

Bringing
Democratic
Reform Down
to Earth

Emerging Hope
for Democracy
from Collaborative
Spaces



Strengthening
Political Parties
Through Political
Party Aid

PRLDM

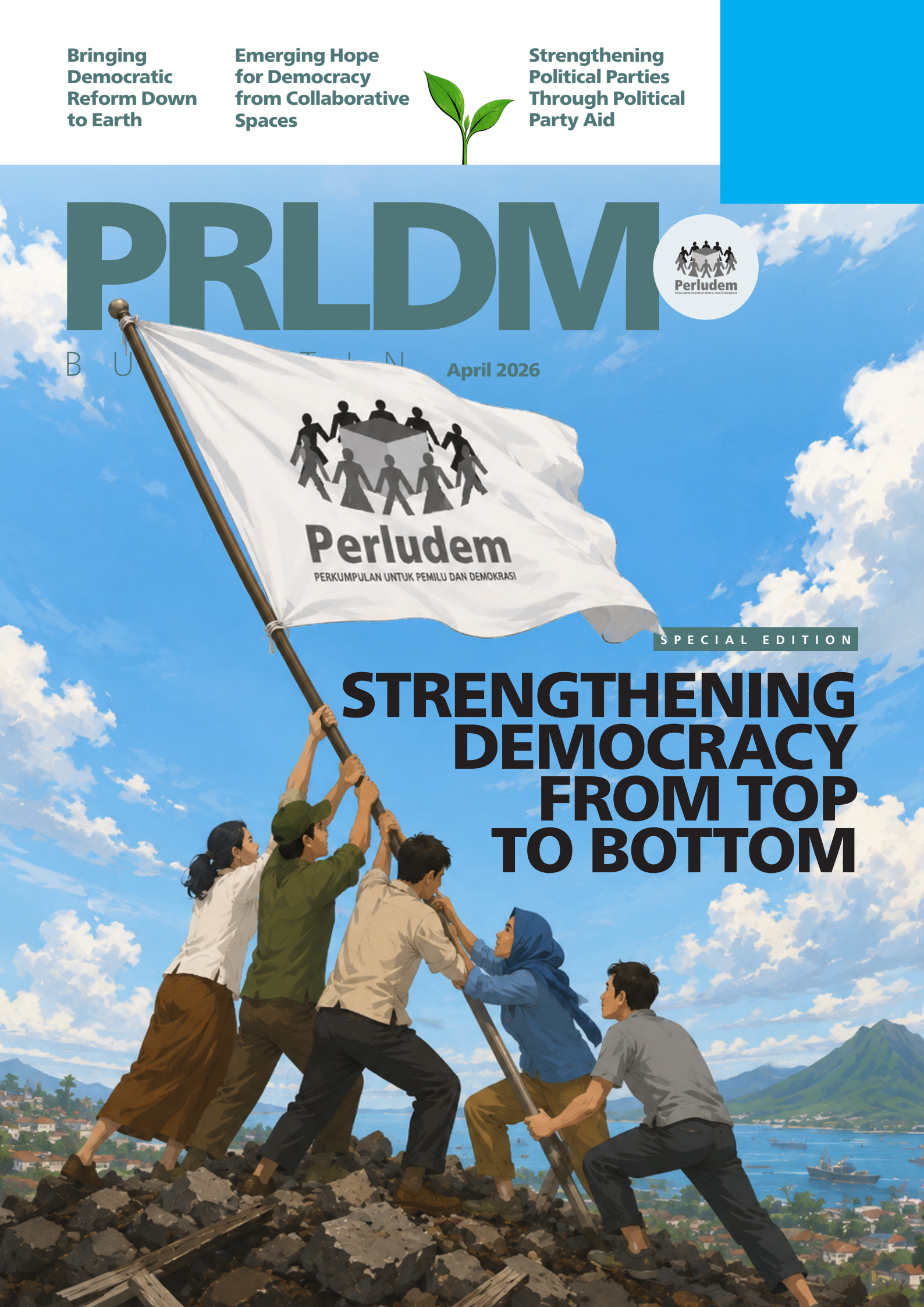


B U T U N April 2026



SPECIAL EDITION

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY FROM TOP TO BOTTOM



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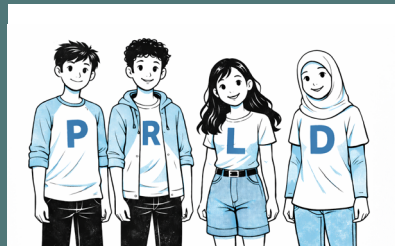
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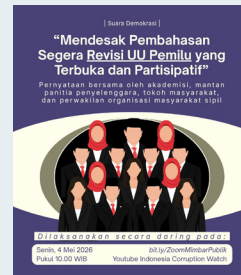
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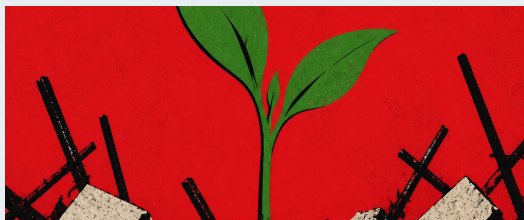
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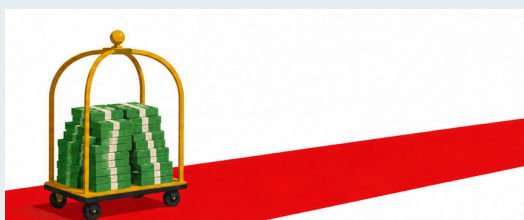
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Strengthening Political Parties Through Political Party Aid



Strengthening a more open, accountable, and participatory political system remains a crucial task in Indonesian democracy. Various challenges persist in political practice and the implementation of democracy, ranging from weak political party governance and issues of transparency in political funding to the need to create a safe and inclusive political space for all groups in society. At the very same time, social developments and the increasingly rapid flow of information also demand a more critical, adaptive, and participatory political education.

