

JOINT CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT

RE-IMAGINING RACIAL JUSTICE IN EUROPE

A Chance to Build an Alternative, Hopeful Future for All

At Anti-Racism and Diversity Week, 47 civil society organisations stand united in our hope for a better future, but also in our demand for action. We call on EU leaders to stand with us and confront systemic racism to build a Europe with a legacy of diversity and justice.

Despite strong legislation against racial discrimination and the adoption of the first EU Anti-Racism Action Plan in 2020, systemic racism remains pervasive throughout Europe. This is evident in the rising influence of political parties that openly justify the denial of rights for the most marginalised, especially racialised people at the intersections of various forms of discrimination. Recent data from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and from a number of CSOs make it clear: racialised communities, including Roma, Sinti and Travellers, People of African, Arab, Asian and Latin descent, Black people, Muslims and Jews (or those perceived as such), indigenous people, including migrants amongst them, continue to face significant barriers. From police violence and discriminatory migration policies to workplace exclusion and shrinking civic space, the European project is failing those it has long marginalised.

European leaders cannot afford silence. By allowing racialised communities to be scapegoated and pushed to the margins, they are complicit in paving the way for authoritarian, exclusionary voices. These forces endanger the lives and freedoms of all Europeans, dragging the continent further away from a future of justice and equality.

This moment demands **a radical shift**. We believe our leaders can rise to the challenge, confronting the tide of authoritarianism and racial injustice to create a Europe grounded in human dignity and democracy. During the Anti-Racism and Diversity Week, civil society gathers in the European Parliament not only as an act of resistance but also a powerful demonstration of our belief in a better future. We know that another world is possible - one that embraces care, justice, and safety for all, especially those at the margins. It is a world fit to address both past and present social and climate injustices. In the face of global developments that push us further from equality, the EU has the power to become the beacon of hope that the world desperately needs.

In response to fragmented policies and an overfocus on criminalisation and securitisation, we call for a shift from punitive policies to those that prevent harm and repair the damage already done. The goal must be to break down the systems that keep racial inequality in place, as outlined in the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan. Europe also needs to invest in community-driven solutions for justice, equity, and safety. Only by embracing an intersectional and restorative approach, guided by the lived experience of those most affected, can we uproot the systems of racism - anything less is empty rhetoric.

The upcoming equality strategies, and specifically the anti-racism strategy, present a critical moment to confront the dangerous trends sweeping through Europe. **The following priorities must be central to this strategy:**

- A renewed **intersectional anti-discrimination framework** that also safeguards the rights of people on the move.
- A legal **ban on racial discrimination** in **law enforcement** and **migration control**.
- A focus on **equality** and fundamental rights within the **Rule of Law framework**, with a sharp focus on racial discrimination, asylum rights, and the rights to protest and free expression.
- A **redirection of funding** towards social provision and community services, with strict non-discrimination conditions attached to the allocation of funds.
- Strong, inclusive **participatory** models for **designing anti-racism policies**, ensuring the voices of marginalised communities lead the way.
- Ensuring that **all equality strategies**, anti-poverty strategy and the European Pillar of Social Rights **address** the needs and protection of **racialised groups**, including migrants.

The anti-racism movement stands united and ready to mobilise collectively to build a Europe that is just, inclusive, and committed to a future where everyone – regardless of their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, disability, age, or socio-economic background – can thrive.

SIGNED BY:

European Network Against Racism (ENAR)

Human Rights Watch

Amnesty International

Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF)

Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice

European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)

European Disability Forum (EDF)

European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network

European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC)

European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance (ESWA)

International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) Youth & Student Organisation (IGLYO)

Advancing Together

Africa Solidarity Centre Ireland

Afro Danish Collective

ANTIGONE - Information and Documentation Centre on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence

Apna Haq

ASOCIACION NACIONAL PRESENCIA GITANA

Association "Center for Integrative Inclusion of Roma Men and Women"

Association Por Ti Mujer

CADO-Advocacy and Human Rights Center

CCIE

CIIB

Changemakers Lab

Collectif for Inclusion and against Islamophobia in Belgium

Community Rights in Greece

De-Colonizer

Etudiants Musulmans de France (Muslim Students of France)

European Alternatives

FEMYSO

Fundacja Inicjatywa Dom Otwarty

G.F.C. Generation for Change CY

Greek Forum of Migrants

International Community Dynamics CLG

Intersect Madrid

Irish Network Against Racism (INAR)

JOVESOLIDES SPAIN

Migrant Tales

New Women Connectors

Northern Ireland Council for Racial Equality

Queerstion Media

Roma Active Albania

Siempre

SOS Racism Denmark

Swiss Minorities Sports Culture & Integration (Swiss Minors)

United African Women of Greece

United African Women Organization

Untold Asian Stories