

Making city together? INVITATION to the Berlin STADTFORUM VON UNTEN

Dear initiatives and interested people,

The Senate for Urban Development and Housing is organizing a new edition of the Stadtforum Berlin (Berlin City Forum) taking place on 26th of June based on the slogan "*Participate! How do we talk about urban development in the future?*" Have you got ideas, but didn't get an invitation. Or weren't able or didn't want to follow the call of the organizers to submit a poster and to be selected for one of the 20 stands at the "*Ideenmarkt*" (market of ideas)?

We neither. We don't want to present our ideas & experiences in competition for attention, but we would like to discuss the question "*Which requirements and resources does participatory urban development need?*" with all interested parties. Therefore we will use the official City Forum and complement it with an independent format: **DAS STADTFORUM VON UNTEN**.

We – the *Initiativkreis Stadtforum von unten* – invite you to discuss the requirements and framework conditions for participation in urban development in an open assembly from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

When? 26th of June 2017, starting at 4 p.m.

Where? Markthalle Neun (Kreuzberg, Eisenbahnstraße 42/43)

The Berlin City Forum is an official starting point for the "*development of Berlin's guidelines for participation*"¹, which was laid down in the coalition agreement. But regarding the first step – designing the event itself – we, the city-users, were once again not appropriately and sensibly involved. Thus, the most important requirement for strengthening the "*structures and processes of citizens' participation*"¹ has been forgotten: **the participation in the participation!**

This is how an event concept came into being, that wants to draw on our "*expertise and cooperation*"² and wants to present them on demand – reduced to the "*Ideenmarkt*" and far away from the podium onto which we are not invited. The organizers are attempting to develop a "***new Berlin participation culture***"² with the currently unsatisfactory methods of participation; and in that way they reveal the lack of awareness for the city-users as equal actors.

The central question "*How do we talk about urban development in the future?*" also hides the core of the debate. What is required instead of participatory communications, is to **institutionally embed our participatory rights** in politics and administration. The further expansion of the "*online participation platform mein.berlin.de*"³ into an "*understandable information source*"³ will not enable and organize our impulses in the real urban space.

So before we go into the development of guidelines and of quality criteria for citizens' participation, **let's take a step back!**

¹ Weblink [Koalitionsvereinbarung „Berlin gemeinsam gestalten“, 2016-2021, S. 31](#)

² Weblink [„initiativenaufruf – Wie reden wir zukünftig über Stadtentwicklung“, S.2](#)

³ Weblink [Wortprotokoll „Ausschuss für bürgerschaftliches Engagement und Partizipation“ 24.04.17, S. 47](#)

You know best what is needed: Therefore we ask all interested participants to prepare **short inputs (max. 3 minutes) for the assembly regarding following questions: "Which requirements and resources do we need to participate?" and "How can a City Forum (from the bottom) look like in the future?"**

In the short 2 hours of time we would like to start making the invisible visible together, and to work on a first overview of and outlook on **participatory urban development**. Representatives of the assembly can take the intermediate results to the official podium, which starts at 6 p.m. We firmly believe, that there will be place for us up there!

Please forward this invitation to your networks! We hope that all initiatives and people that are active in the city, will contribute their experiences to the assembly!

We still need helpers for the set-up of the assembly, transcript writers, translators and other kind of supporters - if you feel addressed, contact us!

Last but not least: Bring along your seat cushions – for sitting or for a pillow fight!

Best regards,

Initiativkreis *Stadtforum von Unten*

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