

A close-up photograph of two hands, one light-skinned and one dark-skinned, shaking in a firm grip. The hands are the central focus, with the fingers interlaced. Overlaid on the hands are twelve yellow, five-pointed stars, arranged in a circular pattern around the central grip, reminiscent of the European Union flag. The background is a solid, bright blue.

Yvote

RESULT BOOKLET



We strive to inform people in Europe, especially the youth, in order to equip them with the needed knowledge and to encourage them to be engaged in the democratic process in the future. We are therefore motivated to increase the participation and youth engagement in Europe and want to increase our understanding of the EU, tackle mistrust and apathy amongst the citizens through peer-to-peer education.

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Taking part in youth-led campaigns shows that even with small means anyone who has a passion can be enabled to be a changemaker. Enthusiasm is a key point in the Y Vote project, because more than a hundred volunteers worked for more than two years, travelled 20 countries and spent countless nights working for something that many believe can be taken for granted: Democracy.

We took off long before the European Parliament elections, with great discussions, and many people that shared the experience of Y Vote in 2014. Sooner than later, the whole process took shape and our team got started. Where to go, when you have such big footsteps to follow? We were, and are, very thankful for the many fruitful exchanges we had with the previous project team and boards of AEGEE-Europe, as well as external partners.

Coming together as a team marked the first of many times we would see and hear each other, and also the beginning of finding out how much the youth in Europe knew about the EU. We delivered workshops, held interviews, got feedback and slowly but steadily prepared for our biggest pillar of the project: the Conventions. We are thankful for the organisers who stuck with us for often more than a year, overcoming challenges over and over again.

Another tool that we managed to bring to the 21st century was the Voting Guide. It is surely possible to find out how you can vote, but we soon got to know that it is not always that easy - and that people need a low threshold to find this data.

Youth participation rates in the European Parliament elections of 2019 rose significantly. How much of that was our effort is, of course, debatable, but we are very happy and very proud to have played a role in this.

Without further ado, we want to show you an insight of what we have done in the past two years - and say thank you to all the people involved. Without you, this wouldn't have been possible.

Philipp Blum
Project Manager

The year of the European Parliament elections is always a special one for AEGEE-Europe. Topics such as youth participation and European citizenship are at the very core of our identity, and the European Parliament elections as the most important exercise of transnational democracy are an exciting moment. Moreover, the low turnout amongst young voters for the 2014 elections was a trend which we wanted to reverse: convinced that youth participation in politics is a crucial element of a democracy, we believed it was our role to raise awareness about the importance of voting in the upcoming elections. This was the mission of Y Vote 2019: inform young people, increase their civic competences and involve them in democratic processes at the local, national and especially European level.



This booklet presents the third edition of Y Vote, which already in 2009 and 2014 engaged many young people across the continent and motivated them to cast their vote. The 2019 edition was a crucial one: the environment in which we act is more and more challenging, with many threats to European democracy and integration coming from inside the Union itself. This created a sense of urgency and motivated many of our members to go the extra mile to make this edition of Y Vote even more successful and impactful. This year's Y Vote campaign was embedded in a bigger project on youth participation and empowerment, titled My Europe, My Say (MEMS), and run in cooperation with the World Association of the Scout Movement (WOSM). Contributing to this project allowed Y Vote to have a considerable external impact, a wider outreach and more resources to deliver high-quality activities. Moreover, the Y Vote project was not the only AEGEE-Europe initiative for the European Parliament elections: thanks to two grants of the European Parliament itself, AEGEE-Europe ran a number of activities to inform young people about the upcoming elections and to motivate them to participate under the umbrella of the Why European Parliament project.

As members of the Board of Directors of AEGEE-Europe, we are extremely proud of the great mobilisation of our volunteers for the European Parliament elections. Many of our members got engaged and organised countless local and international activities with the aim to bring young people closer to the European Union institutions and motivate them to participate. Especially, we are thankful and grateful to the Y Vote team: a group of talented and dedicated AEGEE members who invested 24 months to deliver the best project possible and worked with professionalism and commitment to make this edition of Y Vote one to be remembered.

