

A quick update from Brussels: criteria for success

By

Created 2007-10-14 12:10



Internet access within the European Parliament building has not been as easy to get hold of as you might think, hence the lack of posts over this weekend. Having sat in on small group discussions, spoken to various organisers and participants, and seen more about how the whole thing works, I'll hope to report in full over the next few days, having written up my extensive notes. Liveblogging, however, has sadly proved impossible...

Initial impression? It's certainly an interesting experiment - though I'm not sure if a group of nearly 400 people isn't just too big for this to really work on a practical level. Which creates additional problems - because much smaller than that, the arguments for representativeness (on which more over the next few days) become far, far less convincing.

In the press conference I'm currently sitting in, Professor Fishkin has laid out his three criteria for success:

- 1) Is it representative?
- 2) Is it deliberative?
- 3) Will decision-makers listen to the results?

Fishkin seems hopeful, noting that the participants seem to be representative, that discussions took place throughout the last few days, and noting that both the Bulgarian Prime Minister (a speaker at this afternoon's final plenary meeting) and Jens-Peter Bonde, the Danish MEP, have become proponents of deliberative polling, even though one is very pro-EU, the other somewhat anti-

He seems happy, but is his satisfaction justified? As the results of the final poll are collated, I'll do my best to number-crunch...

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