Racial Justice Task Force Working Group Report 2023-2024

Context

The Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF) was founded in 2022 by EC member Srish to expand FYEG’s work on inclusion and racial justice, first as an informal working group due to past cautiousness on working group capacity, then formalised in March 2023. It is a space for action and community for racialised and ethnicised young greens (see the report of the last term). Its main goal for this term was to draft a new Inclusion Plan focused on the inclusion of racialised and ethnicised young greens.

Overall working group coordination

The RJTF remains a small but close community. Several departures and new faces over the past term has brought us to 7 active members, 1 more than at the end of the previous term. While this makes coordinating and focusing our work easier, it has restricted capacities. Expanding could alleviate this, but must ensure the space remains safe and sense of community ensured. Nonetheless, the ongoing small application pool could be emblematic of FYEG’s lack of diversity highlighted in the RJTF report of the last term.

On coordinatorship, Kel Nkondock stepped down at the end of June due to capacity reasons. Given our small size and upcoming summer recess, a new co-coordinator has not been selected. Nefertiti Bikin-kita remains coordinator alongside Srish as EC Responsible. Guidelines on RJTF coordination will be drafted to ensure a smoother transfer of coordinatorship over the coming 2024-2025 period and beyond.

On meetings, these went from biweekly in the previous term to weekly. This has fostered more space to discuss and work together, and for community-building. Average attendance has been 4 out of 6-7 members, with the same issue of the previous report of clashes with work commitments affecting participation. However, the weekly frequency has led to fewer and shorter inactivity gaps of members, meaning less capacity needed to ‘refresh’ returning members on where we are.

Following the previous term, we have worked towards more dynamic and flexible plans, timelines, and tasks, which has worked well given the different capacities of everyone.
The RJTF’s year in review

Inclusion Plan

The RJTF started with evaluating current structures. In addition to the Safer Spaces Policy highlighted in the previous report, the RJTF reviewed other statutory documents and organisational structures, such as the Internal Rules of Procedure, Activity Plan, Strategy Plan, Inclusion Plan, Activity Report, hiring policy, and work culture.

As stated in the Activity Plan 2023-2024, the RJTF also carried out a survey with the Member Organisations (MOs) to understand the differing contexts, realities, and challenges of MOs to assist in the RJTF’s work on the Inclusion Plan.

A recurring challenge was finding a solid starting point due to limited capacities and the broad scope of the issue. As such, the timeline had to be adjusted several times. Over the course of several months, the RJTF worked towards a more detailed Inclusion Plan than its predecessor to comprehensively tackle this area of inclusion. Work was done better together, so the majority of writing took place over several work sessions.

Engagement with partners

The RJTF was more involved externally than the previous term, pursuing the Activity Plan objective of collaborating with the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and other racial justice organisations. We participated in session I of ENAR's Climate Justice Academy in November 2023 in Lisbon through an open call in addition to RJTF members, but failed to set up a proper feedback mechanism and could not attend session II. Learning from this, two RJTF members will attend session III in September 2024 in Bucharest, with a plan to evaluate and share learnings with RJTF.

RJTF members also spoke at a panel of the Coordinating Committee of International Voluntary Services (CCIVS) for their Decolonise IVS! Project, and two panels at the first Europe-Asia Youth Forum of the Student Think Tank for Europe-Asia Relations (STEAR). We plan to further explore such collaborations. At the RJTF live meeting from 20th-21st July, we will discuss potential partners and meet with ENAR on long-term collaboration.

MO meetings

The RJTF had a meeting with Vihreät nuoret to discuss their inclusion strategy. An advice document was being worked on, but due to limited capacities, focus redirected towards the Inclusion Plan. A meeting with the DWARS Inclusion Commission was also held to understand their work and challenges. Based on these meetings and insights from our survey, we believe engaging with MOs could be valuable in supporting their
inclusion efforts and learning their realities. We hope to have more capacity for this in the future.

**Internal initiatives**

The RJTF devoted some weeks on an internal reference guide on our consensus on different theories and terminology within racial justice and decoloniality. These research efforts are helpful in guiding our work, however, were paused to prioritise the Inclusion Plan. We hope to continue this, and eventually share the guide with FYEG too.

At the live meeting, the RJTF plans to assess how we can better our work; set out our vision tree, and 2025 goals and partnerships; and expand on our community-building.

**Reflections and learnings**

This past term was particularly capacity-intensive for the RJTF with the Inclusion Plan. The shift towards more flexibility has worked well. This coming term, the RJTF seeks to assist in Inclusion Plan implementation, but we hope to also have more space for less organisational-oriented efforts and more political decoloniality efforts.

As the RJTF establishes itself more, our greatest strength lies in open communication and the community we have fostered. Meetings often go beyond an hour, as once it concludes, we stay on to spend time together. This sense of community must be cherished and prioritised as the RJTF grows, as it is the core motivation and driving force of the RJTF and our members.