



EDUCATION & TRAINING

Y VOTE CONVENTION
WARSZAWA, POLAND

RESULTS BOOKLET



This event is part of the “My Europe, My Say” Project and is organized with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



“My Europe, My Say!” is a European project, implemented by a consortium led by the World Organisation of the Scout Movement- Bureau Européen du Scoutisme (WOSM). The consortium includes AEGEE-Europe and 48 independent youth organisations and covers 30 countries. The project encompasses various aspects, all the way from capacity building tracks to large scale youth exchange events to interactive spaces of dialogue between young people and decision makers. This convention was one of the activities under the project, and received the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

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Dear reader,

A little more than two years ago I was catapulted into the world of European politics. I was just a student who thought that politics didn't listen to those who are affected by it. However, through joining voluntary associations such as Pulse of Europe and later on AEGEE, through which I became a member of the Y Vote core team, I found out that decision makers can be reached and reasoned with, that every voice can make itself heard and give input for the rest of society.



Now that I have spent these past years dedicating myself to learning all I can on the European Union and other international institutions whilst promoting positive change, I was glad to meet all of the participants of this event. I was inspired by the willingness to contribute and change something so fundamental such as education for the better. We exchanged ideas about education and training I hope will live in the back of your minds and contribute to the future vision for our continent.

You overwhelmingly showed me what many powerful informed voices can create together, by creating these recommendations you have demonstrated that young people can get together and offer plausible solutions for the betterment of not only the European Union but Europe as a continent.

Of course I cannot stop without thanking the rest of the Y Vote team, AEGEE-Warszawa, the Comité Directeur and most importantly Doro for the great work on creating and managing the content of this Convention making it flow smoothly all the time.



Leonardo Manganelli

Content Manager
Y Vote Project

Dear reader,

having dealt with education topics during two years of membership on the Civic Education Working Group of AEGEE-Europe and being the External Relations manager of Y Vote, I am very happy to have organised the Convention on Education & Training. Young people, AEGEE member or not, have contributed to the event with their ideas, knowledge, experiences and creativity to shape "The Future of Education". We encourage them to be active citizens in their cities, countries and beyond, and carry on with the spirit they received.



Every citizen in our societies is granted the right to education to learn, grow and to participate in society. During the Convention, participants learned about the differences in school systems of various countries, the stakeholders in educational policy making and programs developed to improve its quality and the role of NGOs in education. There were discussions on lifelong learning, importance of non-formal education and shaping school curricular. This knowledge helped participants to draft recommendations for EU policies, which can be found in this booklet.

I am extremely happy with the results of this Convention. The participants brought with them a lot of energy, motivation, ideas and actively participated. I also thank the organising teams of AEGEE-Warszawa, especially the main organiser Magda Wasilewska and incoming responsible Jan Postek, and Y Vote for their work and help to make it a wonderful event. Last but not least, I would like to thank my co-trainers Leonardo Manganelli, Joanna Pankowska and Alejandra Piot Pérez-Abadin for the amazing work we did together!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D Harles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'D' being particularly large and stylized.

Dorothea Harles
Content Manager & External Relations Manager

Dear reader,

I am extremely grateful that I had a chance to coordinate such an empowering and inspiring event. All of this would not be possible without other organizers and helpers from AEGEE-Warszawa as well as Doro and Leo from the Y Vote Team and Alejandra from the Comité Directeur who prepared amazing content for our participants. Y Vote is an extremely important initiative for young Europeans as the elections are approaching and it is necessary to spread knowledge to involve young people in processes occurring in the European Union. The ideas of our participants, their knowledge and motivation as well as the recommendations they drafted were truly inspiring and hopefully will bring around a lot of positive outcomes.



Thanks again to all the people involved!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M Wasilewska'. The script is fluid and cursive.

Magdalena Wasilewska

Main Organizer, AEGEE-Warszawa

The Convention

As a project, we want to encourage young people to make informed choices at the European Parliament elections and learn more about topics that are relevant for young Europeans. Therefore we organise Conventions along the topics of the EU Youth Agenda where participants learn about the functioning of the EU and discuss how to become active citizens. In these events, the goal is to

1. Learn about the EU institutions with a strong focus on the European Parliament, voting in the European elections, one of the EU youth agenda topics and its role in the European Union, youth policy in the EU with the focus on structured dialogue.
2. Learn about the current work of the EU and its competences in the respective topic and discuss these issues with policy makers.
3. Draft recommendations in the form of a Youth Agenda that will be brought to policy makers.



