



# REAL DEMOCRACY in your town Public-civic partnerships in action

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## Introduction

In the past few years it has become evident that citizens across Europe have been undertaking collective action with the aim of disrupting the destructive status quo linked to austerity measures, state capture, mismanagement in the public service sector, or usurpation of public functions and interest. It is particularly at local and municipal levels – where the interaction between authorities and citizens is more close-knit – that initiatives borne from discontent with the status quo are in a position to quickly become real policy alternatives that allow higher rates of citizen participation, increased public ownership, more transparency, and give more power to democratic agency. Up until 2018, a wide range of European progressive political communities and social movements have called to municipalise Europe.<sup>1</sup> A strong consensus on a range of issues has been reached by many progressive cities through the Fearless Cities Summit created by the municipalist movement, from Naples, Barcelona, and Madrid in the south, to Ghent, Amsterdam, and Hamburg in the north.<sup>2</sup> Citizen participation, public ownership of services, participatory governance models – all of these and others have been directly inspired and motivated by a wide-spread commons movement which has already organised assembly meetings across Europe, and has also made achievements in maintaining hold over public ownership and continuing with the democratisation process in some less visible cities such as Grenoble or Vienna.<sup>3</sup> Although contesting the current distribution of power often starts with a confrontation of the existing order or rules, it can also gradually lead to more constructive proposals, which in turn can become real changemakers in the social architecture of a city. In some cases, it results in institutional innovation and puts into force practices that directly empower citizen engagement, thus challenging the ongoing reduction of democratic practices into that of a merely representative model.

This report will primarily look at the emergence of ‘public-civic partnerships’ as a counterproposal to the detrimental effects of the more prominent public-private partnerships (PPPs). Public-civic partnerships represent a new hybrid form of institutional arrangements wherein the democratic agency of citizens and their vibrant social energy is coupled with the institutional stability of public administration. Public-civic partnerships not only represent a real alternative to detrimental PPPs which rely on investment-related interests of private investors, putting public interest in the backseat, but they are also – depending on the case – examples of a new institutional design in which citizens can create new value through the collective exercise of their constituent power. For the Greens that hold executive positions in different cities and municipalities across Europe, the involvement of citizens can be especially beneficial as it



## Ghent, Belgium – Commons transition plan

Being part of the increasing family of progressive cities across Europe, Ghent is particularly interesting as the city administration has commissioned a commons transition plan, putting the transformation of the city according to principles of the Commons high on the agenda. The plan is a result of the research conducted by P2P Foundation's<sup>1</sup> Michel Bauwens and Yurek Onzia, which concludes with a set of 23 integrated proposals on how the city can adapt institutionally to the needs of the many commons activities emerging.<sup>2</sup>

The study outlines successful urban commons initiatives not only in Ghent itself but also in other European cities and highlights their potential – not the least from an economic perspective:

- ▶ As integral part of an ecological transition with reference to the decreased ecological footprint of shared and common infrastructures.
- ▶ As “a means towards the re-industrialisation of the city following the cosmo-local model which combines global technical cooperation in knowledge commons with smart re-localisation of production”.
- ▶ As a system of “Democracy+”, meaning an elaborate system of multi-stakeholder governance in close collaboration with commoners that would lead to a new level of participation and deliberation among citizenry.

However, the authors of the Transition Plan also point out the challenges that arise from urban commons as they – being co-creations and relying on self-governance – differ from both state and private property and therefore also require new forms of cooperation between the three actors of citizenry, state, and market. They state that “generative market forms” are necessary in order to “sustain the commons and create livelihoods for the core contributors”. The role of the state power, in the case of Ghent the city administration, must be the one of a partner, empowering such civic initiatives and at the same time ensuring the democratic representation of the interest of the entire citizenry. As one of their proposals, the authors therefore suggest most notably “the creation of an Assembly of the Commoners for all citizens active in the co-construction of commons, and a Chamber of the Commons for all those creating livelihoods around these commons.” As a best practice, they refer to the food policy of the city of Ghent – in which the establishment of a Food Council has led to this successful combination of representative and contributory logic – and propose the replication of this model for commons such as energy, transport, housing, etc.

