

Blog project

“First Time Voters” – European Elections 2014



General idea

The idea is to set up a blog to gather as many different voices as possible from young people who will be eligible to vote in the European election 2014 for the first time.

Many members of EUNET will do projects connected to the European elections within the next 12 month or will realize projects with young people who will be first time voters in May 2014 for the European Parliament. This blog project will not create something totally new but sets up a EUNET-platform to show and multiply what youngsters have to say in different countries in local seminars, trainings and youth projects about the European elections. So the project will be more or less a collection of different voices from as many member organisations of EUNET as possible.

Aim of the project

By setting up this platform we will achieve different goals:

- ✓ We provide a public platform for first time voters to express their attitude and their opinion about the European election 2014
- ✓ We provide a public platform where other first time voters have the opportunity to learn about the views of their peers in different countries about the European election 2014 and compare them to their own
- ✓ We multiply the voice of first time voters to politicians and show them what young people think about the European election 2014
- ✓ We provide a tool for all members of EUNET which can be used in projects connected to the European elections, stimulating discussions, share different opinions etc.
- ✓ We set up a joint project in our network and work collaboratively with different member organisations thus strengthening the ties between the EUNET members and increase the network structure.
- ✓ We multiply the (local) work of the members of EUNET involved in the blog project and disseminate their European activities

Practical implementation

The Europe House Marienberg is willing to be the lead partner of the project. In the first place we set up a blog and inform all EUNET members about this project. Every member organization is warmly welcome to participate.

Participation in the blog project can vary. Actually it depends on the projects of every specific member organisation. If a Europe House has only a project once in six month it is possible to take part in the blog project just every six month or even once at all. If a Europe House has more projects it can independently decide how often a contribution will take place.

What is a contribution?

As stated above we would like to collect in the first place as many different voices of first time voters from as many different countries as possible. So every EUNET member organisation who has contact to first time voters should ask them whether they want to participate by sharing their thoughts and opinion about the European election 2014.

Further down you'll find some questions which should be answered by the first time voters. And the youngsters should be willing to hand in a photo of themselves. The answers with the photo should be then send to:

Karsten Lucke - Europe House Marienberg –

E-mail: lucke@europa-haus-marienberg.de

The photo and the thoughts and opinions of the handed in person will be implemented into the blog by the Europe House Marienberg.

Every time a member organisation encounters new first time voters they can start this process again and again. By doing this we will increase the amount of voices over the next twelve months until the election in May 2014.

Additional contribution

In addition to the photo and the opinion of first time voters the EUNET members could also forward the local seminar, training, project with title and date. This could be also implemented in the blog showing not only the first time voters but also the projects they have been engaged in. This again is a good way of multiplying the actions of EUNET members and their European educational work.

Depending on the blog we will use it might also be possible to hand in small videos instead of photos. Photos will have the priority but video might be a good enrichment. If the videos are implemented on Youtube / Vimeo they can be linked instead of uploaded directly to the blog.

It might also be interesting what methods were used in local projects about the European elections. The blog could also gather those information to share it with others.

The blog

We can use the wordpress.com blog system which is for free. We can choose a blog URL which always ends with “wordpress.com” – e.g. www.ourblogname.wordpress.com

For 18\$ a year we can skip the last part of the address. Then it would look like www.ourblogname.com This is more professional and looks better.

I already saved the address www.firsttimevoters2014.wordpress.com which can be changed to www.firsttimevoters2014.com or www.firsttimevoters2014.net

The basic (free) version provides 3 GB of space for photos. This should be enough. The question is whether it will still be enough if the amount of pictures is very high and we include also videos. It is also possible to buy more web space for a free account when needed. We have to check with the EUNET office what is possible.

Initial partner

The project idea was developed on the “Open space” event by EUNET in March 2013. The small workshop which dealt with this idea consisted of following persons:

Regina Lecointe, La Maison de l’Europe des Yvelines, France

Mary Pyrgos, House of Europe in Cyprus, Cyprus

Francois Dibon, Maison de l’Europe de Rennes, France

Kilian Kindelberger, Berlin-Brandenburgische Auslandsgesellschaft, Germany

Karsten Lucke, Europe House Marienberg, Germany

The project will start with those people right now. In the same time all EUNET members will be contacted to motivate them to participate in this blog project.

Catalogue of Questions

The following questions shall be asked every first time voter:

1. Do you know that there will be elections? What elections?
(In France and Germany there will be local elections at the same time)
2. Are you interested in the European elections? Explain!
3. Do you know how the election will work? Do you know who you can vote for?
4. What are your expectations concerning the election?
5. What does Europe in general mean to you?
6. What has to be changed in order to make Europe / European elections more interesting for me?