Among all the numbers which we could mention to illustrate the achievements of Y Vote, we want to underline that the turnout among 18-24-year-old citizens was 42% this year, with an increase of 50% in comparison to 2014. Indeed, the higher turnout of these elections was mostly driven by youth. If AEGEE and Y Vote had even a very minor role in this historic achievement, we can confidently say that our aim was reached.

The elections are over, but not the commitment of AEGEE to involve young people in politics and to bring the voices of young people to the table of decision-makers. Our Agenda for Europe is an extremely precious document for us and will be at the core of our advocacy activities in the next few months. Moreover, the results harvested by Y Vote will be streamlined in the activities of AEGEE-Europe and will live much longer than the project itself.

It was an honour and a pleasure to be part of this adventure.

Viola Bianchetti

Projects Director, Comité Directeur 2018-2019

Y Vote in a nutshell

Y Vote is a Europe-wide campaign designed to encourage young citizens to make informed choices in the European Parliament elections. Y Vote aims at empowering and motivating young people to participate in society and to get involved in democratic processes. Actions are designed to tackle the low understanding of and information on EU institutions, mistrust and apathy towards the European project as well as the low voter turnout among young people. In our 2019 edition, we reached this again by providing opportunities to improve and develop the knowledge and skills of young people about the European Parliament elections and EU institutions. The project has previously been organised for the 2009 and 2014 European Parliament elections.

The following are the aims of Y Vote for the European Parliament elections 2019:

DEVELOP skills, knowledge, and motivation of young Europeans to vote in an informed way.

EMPOWER young people in Europe to take an active role in society.

INVOLVE young people in the political processes by discussing current youth issues and creating recommendations towards policy-makers.

About AEGEE

Founded in 1985, AEGEE (Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe), also known as the European Students' Forum, has grown to be one of the largest interdisciplinary student associations of the continent. It is the members of members strive 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 and acts as youths' representative towards decision-makers. Moreover, AEGEE strengthens mutual understanding and brings Europe closer to young people.

The four pillars of Y Vote

During the process of creating the new structure for the 2019 edition, we had the chance to analyse and improve the previous editions of the Y Vote project. We thus took a diverse approach in gathering input: collecting ideas and feedback from volunteers previously working on the project, assessing and analysing the available documents and data from the previous editions as well as taking into account the needs of the AEGEE network and the ones of young people in Europe. Our analysis resulted in four pillars that support the project.



The **Conventions** became our main thematic working platforms as they had been during previous editions of the project. By gathering groups of around 20 to 40 young Europeans, we were able to zoom in on the general tendencies of European youth towards the EU and the chosen topics. The working process during the Conventions led to the creation of a series of recommendations called Our Agenda for Europe. In this area, the Y Vote core team worked together with many different AEGEE locals and other organisations to enable events all over the continent.

Our **Voting Guide** is a logical step into the future of information flow. We believe that young people need the tools to inform themselves about the European Parliament elections and how to vote in their country. However, we recognised the lack of information on registration processes for the elections and decided to counteract this in the form of an app available to anyone wishing to know how to register to vote in their respective state or their country of residence.

Local Actions focused on creating participatory events that could include everyone. To counteract the fact that a lot of citizens would never find out that the European Parliament elections are happening, the Local Actions focused on raising awareness through workshops and fun activities. Bringing the topics closer to the citizens and reaching out to them in their city and local community was only made possible by the initiative of local action organisers.

The last pillar, the **Mayor's Manifesto**, can be best described by asking "Have You Met Your Mayor?". The pillar seeks to inspire youth to contact their local decision-makers to uphold European values in their communities. The objective is to create sustainable cooperation between youth organisations and their cities by co-organising a pro-European event and continuing to cooperate afterwards.