1 For more information on the P2P Foundation, visit: <https://p2pfoundation.net/>

2 To read the full Commons Transition Plan of Ghent and learn more about the Commons Transition in general, visit: <http://commonstransition.org/commons-transition-plan-city-ghent/>

provides a fresh source of enthusiasm for green political projects. However, public-civic partnerships are not something final, completed, or monolithic; they rely on experimentation, and emerge in different forms within the fluidity of new social movements and initiatives that call for more equality and sustainability, frequently coupled with demands for more public control and protection of public interest. Often they are a direct result of controversy or conflict around a specific idea or project, but they can also be a response to austerity measures or privatisations that turn cities into powerless territorial units and leave citizens without the ability to constructively engage with local politics.

Within the current context, public-civic partnerships emerge as attempts at ‘commoning’, remunicipalisation efforts, or as initiatives to democratise urban governance regimes that hold the transformative power to turn institutions into an empowering, civic-centred state with citizens as its partners.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, another interesting proposal for the transformation of the state is the concept of a ‘Platform State’, which can ‘only emerge from the local experimentation of institutional, social and economic innovations and therefore from the process and the methodology on which the co-city is based. The Platform State is therefore a relational, enabling, facilitating State, that plays a central role in incentivising and supporting the efforts of the other actors in taking care of shared resources, engage itself in a collaborative/polycentric approach to urban governance, facilitates the conditions for which actors can develop social relationship.’<sup>5</sup>

## **Public interest – the main ingredient of democracy**

Before exploring how new and inclusive models of governance and public ownership can operate, it is important to briefly reflect on our current state. Why is it now that citizens have suddenly started to oppose the neoliberalisation of their cities, to challenge state capture at a local level, or to contest the usurpation of public functions? Evidently, time was needed to realise the limits of representative power, which has been influenced by a variety of actors who have neglected public interest and delivered cities across Europe to the predatory rules of the market. This has often been manifested through malfunctioning governance and a toxic mixture of austerity and public-private arrangements designed to generate short-term profits for the business and political classes, while leaving citizens and future generations with significant debts and a hopelessness about the capacity for change within local politics. In many of these cases, citizens have been caught with little choice except between bad governance of public property on one side and aggressive privatisation on the other. This systemic



## Barcelona, Spain – municipalist project in action

Taking over the power at a local level in Barcelona, municipal platform Barcelona en Comu' has initiated a wide range of processes in order to transform public institutions, policies, and services in the city. This so-called 'municipalist transformation' is following different principles, primarily those focused on the promotion of public interest and common good, designing participatory governance models, and opening permanent exchange and city-wide dialogue with citizens through different instruments. The overall implementation is elaborated and implemented through different plans and programmes, with special attention being paid to transparency, monitoring, and evaluation of the measures taken. Finally, the programme remains open for discussion and amendments, with participatory communication tools being put in place to ensure follow-up discussions. The active participation of citizens in the diagnosis, proposals, debates, and decision-making on municipal policies is at the heart of Barcelona En Comu's desire to 'do politics differently'. This collaborative approach to policy-making also had to be institutionalised, which led to, among other initiatives, the introduction of the Citizen Participation Regulation (*Projecte normatiu Reglament de participació ciutadana*) after more than a year of online and face-to-face consultations. The city administration itself underlines that "[i]n the same way that the municipal government's and the opposition's councillors and advisers have channels for debating, monitoring and controlling government actions, it is essential to generate forums where the general public can promote, debate, decide and co-produce municipal policies."<sup>2</sup>

Apart from Barcelona, similar municipal projects have emerged in many other cities like Madrid, Lublin<sup>3</sup>, Naples, Zagreb, and Belgrade, where equivalent processes have been initiated in the political spheres.

1 More information on Barcelona en Comu can be found here:

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/eu/europe-make-it/laura-roth/which-municipalism-lets-be-choose>

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/eu/europe-make-it/oscar-reyes-bertie-russell/eight-lessons-from-barcelona-en-com-on-how-to-take-bac>

[http://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Barcelona\\_en\\_Com%C3%BA#Citizen\\_participation\\_process](http://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Barcelona_en_Com%C3%BA#Citizen_participation_process).

<https://barcelonaencomu.cat/ca> (In Catalan and Spanish)

2 <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/participaciociudadana/en/how-participate>

3 <https://blog.p2pfoundation.net/new-municipalism-poland/2017/02/23>

pattern has been repeated countless times across Europe in different phases, with the results pauperising citizens and ultimately eliminating their capacity for efficient political activity.