Based on this need, this Special Edition of the Bulletin introduces several products and initiatives developed by Perludem as part of its efforts to promote more substantive strengthening of democracy. Through *Guide to the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Political Parties: Strengthening Integrity, Protecting Cadres, and Building Public Trust*, the development of *Democracy Education Platform*, and the study of *Governance of Digital-Based Political Party Financial*

Aid (E-Banpol) for Accountability and Transparency, Perludem strives to present various knowledge instruments that are not only conceptual but also can be used practically to support political system reform and expand citizen participation.

These various products demonstrate the need for comprehensive efforts to strengthen democracy. These efforts include strengthening internal political party governance, increasing transparency in public fund management, and building citizen political awareness. All of these aspects are interconnected and crucial for fostering a healthier, more equal, inclusive, and participatory political life.

Through this Special Edition, we hope the readers will gain a closer look at the various ideas, experiences, and products developed by Perludem, while also recognizing the importance of collective work in maintaining and strengthening the quality of democracy in Indonesia.

We wish you a great read.

Editorial Team



Heroik M Pratama
Perludem
Executive Director

Bringing Democratic Reform Down to Earth

Efforts to strengthen the quality of democracy in Indonesia are inextricably linked to works at various levels, from regulatory reform and institutional strengthening to the development of a healthy political culture within society. Therefore, democracy must be understood not merely as a routine electoral procedure, but as a system that demands integrity, accountability, and adherence to the principles of justice and equality.

Today's democratic challenges are increasingly complex. On the one hand, there is a need to ensure that elections and political party governance are transparent and accountable. On the other hand, political spaces still face various fundamental issues, such as the often unaddressed practice of sexual violence in politics, weak management of political funding, and limited access to inclusive political education for the public. This situation demonstrates that strengthening democracy is not sufficient through policy changes alone; it also requires knowledge-based interventions that can handle these issues concretely.

As part of civil society focused on electoral and democratic reform, Perludem believes it is crucial to continue producing knowledge products that are not only analytical but also applicable. These products are designed to bridge the gap between norms and practices, while simultaneously encouraging transformation at both the institutional and individual levels. In other words, strengthening democracy needs to be done from top to bottom: from the regulatory framework to implementation on the ground.

Perludem developed *Guide to the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Political Parties* in response to the limited mechanisms for preventing and handling sexual violence in political circles. This



initiative stems from the urgent need to ensure that political parties function not only as democratic institutions but also as safe and equitable spaces for all their members.

This Guide is designed not merely as a normative reference, but as a practical tool that can be adopted and implemented directly by political parties. It encourages strengthening internal systems capable of preventing sexual violence, providing a safe and reliable reporting mechanism, and ensuring victim-centered case handling. This approach prioritizes victim protection while ensuring accountability in every aspect of the handling process.

Perludem has also compiled a book of *Political Aid [Bantuan Politik: Banpol] Fund* to comprehensively analyze the dynamics of public fund management by political parties. This initiative is based on the recognition that political funding is one of the most crucial factors in determining the quality of democracy. When funding

Perludem believes it is crucial to continue producing knowledge products that are not only analytical but also applicable.

Workshop on Safe Spaces in Politics with representatives of political parties, Monday (20/04).

PHOTO: HAURA IHSANI



Perludem Implements the Guide to the Prevention of Sexual Violence in Politics

A safe and inclusive political space is a crucial prerequisite for a healthy democracy. However, in practice, the issue of sexual violence remains a challenge that has not been fully addressed systematically within political parties. To answer such call, Perludem published the book *“Guide to the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Political Parties: Strengthening Integrity, Protecting Cadres, and Building Public Trust,”* as a reference for political parties in building a safer, more inclusive, and more just political space.

The guidebook was designed to encourage political parties to adopt internal systems capable of preventing and handling sexual violence in a more structured and sustainable manner. The guide outlines key principles, such as respect for human rights, gender equality and justice, victim-centeredness, and guarantees of confidentiality and security. Furthermore, the guide provides practical references on prevention and response

measures, from internalizing policies and establishing a PPKS Task Force [*Satuan Tugas Pencegahan dan Penanganan Kekerasan Seksual*] to providing a secure and accessible reporting channel for all cadres.

This guide also integrates internal party policies with the national legal framework, particularly the Sexual Violence Crimes Act [*Undang-undang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual*]. This is crucial to ensure that case handling is not limited to internal mechanisms but also has a strong legal basis to ensure justice and reparation for victims. Furthermore, a victim-centered approach is a key principle that must be applied throughout the reporting, investigation, and reparation processes.

As part of the implementation of the guidelines, Perludem held a workshop entitled *“Safe Space in Politics: Strengthening Political Parties in Preventing and Handling Sexual Violence”* on April 20, 2026, in Jakarta.

The event was attended by representatives of political parties at



The Guide to the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Political Parties: Strengthening Integrity, Protecting Cadres, and Building Public Trust, compiled by Perludem, can be downloaded from the following official website: **Guide to the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Political Parties**



the central level, and featured speakers from academics, researchers, and civil society organizations focused on gender and sexual violence issues. In this forum, Perludem not only introduced the guide as reference document but also encouraged the implementation of systems for preventing and handling sexual violence within political parties.

The evolving discussion shows that sexual violence in the political sphere is closely linked to power relations, hierarchical organizational structures, and internal cultures that in many cases still normalize discriminatory practices. Various forms of violence, from verbal harassment often dismissed as jokes, to digital-based sexual violence that has become increasingly complex in the digital age, require a serious response from political parties.

One of the key findings of this workshop was the lack of standard operating procedures (SOPs) specifically regulating the prevention and handling of sexual violence in most political parties. Existing mechanisms are generally ordinary, operating through internal ethics bodies or directly delegated to law enforcement officials, without the support of an internal victim protection system. This situation highlights a gap between the need for safe spaces and the institutional readiness of political parties

to respond to issues of sexual violence.

