
Published at: 05-08-2009



"Interacting with the European Parliament"

Engaging the citizens in setting up the EU common goals and policies through encouraging them to participate in a Europe-wide debate – this is the main objective of **the "Interacting with the European Parliament" communication campaign**, implemented in various languages through the internet-platform <http://parliament.europe.bg> by the European Institute Foundation, the Center for Policy Modernization, Europe Gateway and Radio Bulgaria – BNR.

With this initiative, the team's priority is to facilitate the communication between the civil society and the EU institutions, the Members of the European Parliament in particular.

The campaign aims at encouraging the citizens and the civil society organizations from over 20 EU Member States, as well as from the Western Balkans countries, to participate in the pan-European debate. This internet-based initiative includes production and dissemination of information and analytical articles on key issues from the European Parliament's activities, a series of online-discussions and video-chats with MEPs, as well as radiobroadcasts, focusing on the EP's functioning – co-produced with "Radio Bulgaria" – BNR. The priority topics are the European Parliament's role – as the only EU-body, directly elected by the citizens, and the mechanisms of its work. These are a good occasion for the project team to look ahead and describe in more detail the EP's new role and increased powers under the Lisbon Treaty, which would determine the need for an ever more intensified dialogue between the citizens and the MEPs.

The **campaign's start** coincided with the EP elections in June 2009. Its duration is of sixteen months and is set to conclude in 2010. It naturally succeeds to its predecessor – the **"Now – interacting with the European Parliament!"** project, implemented with the EP financial support through the Directorate General "Communication" under the 2008 Annual Grant program. As a result of this project namely, the web-based information system <http://parliament.europe.bg> was set up as an interactive mediator between the voters and the elected on all the topical issues at the European agenda. The project team is determined to clarify to the target audiences all the important aspects of the European Union's institutional organization and, within it, the specific place and role, played by the European Parliament: focusing on how its decisions affect both the citizens's everyday life and the global geopolitical processes.

All the project **activities** are targeted towards stimulating the Europe-wide democratic debate through including into it the citizens and the civil society organizations from the different EU Member States (20

About the project "Interacting with the European Parliament"

envisaged within this project). In addition, this project is set to contribute to increasing the effectiveness of the communication with the EU institutions in the process of policy – defining. The approach, adopted for the project implementation, includes promotion of the mutual understanding of the cultural diversity in Europe.

Our target **audience** is wide, multilingual and coming from different EU Member States. We are paying particular attention on the academia representatives, the young people, the blogosphere, the media and the CSOs. The project is oriented not only towards the EU territory but also towards the citizens from the Western Balkans countries – Croatia, Turkey, Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. To implement the objectives, the already established partnerships continue in a sustainable way – with networks such as PASOS, CHALLENGE, the Balkan Communication Network, the Local Development Booster, as well as with the Europe Direct Information Centers.

[Click HERE to see more about the implementing organizations.](#)