Until the wave of progressive ‘fearless cities’<sup>6</sup> emerged as a systemic response, many cities were exposed to a multitude of detrimental impacts that rapidly and dramatically transformed urban life and public functions of the city. In many cases, this manifested as a further degradation of public services and quality of life that went hand in hand with the privatisation of public services, shrinking of public spaces required for social cohesion, and less affordable and accessible options for housing. Very often, local politicians played the roles of middlemen for their own interests while burdening both future generations – threatening their quality of life and access to resources – and public budgets, in which there were increasingly less funds available for education, health, or housing, due to debt and interest repayments. In reality, investments in most of these cases were not meant to improve the living conditions of communities, but instead to increase consumption or to mirror social inequalities through the creation of exclusive zones or expropriated property. Under pressure, local proponents of the neoliberal agenda were in many cases pushing forward with their systemic plundering and privatising of the remaining natural resources and public infrastructure.

Paired with austerity measures, in a number of cities this led to discontent and burgeoning protest movements that openly challenged the status quo or – where possible – overturned it through direct self-organisation in different areas. As reported by the Transnational Institute, TNI., during the past decade thousands of initiatives have emerged across Europe to reclaim and democratise the public service sector (in sectors such as housing, energy, water, or care), directly responding as a counter-power to control the damage created by the neoliberalisation of the city.<sup>7</sup> Collective action, much of it successful, was organised in order to compensate for the large vacuum that emerged from the withdrawal or severe reduction of state competences induced through austerity. In fact, the crisis appeared to open a window of opportunity for citizens to directly engage and democratise structures of governance and to claim public ownership – albeit in unfavourable circumstances, as financial losses and debts were created through the extractivist logic of neoliberalism. Citizens were now in a position to start anew and use their democratic agency to decentralise power and regain control over public resources, recognising the failures of different neoliberal instruments such as PPPs and outsourcing practices.



## Vienna, Austria – the good life for all'

In Vienna, where public ownership and civic participation are still highly appreciated and maintained, the convergence of progressive civil society, academia, social movements, and trade unions has created the concept of 'The Good Life for All' on both the theoretical and practical level. They organise congresses biennially, with dialogue series taking place between congresses to offer space for reflection and debate on new questions. The meetings are often frequented by thousands of participants in order to collectively develop further ideas of transformation. This collective action dares to be emancipatory and utopian through the idea of 'The Good Life for All', wherein progress does not come at the expense of others but through freedom, peace, and solidarity.

The 2017 Opening Congress of 'The Good Life for All' concluded with five theses that aim to offer a vision for the world and society that provides good livelihoods for everyone:

1. Societies need a vision that provides orientation and maximises the realisation of individual potential.
2. The good life for all is a concrete utopia; a civilisation where progress for some does not come at the expense of others.
3. Freedom for all needs democratically-defined limits.
4. Selective economic regionalisation can promote sovereignty and cosmopolitanism.
5. The good life for all must create space for mobilisation from the grassroots.<sup>2</sup>

In particular, the emphasis on both sovereignty and cosmopolitanism is interesting as it acknowledges that global problems like climate, poverty, human rights, and the world economic order have many layers and do not have to be dealt with at only the global level. Climate and social policies are often made and/or implemented at the local level. "At all levels people can become active in order to promote freedom, solidarity, sustainability, and democratisation."

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.guteslebenfueralle.org/en/>

<sup>2</sup> More details on each of the five theses can be read here: <http://www.guteslebenfueralle.org/en/id-5-thesis-for-a-goodf-life-for-all.html>

According to TNI, with the goal of protecting public interest, thousands of politicians, public officials, workers, unions, and social movements are currently working – often invisibly – to reclaim or create effective public services that address the basic needs of the people and respond to our social, environmental, and climate challenges. In total there have been more than 1600 cities in 45 countries involved in ‘(re)municipalisation’, referring to ‘the return of public services from private to public delivery’.<sup>8</sup> These (re)municipalisations have generally succeeded in bringing down costs and tariffs, improving conditions for workers and boosting service quality, while ensuring greater transparency and accountability.<sup>9</sup> The same report by TNI also states that ‘(re)municipalisations occur at all levels, with different models of public ownership, and with various levels of involvement from citizens and workers. But out of this diversity a coherent picture nevertheless can be drawn: the movement for (re) municipalisation is growing and spreading, despite the continued top-down push for privatisation and austerity policies.’<sup>10</sup>

### **Race to the bottom – the damaging pathways of public-private partnerships**

However, the political reality of the last few decades is that PPPs were particularly instrumental in the overall neoliberalisation of the city, expropriation of the commons, and erosion of public functions of the city. In many cases, through support to these instruments and similar policies, some local politicians used their privileges to expropriate resources of public value (often improving their own status and increasing the inequality gap) while leaving future generations with large debts and risks linked to unsustainable projects. It was precisely the failures of PPPs that led many European cities into unsustainable financial situations, debt, and expensive expenditures of public budgets which were burdened with and exhausted by PPPs.