The workshop and initiative received positive responses from several political party representatives in attendance. They viewed the guide developed by Perludem as an important step in helping political parties develop clearer and more measurable mechanisms for preventing and handling sexual violence. Several participants noted that the issue of sexual violence has not been specifically discussed within internal party governance, suggesting that the guide could serve as a starting point for developing policies, procedures, and protection mechanisms for cadres.

These responses demonstrate that the need to build a safe political space is beginning to be understood as a crucial component of strengthening political party institutions. However, the challenge extends beyond developing internal regulations or mechanisms, including ensuring that the values of protection, equality, and support for victims are truly implemented in daily organizational practices.

Through this guide, Perludem hopes that efforts to prevent and handle sexual violence in political parties can further develop and serve as part of a shared commitment to creating a safer, more inclusive, and more just political space.

Four
Democracy
Education
Platform



Perludem Develops Democracy Education Platform for Younger Generation

The Association for Elections and Democracy [*Perkumpulan untuk Pemilu dan Demokrasi: Perludem*] is initiating the development of a Democracy Education Platform as an alternative learning space. This initiative is motivated by the limited educational approaches capable of fostering critical and participatory political awareness among citizens. Amidst the increasingly complex dynamics of democracy, the need for relevant and contextual political education is increasingly urging, especially for the younger generation as active voters and future leaders.

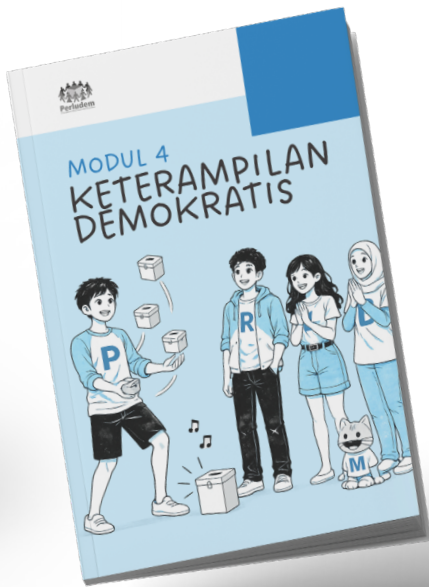
To date, civics education has largely focused on imparting knowledge and memorizing concepts. This approach is certainly important as a foundation, but it is not always sufficient to encourage citizen engagement in more vibrant and meaningful democratic practices. In everyday life, political participation often feels routine, lacking a full understanding

of citizens' rights, responsibilities, and roles in safeguarding and overseeing the exercise of power.

Gradually, this situation can influence how society perceives the political process, from the emergence of distance or indifference to a tendency to seek support from certain figures. At the same time, the public sphere also faces challenges such as the practice of vote-buying and the dissemination of information that cannot be reliably verified. This situation highlights the importance of providing an educational approach that not only imparts knowledge but also fosters greater awareness and reflective engagement.

On the other hand, the development of digital technology has significantly transformed the democratic landscape. Social media and various digital platforms have opened up broader spaces for public participation, but they also present new challenges in the form of the dissemination of misleading





This platform is designed as a learning space that not only strengthens conceptual understanding of democracy but also encourages the development of practical skills relevant to the challenges of today's democratic life.

information, polarization, and a decline in the quality of public discourse. In this context, democracy education is no longer sufficient to simply discuss formal institutions and procedures; it also needs to address the ability to understand and respond to the dynamics of democracy in digital realm.

In response to these challenges, Perludem's Democracy Education Platform is designed as an inclusive, interactive, and experiential learning space. The approach used focuses not only on knowledge transfer but also on strengthening skills and developing democratic attitudes through various learning methods, such as group discussions, case studies, simulations, and critical reflection on current events in political life.

In practice, this platform is designed as a learning space that not only strengthens conceptual understanding of democracy but also encourages the development of practical skills relevant to the challenges of today's democratic life. To achieve this goal, the learning materials are organized into four main, interconnected modules:

1. **Introduction to Democracy Module**
Discussing the basic principles, values, and development of democracy, including various contemporary challenges such as symptoms of democratic decline in a number of countries.

2. **Democracy Actors Module**
Reviewing the roles, functions, and relationships between stakeholders, ranging from state institutions, political parties, civil society, to the media in maintaining the balance and accountability of power.
3. **Democracy in Digital Realm Module**
Highlighting the influence of technological developments on democratic practices, while equipping participants with digital literacy skills and media ethics.
4. **Democratic Prowess Module**
Focused on strengthening participants' practical capacities, such as critical thinking, formulating arguments, conducting policy advocacy, and actively engaging in the public decision-making process.

As part of its development process, Perludem also encourages collaboration with various stakeholders, from academics and civil society organizations to youth communities. This collaboration is crucial to ensure the material remains relevant, contextual, and closely aligned with the diverse experiences of the community. With this approach, the platform is expected to be widely accessible and serve as a learning space that adapts to changing times and the dynamics of democracy.

Through this initiative, Perludem seeks to promote democracy education that goes beyond merely normative comprehension and becomes more practical and down to earth. The hope is that learners will not only understand democracy as a political system but also be able to apply it in their daily lives, from engaging in public discussions and policy oversight to participating in elections and decision-making at the local level.

Perludem hopes that through this platform, democratic education will no longer be viewed as distant or exclusive, but rather as accessible knowledge that is relevant to the community's experiences. This way, democracy can further grow as a shared practice, collectively guarded and nurtured. ●



Perludem Completes Study on Governance of Digital-Based Political Party Financial Aid (E-Banpol) for Accountability and Transparency

Perludem, in collaboration with the Directorate of Ideology, Nationality, Politics, and Democracy [*Direktorat Ideologi, Kebangsaan, Politik, dan Demokrasi: Dir IPKD*] of the National Development Planning Agency [*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional: Bappenas*], has completed a study titled “*Governance of Digital-Based Political*

Party Financial Aid (E-Banpol) for Accountability and Transparency.” This study was developed as part of an effort to promote more transparent, accountable, and integrated political party funding governance, while also helping prepare for the development of E-Banpol platform in Indonesia.

