



**RACE AND
PRIVILEGE**

RACE AND PRIVILEGE

**Research and reflections to accompany our
work to protect human rights and build a just peace**

July 2017



**Quaker
Council for
European
Affairs**

Structure

Introduction

Quaker concern about racism

Understanding race and privilege

The politics of privilege

Reinforcing privilege through European policy

How might individuals respond?

How might faith communities respond?

How might governments respond?

Introduction

This is not a usual Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) publication, but written as a spiritual accompaniment to our our work on peace and human rights. European politics has been dominated by racially charged stories of self, other and the borders between us.

I am experiencing a growing awareness of racial injustice as an aspect of many of the concerns brought to us by members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Forced migration has become an increasing focus of QCEA's work with quiet diplomacy, political advocacy and practical work all taking place from Quaker House Brussels. Many other concerns, from military violence to climate change are linked to the maintenance of global inequality by those with greater privilege and all have racial injustice as one of their roots.

I write from an incomplete and partial perspective, as someone who benefits from privilege that I have because of my race, gender and class. However, as a Quaker I crave to live up to our long-held notion of 'that of God in everyone'. Within the context of my role at QCEA, this booklet represents an attempt to acknowledge racism, with the journey of unlearning and resisting racism still very much ahead of us.

Andrew Lane
Director, QCEA

“Non-violent living requires the unravelling of one's relationship to privilege and oppression”.

**Quaker concern about racism:
Recent Quaker Statements ('Minutes') from 2017**

Quakers in Britain

Quakers in Britain made a statement on 4 February 2017, through their representative body, Meetings for Sufferings, including the excerpt:

“We condemn all acts of government which set people against one another; which discriminate against people because of who they are or where they were born. We reject policies which condone suspicion and hatred; which turn away those who need and depend upon our help. We were not put on Earth for this, but to be a people of God, to live in harmony with each other ... We stand with those whose lives are blighted by racist, discriminatory policies and those whose faith is denigrated by association with a tiny violent minority. We pray for the courage and steadfastness that will be needed as we uphold our testimony of equality, justice, peace, sustainability and truth.”

European Quaker Statement

The Annual Meeting of the European and Middle East Section of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (held at Haus Venusberg, Bonn, Germany 4 – 7 May 2017) considered a Quaker Response to Conference of European Churches' Open Letter on the Future of Europe. The response was endorsed, and was commended to Quaker national structures, known as Yearly Meetings, across Europe and the Middle East for their own consideration. An excerpt reads:

“We also believe that there needs to be a much more explicit reference to the Churches' historical complicity in, and contemporary tendency to foster, nationalism... ...We need acknowledgement, repentance, and a commitment not to repeat the errors of the past,

by, for instance, allowing Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism to go unchallenged in our day.”

Statement from Quaker Forced Migration Conference

From 3-5 February 2017, the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network and other Quaker agencies held a conference, ‘Forced Migration: how can Quakers respond’ at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham, UK. Extracts from the Epistle read:

“We remind Quakers of Advices & Queries 33 and 32:

32. Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs? Bear witness to the humanity of all people, including those who break society’s conventions or its laws. Try to discern new growing points in social and economic life. Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear. Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?

33. Bring into God’s light those emotions, attitudes and prejudices in yourself which lie at the root of destructive conflict, acknowledging your need for forgiveness and grace. In what ways are you involved in the work of reconciliation between individuals, groups and nations?

...Quakers have through time been involved in every aspect of the humanitarian responses to forced migration including advocacy, legal help, trauma care, medical care, language and housing through the common thread of friendship... ..“We pray that the ‘scales will fall from our own eyes’ and those of our politicians – as they did from Saul”

Understanding race and privilege

Race is a social categorisation based on perceptions of ethnicity and skin colour, but also of religion, culture, nationality and legal status. Race does not exist in isolation, but alongside other characteristics such as social class, gender and sexuality.

The concept of race is thought to have acquired its current meaning during the 'European Enlightenment' of the 1700s.¹ One of the earliest identifiable descriptions of race can be found in the 1684 publication, 'Nouvelle division de la terre par les différents espèces ou races qui l'habitent' (New division of Earth by the different species or races which inhabit it) by François Bernier. The following hundred years saw distinct racial groups being constructed through pseudo-science and other philosophical and cultural publications. Kant and other writers claimed that different body types represented different categories of human and were assigned particular characteristics (active/lazy, civilised/uncivilised, etc).²

The concept of separate races, including ideas of inferiority and superiority, suited many as a justification for slavery and colonisation. It therefore contributed to economic privilege for White Europeans, the product of which is still with us today.

