

Municipalist Dialogues in Berlin

Summary

In the context of the discussions of the Arbeitskreis Munizipalismus Berlin (*Munis Berlin*), the group decided some months ago to organize a set of events during 2023. The goal of them would be to go deeper into some aspects of how we could imagine creating a citizen-led municipalist force in Berlin.

For that, we would like to ask for some financial support to hire two people part-time, who could do the secretariat work of the group. We believe that this would help our group a lot as we share political interest and share potential in developing this idea, but the lack of time prevents us to move forward.

History

1. The Arbeitskreis Munizipalismus Berlin started to meet in Summer 2020 as an informal group of people interested in municipalism. The group started with some casual meetings in a bar with changing frequency, and then shifted to biweekly online meetings during 2021.
2. After some time of exchanges and discussions, the group organized some workshops to share publicly some of the ideas and doubts around the possibility of implementing municipalists practices in Berlin. See the banner of the event organized in June 2021 below:



3. After the summer 2021, the group stopped meeting and kept in touch only via the Signal chat that the group has. Part of the reason why this happened was the results of the elections in September 2021. Since the group aims to have an influence in the social and political sphere of the city, some people wanted to see the results of the after-elections negotiations and where each of the actors would end up, before they start talking about how to take action. This period extended until March 2022.

4. Since Spring, the group started meeting again and with renovated energy: from the beginning, some people expressed their interest for moving on with the discussion and shared the urge to think about doing something for the elections in 2026, especially given the current political context. We started working on how to do it and developed the proposal presented in this document.

5. In parallel, the EMN (European Municipalist Network) decided to meet in Berlin on October 13th-15th, partly to support the process going on in the city. In order to take advantage of the people who would be in the city those days, we decided to co-organize, together with the EMN, a public event with some inspiring examples from abroad. See banner below:



Proposal

Over the first half of 2023, we will organize 6 meetings for discussing how to create a municipalist space in Berlin.

We will have discuss the different possibilities for being influential in the next local elections in 2026. Although many are interrelated, we will discuss one aspect in each meeting.

- Meetings will have facilitation and this structure: short intro + open debate.

- Desired outcomes 1: align vision, outline strategy, create snowball effect.
- Desired outcome 2: switch on 'cooperation mode' among groups that would lead us to define a grassroots "program" for the city.
- Key points: what we miss in Berlin, what could we achieve, which process we need, calendar, structure, how to include others, logistics, legal form, feedback events, etc.
- Topics: Principles and functioning / Analysis and Narrative / Aims and objectives / Movements and parties / Process and calendar / Logistics and Finances

Justification

In the current context, there is a deep interest in the group for working more on the idea of a citizen-led influence on the politics of the city.

At the same time, the lack of time of most of the members and the thorough work that setting a proper dialogue requires, brings us to the need for some facilitation and secretariat work. At this moment, we think that having someone who could do the *organizational* work that makes possible the *political* work, would be very useful and would allow the group to move on with their work.

We think that it would be perfect if these tasks could be divided by two people, so that the whole process is more collective and open.

Request

Goal: supporting the group to develop their discussions, growing, organizing events, etc.

Tasks: asking in the group about our needs, organizing the meetings, facilitating the work of the working groups, preparing the set-up for the meetings for the coming year, etc.

Who: 2 people from the group

Dedication: part-time (25% each)

Time: 3 months (March-May 2023)

Co-financing: We are talking to Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung and Böll Stiftung for them to collaborate with this project. Both for economical and political reasons, we think it would be interesting that they co-fund the project, but we still don't have any confirmation.

A group of people from different movements, projects and parties who are interested in municipalism. We have been meeting for 2 years to discuss how we could imagine creating a citizen-led municipalist force in Berlin.

In our project, we would like to collaborate with other members of the EMN as well as the EMN itself. We would like to get inspiration and advice on how to create a process to create a space of collaboration where Berliner organizations and people could think together and define common goals.

We organize debates and talks, and write public statements in important political moments for the city; on top, we all are committed to bring the idea of setting up a municipalist platform in Berlin to each of our movements, unions, NGOs, parties, etc.

We would like to ask for some financial support to hire two people part-time to do the secretariat work of the group. We believe that this would help our group a lot as we share political interest and share potential in developing this idea, but the lack of time prevents us to move forward.

Over the course of 6 months, we will organize one meeting per month where we will invite people from different organizations to discuss how we could increase our influence in the Berliner political scene, and which conditions we all would need for doing that together.

The goal of these meetings would be to go deeper into some aspects of how we could imagine creating a citizen-led municipalist force in Berlin.

The topics we would like to discuss are: Principles and functioning / Analysis and Narrative / Aims and objectives / Movements and parties / Process and calendar / Logistics and Finances. As the process has an essential role in this project, for each of the meetings, we will invite a big and diverse number of initiatives and people from Berlin, with whom we would like to prepare the sessions.

At the same time, we would like to count on some inspiring examples from the EMN members as an input for the discussions.

Desired outcome 1: align vision, outline strategy, create snowball effect.

Desired outcome 2: switch on cooperation mode among groups that would lead us to define a grassroots “program” for the city.

We need 3000€ for the fees for two people: 1500€ per person.

The rest of the work will be done as activist time.

Logistical aspects will be covered by the people of the group: rooms, calls, material, etc.

Berlin is a city with a high density of progressive movements. Part of the reason why this happens is the big diversity of tactics and strategies that they have, which prevents a higher collaboration. We think that the political position of most Berliners is not reflected in how the city is governed and has little impact on important fields such as the government or the power that civil society.

We believe that if we are able to create cooperation among movements, parties, NGOs, etc, we could have a strong influence in the policies, the governance and the management of the city. We believe