The study stems from the importance of political party funding in supporting



This study attempts to illustrate the importance of transforming Banpol reporting system into a simpler, more effective, and easier-to-use digital format.

the sustainability of democracy. Political parties serve not only as electoral vessels for participating in elections but also bear the responsibility of providing political education, developing leadership, absorbing and championing public aspirations, and maintaining the sustainability of democracy. All of these functions require adequate, stable, and accountable funding support.

In many democracies, state financial aid to political parties is seen as a crucial instrument for maintaining the continuity of their democratic function while reducing their dependence on funding sources that pose the risk of conflicts of interest. State support through Political Party Financial Aid [*Bantuan Keuangan Partai Politik*: Banpol] is also part of efforts to strengthen party institutions so they can operate more professionally,

inclusively, and oriented toward the public interest.

In Indonesia, Banpol has been part of the political party funding system for over two decades. However, in practice, Banpol governance still faces various challenges. The relatively limited amount of aid is insufficient to optimally support the operational needs and political education for political parties. At the same time, the reporting and monitoring system for Banpol use remains ineffective and fails to fully promote transparency in party financial management.

The administrative nature of the reporting mechanism, the extensive documentation required, and the incompletely integrated audit process mean that political party fund reporting is viewed solely as a formal obligation. Consequently, transparency in party fund management is suboptimal, and public access to information on political party use remains limited. However, as funds sourced from the state budget, political party fund management should be conducted in transparent and accountable manners to strengthen public trust in political parties.

Based on these conditions, this study attempts to illustrate the importance of transforming Banpol reporting system into a simpler, more effective, and easier-to-use digital format. Through E-Banpol system, the distribution, budget utilization, reporting, and audit processes can be conducted in a more organized and documented manner. Digitizing reporting also strengthens the traceability of budget use, streamlines the audit process, and provides better public access to information.

Furthermore, the development of E-Banpol is crucial for supporting the broader strengthening of political party governance, with a robust reporting system that serves as a tool to foster a culture of transparency and accountability within political parties. With more open financial governance, political parties can also enhance institutional credibility and strengthen trust with the public.

During the compilation process, the study involved a series of discussions and



Several political parties believe a digital-based reporting system could simplify the administration and reporting process for party financial aid, which has traditionally been done manually and tends to be time-consuming.

data collection to map current Banpol reporting practices and identify various obstacles encountered in its management. The study also examined the importance of aligning oversight needs, political party capacity, and the ease of reporting systems to ensure that Banpol governance reforms can be implemented realistically and gradually.

The idea of developing E-Banpol has received positive responses from political parties and Ministry of Home Affairs [*Kementerian Dalam Negeri: Kemendagri*]. They view strengthening political funding governance through a more transparent and integrated system as a crucial step in increasing accountability in the management of political party financial aid, while simultaneously strengthening public trust in political parties and the broader democratic process.

Several political parties believe a digital-based reporting system could simplify the administration and reporting process for party financial aid, which has traditionally been done manually and tends to be time-consuming. Furthermore, a more integrated system could also help political parties prepare reports in a more organized and documented manner.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Home Affairs

perceives the development of E-Banpol as a crucial step in strengthening more transparent and accountable political funding governance. Digitizing reporting has the potential to streamline the monitoring, verification, and evaluation of political party financial aid use, while also supporting public transparency. The Ministry hopes that through a more integrated system, Banpol management can be more effective and efficient, and achieve more uniform reporting standards.

Perludem believes that strengthening political party funding must go hand in hand with strengthening oversight and transparency systems. State support for political parties is not merely about budget increases, but also part of an investment in democracy to ensure that political parties can better carry out their public functions and support the public interest.

It is hoped that the results of this study can contribute to reforming political funding governance in Indonesia. Through a more transparent and integrated E-Banpol system, the management of political party financial aid will become part of strengthening a healthier, more open, and more trustworthy democracy. ●

The Civil Society Coalition Continues Hearing on Election Law Revisions with the Gerindra Party

After previously conducting a series of hearings and roadshows on advocacy for the Election Law revision to a number of political parties in the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia [*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Republik Indonesia: DPR-RI*], the Civil Society Coalition for Codification of the Election Law again continued a similar agenda with Central Leadership Council [*Dewan Perwakilan Pusat: DPP*] of the Gerindra Party in Jakarta on April 20, 2026. This activity is part of an effort to build a broader dialogue space between civil society and political parties regarding the direction of electoral system reform in Indonesia.

various strategic issues in electoral reform. During the meeting, the Coalition presented several ideas related to simplifying the electoral system, strengthening electoral governance, and improving the quality of political representation and the party system. These proposals were presented as part of a push to create more consistent and democratic electoral regulations that are able to address the challenges of future electoral administration.

The Coalition also stated that the Election Law revision is not solely aimed at improving the technical aspects of electoral administration, but rather needs to be directed at strengthening the quality of democracy more substantively. In this context, strengthening transparency, accountability, and institutional effectiveness are crucial aspects to ensure the political and electoral system operates more responsibly to the public interest.

In addition to discussing the substance of the regulations, this hearing also provided a platform to strengthen communication between civil society and political parties in the policymaking process. This meeting opened up opportunities for more technical and in-depth follow-up discussions, including through the exchange of data, research findings, and the development of joint studies to support the process of drafting a more mature and implementable revision of the Election Law.