AEGEE and the European Parliament elections

The European Parliament plays a crucial role in EU citizens' everyday life. It was in 1979 when the citizens of the then nine member states (Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Ireland and the UK) elected their representatives for the first time. Since then, the European Parliament gained more and more influence in the political processes of the European Union.

Today, 751 representatives are elected by nearly half a billion people in currently 28 member states. Together with the Council of the European Union, the Members of the European Parliament are involved in setting the European policies and the budget of the European Union. Furthermore, the parliament decides about the appointment of the European Commission members. However, in spite of the increasing relevance of the decisions of the European Parliament, the participation rate in the European Parliament elections has decreased continuously since 1979. The lack of participation in the election of Members of the European Parliament poses a problem of legitimacy for such an important institution. AEGEE-Europe had to take an active position and contribute to informing young people and motivating them to participate in the European Parliament elections.

Like we did in the previous two editions, the Y Vote project was set up in order to coordinate all our actions related to the European Parliament elections. In many countries, the European Parliament elections are just seen as a thermometer for the next national elections. Therefore, the actual European problems are seldom discussed and the national media does not show any interest in focusing on them. The Y Vote project is designed to address and eliminate these challenges with every new edition a little bit further. We also know the reason why most people do not vote is that they are not aware of the relevance of the parliament they are called to vote for. This can only be changed by europeanising the public discourse. Therefore, we wanted to provide young citizens with clear explanations of the main functions of the different EU institutions and simple solutions on how they can vote and what the EU is doing for them.

The European Parliament elections campaign started for AEGEE-Europe way before anyone was thinking about the upcoming elections in 2019. In the summer of 2017, we, a group of young people from the AEGEE network were already thinking about how to create an impact, share our love for the elections and increase the 28% of previous youth voter turnout. It has therefore been our goal to start as early as possible and develop, empower and involve young people within and outside of the AEGEE network to vote. And luckily enough our efforts were worth it.

The voter turnout for the European Parliament elections in 2019 rose for the first time since its existence. We are proud to have contributed to this rise by joining the efforts of countless civil actors as well as politicians who chose to work for a United Europe. Because the European Parliament is a forum of discussion that also exists beyond the time of election. We hope that the next edition of the Y Vote project in 2024 will see an even higher voter turnout and contribute to the discussion on how to shape the European Union in the future.

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CONVENTIONS

Conventions

Since the very beginning of the project, the team had focused on creating eight thematic four-to-five days events spanning from November 2018 to April 2019. Each Convention, as we call them, was linked to a topic belonging to the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018: we aimed at identifying issues or topics that are close to the realities of young people in Europe as the feeling of ownership towards the results of each Convention was highly important for the advocacy work that is to be done from youth to youth. Since an established strategy as the one on youth is a concrete tool that creates opportunities on the European level for the eight topics we had Conventions on, we wanted to support the youth issues already mapped out by the European Union in the Strategy from 2010-2018 and to compliment them with concrete policy ideas created by a diverse group of young people from all around Europe.



November 2017	Selection of Convention locations
June - August 2019	Preparation meetings on site
November 2018	Convention on Employment and Entrepreneurship
December 2018	Convention on Creativity and Culture Convention on Education and Training
February 2019	Convention on Participation in Civil Society Convention on Social Inclusion
March 2019	Convention on Youth and the World Convention on Health and Well-Being
April 2019	Final Conference
May 2019	European Parliament Elections

The results of the Conventions are the participants' recommendations, 26 in total, that are summarised in "Our Agenda for Europe" which is also included in the booklet. The full details, results, speakers etc. of every Convention can be found in the corresponding Result Booklets on yvote.eu.

Employment and Entrepreneurship

Cluj-Napoca is by no means new to Y Vote - already in the 2014 edition, one of the Conventions (Pluralism in the Media) took part in this beautiful city in Romania. As it was the first activity in our effort to make youth-led proposals for a better Europe, we were eager to see how our target audience would experience the many months of preparation.

“ We are all European citizens, but often we don't know how the EU actually works. I wanted to learn more about it myself but also inform others. Motivating other young people to speak up is super important as we are the future of the EU!