Is acknowledging race, racist?

Race can be a difficult issue to talk about. The language used to describe race changes with time and many of us fear using socially inappropriate or offensive language. This booklet mainly uses 'People of Colour', noting the increasing use of this traditionally US

1 Others argue that the development of racial politics can be seen in the construction of the Spanish identity in the 1500s (as a White and Catholic space), developed in opposition to both communities expelled from Spain and people encountered during Spanish colonial exploration in the Americas. See: Vives, L (2010) White Europe: an alternative reading of the Southern EU border. Journal of Geopolitica(s), 2011, vol. 2. p58.

2 Vives, L (2010) White Europe: an alternative reading of the Southern EU border. Journal of Geopolitica(s), 2011, vol. 2. p53.

term in Europe too. Arab, Asian, Black, Chinese and White are also commonly used in Europe.

Racism is often ignored within broader social justice movements, or explained in very narrow terms that define racism as something that mainly involves the far-right, or is confined to the criminal justice system. These issues are important, but racism is also about poverty, hunger, poor schooling and limited access to employment.

If you never experience being followed by staff in a shop to ensure that you are not shoplifting, if you are generally trusted by strangers, and if you are never asked to account for the actions of someone else from your ethnic group (for example, after a terrorist attack), it may be difficult to recognise a different experience reported by others. If you are never stopped by the police in your own neighbourhood, and the cultural norms at your school or workplace are the same as your home, it may be difficult to understand the limitations that perceptions of race can have on other people's lives.

Some people believe that if everyone were to recognise the fact that there is only one human race, issues of race and racism would just disappear. Others say society would be more just if we focus on what we have in common. However, this approach often rests on a false assumption – that all people experience the world similarly.

Some People of Colour also reject race and say they are not disadvantaged by racism. We all have our own truth and lives that are affected by many factors.³

It is true that race is a concept that has been imagined by society, and is not a natural or scientific reality. However, unfortunately it is a deeply rooted social phenomenon and to claim to ignore it, is to leave one of humanity's biggest injustices unchallenged.

3 Tochluk, S. (2016). Living in the Tension: The quest for a spiritualised racial justice, pp117-118.

“I have come to realise that racism is not simply another name for racial prejudice, it is racial prejudice reinforced by power and privilege. Few people will comfortably admit to racism because it has become equated with fascism. Yet in truth racism encompasses a spectrum of behaviour that includes both thoughtless, uninformed White liberalism and the brutal horror of ethnic cleansing... ..Many Quakers have a problem with power; we like to be thought of as meek. But to avoid acknowledging powerfulness is to exert power without responsibility. In avoiding my own racism I am aligning myself with power and privilege. Jesus did not align himself with power and privilege”.

OI, Quakers and race, reprinted in Rediscovering our Social Testimony (ROST): responses and challenges.⁴

Race and Privilege

As some people face disadvantages, others are advantaged or privileged. Most White people experience their privilege unconsciously, able to live in communities that reinforce the belief that their identity is neutral, normal, without a race.⁵ This is different to the social experience of People of Colour, and is known as white privilege. The next section shows some of the ways European politics privileges some and disadvantages others.

4 Quakers and race, reprinted in Rediscovering our Social Testimony (ROST) responses and challenges, in Jonathan Dale and others (2000) Faith in Action: Quaker social testimony. Quaker Books: London.

5 Research is increasingly being undertaken into implicit / unconscious bias. This is the idea that people may disfavour someone based on social group membership, but without the intention to do so. For example, whilst looking for accommodation for a holiday a White person might have an implicit bias in favour of a B&B owner/host with a White sounding name. The way to address implicit biases is to understand them, so we can begin to interrupt them.

