

YES to “Not another political party” **BUT** under some conditions

Summary

YES, we support the move towards a transnational electoral wing as proposed by the Coordinating Collective **BUT** we propose a number of conditions for doing so as to guarantee the flourishing of open ideas towards an open future, in a democratic, grassroots movement, such as DiEM25. The specific proposed conditions in a nutshell are: (1) a “sunset” clause: we suggest to carry out another voting procedure after one year to re-examine the idea of a transnational political party; (2) the creation of a task force to redefine the organising principles of the entire movement, working together with the entire membership; (3) making sure that all positions of power are open and subject to an electoral process; (4) making sure that CC members won't be able to run or stand for office while being in the CC, in order to avoid conflicts of interest; (5) making sure that all legal documents and legal positions in DiEM25 can be known to its members; (6) ensuring that DiEM25 the movement and its electoral wing are statutorily bound but operationally separated and (7) that all electronic voting procedures are transparent and auditable.

Introduction

We support the passionate outcry of the CC and a big part of our movement to start acting to combat the great crises and injustices we face in Europe and beyond. In principle, we therefore also support the idea to start acting on becoming a transnational political party; as one of the means towards reaching our aims.

We also agree with the CC's proposal, in that a first proposal should not be too complicated and detailed. We face an open future, and an open future demands open-ended ideas.

However, we do want to propose a number of reasonable and necessary conditions to the CC's proposal that in our opinion will **guarantee** the flourishing of open ideas, towards an open future, in a democratic, grassroots movement such as DiEM25.

Why a proposal and not only amendments? Because we think the following conditions are all necessary for us to go forward. No cherry picking should be possible, in other words.

What do I vote for? When voting for this proposal, you vote for (1) adopting the CC's proposal for “not another political party”, (2) adding the conditions listed below and (3) acknowledging that in the case of conflict between the CC's proposal and the conditions, the conditions gain

precedence and taking the provision below into account (that is, your vote will not have any statutory effect).

One important provision: a vote for this proposal does not have any immediate effects on the organising principles and/or the manifesto of DiEM25 because the process leading up to this vote did not comply with section 6 of the organising principles. Because of this, no additional mandate to the existing mandates of DiEM25 bodies will follow from a vote for this proposal. For any new mandates and corresponding formal changes to the organising principles and/or the manifesto, additional votes will be needed that will comply with the rules laid out in section 6 of the organising principles.

1. We need a sunset clause

Choosing for a transnational political party seems like a good idea, but the future might teach us otherwise. Whatever the future might hold, we think it would be wise to already propose a moment of reflection and reconsideration: a moment at which the movement can either continue or discontinue the transnational political party project.

Condition I: “One year after the vote, the entire membership of DiEM25 the movement will be able to engage in a vote to either continue or discontinue DiEM25’s political wing.”

Why? The future is necessarily open-ended and uncertain. Moving towards creating a transnational political party might create power-structures or imbalances between movement and party that in time might be seen as undesirable by the majority of the DiEM25 membership. A sunset clause will guarantee that such a problem can be mitigated.

2. We need some rigorous changes to the organising principles

The organising principles (OPs) contain some problems that - if not anticipated beforehand - can lead to structural issues later on. We propose to mitigate the most pressing problems by already putting conditions forward of the following amendments to the OPs to put forward in case we go down the path towards a transnational political party.

Condition II: “At least before **two months** after the vote on the transnational party issue, an open call to all DiEM25 members should be issued for forming a task force for a grassroots-based review of the OPs in light of becoming a transnational party. This task force should be voted in by the membership with a 2/3 majority. The task force should meet regularly, should not contribute to ideas itself and will be responsible for (1) reaching out to the entire membership of DiEM25 to ask for ideas, (2) transparently collect, collate and summarise these ideas and (3) develop a consensual document that most DiEM25 members can agree with.”

Why? For some time now, the movement has been struggling with the current version of the OPs (not being sure about mandates, ways to put forward proposals from the grassroots, etc.). A dedicated task force will be able to tackle all these issues in a timely manner.