Desireé van Langen, AEGEE-Amsterdam

The attendees had considerable experience in the field of employment and entrepreneurship, sharing their familiarity with Spanish youth employment problems and contributing to know-how in Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs. The small group size, combined with a very high level of enthusiasm, led to excellent ideas and gave everyone a chance to discuss their issues with Iuliu Winkler, Member of the European Parliament for more than ten years.

Enjoying the last warm sunny days, as well as the first snow of the year, the participants took to the streets to spread their message about the upcoming elections to the European Parliament and get a "thumb up to vote". All in all, we were very pleased with the way the content came together and we received a lot of input and suggestions for the upcoming events.



Member of the European Parliament Iuliu Winkler discussing the recommendations with the participants

Creativity and Culture

In Passau, participants of the Convention on Creativity and Culture discussed the importance of these fields for European citizens and for enhancing the European integration process. While creativity enriches our lives, culture builds the basis of society. Through cultural exchanges, citizens get to know each other better in Europe. As the Convention took place in 2018, the European Year of Cultural Heritage, a workshop was provided by the European Students Association for Cultural Heritage.

There, the participants discussed the significance of cultural heritage for individuals and the society and evaluated the connection between culture and the European Union, in particular for programs like Creative Europe, Erasmus+ and town twinning. Recommendations were drafted in three fields: work in the cultural sector, a European public sphere and accessibility of European cultural heritage. The panel discussion about whether we need a European public sphere organised together with the Young European Federalists gave an outlook to the future. The panellists suggested more exchange of citizens with different opinions, political engagement and peer-to-peer education about the EU to enhance a European public sphere.



Expressing creativity and taking a break from discussions at the joint art project wall in Passau

Education and Training

The Convention on Education and Training in Warsaw was a full learning experience, both for the participants and the organisers. Many different aspects of education were discovered: non-formal education by non-governmental organisations, the gaps in formal education systems between different nation-states, the various educational players and policies in the EU, lifelong learning for all and a lot of informal learning. The discussions on “The Future of Education” were full of spirit and vision.



Proper facilitation of discussions is key to a successful exchange

The inclusion of the many different aspects was made possible by the wonderful speakers who encouraged and questioned the participants, namely Małgorzata Szybalska from the National Ministry of Education and Alicja Pacewicz who is Co-Founder and Senior Advisor at the Center for Citizenship Education in Poland. Also, Marcin Świąćicki, member of the Polish Parliament and former mayor of Warsaw, came to give his opinion on the recommendations. Lastly, the inspiration received went into a creative activity in remembrance of the human rights day, directly engaging the participants in active citizenship right away.

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Y Vote emphasises the importance of the constant dialogue between youth and policymakers, offering a format for open exchange. It encourages young people to actually address their ideas and points of view. Furthermore, this project closes the gap between politicians and young Europeans. Though there are still too few formats like Y Vote, I already experienced the project as a milestone in non-formal political education. Our generation has to be aware of the importance that we can have in the political discussions of our times. What we need to do in order to use our potential is to politicise consequently by accepting our role as an active citizen, and to speak up loudly about our ideas and concerns. Let us get political.

Jonathan Lessing, AEGEE-Düsseldorf

Participation in Civil Society

Right in the heart of Düsseldorf, 40 young people from the EU, Eastern Partnership countries and beyond had five days to work on the issue of participation in civil society. In addition to a series of seminars to educate students in the areas of public speaking, activism, social media and project management, Prof. Dr. Emanuel Richter from RWTH Aachen University addressed the political aspects of civil society in Europe. This laid a strong theoretical foundation which was combined with sessions on the competences of the EU institutions.

The local partners of the Convention presented themselves and their ideas on participation in a forum. This included local and European-wide non-governmental organisations such as Democracy international, Interkultureller Dialog e.V. and JEF Helsinki and political parties as Young European Spirit and VOLT.