The politics of privilege

Racism is deeply rooted in European political systems and structures. What might be more surprising is that openly racist narratives are still regularly heard within political discussion. Recent examples include a Danish politician who argued that only White people can be Danish and a Polish Member of the European Parliament (MEP) that referred to migrants travelling to Europe as ‘human garbage’ whilst speaking in the Parliament’s chamber.⁶

This section will consider the:

- politics of European colonialism
- Nationalistic populism, hate speech and hate crime, and
- Recent claims about xenophobia and Brexit.

Race, colonialism and politics today

During the post-war period many of the territories controlled by European colonial powers became independent states. European governments then introduced guest worker schemes and mass recruitment from former colonies that diversified the populations of many countries, such as the UK, France and Belgium. This immigration made a significant contribution to European economic growth during the formative years of the European project, whilst the same communities were often portrayed as a burden on European societies.

Colonial imagery continues to be used on our continent. One high profile example is the character of ‘Zwarte Piet’ that has been used to perpetuate racist stereotypes since the 1850s and is still celebrated in the Netherlands every December. This example is just one consequence of failing to address Europe’s historically harmful

6 European Network Against Racism (ENAR) 2016. Racism and Discrimination in the Context of Migration in Europe. ENAR Shadow Report 2015-16. p10. Available online at: http://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/shadowreport_2015x2016_long_low_res.pdf

relationship with other parts of the world, and failing to acknowledge how it continues to influence society and politics today.

Research commissioned by the Swedish Minister of Integration in 2013 showed that stereotypes dating back to colonialism were still prominent in Swedish culture. The report concluded that Swedes of African descent are marginalised in social, economic and political terms. The research also identified the presence of 'Afrophobia' within society (see p14).

Europe is built upon a 'structural racism' that began with the slave trade and colonisation. Colonial relationships between Europe and other parts of the world were developed before we were born, but we are responsible when today's politics accept and extend the privilege of some at the expense of others. Continued privilege built upon colonial exploitation and enslavement is a moral injustice and firmly on the territory of faith groups.

Nationalistic populism and xenophobic hate speech in Europe

Nationalistic populism has been identified as a distinctive feature of 2016, by the Council of Europe's expert body⁷, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).⁸ The body monitors racism in Europe and prepares recommendations for the Council of Europe's 47 member states. Their annual report for 2016 included the following concerns:

- Hate speech is not confined to extreme groups but also found in the political mainstream
- Women wearing visible religious symbols (especially headscarves) have been particularly vulnerable

7 After the Second World War and the Holocaust, European countries signed the European Convention on Human Rights, and established the Council of Europe to oversee the protection of human rights and democracy in Europe. Completely separate from the European Union, it now includes every country in Europe except Belarus.

8 Council of Europe (2016) Annual Report on ECRI's Activities. Available online at: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/Annual_Reports/Annual%20report%202016.pdf

- Despite efforts of some countries' authorities to address the lack of personal identity documents for Roma, they continued to suffer from widespread prejudice, stigma, violence and social exclusion
- People of African descent continue to experience racist abuse, including the prominent example of abuse of Black football players.

Some political ideologies and groups⁹ use the concept of 'the other' to reinvent a narrative of national identity through which they privilege particular groups within society, such as the current elite, or a far-right political group seeking power.

In 2017, the European Network Against Racism reported a long term growth in European political forces that aim to privilege the interests of people who are perceived to be the native population, and therefore disadvantage people who are perceived to be immigrants or descendants people who arrived in Europe within recent generations.¹⁰

Politicians who promote this nationalist agenda exploit the fear that governments cannot protect citizens from globalisation. For example, in 2015, the Hungarian government launched a billboard campaign that featured messages, such as, "If you come to Hungary, you cannot take away Hungarians' jobs". The billboards were written in Hungarian and could only reasonably be expected to increase fear of migrants. The public campaign also included questionnaires that attributed forced migration to EU membership and linked migration with terrorism.¹¹

9 Often described as nationalism, nativism, or the broader term populism.

10 European Network Against Racism (ENAR) 2016. Racism and Discrimination in the Context of Migration in Europe. ENAR Shadow Report 2015-16. pp9-10. Available online at: http://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/shadowreport_2015x2016_long_low_res.pdf

11 Euractiv. Hungarian official admits campaign to generate hate against migrants. 7 September 2015. Available at: <http://www.euractiv.com/section/justice-home-affairs/news/hungarian-official-admits-campaign-to-generate-hate-against-migrants/>