According to TNI, ‘PPPs are a medium- or long-term contractual arrangement between the state, a regional or local authority, and a private sector company, in which the private sector participates in the supply of assets and services traditionally provided by government. Examples include hospitals, schools, prisons, roads, railways, water, sanitation and energy services. As such, they include areas that affect the basic human rights of citizens. PPPs are presented as an alternative to the traditional way of procuring public infrastructure or delivering social services. In traditional procurement, the state has to finance and pay the costs upfront when a road or a school is built. With PPPs, on the other hand, the costs are spread over a long period of time. This relieves the



## Bologna, Italy – Bologna regulation

One of the most remarkable and drastic restructuring of urban life has recently been implemented in Bologna through the work of LabGov<sup>1</sup>, the first laboratory devoted to the study and practice of urban co-governance, put into practice under the co-direction of Christian Iaione and Sheila Foster since 2012. In this context, Iaione was also part of the drafting process of the Bologna Regulation on the Urban Commons.<sup>2</sup>

LabGov gained international recognition after hosting the international conference 'The City as a Commons' in 2015 in Bologna, which brought together over 200 experts, academics, and commoners from all over the world under the umbrella of the International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC). Based on its blueprint and Co-City<sup>3</sup> protocol, other LabGovs in Italy<sup>4</sup> and beyond emerged, with their details being collected in the Co-Cities database<sup>5</sup>; more than 130 cities are now implementing several hundreds of commons-based projects and urban policies. The analysis of all these different projects feeds into the Co-City protocol which is constantly being modified by LabGov. This also makes the protocol open enough to adapt to the needs and conditions of each local context, allowing it to serve as a guidance rather than a strict plan for all co-governance experiments.

2 The Bologna Regulation is a legal framework created to answer the citizens' demands for co-governance, as the existing instruments were not capable of allowing cooperation between the municipality and its citizens in the co-management and care of the city's public spaces. For more details, cf. Laura Sobral, *Doing it together – Cooperation tools for the city co-governance*, 2018, pp. 62-81: [https://issuu.com/acidadeprecisa/docs/doing\\_together\\_laurasobral\\_2018\\_iss](https://issuu.com/acidadeprecisa/docs/doing_together_laurasobral_2018_iss) See also: <https://labgov.city/thecommonspost/bologna-regulation-on-public-collaboration/>

3 More information on what constitutes a Co-City can be found here: <https://labgov.city/city-as-a-commons/#CCP>

4 Including Battipaglia, Mantua Reggio Emilia, and Rome.

5 The database can be accessed here: <http://commoning.city/commons-map/>

public treasury and reduces borrowing needs at the outset. However, PPPs may store up borrowing and debt for the future, reducing governments' fiscal space and their ability to deliver essential services. In addition, PPP projects often create infrastructure or services that come with user fees to generate revenue, which can effectively exclude poorer citizens.<sup>11</sup> Despite the praise they receive, at the end of the day many PPPs are more expensive due to profit expectations, transaction costs, and cost of the capital. With such arrangements, the future of such cities is often locked into new costs, debts, and narrowed policy choices in the long term, which can often lead to poor services and the loss of democratic accountability.<sup>12</sup> Placing the delivery of public services completely into the hands of private providers protected by bulletproof contracts disables citizens from taking part in any decision-making while also exposing them – as both users and contributors – to significant risks through local taxes.

## **Reclaiming the public, re-inventing the city**

The self-organisation of citizens at a local level can evolve into true democratic agency and transformative power through interaction with public institutions. There are many pathways that can be instrumental in demonstrating the Europe-wide emerging movement aiming to reclaim the public; either through the commoning of the state (at both national and local levels)<sup>13</sup> or through (re)municipalisation of public services. This is often coupled with evolving ideas on how to democratise the current governance model or increase public ownership, having been reduced in many cases by different forms of state capture. One of the advantages of this is that the common perspective around public interest can likely be shared by both the municipality and its citizens, while this is rarely the case with private investors aiming primarily for revenues and profit. Thus, specific structures have recently been designed across Europe to build on collaboration and cooperation between public institutions and citizens, occasionally even including commons initiatives<sup>14</sup> in a variety of policy fields and areas of interest (such as waste, water, energy, housing, education). They are part of multi-year experimentation processes designing and arranging a variety of hybrid institutional arrangements between community initiative and public administration, focused on protecting public interest rather than searching for private investors to take over and commodify resources or infrastructure. In some cases, 'local administrators have recognised the public interest in active citizenship and capable communities: therefore they support the commitment of residents and other stakeholders to develop pioneering social initiatives'.<sup>15</sup> In these cases, through commoning or other collective ac-