This forum has been used to encourage other organisations to share their views, from local cultural aspects and European-wide non-governmental organisations to real political parties: these partners shared not only what they did, but were open to all questions about the processes behind their initiatives and strategies.



EU Commissioner Tibor Navracsics at the Convention on Participation in Civil Society

This theoretical and practical expertise entitled the participants to develop project ideas. Through proposing these ideas and projects to EU Commissioner Tibor Navracsics, as well as to Members of the European Parliament Sabine Verheyen and Arndt Kohn, the participants received immediate high-level input on their vision for the future path of Europe.

Social Inclusion

Having a Convention in the country of e-voting was bound to happen. AEGEE-Tartu hosted us in Estonia to talk about e-democracy and social inclusion. We looked into the latter from two different angles: what issues connected to social inclusion concern the young people in Europe and what approaches or tools can be used to make voting more accessible. The training aimed at providing the participants with the needed knowledge on social inclusion through non-formal educational methods such as simulation games and group work.



In a Panel Discussion, the participants had plenty of time to ask their questions

Before the drafting of the policy recommendations on the topic started we hosted two panel discussions. The first one was focussing on the good example Estonia has set in the past decades in e-democracy enabling their citizens to vote in a way that fits them best, evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of this system. The panel consisted of Heiki Viisimaa from the Estonian National Youth Council, Kadri Haller-Kikkatalo from the Estonian Health Insurance Fund, Tanel Keres, CEO of e-kool, Märt Põder, an activist on free movement of information and Katrin Höövelson, the Deputy Head of the European Commission Representation in Estonia who came in on behalf of the EU Commissioner on Digital Economy and Society - Mariya Gabriel.

The second one was a panel discussion on Social Inclusion with the Member of the European Parliament from Latvia - Miroslav Mitrofanovs. As the panel happened after the first drafting round of the recommendations, a “reality-check” activity was implemented in which the Member of the European Parliament expressed his opinion on the feasibility and tangibility of the drafted proposal by the participants.

Youth and the World

As the topic Youth and the World is very broad, the organising team decided to focus the Convention on Human Rights. This topic gave participants the opportunity to receive all kinds of input and include many different contexts into the discussions. Starting with discussions about the human rights situation in Europe, the participants had the chance to exchange views with experts concerning migration issues, legal issues, LGBTQI+ rights and more. The participants were joined by speakers with different backgrounds, many serving at universities. But they also had the chance to, for example, to discuss with Amnesty International's Senior Political Affairs Officer Nicole Sprokel and Member of the European Parliament Kati Piri, who is an advocate for LGBT+ rights and strongly involved in the parliament's committee work on human rights in different parts of Europe. The Convention dates coincided with the International Women's Day which matched the panel discussion about gender and women's rights.



Drafting recommendations on paper

On the last day, AEGEE-Utrecht organised a big festival with lots of local participants where our Convention participants could present their recommendations and hosted a workshop to discuss them. The festival had a full program with music, panel discussions, workshops, theatre and more. It was a good opportunity for our foreign participants to mix with many of Utrecht's local residents and discuss European issues!

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Once every five years, we can have a direct influence on European politics. The policies they make will shape not only the present but also the future. Our future. Yet, so many intelligent and motivated young people do not take this chance. If we do not participate, the blame for a crappy future will lie completely on us. Therefore, I find it so important to motivate and inform my peers. To trigger them to not take peace and prosperity for granted. We worked together with different student groups and created a huge festival in two locations, with theatre, music, art and over 30 speakers. 400 young (and some older) people joined. There were vivid discussions about the future of Europe, inspiring stories and hilarious moments. We created a place where every opinion was heard. Because we live in a free Europe and we should enjoy every moment of it while fighting for a similar or better tomorrow.