Hate crime

Hate crime is crime that is motivated by hatred of a characteristic that the targeted person or people are perceived to hold. The QCEA report 'Hate Crime: Prevention and Restoration in the EU' provides a detailed examination of hate crime in Europe. In particular, we noted the substantial under-reporting of hate crime and made recommendations to improve community justice processes and give victims more confidence in them.¹²

In general, the data available on hate crime in Europe is of low and inconsistent quality. Several European countries do not report any hate crime having taken place at all. In 2016, a new process began that expects to develop a common methodology to record and collect hate crime data, known as the High Level Group on combating Racism, Xenophobia and other forms of Intolerance. It brings together different EU institutions, with the Council of Europe, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

¹² QCEA (2015) 'Hate Crime: Prevention and Restoration in the EU'. Available online at: http://www.qcea.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Hate-Crime-Background-Paper-final.sla_.pdf

Afrophobia

Approximately 13 million people of African descent live in Europe. The fear, dislike or hatred of people of African descent is known as Afrophobia, a specific form of racism that receives little public or official attention.

Afrophobic prejudice causes discrimination in education, health care, the labour market, justice systems and the media. In particular, young Black men are disproportionately represented negatively in newspapers, TV news, music videos and computer games. Black men are too often featured in supporting roles alongside White protagonists. They are also stereotyped in criminal and violent roles, using similar imagery to that used during European colonisation to claim that African men were wild and needed European civilisation.

QCEA has previously highlighted afrophobia in its 2015 report, 'Hate Crime: Prevention and Restoration in the EU', that found that victims of afrophobic hate crime have more severe feelings of powerlessness and insecurity due to the long history of structural disadvantage against people of African descent.

Post Brexit hate, not so new

There has been much discussion of an increase in hate crime following the Brexit referendum. I have heard a number of accounts from friends living in Britain who over the last year have experienced hostility for the first time whilst living there.

Akwugo Emejulu, Senior Lecturer at the University of Edinburgh has examined the operation of white supremacy before and after the EU referendum. She argues that:

“An unstated campaign strategy of the Leave campaign was to re-imagine Britain and Britishness (but really Englishness) as White in order to make particular kinds of claims to victimhood which would highlight economic inequality without challenging neoliberalism. For instance, a key argument of the campaign was that the ‘working class’ (who were unquestionably assumed to be White) were suffering under the burden of mass immigration, which transformed the culture of their neighbourhoods and put undue strain on public services.”¹³

Akwugo Emejulu reminds us that racism is not an aberration in Britain linked to Brexit. She also cautions the many social justice campaigners are too quick to claim “This is not who we are”, without examining the wider system of racism of which they are part.

13 Emejulu, A. (2017) On the hideous whiteness of Brexit. Available online at: <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2733-on-the-hideous-whiteness-of-brex-it-let-us-be-honest-about-our-past-and-our-present-if-we-truly-see-k-to-dismantle-white-supremacy>

Reinforcing privilege through European policy

Europe is shaped by the way we choose to understand geography and history, but also race. Race is a particularly relevant lens through which to understand European policy. Political discourse has always been influenced by ‘us and them’, but in recent years there has been an even stronger focus on Europe's external border.

Violent Responses to Migration

Since the political crisis of 2015 in particular, we have seen the construction of walls and fences to keep people from reaching safe territory (in breach of international obligations to shelter refugees), with prominent examples on Hungary's southern border and on France's border with the UK.

European governments have deployed joint naval operations through the European Union in the Mediterranean and through NATO in the Aegean Seas. The EU operation has so far refrained from one of its originally intended purposes, to engage militarily with smugglers on the Libyan coast. In 2016, QCEA staff met with Ambassadors and other officials that sit on the relevant EU decision-making committee to discuss the protection of human rights and encouraged a larger civilian maritime presence to help save lives at sea.