Through this series of hearings, the Civil Society Coalition hopes that deliberations on the Election Law revision can be conducted more openly, participatory, and substantive. Political party involvement is considered a crucial aspect in promoting electoral reform that not only addresses the technical needs of the election but also strengthens the quality of democracy and political representation in Indonesia. ●



The Coalition hearing with the Gerindra Party Central Executive Board, Monday (20/04)

PHOTO: RIKKY MF

During the hearing, the Coalition presented several key proposals for revising the Election Law, ranging from strengthening regulatory consistency, improving electoral governance, and promoting a more inclusive and accountable political representation system. Furthermore, the Coalition emphasized the importance of internal reform of political parties through strengthening cadre development, transparency of political funding, and more open political recruitment mechanisms.

Furthermore, the hearing also discussed



The Civil Society Coalition for Codification of the Election Law Media Release “Election Law Revision Still Left Untouched: Democracy at a Forked Road”

The Civil Society Coalition for Electoral Codification has officially urged the House of Representatives (DPR) and the Government to immediately discuss the revision of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections on April 9, 2026, through a press conference. This demand is based on a comprehensive evaluation of the implementation of previous elections, which revealed various structural problems in the design of electoral regulations.



“The stagnation in the Election Law revision reflects a crisis of political ethics, where short-term electoral interests dominate over a commitment to the strength of democracy.”

Kahfi Adlan Hafiz, *Perludem*

The need to revise the Election Law is increasingly pressing, particularly in light of the upcoming election organizer selection process.

The DPR responded to the pressure by stating that deliberations on the Election Law revision would not be rushed. Although the revision of Law 7/2017 was stipulated on November 19, 2024, to be included in the 2025 priority National Legislative Program [*Program Legislasi Nasional: Prolegnas*], 17 months have passed without deliberations. On the other hand, the continued absence of formal deliberations on the Election Law revision reflects an approach that tends to ignore the urgency in formulating regulations directly related to the electoral democracy cycle. In the context of legislative theory, delays in responding to the need for legal changes can impact the system's unpreparedness in facing crucial stages of the election.

The need to revise the Election Law is increasingly pressing, particularly in light of the upcoming election organizer selection process. Without an updated legal framework, the selection process could potentially rely on outdated mechanisms that have been proven to cause numerous problems.

The House of Representatives Continues to Delay Deliberations of the Election Law Revision

Efforts to expedite deliberations on the Election Law revision have been spoken by many parties since the 2024 elections. The House of Representatives (DPR) responded positively and progressively to this,

including Law 7/2017 in the 2025 Priority National Legislation Program (Prolegnas), an initiative of the House. Unfortunately, this positive response was not followed-up by concrete action, such as the immediate formation of a working committee [*Panitia Kerja: Panja*] to revise the Election Law. For a year in 2025, there was no meaningful deliberation, with the DPR busy debating whether the Election Law revision would be deliberated by the Legislative Body [*Badan Legislatif: Balesg*] or Commission II.

In early 2026, the DPR had still not yet formally discussed the Election Law Revision. However, Commission II, which had been appointed to deliberate on the Election Law Revision, began by inviting academics, practitioners, and civil society organizations to a Public Hearing [*Rapat Dengar Pendapat Umum: RDPU*] to provide evaluation notes and recommendations on the Election Law Revision, with the aim of fostering meaningful participation.

This is certainly a positive step that deserves appreciation, but ideally, the RDPU could run concurrently with formal deliberations of the Election Law Revision in the DPR. The various evaluation notes and recommendations submitted by the various parties invited by Commission II should have been included in a Problem Inventory [*Daftar Inventaris Masalah: DIM*] Document, an academic paper, or draft articles of the Election Law. However, to date, the public remains unaware whether Commission II of the DPR has obtained



“Updating the Election Law is no longer an option, but an inevitable necessity.”

Ida Budhiati, Member of DKPP for 2012-2017



“Election Law reform must immediately be implemented to prevent stagnation in election quality. Delays pose risk of superficial revisions that are susceptible to political interests, while issues such as election organizer recruitment, vote-buying, and a complex system remain unresolved. The public’s right to simple, clean, and efficient elections cannot be achieved.”

Hadar Nafis Gumay, Executive Director of Netgrit

The Civil Society Coalition believes that the continued lack of formal deliberations on the Election Law revision demonstrates the House of Representatives' disregard for public demands, which have been openly expressed and based on empirical arguments.

the DIM document, or the draft academic paper, or the draft Election Law.

The Civil Society Coalition believes that the continued lack of formal deliberations on the Election Law revision demonstrates the House of Representatives' disregard for public demands, which have been openly expressed and based on empirical arguments. In a democratic system, the House of Representatives should fulfill its representative function by absorbing and following up on public aspirations as part of the legislative process. However, the facts show that these public demands have not been responded to with concrete steps reflecting institutional seriousness. This raises questions about the House's accountability in carrying out its constitutional mandate.

Furthermore, the DPR has shown a tendency to delay deliberations on the Election Law revision without adequate justification. This delay becomes even more problematic when combined with the increasingly tight timeframe leading up to the next election. In such a situation, legislative delays pose the potential to create legal uncertainty, impacting various aspects of electoral administration. Consequently, opportunities for substantive improvements in election implementation become increasingly limited.

The Coalition asserts that the implementation of Law Number 7 of 2017 without revision will not result in significant changes in the quality of future

elections. In fact, the DPR is considered to have violated the constitution by ignoring the Constitutional Court's ruling requiring regulatory adjustments. According to the Constitutional Court's official website, since its enactment, there have been 182 judicial reviews of Law Number 7/2017, of which 21 were granted. One concrete consequence of the judicial reviews granted by the Constitutional Court is regulatory adjustments that adopt the Constitutional Court's ruling. From the perspective of constitutional supremacy, ignoring the Constitutional Court's ruling constitutes a serious violation of the principle of the rule of law.