## Hamburg, Germany – our city, our grid

The case of Hamburg is not only one of the best examples of re-municipalisation of public services in Europe, but also an example of the successful *Energiewende*<sup>1</sup> movement that has resulted in systemic ecological transition in the energy sector coupled with the creation of community energy. It started with the phasing out of concession contracts with big energy companies, which provided a window of opportunity for systemic change as the topic of future local energy provision was put on the agenda and opened the door for overcoming established relations.

The coalition '*Unser Hamburg – Unser Netz*'<sup>2</sup> (Our Hamburg – Our Grid<sup>3</sup>) was founded in 2010 by six organisations from the social and environmental movements, among them Attac Hamburg, Friends of the Earth (BUND), parts of the Lutheran Church, and more. Their referendum to legally bind the city government to re-municipalise the energy grids (electricity, district heating, gas) and to create an energy sector in line with customers' needs and climate protection was won in September 2013 with 50.9 per cent of the votes.

As stated by Sören Becker in his contribution for the Transnational Institute, TNI, the success of the referendum in Hamburg was by no means the end, but rather was the initial spark for re-municipalisation politics in Germany, as similar process could also be observed in other German cities such as Berlin<sup>4</sup> and Augsburg. "In short, the government who had previously opposed re-municipalisation outright suddenly found itself in charge of implementing the reform."<sup>5</sup>

"[R]e-municipalisation seems to have resulted in changes that were bigger than the issue of energy provision itself"<sup>6</sup> as it has led to the end of 'business as usual' in the general political economic structures that do not only apply to the German energy sector.

1 German energy transition

2 <http://unser-netz-hamburg.de/>

3 A short presentation of the initiative in English can be found here: <http://www.energy-democracy.net/?p=935>

4 Cf. Transnational Institute, Reclaiming Public Services: How cities and citizens are turning back privatisation, 2017, Available at: [https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/reclaiming\\_public\\_services.pdf](https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/reclaiming_public_services.pdf), pp 24-25 for more details on the events in Berlin

5 Transnational Institute, Reclaiming Public Services: How cities and citizens are turning back privatisation, 2017, Available at: [https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/reclaiming\\_public\\_services.pdf](https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/reclaiming_public_services.pdf), p. 127

6 Transnational Institute, Reclaiming Public Services: How cities and citizens are turning back privatisation, 2017, Available at: [https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/reclaiming\\_public\\_services.pdf](https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/reclaiming_public_services.pdf), p. 128

tions, citizens are able to produce new social value that is the antithesis of the extraction-oriented methods of PPPs.

Many of these ideas have already been shared and cultivated by progressive communities (primarily European green parties, ecological movements, commons movements, degrowth movement, and ‘good life for all’ initiatives<sup>16</sup>) as core ideas of a necessary paradigmatic shift. Recently, they have also been gaining more mainstream popularity through a variety of municipalist platforms and – once the representative power is gained through elections – through their efforts to transform public institutions. However, even in these cases ‘municipalist initiatives question the sharp division between the “inside and outside” of local institutions, whilst accepting that there must also be a productive tension between these spaces. In many cases, the organisation of municipalist candidacies come from social movements, as activists and ordinary citizens decide to present themselves for elections. For that reason, municipalism promotes both ‘pressure from outside’ as well as opening up decision-making mechanisms from within local institutions so that movements can have a greater impact on policy.’<sup>17</sup> Citizens who are the driving force of community initiatives often perceive themselves to be ‘capable of pursuing social purposes at the same level as, or even better than institutions. In their opinion, the talents and knowledge, the entrepreneurial spirit, the organisational and practical capacities, and the sincere and deep engagement of citizen groups allow being more efficient in driving urban change, much better than through public policies conducted by bureaucratic structures.’<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, there are also warnings that, for much the same reason, it is beneficial for social movements to be more anarchist in practice so as to maintain their autonomy and negotiating position when merging with public structures.<sup>19</sup>