An example of the link between hateful rhetoric and government policy can be seen in this September 2015 quote from former Romanian President Traian Băsescu:

“I think about the problem in terms of national security. Let us not forget that among these people are Sunni, Shia, people who put bombs reciprocally in their country (...) Why should we Islamise Europe? We should destroy the migrants' boats and ships, right in the docks. Otherwise immigration will increase each year, will triple from year to year”.¹⁴

European governments seek to use many tools to persuade other countries to host migrants or accept people being returned whose asylum applications have been rejected. Such policies include direct payments, manipulation of trade agreements and new conditions for the receipt of development aid. Notable examples include the EU-Turkey deal and EU funding for the Libyan coast guard. However, Compact agreements with a much wider range of countries, including Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Mali and Ethiopia are intended to have a similar effect. Some governments have suggested only accepting asylum applications from reception centres outside of Europe.

The EU collectively has the largest international development budget in the world. However, European governments are increasingly diverting some of this money to pay for militarisation in countries on the migrant path to Europe. A migration-security-industry has developed, with significant lobbying influence in Brussels and other European capitals.

The French government has a significant military presence in several former French colonies where they continue to claim interests. Believing that their presence benefits all of Europe, the French government has pressurised other governments to agree that the EU budget can be used for some of their activities.

In May 2015, the European Commission coordinated a public consultation proposals, for the training and equipping of armies in countries outside of Europe. One of the main questions participants were asked was where EU train and equip policies should operate. The question then listed continents in a way that was, in the words of a peacebuilding expert in London, “impossible to answer that without sweeping generalisations that border on racism.” These proposals were supported by the European Parliament’s Foreign Affairs

14 European Network Against Racism (ENAR) 2016. Racism and Discrimination in the Context of Migration in Europe. ENAR Shadow Report 2015-16. pp10-11. Available online at: http://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/shadowreport_2015x2016_long_low_res.pdf

Committee in July 2017 and are expected to be approved by the whole Parliament in September 2017.

“The European standpoint on migration utilises control under white supremacy, neoliberalism and patriarchal hegemony, the effects of which manifest into criminalisation of migration, and of people of colour. We must not only call for no borders, no deportations, no detentions as an attempt to redistribute power, but call for the end of such prevailing superiority.”

Part of a Statement by the Black Dissidents group at the DSEi Arms Fair in London, September 2015.

Immigration Detention

One of the harmful consequences of the othering of migrants and refugees has been the frequency of immigration detention. European governments are increasingly using detention as a means of more efficiently returning failed asylum seekers to their country of origin. In some cases, especially during the political crisis of 2015, European governments detained people in very poor conditions. These ranged from muddy fields to airport lounges. For more information, see for example, QCEA's report on Child Immigration Detention in Europe.¹⁵

The racial dimension of detention and immigration detention has been the subject of much more research in the US. Michelle Alexander has undertaken research on mass incarceration and describes how one of the major challenges for racial justice is getting people to care about the incarceration of low-income ethnic minorities.¹⁶

15 QCEA (2017) Child Immigration Detention in Europe <http://www.qcea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Child-immigration-detention-in-Europe.pdf>

16 Tochluk, S. (2016). Living in the Tension: The quest for a spiritualised racial justice, p99.

The injustice of global inequality is far removed from most policy discussions in Brussels and in other European capitals, and certainly not considered through a lens of race. In any discussion of refugees in Europe, we need to remember that there are tens of millions of refugees worldwide and a tiny proportion are hosted in Europe. As Mehdi Hasan has said, “Obsessing over Europe’s refugee crisis while ignoring Africa’s is white privilege at work”¹⁷.

European Union institutions: Absence of ethnic minority leadership and staff

The European Union institutions do not reflect the ethnic diversity of the citizens that they exist to serve, and show no interest in increasing the number of staff from ethnic minorities. Ethnic and religious minorities alone represent at least 7 percent of the EU population. European institutions do not collect data on the ethnicity or religion of their staff, but it is widely recognised that they would fall far short of employing 7 percent of staff from ethnic or religious minorities.¹⁸

When asked about this by a EurActiv journalist in September 2016 Alexander Winterstein (The Commission's deputy chief spokesperson) argued that racial diversity did not need to be monitored as recruitment to the Commission was fully open and the institution included some ethnic minorities.¹⁹ Another important EU body that coordinates decision making between the EU's 28 member states, the Council of the EU, does collect data, but only on gender, age, disability and nationality.