Condition III: “Within two months after the vote, the CC should put forward a proposal to make sure that all significant positions of power that surpass the DSC level (e.g. PNCs, should be (1) open to all DiEM25 members, (2) formalised in the OPs and (3) filled through all-membership votes or lotteries.”

Why? A move towards a transnational political party will require much more coordination/operational support. The people providing this support will be in positions of significant power, which should therefore be legitimised in order to these people to be accountable. Open positions and votings/lotteries will provide for the much needed legitimisation of these positions.

Condition IV: “An imminent vote on the following amendment to the OPs should follow the vote on the transnational party issue: [original]: ‘No individuals in public office or holding positions of major responsibility within a political party (e.g. sitting on its national executive or leadership board) can sit on the CC.’ => [amended]: ‘No individuals in public office, **standing for public office**, or holding positions of major responsibility within a political party (e.g. sitting on its national executive or leadership board) can sit on the CC.’ Additionally, a clause should be added stating that, in order to respect the mandate of CC members, they can return to their positions on the CC as soon they seize standing for office, be in public office or hold positions of major responsibility within a political party.

Why? To avoid major conflicts of interests between the leadership of the movement and those involved in the political wing. For instance, under the current OPs a CC member can stand for public office. Under the new OPs, a CC members needs to step down before being able to stand for office. However, in order to respect the mandates of CC members, they should also be allowed to return to the CC as soon as they stop being active in the political wing of DiEM25 (e.g. not running for office anymore).

3. Some conditions for DiEM25’s legal structure

At the moment, the legal structure of DiEM25 (its European level) is very opaque. We don’t know who are part of the “legal entity” DiEM25 (official board members under the Belgian law), we don’t know who is legally in charge with DiEM25’s finances and we are not able to see any of the legally obligatory documents (legal statutes, annual financial report, etc.). Moreover, it is difficult to assess how DiEM25 the movement is kept legally separate from DiEM25’s electoral wing.

Condition V: “The official legal documents of DiEM25 (its statutes, annual financial reports, etc.) should be made transparently available to all DiEM25 members. The CC is expected to propose a way to do this within **two months** after the transnational party vote.”

Why? Like every political movement/party, transparency concerning legal matters is essential for the membership. Especially when funding is organised for national parties of DiEM25’s electoral wing and money is channeled towards the movement, the membership needs to know who is legally in charge with taking care of these finances; to provide the necessary accountability.

Condition VI: “DiEM25 the movement and its electoral wing should be statutorily bound, but operationally independent. This has the following implications (1) what DiEM25 political party’s can and cannot do is **solely** determined by the statutes (the OPs) of DiEM25 the movement in conjunction with membership-wide votes, (2) the leadership of DiEM25 the movement has no further control concerning the day-to-day operations of the DiEM25 political parties, (3) disputes between a DiEM25 political party and the leadership of DiEM25 the movement should be settled by the independent mediating body and (4) in extreme cases, a DiEM25 political party and DiEM25 the movement should be able to “separate”, which would mean that the DiEM25 political party would lose its right to carry the DiEM25 name and identity.”

Why? One of the main concerns of the members of DiEM25 is that DiEM25’s electoral wing will de facto replace DiEM25 the movement. Merely making membership of DiEM25’s electoral wing optional, as proposed by the CC, seems not sufficient to mitigate this problem. By having the abovementioned condition, the following risks are mitigated: of (1) the DiEM25 leadership totally controlling the day-to-day operations of the DiEM25 political parties, de facto turning the movement into an umbrella party and of (2) a DiEM25 political party moving into a direction that the movement cannot identify itself with and vice-versa, in case of which a proper separation would be better than a continuous internal struggle.

Condition VII: “All electronic voting procedures should be made transparent and auditable. This implies that the CC should present a roadmap to ensure this within 2 months after the vote and should start implementing solutions no later than 4 months after the vote, unless convincing grounds for extension of this period are presented and validated by the VC.”

Why? Voting processes are the cornerstone of democratic organisations and it is paramount that they are transparent (e.g. that the sorting algorithm for lotteries is public) and auditable; meaning that *in principle* everyone should be able to contest voting outcomes and ask for proofs that they happened in a fair way. At the moment, neither is the case in DiEM25. We therefore ask to change this.