Lisette Mijnen, AEGEE-Utrecht

Health and Well-Being

For the Convention on Health and Well-Being which took place in Sofia, we were able to select participants from diverse academic fields related to the topic, amongst them medical students and health assistants as well as students of Psychology and Biotechnology. The ambition was to learn and discuss what the current political dimension of Health and Well-Being in the European Union is and to talk about the specific impact of related issues, such as mental health on individuals and society as a whole. Hereby, we aimed to give participants ideas and guidelines on potential ways to decrease levels of stress.



The Conventions came alive through the participants thorough engagement with the topics

It became evident that nearly all people present during the discussions concluded that the field of mental health is not treated in a suitable manner in their communities as they often lack funding and structures to provide the necessary assistance. While sharing experiences from different countries, we concluded that the stigmatisation of mental health problems is a societal problem that has a negative impact on the way we treat the issue. In order to set a good example and to give ideas on how to include a healthy routine into our daily lives, morning sports and yoga sessions were offered to the participants.

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After three years in this association, I felt that organising a conference on one of AEGEE's most important thematic projects would have been a nice end to my career; in the end, it gave me more motivation to keep working.

One of the most important consequences of the final conference taking place in our city is our renewed relationship with the Torino City Government, which has been a key partner in the logistical establishment of the conference; we have shown that we are a reliable organisation with the power to advocate for significant change and, after the event, they were looking forward to reading Our Agenda for Europe.

In my view, a good relationship with city governments is something that any AEGEE antenna should reach for: it's not that difficult to do, and it's a strategic stage where we can be players and influence policy-making through our activism.

Marco Melatti, AEGEE-Torino

Final conference

The final conference taking place in Torino was twofold of events, unlike the previous thematic Conventions. At the same time, around 30 young European citizens and the project partners of Y Vote met to learn, create and discuss. This format led to inspiration and close exchange between all people involved.

The young citizens were the ones to draft the final recommendations and were prepared for that in several workshops. The knowledge of active citizenship was used and put into practice right away by carrying out street actions. Through this, participants could already feel the impact they can have on other people around them and therefore sense the spirit of being multipliers.



An informal meeting with Member of the European Parliament Brando Benifei

Additionally, the young Europeans came in close contact with our partner organisations to gain insights into their processes, understand the structure and environment Y Vote is part of and therefore the combined outreach of campaigns, how policy processes work and what opportunities non-governmental organisations and institutions offer. Therefore, time was allocated for exchange with our partners represented by the European Parliament, POLIS180, the European Youth Forum, European Movement Italy and AEGEE-Europe. At the projects' fair, the organisations presented themselves and the world café enabled a closer exchange between the participants and the partner representatives. Additionally, our patron Brando Benifei joined for a discussion on the recommendations, their implementation and shared personal insights of a Member of the European Parliament. During the whole conference, informal exchange was present and personal relations were made between the different participant's groups which helped to understand their similarities and needs.

Next to the exchange with the young Europeans, the partner representatives met for their own sessions to exchange more in-depth about our organisations, projects, the best practices and possible future cooperation. This offered a more sustainable project management, harvesting results efficiently and getting to know each other better. The discussions and outcomes were very insightful and fruitful and led to closer and personal ties between the present partners.

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Develop. Empower.

OUR AGENDA FOR EUROPE

Our Agenda for Europe

During the Conventions, the first iteration of the recommendations focusing on the different EU Youth Strategy issues was drafted. This resulted in more than 50 recommendations which were the starting point for the work of the Final Conference on the creation of the final version: Our Agenda for Europe. The tasks for the participants were to provide feedback on the existing recommendations, possibly rearrange them between eight different themes, adapt the wording to be more inclusive and prioritise three to four recommendations for each matter. In groups, the participants worked on including feedback and rewriting the recommendations for final versions. A final vote has been taken to ensure that everyone agrees on the results. Some actions have already been taken by both the European Union and the member states however when they did these actions went rather unnoticed and untouched. Therefore we suggest the following to European Union decision-makers:

Employment and Entrepreneurship

1. We strongly encourage the EU to increase the visibility and accessibility of EU programmes and application processes by implementing a common platform.
2. We strongly encourage the EU to launch and establish a programme and to provide it with economic support so that entrepreneurs might be provided with strategic, legal and financial advice from the experts.
3. We strongly encourage the EU to provide language and soft skill certificates for the youth participating in EU programmes in order to improve transnational recognition of their skills.
4. We strongly encourage the EU to ban unpaid non-compulsory internship, to make them accessible for all young people, regardless of their social, economic and educational background.