17 See his Washington Post article at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2016/11/03/obsessing-over-europes-refugee-crisis-while-ignoring-africas-is-white-privilege-at-work/?utm_term=.c4433e015d0a

18 Fernandez, C. EU institutions failing race equality drive. 5 September 2016. Available online at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/future-eu/opinion/diversity-in-the-eu-institutions-how-the-eu-bubble-has-failed-race-equality/>

19 Crisp, J. Is the European Union too White? 26 August 2016. Available online at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/future-eu/video/is-the-european-commission-too-white/>

In 2014, the European Commission President encouraged the 28 Member States to nominate women to serve as Commissioners. Almost a third of the Commissioners sent to serve in Brussels were female, but none were from ethnic minorities.²⁰ In July 2017 the European Commission launched its Diversity and Inclusion Charter. Its main focus is gender and it includes measures to support workplace diversity in terms of age, disability and LGBTI. Race is included in the opening statement within a longer list of characteristics, but it is not identified as a specific problem requiring attention.²¹ During the summer of 2017 we will be joining with other Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh groups and anti-racist, LGBT, disability and women's groups to writing publicly to the Commissioner responsible for this strategy, following up on a private letter written by QCEA earlier this year.

Overall, we see a failure of leadership on diversity at the top and recruitment processes for junior staff that replicate the current unrepresentative workforce. One exception is that the Commission and Parliament have traineeships that reach out to Roma candidates.

The failure to recruit People of Colour is far more significant than just the EU institutions setting a bad example or missing out on talented people, but has real consequences for the culture and experience of the organisations. To be an organisation that seeks to serve all EU citizens, and to develop policy for more than just a narrow elite within society, the institutions need to include a spectrum of life experiences. As explained above, European citizens do not have similar or equal experiences of living here – and as things stand a monoethnic workforce is simply reinforcing privilege.

20 Teffer, P. Diversity: 'EU Commission doesn't look like Europe' 16 March 2016. Available online at: <https://euobserver.com/institutional/132692>

21 European Commission (2017) Communication of the Commission - A better workplace for all: from equal opportunities towards diversity and inclusion - C(2017) 5300. Available online at: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication-equal-opportunities-diversity-inclusion-2017.pdf>

Not anti-European

These concerns do not add up to an argument against the European institutions in general. The human rights standards developed in Europe since the Holocaust have helped to ensure that peace and human dignity have been increasingly enjoyed in Europe over the last 70 years.²²

European Union action on racism

I have not found information that allows me to make an assessment of the effectiveness of EU measures to address racism. However, racial justice advocates in Europe may be able to make use of the following:

- The Framework Decision on Combating Racism and Xenophobia penalises public incitement to violence and hatred on the basis of race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin
- The Race Equality Directive prohibits discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin in specific sectors.
- The Employment Equality Directive prohibits workplace discrimination on the basis of religion
- The Audiovisual Media Services Directive bans incitement to hatred in audiovisual media services.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance have found that many European countries are not fully implementing their legislation on racism and racial discrimination, and government anti-racism bodies are poorly funded. For example, only 20 of the Council of Europe's 47 member states have ratified Protocol No.12 on a general prohibition of discrimination. Protocol No. 12 is an extension

²² European governments have also been working together to develop capacity for supporting peacebuilding in recent years, and have relevant experience that could be used to more effectively to address the root causes of forced migration. Examples include, the EU's unarmed confidence building mission in Georgia, and funding for non-governmental peacebuilding organisations to work in violent conflicts in many parts of the world.

to the European Convention of Human Rights that prohibits discrimination as a whole, rather than only in the application of one of the other convention rights.²³

The EU budget has been used to support some anti-racism projects, of particular importance in countries where such support is not provided by national governments. This financial support includes:

- The Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme which seeks to reduce racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism
- The Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (PROGRESS) provides some financial support to implement the principle of non-discrimination
- The Europe for Citizens Programme provides support for remembrance projects.

These funding opportunities are small, but they do support activity that would otherwise not happen.

“In the end human rights are about people being treated and feeling like people who matter. We are reminded graphically of violations of human rights far away and near at hand. In ignorance or knowingly we all violate human rights. We are all involved in the exercise and abuse of power.”

London Yearly Meeting (Quakers in Britain, 1986)²⁴

23 Council of Europe (2016) Annual Report on ECRI's Activities. Available online at:

http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/Annual_Reports/Annual%20report%202016.pdf

24 Quoted in Dower, N. (ed) (2008). Nonsense on Stilts? A Quaker view of Human Rights. Ebor Press, York. p19.

How might individuals respond?