This can be extremely useful during the transformation of public institutions, and when the common ground between the perspectives of the public administration and citizen initiatives must be identified. The notion of a Platform State, as coined by LabGov in Bologna while working on the ‘co-city’ concept, is particularly useful for this purpose, as within that framework government can seek to ‘initiate stable partnerships between the “public as a person” (public institutions, the state as an apparatus) and the “public as a community” or “communities” (composed by the four other actors of co-governance).’<sup>20</sup> However, a precondition for this is the ‘recognition of the emerging role played by the collectivity and therefore of legal, political, institutional subjectivity to the fifth actor of the quintuple helix or pentahelix model, the civic actor (composed of collectives, active citizens, social innovators, city makers, digital artisans, urban farmers, co-workers, digital collectives, etc.) represents a novelty and a



challenge urban constitutional lawyers and urban governance scholars should take on. Urban constitutionality requires a rethinking of the urban democratic and policy making process and involves an internal reorganisation of public administration, both structurally and mentally, in order to develop a new kind of relationship with citizens, based on coordination and distribution of power instead of limitations, restrictions, and separations of powers.<sup>21</sup> Similar arguments come from seasoned scholars and activists from another angle of the Italian commons movement, which claim that ‘social movements may be more capable of challenging existing institutions and offering true alternatives because they are made up of civil society actors rather than professionals and may provide the much needed institutional “imagination” necessary to providing true alternatives for example to private property. They may offer new imagination in the sense of functioning alternative reconfigurations of property, new or traditional communal forms of property that promote cooperation in sharing scarce resources thus broadening access to these resources for the local people who depend on them.’<sup>22</sup> Accordingly, social movements based on the commons are seeking institutional innovation and the production of ‘alternative forms of resource governance and management’.<sup>23</sup>

## Conclusion

Due to austerity and other detrimental impacts of privatisation models, multiple crises opened the window of opportunity for the re-invention of the city through self-organisation, collective action and commoning.<sup>24</sup> Although public-civic or public-common partnerships are still in an experimental phase, they certainly do present relevant and viable alternatives to further commodification – and extraction-oriented practices often exercised through PPPs.<sup>25</sup> They empower citizens, strengthen their agency and stimulate their social engagement and participation. Through strengthening trust between citizens and encouraging participation, and when designed with attention to class, gender, and the elimination of other inequalities, these collaborative models can bring about real change and make a difference in each city and municipality in Europe.<sup>26</sup>

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1. BCN En Comu, Municipalise Europe, 2018.
2. For the Fearless Cities Summit, see: <http://fearlesscities.com/en/summits>
3. For the European Commons Assembly, see: <https://europeancommonsassembly.eu/FOr>
4. Dolenc *et al*, D. 'Constructive Confrontation or Constructive Tension: The State and The Commons', Green European Journal V 14/2016, Finding Common Ground, <https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/constructive-confrontation-or-constructive-tension-the-state-and-the-commons/>
5. Iaione, C. 'The Right to the Co-City', 2017. Accessible at: <http://labgov.city/commonspress/the-right-to-the-co-city/> Furthermore, 'the starting point of the Platform State need to inspire also the next-generation of administrative action [...] based on authority and hierarchy or service provision and outsourcing, to embrace collaboration with different actors in which government plays pivoting role.'
6. Accessible at: <http://fearlesscities.com/en/summits>
7. Transnational Institute, 'Reclaiming Public Services: How cities and citizens are turning back privatisation', 2017., Accessible at: [https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/reclaiming\\_public\\_services.pdf](https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/reclaiming_public_services.pdf)
8. Transnational Institute, *op. cit.*
9. Transnational Institute, *op. cit.*
10. Transnational Institute, *op. cit.* 'More precisely, remunicipalisation is the passage of public services from privatisation in any of its various forms – including private ownership of assets, outsourcing of services and public-private partnerships (PPPs) – to public ownership, public management and democratic control. While our main focus in this research is on cases of return to full public ownership, the survey also includes cases of predominantly publicly owned services when the model is implemented with clear public values, to serve public objectives and when it contains a form of democratic accountability.'
11. Transnational Institute, *op. cit.*
12. Transnational Institute, *op. cit.* 'Governments and financial institutions should focus on developing the right tools at the country level to identify whether – and under what circumstances – it is desirable to choose PPPs instead of traditional procurement. This implies that they should choose the best financing mechanism, including examining the public borrowing option, and should stop hiding the true costs of PPPs, by reporting in national accounts and statistics the costs of the project and