The recommendations are later brought to our final conference in April 2019, which will happen in Torino, Italy. Together with other NGOs and participants from all over the continent, we will gather all recommendations from all Conventions into one Youth Agenda for Europe.

In the following pages, you can find a wrap-up of our actions!

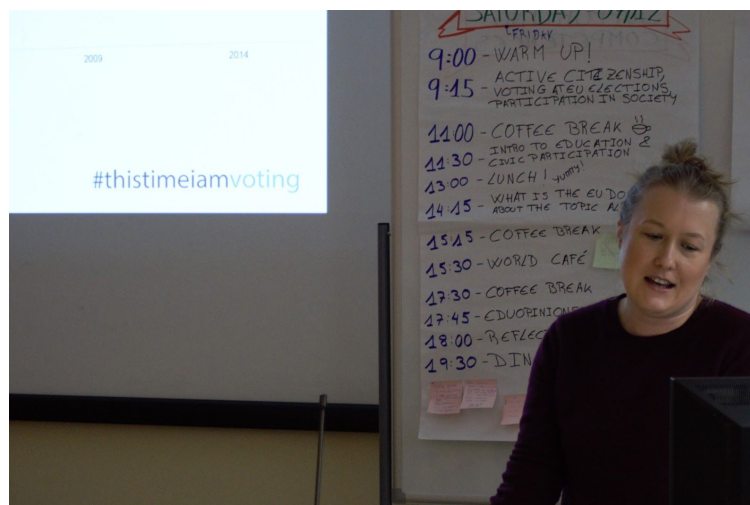
Introduction to the EU institutions

The European Union with its history and institutions is a complex system that we all heard about somehow, but we need to understand it a little bit in order to really discuss the influence. After all, the EU institutions are the European peoples' institutions. In this session, participants learned about the history of the European Union, four European Institutions and their competences as well as the [division of competences](#) between the EU and the member states. It started with a presentation about the institutions, then went on with the game "Who am I" employing milestones of the EU for the cards and then with categorising the competence division onto different flipcharts. The session ended with a Kahoot! quiz about the EU and its institutions, which the participants enjoyed a lot.

Active Citizenship

Every inhabitant of one of the 28 EU countries is an EU citizen. Many citizens are not actively participating in society. This workshop improved the understanding of participants of the meaning and importance of being an active citizen, how to learn being an active citizen, and how young people can get involved at different levels in European politics. There was a special focus on the upcoming European Parliament Elections.

The workshop started with a game in which the participants had to find out the rules of the game by themselves in order to answer a question in a right way. This made them aware of the importance of empowerment for participation and how to achieve this for everyone. One conclusion was that Civic Education is needed to learn active citizenship. Then, we had a deeper look into the different forms of education: formal, non-formal and informal. In groups, participants collected ideas how they want to become active on local, regional, national or European/International level. These ideas were used by the participants on the last day for making pledges on future actions. In the presentation on the [This Time I'm Voting](#) campaign, Katarzyna Kowalewska from the European Parliament Representation Office in Warsaw gave input on how to create awareness for the importance of voting in the European Parliament Elections in May 2019.



Introduction to Education & Training

Education & Training is part of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018. Education touches all parts of our lives, still most of us are closest to it in school. In this session we had a look at education systems as they vary a lot between the countries, in terms of goals and values of education, the setup and quality outcome.

First, we had a look at the underlying values and goals of the national education systems in which the participants went to school themselves. These included the following countries: Albania, Belgium, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Moldova, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Turkey. This means that there was a huge range of values which the education systems incorporate such as hard work, competition, output orientation, silence, obedience, humiliation, curiosity, critical thinking, team work, self-agency or patriotism.



Then, Dr. Michał Sitek, head of the International Studies Unit of the Educational Research Institute in Warsaw, Poland, delivered a lecture on the differences between national education systems, the challenges of reforming education, international quality comparison studies like PISA and on the Polish Education system which faced recent changes. He started by explaining the importance of skills for the chances children have in their lives, including their employability and civic engagement, which results in the need for lifelong learning opportunities. International studies try to measure the skills people have to use the outcomes for new policies. These mainly include literacy, numeracy and science. These indicators are used for the comparison of countries. One outcome is that some education systems focus more on general education or vocational education. Also, countries differ in the freedom they give to schools for own decisions. The education system in Poland, for example, faced changes in the year 2000, when one year was added to the mandatory school education, and was taken away not shortly after in 2016. The strengths of the Polish system are the focus on key competencies and the high quality of primary and lower secondary education. The weaknesses are that there is no attention paid to soft skills in school education and adult learning.

With that knowledge, the participants discussed the strengths and weaknesses of their national education systems in small groups. They noticed similar points between the countries, but also differences, such as free education in Germany as opposed to paying tuition fees for education in Albania and Italy. A selection can be found below. Together, we checked how the values of a system explain the strengths and weaknesses, and how the participants would like their education system to be instead. One important point was, that schools should not kill creativity.

Strengths of education systems*

- Good job perspectives
- Dual system in Germany for vocational education
- Education is free or affordable
- Possibility to have more physical education outside school and also practical lessons
- critical thinking is taught
- good teaching in academic basic skills like maths or science
- Bologna System
- ERASMUS Programme and Cultural exchanges

Weaknesses of education systems*

- No balanced theory and practice
- Not always free of charge
- Strong differentiation between good and bad students
- Early decision making for the three different paths of high schools
- No focus on psychological development of children
- Bad qualification of some teachers/education workers
- Hierarchical system

*as identified by participants.

EU policy in Education & Training

This workshop focussed on the different actors in educational policy making and on the most important policies in the field of Education & Training.

The participants started by identifying the following actors in education:

- Pupils
- Parents
- Teachers
- Teachers unions
- NGOs
- Companies
- National/regional governments
- European Commission
- Council of the EU
- European Parliament
- Council of Europe
- United Nations

The European Union has only supportive competence in education towards the member states. Still, there exist ways to shape educational policies, also outside of the EU (see table below). The participants had to solve a memory game of the most important educational policies influencing EU members states, their main goal, their year of coming into force, the institution adopting it and their context. With that, they gained an overview of some of the existing programs.

Year	What?	Who?	Description
2010	<u>ET2020</u>	European Commission	Reference framework for activities at EU and national and regional levels
2015	<u>Paris declaration</u>	Ministers responsible for education and the European Commissioner	Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education
2010	<u>Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education</u>	Council of Europe	Recommendation on policy concerning Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights
2015	<u>Sustainable Development Goal 4</u>	United Nations General Assembly	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Then, Alicja Pacewicz, Co-Founder and Senior Advisor at The Center for Citizenship Education in Poland, talked about the role of NGOs in education. Also, she is involved in educational policy making in Poland and explained about the future challenges.



World café

The topic of a “Future of Education” has many facets. These were captured in the interactive format of the world café. For this, several experts sat at several smaller tables to give the participants the opportunity for smaller and in-depth discussions with them. Rotating through the room after a certain time, the participants had the chance to meet all experts in a small group and enter in a deep exchange of opinions.

In this world café on the “Future of Education”, three experts participated. At the first table talking about schools, there was Małgorzata Szybalska from the National Ministry of Education who has been working in the department for Curricula, Textbooks and Innovations for 20 years. The second table was dedicated to the topic of non-formal education. Alicja Pacewicz, who founded the Center for Citizenship Education in 1994 and worked in the field since then, discussed the importance of non-formal education next to formal education with the participants. At the last table about Lifelong Learning, participants had the chance to meet Joanna Pankowska, steering committee member of the Lifelong Learning Platform. Overall, participants and speakers very much enjoyed the two hour discussion.

“In the future, education and school systems need to adopt faster to an ever changing world.” - Małgorzata Szybalska

The discussion at the table on schools with Małgorzata Szybalska, led to questions concerning the new reforms that the Polish government introduced and to how the curricula are formed and decided on. There was a discussion on how the current curricula are overwhelming pupils through the broadness of subjects, the impersonality of schools and the adding of large amounts of homework that would engorge any other free-time they had. This led to the discovery that the Polish system allows the teachers a relative freedom in teaching style as long as the main points of the curriculum are achieved.

Following this, the participants began discussing the possible advances that education systems might use, such as following the path set by the Finnish education system, promoting technological or project based lessons to improve logical thinking and approaches and the removal of any form of grades for at least the years of primary education.

Last but not least the discussion revolved around school dropouts and the way that most national cultures look down on them. There was consensus on the fact that it should be obligatory to go to school until 16. However, if children were to drop out, alternatives should be promoted instead of shaming them.



The discussion at the table on non-formal education with Alicja Pacewicz started off with the question if formal or non-formal education is more important. The participants were divided on that question as the two forms of education are not easy to distinguish and non-formal education is getting more integrated into the school system. The formal education system ensures equal access for all and nation states have a lot of power over it, whereas non-formal education opportunities are not equal for everyone as they are not compulsory. However, education on democracy is very much needed. Overall, both kinds of education should be balanced in a country.

Next, the discussion went to how non-formal education could be fostered. It became clear that an information network for the different European actors is needed, e.g. to exchange project ideas and collaborate better. This brought up the point what the role of NGOs should be in education in general. If the education system is working well in a country, they are less needed, but should never cease to exist still.

Lastly, the question was discussed what kind of education policy would be easiest to make on EU level. Member states are not keen to be swayed by the EU, especially not on their formal education systems, so non-formal education policy is easier to adapt, even though the impact of formal education systems are lasting longer. There is already a common framework for all parts of education called "[Key competences for lifelong learning](#)" which have been reworked since 2006. Another idea for an EU-policy is to improve the support of teachers on (non-) formal education via personal and material exchanges.

"Information and research results need to be easily and freely accessible, education should be shaped by a democratised process and the education system should be free of election cycles. That is how I envision the future of education." - Joanna Pankowska

The discussion at the third table was about Lifelong Learning. It started with the connection of the three types of learning, namely formal, non-formal and informal. While society values formal education, not much credit is given to the other two types of learning.

When discussion formed around whether Lifelong Learning is only focused on the labour market, Joanna Pankowska clarified that it is actually influencing more parts of life than work. Additionally, Lifelong Learning is also about challenging your ideas and thinking “out of the box”. Since it is not just a way to get educated, there are many different ways to gain knowledge and education that are related to the different ways of learning. A negative aspect of purely formal education can be that depending on teachers, the school education can create a negative concept of learning in oneself.

The importance of a thorough education is growing nowadays that, with internet and social media, easily accessible information needs to be evaluated by consumers to e.g identify fake news. By being able to do so, citizens will be able to communicate adequately employing quality information. In schools some teachers are teaching their students the concept of learning how to learn, which is unusual, but important and should not be cast aside as irrelevant.



Recommendations

Education and training in Europe have long been a matter for discussion. Even though the nations have various systems in place, there are common strands that they all follow. In this continuously changing world the education systems are taking too long to change and adapt to the skills and knowledge required by both students and teachers.

Only a few existing programmes are well known and they need to be significantly improved. We would like to see the European Union supporting its member states in preparing their educational systems for a future world that will rely on educators and those pupils to be prepared.

Therefore we, the participants of the Y Vote Convention about Education & Training, propose the following recommendations:

1. Practical skills for the labour market

We suggest that the EU to promote the conversion of conventional education resources into interactive digital tools, as well as encourage collaboration between industries and educational institutions to provide students with the professional experience and readiness for the labour market in the technological era.

2. Platform for key competences

We strongly encourage the creation a transparent and regulated platform to exchange methodology of implementing the key competences framework in the EU educational systems.

The platform should be a space for students , teachers and educational policy makers through which they can obtain information about what the key competences are, how and why the framework is implemented.

3. Exchanges for pupils and teachers

We strongly recommend to increase funding and promotion of relevant programmes that enable pupils of all age groups and educational backgrounds as well as teachers to participate in short and long term exchanges between schools, of members and partner countries of the EU.

4. Civic Education material

We strongly encourage the EU to provide resources to create materials for effective teaching on civic education in formal and non formal environments using engaging digital tools and encourage schools to collaborate with civic stakeholders.

5. Emotional Intelligence Training For Teachers

We strongly encourage the EU to enable training opportunities for teachers on emotional intelligence and soft skills, in order to support pupils in the safe development of their full life potential.

The Recommendations are written by: Ali Daim Abbas Shah, Alhassan Akondor, Laur Mihai Amanolesei, Françoiska Çollaku, Marcos Toledo Cómez, Johnny Eugen Diesendorf, Mateusz Gierczak, Tilbe Gürsoy, Lukas Herzog, Aarón Júlvez Manero, Lukas Kaczmarek, Daniela Lascu, Jacqueline Marzinzik, Jonas Meyer-Below, Nino Natroshvili, Alejandro Nievas Garcia, Maxim Shtarnov, Marleen Talve, Gisela Lydia Tatsi, Giulia Tempesta, Alexandra Pilečková, Alessandro Pilia, Alessandro Pratesi, Henrike Werner, Lovro Žada

Reality check with policy makers

One of the main parts of this Convention was a session in which the participants got the opportunity to exchange their ideas with policy makers, by presenting the drafted recommendations for a reality check and to ask questions.

The recommendation drafting process went as follows: it started with a gathering and clustering of ideas, participants split in groups to formulate their ideas for a better Europe, gave feedback to each other and finalised them together with the input of the policy makers.

We were very happy to welcome Marcin Świąćicki, member of the Polish Parliament and former mayor of Warsaw, and Anna Grabowska, a senior expert at the Warsaw Department for Education. They joined us on Saturday afternoon so that the five groups, each responsible for one of the previously mentioned recommendations, got the chance to present their ideas, ask for feedback and discuss the topic altogether.

Both speakers, Mr. Świąćicki and Ms. Grabowska, were very impressed by the wide range of ideas the participants came up with. They could offer helpful insights into policy processes, current programs such as an existing school exchange program between the cities of Warsaw and Düsseldorf, and general tips on the implementation of the ideas. All five ideas were approved by them and both participants and guests enjoyed the discussion time.



Human Rights Day

On the 10th of December 2018 the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration took place.

Article 26 of the Declaration states:

- 1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.*
- 2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.*
- 3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.*



Y Vote is a partner of the #MEGA Campaign by the European Civic Forum which put a special emphasis on this day and put it under the slogan “#Nodaywithoutus”. As the Human Rights Day is so closely connected we included it in the Convention which ended on the 9th December in preparation for that day. We challenged the participants in a creative task with creating a one minute video to show the importance for the right to education for all. You can watch it [on our Facebook page](#).

Results in numbers

26

Participants

4

Days

14

different nationalities

23

Years old (on average)

24.4%

is the average increase in knowledge
about the EU Institutions.

54%

Members of AEGEE

92%

Have had the chance to vote

95.8%

Of these people did vote

over 95% of participants...

...see the importance of the European Institutions.

...(strongly) agree that they are motivated to increase their participation.

...(strongly) agree that they gained knowledge about Education & Training.

...(strongly) agree that Education & Training is important on individual and
societal level.

...say that active participation of citizens is important to improve society or
mandatory for a working society.

Y Vote

Y Vote is a Europe wide campaign designed to encourage young citizens to make informed choices in the European Parliament elections 2019. This will be reached by improving and developing the knowledge and skills of young people about the elections and European institutions. We, the Y Vote core team, aim at empowering and motivating young people to participate in society and become involved in democratic processes. These actions will tackle the current low understanding of and information on European institutions, mistrust and apathy and the low voter turnout, especially among young people. The project has previously been organised for the 2009 and 2014 European Parliament elections.

