



PRESS RELEASE

ECB demands over €20.000 in legal fees from Yanis Varoufakis, Fabio de Masi and DiEM25 for “Release #TheGreekFiles” campaign

For daring to demand information that should be available to anyone, the ECB wants to bring the pan-European movement DiEM25 to its knees financially. In response, DiEM25 is relaunching the “Release the #TheGreekFiles” campaign.

In the summer of 2015, the European Central Bank (ECB) shut down Greece’s banks as part of their efforts to intimidate our government into submission. This measure was so authoritarian and unprecedented that the ECB secretly commissioned an opinion from a private law firm in Brussels – using taxpayers’ money – to find out if they were actually allowed to do it. **Unfortunately for them, a whistleblower from inside the institution alerted DiEM25 to this.**

In 2017, Yanis Varoufakis, former Greek finance Minister and co-founder of DiEM25, submitted a freedom-of-information request in the name of DiEM25 to see that legal opinion, together with then-MEP Fabio de Masi. After all, if that opinion said that it was legal for the ECB to shut down Greece’ banks, why not share it? And if it said that it was not legal, why did they shut them?

While the ECB confessed the existence of that legal opinion, the ECB refused to make it public on “confidentiality” grounds. Fabio de Masi and Yanis Varoufakis took the ECB to the European courts in response. **At the same time, DiEM25 launched our campaign “[Release #TheGreekFiles!](#)”.** In the end, they lost the court case, as the EU judges unsurprisingly backed the ECB’s ridiculous argument.

Now, the ECB is demanding over €20.000 from DiEM25’s membership, and from Fabio de Masi, for having dared to try to force them to show the legal opinion they bought using taxpayers’ money – something that every European should have free access to.

The same ECB that prints trillions of euros at the stroke of a button to hand over to oligarchs and cover up the bankruptcy of member-states wants to squeeze DiEM25 financially. **Not because they care about the money, but to send a message: see what happens if you try to expose what we do behind the scenes.**

Erik Edman, Political Director of DiEM25, is available for interviews.

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Notes to editors

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About Erik Edman



Erik is the Political Director of DiEM25 and is based in Brussels. He has been a grassroots activist for the movement since it was formed in 2016 and a member of its Coordinating Collective since 2018. A Greek-Swedish Athenian who left Greece in 2010 and has lived in the UK and Belgium since, he has been involved in various civil society struggles through the years and has worked in various NGOs and institutions in Brussels since 2015, before joining DiEM25 full-time in 2018 as the Campaign Director for MeRA25's (DiEM25's political party in Greece) European election campaign. Erik holds a BA History and Politics from the University of Exeter and an MSc Political Sociology from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

About DiEM25

DiEM25 is a pan-European movement of democrats, united under the conviction that the European Union will only survive if it is radically transformed. The environmental, economic and coronavirus crisis have shown what real solutions for the majority and not the minority can only come about if we join forces across borders. This is the mission of DiEM25: through a coordinated effort, across Europe, to unite citizens and create enough energy to save the EU from itself. The EU will unite or disappear. We must act quickly, before it is too late: that is why we are the Democracy in Europe 2025 (DiEM25) movement.

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