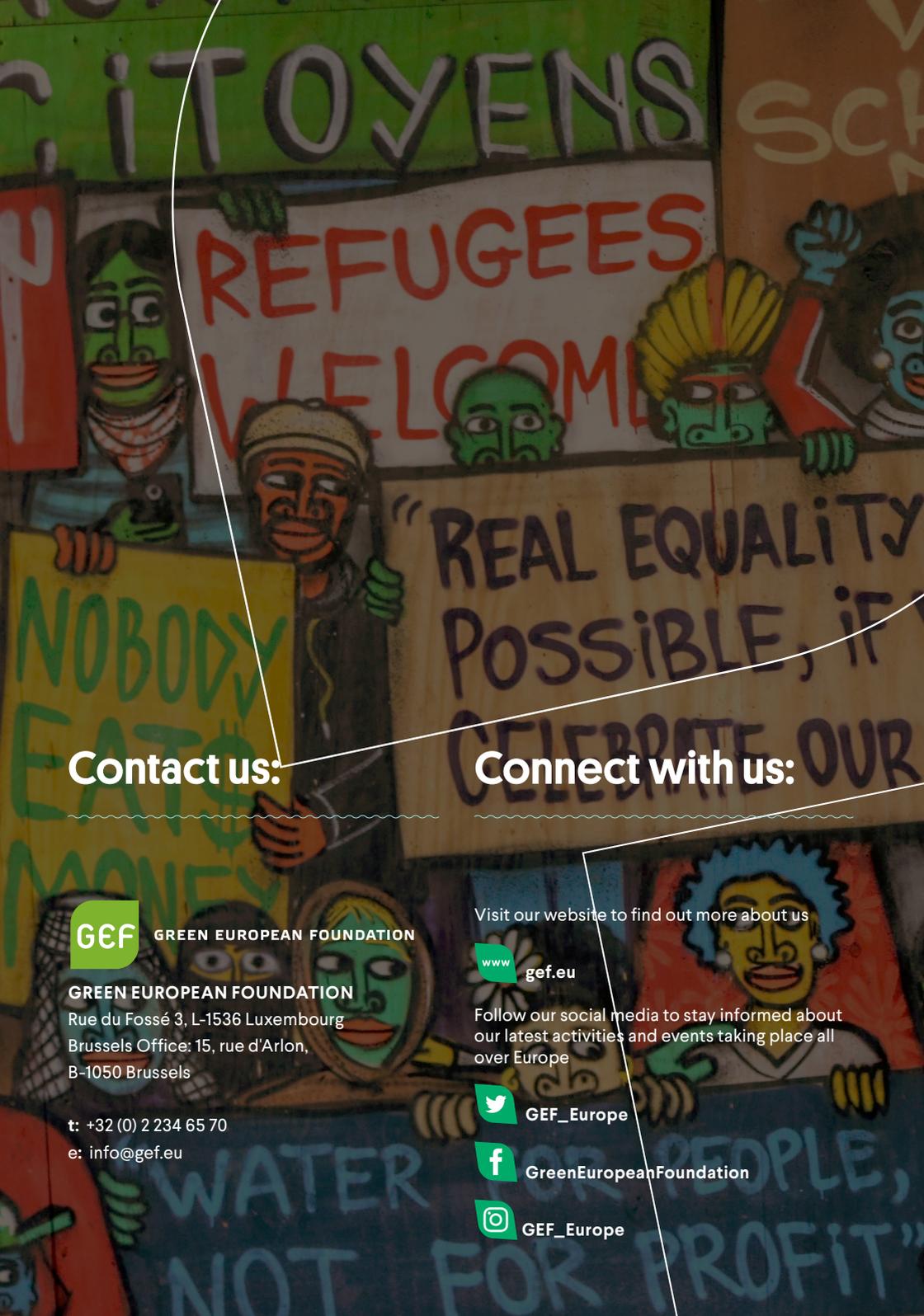
its contingent liabilities. This will boost the transparency of the decision-making process and increase democratic accountability.’