In many cases, it is not possible for White people to refuse the advantages that they receive. Realising that you are part of a system of White Supremacy, and extracting yourself from that system is difficult. Tenderness, patience and care of ourselves and others must be part of response.

For White people that are new to privilege it is important not to be overconfident, undertaking well-meaning forms of anti-racist activism that are in fact not appreciated by People of Colour. As many anti-racism activists have said, it is not the responsibility of People of Colour to educate society about racism. This is part of the reason why some anti-racist gatherings routinely allow time for People of Colour and White people to spend time sharing separately (meeting as a caucus).

White anti-racism author Shelly Tochluk's advice is to:

**“step back and listen,
leave your guilt at the door,
avoid appeals for affirmation,
admit you do not know,
stay in conversation,
ensure that you are not taking over by talking too much
or trying to lead without being asked,
accept leadership from People of Colour,
don't be defensive,
accept feedback
interrupt racism and privilege when you see it...
...be prepared to prove yourself over time in order to earn trust,
[and] make a long-term commitment to a place
(like a particular organisation or town) where you can nurture
authentic relationships.”²⁵**

²⁵ Tochluk, S. (2016). Living in the Tension: The quest for a spiritualised racial justice, p177.

We can all speak up for racial justice within the movements of which we are already a part. Political, social, and faith-based organisations, businesses and trade unions must all do more to identify and support anti-racism groups to broaden the coalition of groups addressing racism. White supremacy is a test of whether as peace and social justice groups we are willing and able to reach out beyond our traditional constituencies.

Within local, national and international contexts, there are a different range of activities that individual citizens can undertake including, home-based research, human rights monitoring, advocacy with individuals and following up on specific human rights violations. Anti-racism projects need financial support, and so fundraising and donating are also important ways we can contribute as individuals.

How might faith communities respond?

Some liberal religious communities are active on social justice issues and outspoken about their belief in equality, whilst at the same time remaining racial homogeneous. Making efforts to reach out to a wider spectrum of society can be an exciting opportunity for community building and spiritual growth.

In her chapter ‘Not Somewhere else, but here: the struggle for racial justice as a struggle to inhabit my country’ Rebecca Parker imagines anti-racist activism as a spiritual practice that can enable us to reclaim our humanity from a life of “numbness and disengagement”.²⁶

Praying, public statements, offering sanctuary and other service are typical contributions faith communities can make. Britain's Quaker Peace and Social Witness is currently launching a programme to encourage Quaker Meetings to more clearly serve as places of

²⁶ Soul Work: Antiracist Theologies in Dialogue, edited by Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley and Nancy Palmer Jones, 171-198. Boston: Skinner House, 2003.

sanctuary. For example, one of the activities that Quaker Meetings will undertake is to offer their premises for free to anti-racism groups and events.

Thinking deeply about subtleties

Faith communities often reflect on how welcoming we are to enquirers. One query is to ask whether we have any community practices that subtly exclude others. For example, if all the photographs on our notice boards and in our newsletters are all of one demographic, what message might this give?

Jamie Bartlett's new book, 'Radicals: Outsiders Changing the World' includes some important reflections on the inclusiveness of social movements. Jamie describes his research with the far-right English Defence League, and with two different groups of environmental activists.

Jamie found it easier to fit into the far-right group, as the environmental groups had developed specific cultural practices that helped members to feel included in the group, but left new participants feeling excluded and judged as less virtuous.²⁷ Faith communities have many specific religious and organisational forms that help to bind them together as a group. I sometimes wonder if the smaller and more radical the faith community is, the more particular and coded these cultural practices become.

Perhaps Quakers can be encouraged by our experience of being a welcoming environment for LGBTI people for many years. On the other hand, we may also be guilty of idolising Quaker history, for example concentrating on William Penn as the proponent of mechanism of peaceful cooperation in Europe and not Penn the slave holder.

²⁷ Talk by Jamie Bartlett to Full Circle discussion group in Brussels, 6 June 2017.

People of faith are called to ask deep questions. This challenge may feel overwhelming, but it is necessary and presents opportunities for growth. We need to unlearn behaviours and assumptions we have as part of a group with privilege. We need to discover seeking racial justice as a spiritual practice.