Political Parties in the Parliament Bear No Good Faith

The stagnant deliberation of the Election Law revision cannot be separated from the attitudes of political parties in parliament. Although crucial issues have emerged, raised by several political party elites, to change the Parliamentary Threshold (PT), this has remained merely a topic of discussion without being followed-up by formal deliberations on the Election Law revision. Ideally, proposals to change the variables of the electoral system should be made during deliberations on the Election Law revision in the Special Committee [*Panitia Khusus: Pansus*] or Working Committee [*Panitia Kerja: Panja*]. Consequently, there is a tendency for political parties themselves to drag out



"The Election Law revision must truly support justice, equality, and human dignity; because a healthy democracy can only be achieved if every citizen is free from violence and has equal access."

Dewi Kanti, Akur Sunda Wiwitan



"Without a new law, the KPU and Bawaslu are operating in legal limbo; they are forced to draft regulations without a solid foundation, which risks being challenged and overturned mid-term."

Suraiya Kamaruzzaman, Lecturer at Syiah Kuala University and Women's Activist

the deliberations. This raises concerns that short-term electoral interests are overriding their commitment to strengthening the democratic system.

The lack of initiative from political parties to expedite the Election Law revision demonstrates a conflict between normative democratic interests and pragmatic interests of power. Political parties tend to maintain existing regulations if they are perceived as advantageous to their position in electoral competition. This poses the potential to create inequality in the political arena and undermine the principle of electoral justice. In the long term, this situation could erode the legitimacy of the democratic system itself.

This situation is yet another wake-up call for Indonesian democracy. Political parties, supposedly at the forefront of maintaining the quality of democracy, are instead trapped in narrow political calculations. When political parties fail to fulfill their normative functions, checks and balances become ineffective. The stagnant Election Law revision reflects not only legislative issues but also a crisis of political ethics within the party system.

Selection of Election Organizers as Part of Integrated Electoral Stages

The urgency of the Election Law revision is becoming increasingly apparent as the election organizer selection process approaches, which must begin in October, six months before the election

organizers' terms end in April 2027. Ideally, the Election Law revision should be completed no later than August 2026 to ensure regulatory readiness before that stage begins. Delays in completing the revision will impact the legal system's unpreparedness in regulating the crucial selection process. From an election management perspective, regulatory certainty is a key prerequisite for effective and credible elections.

The election organizer selection process begins with the formation of a selection team, which plays a strategic role in determining the quality of the candidates selected. This process is a crucial initial step in determining the direction and quality of the election organizer institution. If the selection process is not supported by updated regulations, the potential for irregularities and procedural weaknesses will increase.

Previous experience shows that the quality of election organizers is a major problem, a problem rooted in a selection process lacking integrity. This situation emphasizes the need for the selection process to be positioned as an integral part of the election cycle. The Election Law revision must accommodate fundamental improvements in the selection mechanism to ensure the selection of independent, professional, and integrity-based organizers. Without these steps, the quality of electoral democracy will be difficult to improve.

The lack of initiative from political parties to expedite the Election Law revision demonstrates a conflict between normative democratic interests and pragmatic interests of power.



“Immediate improvements to electoral regulations must be implemented to guarantee the political rights of millions of people with disabilities, who are currently hampered by data gaps, discriminatory administrative requirements, and regulatory inconsistencies with the latest disability law and the Constitutional Court ruling. Inclusivity must be the primary foundation for every election management policy to eliminate discrimination in the field.”

Heppy Sebayang, PPUA Disabilitas



“Delaying the Election Law revision is no longer a matter of time, but a matter of risk to the quality of elections and the future of democracy.”

Rosmiaty Azis, South Sulawesi's Yasmib

Time Limitations of Electoral Stages

Based on previous experiences with deliberations on the Election Law, the Law was finalized and enacted close to the start of the electoral stages. This, of course, limited the time available for election organizers to prepare technical regulations, such as KPU and Bawaslu regulations. All implementing regulations should have been finalized before the stages are commenced.

Civil Society Urge

Based on these developments, the Civil Society Coalition for Codification of the Election Law urges that:

1. **The DPR and the President** must immediately initiate and complete deliberations on the Election Law revision within a measurable time-frame, making it a national legislative priority to ensure legal certainty before the election organizer selection stage begins.

2. **All political parties in parliament** must demonstrate a real commitment to democratic reform by no longer delaying deliberations on the Election Law revision and ensuring that regulatory changes are not based on short-term electoral interests.
3. **The DPR and the President** must ensure that the process of revising the Election Law is carried out through a constitutional, transparent, and accountable legislative mechanism, and guarantee meaningful public participation in every stage of the deliberation.
4. **The General Election Commission and the General Elections Supervisory Body** must also encourage deliberations on the Election Law revision and presenting evaluation notes and reflections from the institutions.

ELECTION LAW	DELIBERATION TIME (APPROXIMATELY)*	EFFECTIVE DATE	INITIAL DATE OF ELECTORAL STAGES	TIME GAP TO STAGE
Law no. 3/1999	3 months	1 February 1999	7 June 1999	4 months
Law no. 12/2003	8 months	11 March 2003	1 April 2003	21 days
Law no. 10/2008	14 months	31 March 2008	5 July 2008	3 months
Law no. 8/2012	16 months	11 May 2012	11 August 2012	3 months
Law no. 7/2017	20 months	16 August 2017	3 September 2017	18 days

REFERENCE: KOMPAS DAILY



“Revising the Election Law means saving the budget as well as saving democracy.”

Okky Madasari, Sociologist and Writer



“Concerns about the current state of the DPR, which appears to be a “one-party” system due to the lack of opposition. This situation has left the public doubting whether the Election Law revision is truly aimed at improving democracy or merely preserving the power of the ruling class.”

Savic Ali, Democracy Activist



“Without transparency, the Election Law revision will only serve the interests of the elite, not the needs of the people.”

