N E C E
NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

bpb: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung

Press Invitation

The Launching of VoteMatch Europe 2009: MEPs test the popular voting tool

Wednesday 29th of April, 2009, 6:30 - 8:30 pm, Salon of the European Parliament

- with -
Alexander Alvaro, MEP and Member of Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe,
Philippe Lamberts, Co-Spokesperson of and MEP Candidate from the European Green Party,
Manuel Medina Ortega, MEP and Member of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament,
Janusz Onyszkiewicz, MEP and Member of Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe and
Diana Wallis, MEP and Member of Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

Back in 1979 the European Communities have elected their Parliament for the first time by direct universal suffrage. It was a truly historical moment. Thirty years later the tide of events in the European Union is no less ground-breaking. Between the 4th and the 7th of June 2009 375 million citizens in the 27 member states will be called to the polls to cast their vote. Taken together, more than 9.000 candidates of more than 200 political parties stand for election. VoteMatch will help people to make an informed choice.

On the occasion of the launch of www.votematch.eu there will be a parliamentary evening on Wednesday, 29th of April 2009 in Brussels, Belgium. It is organised by the Federal Agency for Civic Education's (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung/bpb) Network NECE - Networking European Citizenship Education - in cooperation with the Dutch Institute for Political Participation and the website EUdebate2009.eu. The event is hosted by MEP Alexander Alvaro as a representative of EU40. In the course of the evening, the Members of the European Parliament named above will test the pan European voting tool, developed and elaborated by partners of VoteMatch from eleven European countries.

Model and licenser of VoteMatch was the StemWijzer, launched first in 1989 in the Netherlands. By now, comparable voting tools do exist in a dozen European countries. Its popularity is demonstrated, for instance, by the frequent use of the German Wahl-O-Mat tool: Five million people have tested it on www.wahl-o-mat.de during the 2005 parliamentary elections and more than fifteen millions have used the tool since 2002.

The idea of VoteMatch is to raise motivation and offer orientation for voters in the European Elections. The pan European VoteMatch differs from national voting tools since there are no European parties, but members from national parties elected to the European Parliament organise themselves in political groups based on political core principles. Thus VoteMatch provides policy propositions of the European Parliament's political groups. Users can compare the different policies and find out which group's opinion correspond most closely to their own preferences.

Media representatives are invited to attend the parliamentary evening on Wednesday 29th of April, 2009 at 6:30 pm in the Salon of the European Parliament (Rue Wiertz 60, B-1047 Brussels)

Registration required. For further information and registration please contact: