

# Euro Wahl Gang 09 (working title)

*A European Young Voters Campaign*

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION,

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**Politikfabrik e.V.** - a Berlin based student agency for political communication - is planning an European young voters campaign for the 2009 European elections. In cooperation with student teams from Hungary and Poland, **Politikfabrik** wants to increase young voters' interest in the election. Through several events in Germany, Hungary and Poland the "**Euro Wahl Gang 09**" will enable young voters to gain information on the election and stimulate political participation. The trilateral aspect of the project will strengthen the "European spirit". In each of the three participating countries there will be national teams of eight students. These national teams will cooperate in workshops in order to develop the campaign. **Politikfabrik** will share its know-how previously gained in similar projects (e.g. Wahlgang 02/05) and coordinate "**Euro Wahl Gang 09**" from Berlin.

## IDEA AND BACKGROUND

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After the successful realisation of our campaign "Wahl Gang" for first time voters in 2002, 2005 and 2006 on the federal and municipal level in Germany, we would like to develop a similar campaign on the European level in cooperation with student teams from Hungary and Poland. Aim of the campaign is to increase attention at the elections and the participation of voters.

The European elections 2009 are an important milestone for the European Integration. After the failing of the constitution and the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007, which regulates the realignment of the EU, the elections will be an important indicator for the support of Europe from its voters. Though the enthusiasm for Europe is especially great among the young generation, unfortunately this does not have a very big impact on the voters' participation. With the "**Euro Wahl Gang 09**" we want to increase the interest of young Europeans in this topic and motivate them to inspire their peers.

We would like to show the European dimension of the elections with a series of linked activities and events in various countries. Furthermore, we would like to create a corporate feeling among young European voters relating to the next elections.

The **“Euro Wahl Gang 09”** campaign includes the joint development of a communication campaign aiming at higher voter participation among young voters. For that purpose, in the run-up teams of students will be built who will carry out the multimedia campaign starting at the conception, up to the realisation. The campaign gains authenticity due to our proximity to the target group and our professional proximity to the topic, (we are students of political science, communication studies and marketing). Obviously, the campaign is neutral when it comes to party policies.

During the European elections, in at least three European cities (Dresden, Wroclaw, Pecs) the **“Euro Wahl Gang 09”** campaign will be planned and realised by student teams. A transnational campaign can be designed in a more versatile and successful way- it can overcome the national perception of the elections and boost the European consciousness. Only a genuine European campaign will be suited to reach the first-time voters for the European elections in 2009.

Most important in this context is the intercultural and political exchange. Before the actual campaign starts, the **“Euro Wahl Gang 09”** teams will design it in trilateral workshops. This way finding a common European approach, so essential for the campaign, can be guaranteed. During the following implementation of the campaign, it should be extra motivating for the teams to work with concepts they themselves have come up with.

For the selection of the partner regions we would like to concentrate on regional areas and medium-sized cities und leave out the urban centers. This selection seems more promising, since a lot of times there already is great effort in big cities and it usually is a lot harder to get attention for such a project.

## REALISATION

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The project is cut into three phases.

- Until the end of the year, the concept should be worked out in detail and the strategy for the formation of the **“Euro Wahl Gang 09”** and the web portal should be formulated.
- During the second phase, a network of strong multipliers will be build up in the countries involved and a 1<sup>st</sup> workshop will be held. The aim of this workshop is for the team members to become acquainted with each other and develop a guideline for the further procedure with the help of a trainer team. The Politikfabrik trainer team will share its know-how especially in the areas of teamwork, event management and fundraising.
- During the 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop, the 8-people national teams will compile the contents of the campaign. At the end of this second phase, the participants know each other and are in permanent contact. Together they have developed a campaign for the

European elections and know how to use the features of the website.

- In the third phase, the campaign will be realised.

## THE CAMPAIGN

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The aim is the production of different campaign modules, which will be made available online as toolkits, for example poster artworks, prefabricated press releases or a prefabricated spot. The specified contents will be worked out in detail in the workshops.

The web portal will play a key role in this context. It will not only contain all the necessary materials, but it also serves as a platform for coordination and communication inside the teams and it's also vital for the visualisation of the campaign for the public.

Because of the modularity and the openness a fluent transition will be created between the moderators of the campaign and the target group. For all young voters it should be possible at any time to become a developer of a campaign and to take part in the design process of the project. Experiences made in the project "eu\_checker" and during the organisation of the "European Youth Media Days" encourage us in our participating approach.

## THE ROLE OF THE POLITIKFABRIK

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The task of the Politikfabrik is to assist during the formation of small teams inside the participating countries. During the workshops we share our knowledge and coordinate the work of the different teams. The key factor for success and the big challenge is the realisation of a common European campaign.

## PARTNERS

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The Politikfabrik will count on reliable partners. We already asked some national organizations in Hungary and Poland and received a positive feedback. Here is a list of the organisations, which are interested in cooperation:

### HUNGARY

**DUE - The National Association of Student and Youth Journalists** has been educating young print and radio journalists – opinion shaping communication experts of the future – for 19 years. DUE is an organisation of major public benefit. DUE has 5 000 members and publishes a Hungarian youth-magazine.

### POLAND

**POLIS – The Young Journalist's Association** aims to help young people and their teachers to overcome passivity and helplessness - to

discover, express and share the ethos of Human Rights and the vocation to participate in policy making and public life. POLIS main field of interest and action is civic journalism, training in responsible media work and use. POLIS educates by providing an opportunity to participate in editorial work and to share responsibility for publishing "Polis", the Journal for the Art of Public Life and "Poliska", the younger sister of "Polis" compiled with the newsletter of our Association. Vocation to participate in policy making and public life involves training in the use of democratic procedures, effective and varied communication skills and teamwork as well as an opening of broader horizons, acceptance of European and world concerns.

#### EUROPEAN PARTNERS

For a possible extension of the participating countries and student teams we need a strong European network. In the actual schedule a trilateral **"Euro Wahl Gang 09"** team is planned. Depending on further sponsors and interested national organisations an extension is possible. For the European communication and to reach our target group we already established contact with the following partners:

**Café Babel** is a multilingual European current affairs magazine, designed for readers across borders. Cafebabel.com revolutionises European media through participatory journalism, providing a unique platform of expression for the 'eurogeneration', the first generation living Europe on a day-by-day basis thanks to the Erasmus study exchange programme, the internet and an increasing mobility.

#### PATRONAGE

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For the patronage of the **"Euro Wahl Gang 09"** we would like to get the patronage of the president of the European parliament (at the moment Hans Gerd Pöttering) and the foreign ministers of the participating countries.

Alternatively we consider acquiring national or European celebrity as supporters/patrons of the campaign

#### NEXT STEPS

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##### JULY – SEPTEMBER 2008

- set up of the national organizing teams (3 members each)
- search for partners and sponsors (Allianz Foundation has already showed its interest)
- planning for the 1st workshop "networking"

##### OCTOBER – DECEMBER

- 1st workshop for the small national teams (3 members each)
- search for patron (e.g. the Foreign Ministers of Hungary, Poland and Germany)
- application stage for the rest of the national team members (5 more each country)
- planning for the 2nd workshop "the campaign"

JANUARY – MARCH

- Realisation of the 2nd workshop
- each national team organizes the national events

APRIL – JUNE

- start of the national events

CONTACT

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