Dhia Al-Uyun, Constitutional Law Expert, Brawijaya University



Emerging Hope for Democracy from Collaborative Spaces

In recent times, the development of Indonesian democracy has left numerous issues that have raised public concern. Democracy, which should operate on the principles of participation, accountability, and respect for the law, has instead shown the opposite. Numerous public policies are issued without adequate participation,

civil society criticism is often viewed as a nuisance, and electoral politics increasingly demonstrates the dominance of elite interests over the broader public interest.

This situation is increasingly evident in the political and electoral landscape following the 2024 elections. Various issues have emerged throughout the electoral process, ranging from ethical issues among

election organizers, weak political party governance, transactional political practices, and the declining quality of public discussion spaces. In many cases, democracy operates procedurally, but has not yet fully delivered the substantive qualities that guarantee justice, representation, and the protection of citizens' rights.

On the other hand, the public is also witnessing a growing trend towards consolidation of power. Relations between the government, political parties, and state institutions often raise concerns about the weakening of checks and balances mechanism. Under such circumstances, civil society is a crucial element in continuously striving to maintain open democratic space. Criticism, policy advocacy, political education, and oversight of the political process are all part of the ongoing work to ensure democracy does not deviate further from its fundamental principles.

Amidst these pessimistic conditions, recent advocacy experiences have shown that room for improvement is not entirely closed. Not all parties reject criticism and input. A number of state institutions, ministries/agencies, and political parties remain open to dialogue and demonstrate a willingness to discuss democratic reform agendas.

This experience is an important note worth taken into account. A number of Perludem's efforts have received a positive response from various stakeholders. The hearings and discussion forums initiated were not only well-received but also attended and followed up by various parties.

For example, a number of political parties have been open in discussing the issue of Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence (TPKS) in the political sphere, as well as collaboration with Bappenas in compiling a study on the governance of political aid (Banpol) to help prepare the development of the E-Banpol platform, as an effort to

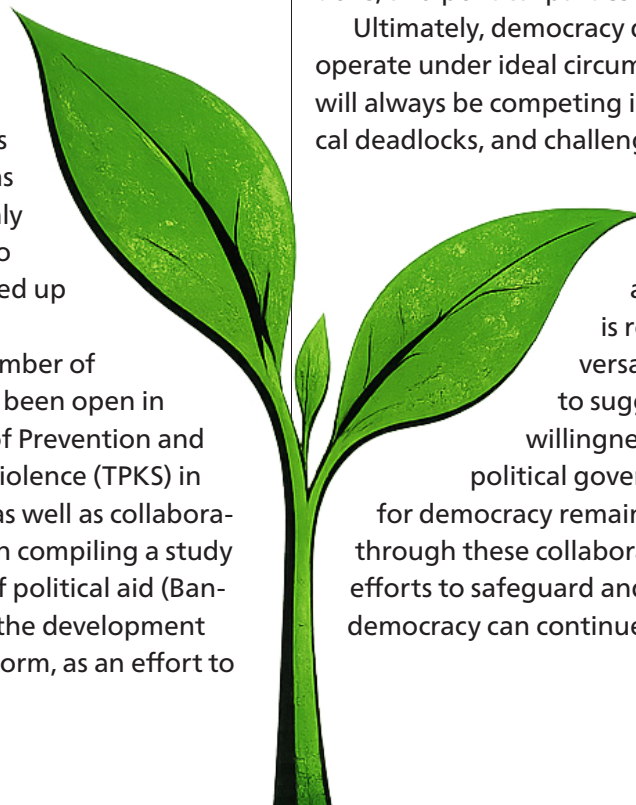
strengthen transparency and accountability in political funding. The idea of developing E-Banpol has also received a positive response from political parties and Ministry of Home Affairs (Kemendagri), who view strengthening the governance of political aid as crucial to supporting the quality of democracy. Furthermore, communication with the Corruption Eradication Commission [*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi*: KPK] regarding strengthening political integrity and elections also demonstrates that the space for dialogue regarding the democratic reform agenda remains open.

This openness will indeed not automatically resolve the various existing democratic issues. The challenges to the quality of politics and elections remain significant and complex. However, the willingness of some stakeholders to accept suggestions at least indicates that there is still room for improvement.

Therefore, the current state of democracy needs to clearly be viewed. On the one hand, there has been a clear setback and requires continued criticism. However, on the other hand, there are still opportunities that can be maintained and strengthened through cross-actor collaboration. A healthy democracy cannot be built by one party alone; it requires the involvement of civil society, academics, the media, election organizers, state institutions, and political parties.

Ultimately, democracy doesn't always operate under ideal circumstances. There will always be competing interests, political deadlocks, and challenges that continually arise in the process. However, as long as there is room for conversation, openness to suggestions, and a willingness to improve political governance, hope for democracy remains intact. It is through these collaborative spaces that efforts to safeguard and strengthen democracy can continue to grow.

Relations between the government, political parties, and state institutions often raise concerns about the weakening of checks and balances mechanism.

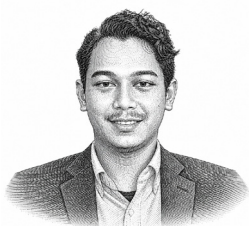


Strengthening Political Parties Through Political Party Aid



While discourse on reforming the legal framework for elections and political parties has frequently intensified, one somewhat overlooked idea is increasing state financial aid for political parties (Banpol). This idea is quite controversial: publicly rejected but supported by anti-corruption and democracy activists.

For example, in Kompas Research and Development findings (29/5), more than 60 percent of respondents rejected the Banpol. The reasons ranged from a lack of financial transparency to rampant political corruption by political party cadres. On the other hand, poor party performance further legitimized this public view. Meanwhile, many parties pushed for an increase in Banpol. BRIN and the KPK, for example, have long included an increase in Banpol in the National Strategy for Corruption Prevention [*Strategi Nasional Pencegahan Korupsi: Stranas-PK*] to reduce political corruption. This article aims to highlight the dire reality of political funding and why Banpol is crucial as a solution.