Creativity and Culture

1. We suggest that the EU support the cooperation between media entities of different European countries in order to foster cultural diversity and transnational cooperation.
2. We strongly encourage the EU to create a platform to connect emerging and established professionals within the cultural industry, in order to provide mentoring and create common projects.
3. We strongly encourage the EU to educate its citizens on cultural diversity implemented in formal and non-formal education.

Education and Training

1. We strongly encourage the European Union to increase funding for projects aimed at increasing media literacy and to support educational institutions, civil society organisations and other relevant parties to take part in educational projects on this issue.
2. We strongly recommend increasing funding and promotion of relevant programmes that enable pupils of all age groups, educational and economic backgrounds as well as teachers to participate in short and long term exchanges between schools, of members and partner countries of the EU.
3. We strongly encourage the European Union to enable training opportunities for teachers on emotional intelligence and soft skills, in order to pass down these competencies to the pupils.
4. We suggest that the European Union promotes the conversion of Conventional education resources into interactive digital tools, and raise awareness about existing educational materials, on civic education and the other key competencies, for formal and non-formal education.

Youth and the World

1. We recommend the EU to create a standardized recognition process to improve the well-being of asylum seekers and refugees in the European Union.
2. We recommend the EU to further support humanitarian aid projects in non-EU countries by increasing funding of locally organised initiatives and fostering volunteering practices.
3. We recommend the EU to increase funds for certification schemes ensuring adequate working conditions regarding the production of imported goods.
4. We recommend the EU to improve the effectiveness in which the rule of law is protected and implemented inside the EU borders.

Social Inclusion

1. We encourage the EU to implement funded programs between non-governmental organisations and schools to promote education on gender equality and raise awareness.
2. We recommend the EU to expand the projects that encourage voluntary work for school students, providing them with the necessary tools and supervisors in order to promote active citizenship.
3. We strongly encourage the EU to improve access to public institutions for everyone according to the European Convention of Human Rights.
4. We encourage the EU to establish a common electoral system for European Parliament elections based on a proportional vote or directly elected candidates, in order to promote democracy and representation.

Participation in Civil Society

1. We recommend that the European Union inform citizens about the importance of independent media, avoiding hate speech and recognising fake news by providing non-formal education and awareness-raising campaigns.
2. We encourage the EU to coordinate and fund a platform that provides space for discussion among diverse social groups, promoting European values and strengthening social cohesion.
3. We recommend that the EU support non-governmental organisations and EU institutions to share best practices, create exchanges and projects that set a positive standard, with non-EU countries that play a major role in environmental issues.



Choosing recommendations at the Final Conference

Health and Well-Being

1. We strongly encourage the EU to support the related stakeholders on the topic of mental health as a part of both formal and non-formal education through monetary and consultative means.
2. We strongly encourage the EU to advocate for the integration of mental health support in every national health system.
3. We strongly encourage the EU to support projects concerning sexual health education, consent, gender equality, LGBTQI+ and patient rights; to provide contraception and anonymous STD-testing, and offer platforms for victims of violence and harassment.
4. We strongly encourage the EU to promote greener infrastructure and to increase the accessibility and availability of public spaces, sports facilities and transportation.

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VOTING GUIDE

Voting Guide

Voting should be easy, right? For the European Parliament elections, every member state is partially free to choose their own voting system. This can make it really hard to find out how to vote, especially if a person is not living in a country where they have citizenship. We believe that young people need the tools to inform themselves about the European Parliament elections and how to vote in their country. For this, we developed the app “How to Vote” which provides information on how to vote in different countries by answering two questions.