13. Gunther Teubner & Antonio Negri, *The Law of the Common: Globalization, property and new horizons of liberation*, Finnish Yearbook. ‘While the “common” seeks to overcome the alienation of the private via collective activities and collective modes of attribution, the “public” tends to strengthen the space of open and democratic deliberation, which finds its different forms in each social field.’
14. Accessible at: <https://commonsblog.files.wordpress.com/2007/10/mattei-italian-commons-chapter-short.pdf>
15. An Italian proposal to establish Federcommons is of particular relevance here: ‘The struggle for the commons tries to explore alternative institutions. ABC Naples, together with other companies in the domain of public utilities, is promoting the birth of Federcommons, an association aiming to link the more than 4000 public services companies, which are still 100% publicly owned, to prevent their privatization. The attempt is to try to propose, beyond water management, the exploration of legal forms progressively more suitable for running the commons. This organizational effort in its way is also an exciting challenge, because the current association of utility providers (in which private companies are very strong), Federutility, has de facto monopolized the work of lobbying and interpretation of an extremely complex legal system.’
16. Baioni, M., ‘Public Policies in Support of Civic Initiatives’, 2017. Accessible at: <http://cooperativecity.org/2017/11/21/public-policies-for-civic-initiatives>
17. <http://www.guteslebenfueralle.org/en/home.html>
18. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/laura-roth/which-municipalism-lets-be-choosy> which-municipalism-lets-be-choosy  
Also see: ‘Some suggest this risks ‘decapitalizing’ social movement organisations (as both people and energy shift into the institutions and the new political platforms), or that electoral successes reduce the need to put pressure on friendly governments. On the contrary, the municipalism of the Fearless Cities understands that the capacity for institutional action depends on social mobilization in the street; we must open up institutions to citizens, and be responsive to criticism from social movements.’
19. Baioni, M., *op. cit.*
20. <https://ipe.hr/en/activities/carlos-delclos-this-is-a-good-time-for-social-movements-to-be-anarchist-in-practice/>
21. ‘They should work towards being fully autonomous, being independent from whoever is in power, being independent of the party and the state

to the extent possible, antagonizing markets, the private sector, establishment powers and so on. Otherwise, they risk simply being an arm of the government, making it impossible to claim the popular legitimacy needed to successfully pressure for emancipatory change'

22. Iaione, C., *op. cit.*
23. Iaione, C., *op. cit.* Furthermore 'this requires the building of a governance strategy able to strengthen the capacity to cooperate of the five urban/local actors (public, private, social, cognitive, and above all, the civic) to carry through co-design techniques the co-production of community commons and services and the co-creation of institutions and rules to govern co-city. The pooling governance might be expressed through an urban co-governance matrix.'
24. Bailey, S. & Mattei, U., 'Social Movements as Constituent Power: The Italian Struggle for the Commons', 2012. Accessible at: <http://www.uninomade.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Social-Movements-as-Constituent-Power.pdf>
25. Furthermore 'Commons movements have real value not only in the sense that they are mobilizing civil society actors to fight against corporations and the capitalist system which exploits them, but also in sharing the experiences of successful community resource governance.'
26. Bailey, S. & Mattei, U., *op. cit.* They 'provide not just theoretical but empirical challenges to the assumption of private property and the developmental state which underpins the liberal constitutional form. Thus restoration of the democratic constitutional fabric is a constituent action as long as the direct and physical struggle for the commons is rooted in a democratic practice of a multitude and can point at a constitutional text or fundamental principle capable of restoring the interest of the people over that of the profit.'
27. Baioni, M., *op. cit.* 'The economic and financial crisis of Southern European countries has been reflected, above all, in severe cuts to public policies. To turn scarcity into virtue, some local administrators have reshaped their policies, resisting the privatisation of welfare sector, and focusing instead on creating a positive impact on their citizens' lives...'
28. Baioni, M., *op. cit.* 'The public administration can give civic initiatives crucial support, both for operating in publicly owned spaces (by giving in concession its abandoned properties in return for the reduction of maintenance costs and small or symbolic rent).'
29. Baioni, M., *op. cit.* 'Finally, at a more general level, the importance of relational capital has to be underlined. Relational capital is specifically based on interpersonal trust and habit of participation in networking. A good level of social cohesion and "civic culture" is helpful for citizen-led

initiatives. Public administration can play a crucial role in creating the conditions to reinforce relational capital, shaping its structure and addressing public policies for making the city and enabling infrastructure. From the social innovators' point of view, it is obviously easier to develop initiatives in a favourable environment, where they can easily get in touch with people sharing the same aim, skills and attitudes and where some public spaces and organisations are dedicated to spreading ideas and to creating networks.'



## Contact us:



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