at the time of research and was not surveyed.

72 The EIB Climate Survey: Government action, personal choices and the green transition (2023). European Investment Bank. https://www.eib.org/en/publications/20230098-eib-cli-

mate-survey-europe

73   Specifically, Great Britain.

74   Specifically, Great Britain.

75   Wax, Eddy & Guilloy, Louise (2024) Europe's Greens are on the ropes. Politico. Available at: https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-greens-are-on-the-ropes-eu-elections

76   Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey - Being Black in the EU (2018). European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-being-black-in-the-eu_en.pdf

77   'Black, Indigenous, and people of colour'

78   As this was optional, the number of respondents who provided an answer varied, but tended to be small.

79   Machine translation. Original in Portuguese: 'Sou brasileiro, nesse momento o Brasil está sendo especialmente afetado pelo aquecimento global, calor no inverno, calor extremo no verão e em algumas regiões como a floresta amazônica, o céu tá até mudando de cor de tanta floresta queimada'

80   The selection rates for these varied between countries. In certain cases these variations were quite stark - this is in part due to respondents from Ireland, who consistently selected options at a rate below the mean average. For example, while almost two thirds of respondents in Spain (65.18%) selected 'Racial discrimination', just under one third of respondents in Ireland (32.24%) selected this option - giving a range of 32.94% between selection rates in Spain and in Ireland. Excluding Ireland, this range becomes a much narrower 15.33% between Spain and Netherlands (49.85%). Similarly, 40.68% of respondents in Belgium selected 'No opportunities to engage', which was over double the selection rate in Ireland (19.13%), giving a range of 21.55%. Excluding Ireland, this range becomes a 13.60% difference between Belgium and Netherlands (27.08%). %age 'Agree' - %age Disagree 'scores'

82   Giving a ranking of between -5/-6 to +4/+5 depending on the distribution of rankings around the median.

83   Shirzad, Sahar (2023). Opinie: 'Ik stond op het podium tijdens de klimaatmars en mijn spreekrecht werd me ontnomen'. Parool. Available at: https://www.parool.nl/columns-opinie/opinie-ik-stond-op-het-podium-tijdens-de-klimaatmars-en-mijn-spreekrecht-werd-me-ontnomen~b5d3c354/

84   Geuzebroek, Chihiro (2023). Why is Greta unsafe on the stage of the Climate March?. Doorbrak. Available at: https://www.doorbraak.eu/why-is-greta-unsafe-on-the-stage-of-the-climate-march/

85   Cheuk, Door Lawrence (2019). 'Klimaatbeweging ziet activisten van kleur niet staan'. One World. Available at: https://www.oneworld.nl/klimaat/klimaatbeweging-ziet-activisten-van-kleur-niet-staan/
In preparing this report, we bear witness to the profound and transformative contributions of people of colour (POC) around the globe who stand on the frontlines of the struggle for climate justice. We recognise the unwavering spirit and tireless work of courageous climate activists, brilliant authors and scholars, passionate youth climate disruptors, visionary artists, steadfast organisations, dedicated community workers and Indigenous Peoples, both in the global North and the global South. These valiant souls have been sounding the alarm and challenging those in power to face the grave environmental crisis head-on, often without the recognition or support they so rightly deserve from the established NGOs, government agencies and environmental organisations.

Acknowledgments

08

In preparing this report, we bear witness to the profound and transformative contributions of people of colour (POC) around the globe who stand on the frontlines of the struggle for climate justice.

We recognise the unwavering spirit and tireless work of courageous climate activists, brilliant authors and scholars, passionate youth climate disruptors, visionary artists, steadfast organisations, dedicated community workers and Indigenous Peoples, both in the global North and the global South. These valiant souls have been sounding the alarm and challenging those in power to face the grave environmental crisis head-on, often without the recognition or support they so rightly deserve from the established NGOs, government agencies and environmental organisations.

Such erasure not only wounds our collective humanity but also impedes our capacity to forge just and equitable solutions to the intertwined crises of climate and racial injustice. The path forward demands a profound solidarity with people of colour and a radical rebalancing of power.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to this report, especially the POC activists, academics, politicians, and policymakers whose voices and words resonate through these pages.

From our roundtable participants to our survey respondents, you have generously shared your wisdom and testimonies, illuminating the intricate connections between racial justice and environmental sustainability. Your invaluable insights have provided the bedrock for this critical work.

From the grassroots organisers in the UK who tirelessly fight against pollution in marginalised neighbourhoods to the scholars in Germany who have meticulously documented the impacts of environmental racism to the policymakers in the Netherlands who are pioneering inclusive climate policies, your contributions have been indispensable. Additionally, we are immensely grateful to our collaborators and across Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. Your collective efforts have enriched this report and strengthened our understanding of the pervasive nature of climate injustice.

We would also like to express our deepest gratitude to our grassroots authors, whose short essays "Voices from the Community" have been priceless in illustrating the reality faced on the ground by racialised communities across Western Europe.

This report stands as a testament to your dedication and unwavering commitment to justice and equity. We are profoundly grateful for your efforts and solidarity in this shared journey towards a more just and sustainable world.

The insidious forces of systemic racism have erected barriers that silence the voices of people of colour fighting for environmental justice, denying them the respect and influence that their wisdom and leadership warrant. This marginalisation leads to the erasure of those who are disproportionately affected by the environmental emergency and excludes people of colour from roles as leaders, professionals, academics, and experts within the very sectors that aim to address this crisis.

Finally, I must wholeheartedly acknowledge the tireless efforts of the Union of Justice team and friends, whose dedication and hard work have brought this illuminating and urgent call to action to life. From the meticulous research to the communication and design of this report, your collective contributions have been extraordinary. Your unwavering commitment to justice, equity, and environmental sustainability is evident on every page of this report. Thank you!

In the spirit of love, justice and solidarity - let's build a Europe and a world that is just, equitable, and sustainable.

Magid Magid
Founder & Executive Director

Union of Justice is a European, independent, people of colour (POC) led organisation dedicated to racial justice and climate justice. We empower those most affected by equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to make a difference. Additionally, we conduct and promote research as well as campaign to create a Europe and a world that is equitable, just and sustainable.

Email: hi@unionofjustice.com
Website: unionofjustice.com
Twitter/X: UnionOJ
Instagram: UnionOfJustice
LinkedIn: unionofjustice

Union of Justice,
7 Bell Yard,
London,
WC2A 2JR
United Kingdom

"Nothing about us, without us!"