

LIBERATION SCOTLAND COMMITTEE: 06 JUNE 2026

DEMOCRACY FOR SOME: IS FRANCE SILENCING THE KANAK PEOPLE OF KANAKY - NEW CALEDONIA ?



France stands accused of the systematic and deliberate disenfranchisement of indigenous voters in the upcoming provincial elections in Kanaky - New Caledonia, due to be held on 28 June, and in violation of the 1998 Nouméa Accord in which it agreed to the progressive transfer of powers from France to this Pacific island territory.

Known as Kanaky by its indigenous Oceanian inhabitants, the Kanak people (rather than the colonial name given to it by James Cook in 1774), Kanaky - New Caledonia has been designated by the UN for decades as a Non-Self-Governing-Territory under the UN Charter, making it entitled to self-determination and decolonisation under UN and international law.

The Kanak people have been fighting for generations for the fundamental human right to self-determination and against years of manipulation of their electoral system by the administering colonial power (France) working to prevent the realisation of their independent nationhood. An independent Kanaky would join the community of similar-sized neighbouring independent island nations in the region (e.g. Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa).

The French authorities have undertaken the systemic marginalisation of Kanak and Oceanian voters in disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the capital city of Nouméa. These include well documented breaches of the right to vote that were implemented during recent municipal elections in March 2026, including:

- the consolidation of 56 polling stations in Nouméa into just 8 centralised 'voting site' locations, forcing more than a third of the electorate to travel long distances to vote, without any compensation for transport costs and with no postal vote option;
- the removal of names from the electoral roll and irregularities in the composition of the electoral roll.

A formal complaint has been lodged by the Kanak Independentist and Sovereign Nationalist Movement (MNIS) to UN representatives regarding these breaches.

However these measures remain in force for the upcoming provincial elections on Sunday 28 June. And combined with very low car ownership by indigenous Kanak residents of Nouméa's working class districts, the long distance to voting stations, and the absence of public bus services on a Sunday, they will result in the effective disenfranchisement of more than one third of Nouméa's electorate, predominantly from its indigenous neighbourhoods.

This deliberate policy by the French Authorities will result in:

- an electoral process marred by structural obstacles to voting that vary according to social and ethnic background and are incompatible with the requirements for a free and effective vote;
- systematic discrimination selectively targeting the Kanak population that constitutes an infringement of the effective political participation of indigenous people, preventing their free and full expression within international decolonisation law and undermining of their fundamental human rights.

Liberation Scotland calls on the Scottish Government, Scottish civic society and the UK Government to demand that France does not disenfranchise those entitled to vote under the Nouméa Accord in this election, and also on the UN to implement genuine international oversight and actions on its own decolonisation commitments towards Kanaky - New Caledonia, as a long-standing Non-Self-Governing Territory.