Mutual liberation and accountability

Where the majority of participants in an anti-racism project are White, the project will often develop an accountability mechanism to ensure that it can be shaped by People of Colour. It is important for any project to have a close relationship with people affected, but particularly in the context of White Supremacy.

In 1986 British Quakers considered human rights at the primary gathering of what was then known as London Yearly Meeting. Part of the minute reads, “Above all we must take risks for God; look around us to the people who need help; listen to those who experience oppression; engage in the mutual process of liberation.”²⁸

“An early conception of human rights is implicit in the seventeenth century political and religious experience of [Quakers]. Such rights are inherent in the ‘neighbour principle’ as a source of social responsibility, common to world faiths.”²⁹

28 Dower, N. (ed) (2008). Nonsense on Stilts? A Quaker view of Human Rights. Ebor Press, York. p98

29 Michael Bartlet in Dower, N. (ed) (2008). Nonsense on Stilts? A Quaker view of Human Rights. Ebor Press, York. P17.

How might governments respond?

Many anti-racist activists are sceptical about the impact of engagement with political institutions, believing that justice and equality require fundamental political and economic change. However, there are many specific policies that privilege some and disadvantage others, and these can be challenged as we seek to reduce the harm they cause.

For QCEA, protecting and promoting international and European law on racial equality, and working to address institutional barriers to racial justice in European structures are necessary parts of working on Quaker concerns, particularly as we seek to change Europe's response to people seeking sanctuary.

Changing European policy

There are many specific policies that could be changed to make our continent and world more racially just. A few examples include:

- Providing development assistance on the basis of need and ending the coercion of non-European countries to restrict migration, despite the increased risk of human rights violations.
- Holding governments to account if they are inciting hatred toward migrants, ignoring violence toward People of Colour, or otherwise not meeting the standards in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. This can be done through EU infringement proceedings.
- Monitoring levels of inclusion and discrimination in all aspects of European, national and local policy.
- Introducing an EU framework to support each country to create a national afrophobia strategy. This has been requested by a UN body, but no European country has produced a strategy so far. A

first step could be to follow Sweden's example and commission specific research into afrophobia nationally or locally.

In particular, European governments can be encouraged and held to account for their compliance with the European Charter of Fundamental Rights (the 28 EU members only) and European Convention on Human Rights (all 48 European states except Belarus). These international agreements are at risk of being watered down, through the response of European governments to forced migration.

Military responses to migration: There are alternatives

Alongside many other faith and human rights organisations, QCEA has been involved in advocacy for safe and legal ways for people to come to Europe whilst their right to asylum is being established. Recognising that there is not a single solution, civil society organisations have proposed a toolbox of different measures that European governments can use to manage this process.

One of the main such tools is humanitarian visas. This type of visa allows those that can afford to, to travel to Europe safely for three months whilst their asylum application is considered. There is currently an opportunity to provide for this within Schengen border rules as EU institutions are undertaking a review of the EU visa code. Humanitarian visas have been used successfully in some countries including France and Portugal.

Other opportunities include community and private sponsorship, more family reunification, more open labour markets, educational exchanges, scholarships. For these ideas to be implemented, we must make the case to the public, as advocacy toward politicians will be insufficient.

Recommended reading

Dale, J. (2000) Faith in Action: Quaker social testimony. Quaker Books: London. (Especially, New queries on racism for elders, overseers and outreach pp269-271)

Dower, N. (ed) (2008). Nonsense on Stilts? A Quaker view of Human Rights. Ebor Press, York.

European Network Against Racism. (2017). Racism and Discrimination in the context of Migration in Europe – ENAR Shadow Report 2015-2016. Brussels.

McDaniel, D and Juyle, V. (2008) Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice. Quaker Press of FGC.

McIntosh, P. (1998) White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to see Consequences through Work in Women's Studies. Wellesley College Centre for Research on Women.

Tochluk, S. (2016). Living in the Tension: The quest for a spiritualised racial justice.

Weaver, H. Kriese, P. and Angell, S. (eds.) (2012) Black Fire: African American Quakers on Spirituality and Human Rights. Quaker Press of FGC.

**For more information about the
Quaker Council for European Affairs
visit QCEA.org**