Kahfi Adlan Hafiz

Program Manager of Perludem

are struggling to satisfy their financial needs amidst the high costs of politics. This is due to two factors. First, political costs have skyrocketed since the professionalization of politics through television advertising, political consulting, and electability surveys (Webb & White 2007; Ufen 2008). Second, Whiteley (2011) revealed that the demise of mass parties has rendered them unable to raise funds from their members due to declining membership and voluntary contributions.

The two problems mentioned above are also experienced by developing democracies like Indonesia. Mietzner (2009) and Ufen (2010) note that following the success of political consultancy and surveys in Indonesia after the 2004 elections, political parties began to rely on political professionalism to win electoral competitions. At the same time, political competition became more of a marketing contest than a contest of ideas. This was marked by massive political advertising promoting the personal image of party elites, thus increasing political costs.

On the other hand, Indonesia's party tradition rarely exhibits mass-based parties. According to Feith (1957), the majority of political parties emerged not from the grassroots, but from elite and intellectual organizations. This pattern continued

The Reality of Political Funding

Political parties in many democracies

after the Reformation, when many political parties were founded by charismatic politicians or businessmen who used the political parties as personal political vessels, with a catch-all approach.

As a result, Indonesian political parties are seen as distributors of wealth, not aggregators of public aspirations. Public expectations of political parties and politicians are limited to how they solve short-term societal problems (Aspinall 2013; Mietzner 2015). Ultimately, political parties

allocation, namely Rp. 1,500 per valid vote in the Regency/City DPRD election. Empirical studies have not yet been found to determine whether the political aid funds in Government Regulation no. 1/2018 are sufficient for political party needs. However, a recent study by Supriyanto and Wulandari (2011) showed that political aid funds only contribute less than 2% of the political party's total needs.

are trapped in the widespread practice of vote-buying. Political funding swells, not only to facilitate vote-buying but also to maintain the patronage networks that distribute these clientelistic exchanges.

Political Financial System Dysfunction

In a legal sense, political parties have other funding sources, such as membership contributions and third-party donations. However, weak financial management makes these two funding sources not transparent. Most political parties don't even strictly regulate membership contributions or third-party donations in their articles of association.

On the other hand, the amount of political aid funds is still far from adequate. Government Regulation no. 1/2018 stipulates that the national-level political aid fund for party Central Leadership Councils (DPPs) shall be Rp. 1,000 per valid vote in the DPR election. Meanwhile, provincial-level party Regional Leadership Councils (DPWs) receive Rp. 1,200 per valid vote in the Provincial DPRD election. Regency/city-level party Regional Representative Councils (DPDs) receive the largest

Marcus Mietzner (2015) called this condition a *dysfunction by design*, namely the lack of state aid and the absence of incentives for legal donations. As a result, political parties rely on oligarchic funding, often illegal. This was evident in the Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre [*Pusat Pelaporan dan Analisis Transaksi Keuangan: PPATK*]'s findings ahead of the 2024 elections, which recorded a 4,000 percent surge in transactions in party treasurers' accounts outside the Official Campaign Fund Accounts [*Rekening Khusus Dana Kampanye: RKDK*]. Suspicious transactions were also found in the accounts of legislative candidates linked to illegal businesses (Kompas, 2024). Unfortunately, the PPATK's findings were not further processed by either the General Elections Commission (KPU) or the Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu).

On the other hand, funds from corruption activities are also suspected of being used to finance several political parties. For example, Rp. 850 million in corruption proceeds from the Jokowi-era Minister of Agriculture, SY Limpo, allegedly flowed to his party, Nasdem, to finance legislative candidate events (Tempo 2024). Meanwhile, the Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW), as reported by Tempo (2024), stated

Indonesian political parties are seen as distributors of wealth, not aggregators of public aspirations.



that 61 regional heads from the 2021–2023 period were implicated in corruption cases involving the buying and selling of positions within local governments, allegedly to recoup election candidacy costs.

Changing Perspectives and Increasing Banpol

We certainly need to rethink at least two questions: what is the function of political parties and who owns them. Neumann's (1956) classic study explains that political parties serve to articulate public interests and bridge social forces with the state. Therefore, political parties need to be perceived as aggregators of public interests. However, political parties are often viewed as privately owned, whether by business elites or charismatic political figures. This perspective ultimately traps political parties in private funding sources or personal networks of owners, ultimately leading to the oligarchization of party leadership and funding sources (Winters 2013). Ultimately, political parties become unresponsive to public aspirations.

This perspective needs to be changed by placing political parties under public ownership, not the control of specific figures. The public and political parties have a reciprocal relationship, with the people having sovereignty over the political parties, and the political parties being responsive to public aspirations.

Within this framework, the improvement of Banpol is a strategic step. Falguera et al. (2014) identified three main

objectives of Banpol: promoting transparency and accountability of political parties to the public, ensuring equal access to finance among political actors, and limiting the dominance of competitors with unlimited funding sources. Furthermore, Van Biezen (2004) and Gauja (2022) emphasized that Banpol provides public legitimacy to political parties, placing them under public ownership. Therefore, Banpol serves as a state tool to protect the public interest in political parties.

The increase in Banpol will create equilibrium in the political party-state-public relationship. Political parties are accountable to the state through institutionalization, including increased transparency, along with incentives for increased political assistance. Meanwhile, institutionalized and transparent political parties provide incentives to the public by maximizing their role as aggregators of public interests. This is possible because political parties can minimize their dependence on oligarchs and business elites if political assistance can cover at least 60 percent of their financial needs.

Therefore, various literature studies and practices in many democratic countries demonstrate that political assistance can reduce political party dependence on oligarchic funding and, consequently, reduce political corruption. If political assistance is increased, adequate funding provides incentives for political parties to carry out their cadre development and political education functions, rather than simply serving as short-term electoral tools relying on certain charismatic figures. ●

Political parties serve to articulate public interests and bridge social forces with the state.



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