We are an AEGEE-Europe project which is supported by various [partners](#), such as

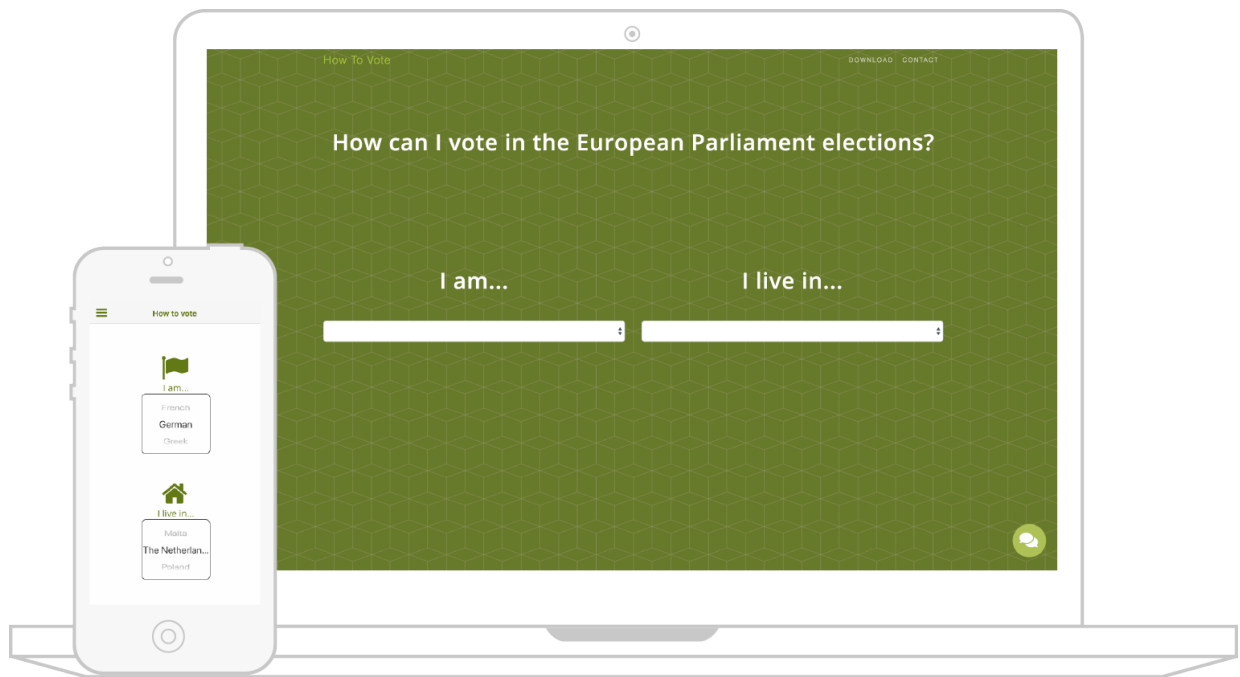
- EDUOpinions
- The European Youth Forum (YFJ)
- Young European Federalists (JEF)
- Erasmus Student Network (ESN)
- European Movement International (EMI)
- This Time I'm Voting – The official campaign of the European Parliament
- The European Parliament
- POLIS 180
- #MEGACampaign by the European Civic Forum
- Eyes on Europe
- World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM)

www.yvote.eu

AEGEE-Europe

Founded in 1985, the European Students' Forum, „Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe“ by full name, is now one of the largest interdisciplinary student associations of the continent. It is a voluntary, non-profit organization that operates without being linked to any political party. AEGEE strives for a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe, which is socially, economically and politically integrated, and values the participation of young people in its construction and development. AEGEE empowers students and young people in Europe to take an active role in society. It creates a space for dialogue and learning opportunities as well as acts as their representative towards decision-makers. Moreover, AEGEE strengthens mutual understanding and brings Europe closer to young people.

www.aegee.org



I'm an Italian living in Brussels, how do I vote?

This question – or at least in a similar way – will come to the minds of many European Union citizens. The root of the problem is that every member state sets their own regulations for the elections and therefore the conditions vary immensely.

We believe that **voting should be easy.**

For this reason, we have created the “How to Vote” app. By choosing your nationality and country of residence, you will get an overview of the specific regulations you will face for the upcoming elections. Who is eligible to vote? How does the registration process work? What ways of voting from abroad do you have? If you decide to vote in your country of residence, which criteria do you need to fulfil?

Our app is now available on any device. It can either be downloaded for iOS in the App Store, for Android in the Play Store or accessed online at

www.howtovote.eu





Y VOTE CONVENTION ON EDUCATION & TRAINING
WARSZAWA, POLAND

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