

Proposal for supporting *Don't Let Belgrade D(r)own Initiative* ahead of elections

On March 4, 2018 municipal elections will be held in Belgrade, Serbia. Being the capital and the largest city in Serbia, local elections in Belgrade act as a barometer of the current political sentiment. For the last five years, the city has been governed by Siniša Mali, a member of the center-right Serbian Progressive Party. This legislation period abounded in non-transparent governance, corruption allegations and unaccountable expropriation of public spaces.

Against this background in general and a Belgrade Waterfront project in particular, the *Initiative Don't Let Belgrade D(r)own* emerged nearly four years ago. Its activists bring a plethora of professional backgrounds ranging from humanities to science, while its activities focus on preservation of public spaces, economic and environmental sustainability and social housing. Being a part of Fearless cities movement, the Initiative fights with sagacity, creativity and courage to bring the decision making to the level of local communities to the benefit of majority, not the privileged ones. This spring the Initiative will contest municipal elections.

Being the only electoral list spearheaded by a female candidate, it comprises 80 candidates and observes equal gender representation. Among others it features Ksenija Radovanović, an architect and activist with first-hand experience in urban development and Dobrica Veselinović, a charismatic political scientist, engaged in social, environmental and urban activism.

DSC Belgrade has supported the Initiative from the commencement of public protests in summer 2015 and contributes to development its economic and social policies. Rounding up the fruitful cooperation, two DiEM25 members are putting their names forward for inclusion on the list with *Don't let Belgrade D(r)own*:

- Ivana Nenadović, DiEM25 CC member, theatre producer and a coordinator of DSC Belgrade
- Zoran Sokolovski, financial advisor, also of DSC Belgrade

The political program of *Don't Let Belgrade D(r)own* is in accordance with DiEM25's Manifesto and European New Deal. Moreover, it represents its acclimatization to EU candidate country – a country whose politics have traditionally resembled a melting pot of Western and Eastern influences. Given its nascent democratic experiences and growing uncertainties of shifting world politics, it becomes even more important to create models of collective decision-making and to make political engagement a worthy cause.

By approving an all-member vote on supporting this citizen's initiative the CC would add Belgrade to the map of Rebel Cities. This would represent a valuable encouragement to our belief that a true change is coming from below, from our neighborhoods, cities, regions, countries to the whole of Europe.

Carpe Belgrade!