EU Commissioner Margrethe Vestager trying out the How to Vote application

Our reasons to get active

European integration has brought along various advantages for the citizens of the member states. Studying, working or simply living in different countries of the European Union has never been as convenient. While these achievements provide unique opportunities and play a crucial role in the formation of a European identity, they also create the necessity for common standards and regulations.

When it comes to the European Parliament elections, member states have not agreed on universal regulations so far. On the contrary, there are differences on the question of voting age, election dates, compulsory voting, the electoral threshold, the possibility to vote from abroad and the registration process.

These differences raise normative questions. Why are voters with an Estonian citizenship able to vote from anywhere around the planet through the national e-voting system while citizens of the Czech Republic, Ireland, Malta and Slovakia can only vote in their home countries? Is it legitimate if experiencing the freedoms of the Schengen Area blocks you from participating in the European Parliament elections?

But also besides these theoretical concerns, there are issues on a more practical level that raised our concerns. Various members of our organisation reported difficulties when they wanted to cast their vote in the elections in 2014. During our assessment, we found early registration deadlines, ineffective infrastructure (mainly postal transfer across borders), and the complexity of voting regulations as being the most problematic issues that blocked people from participating in the past elections. In order to tackle at least one of these issues, we decided to create a Voting Guide which would allow individual users to have access to all the necessary information on how to vote with just one click.

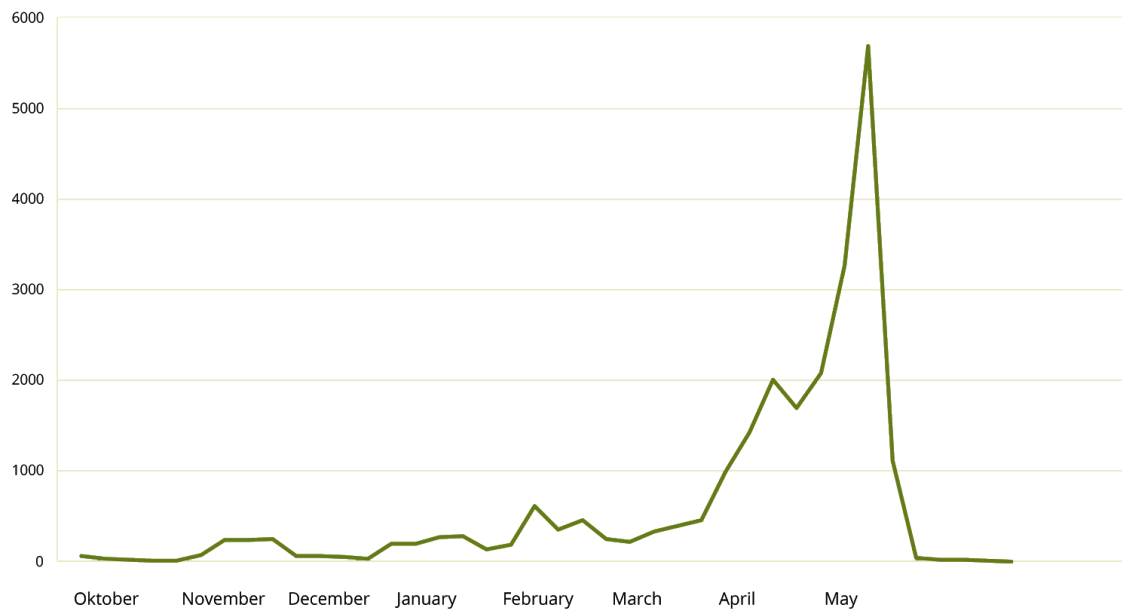
What we did

The Y Vote team decided that the most practical guide needs to be web-based, as the amount of necessary information might again lead to an overload of information in print-format. We, therefore, chose a digital system to implement our idea. In order to reach as many potential users, the application "[How to Vote](#)" was created for the web and for both Android and iOS systems.



Findings and conclusion

Until the elections, in May the web version of our application reached over **23.300 people**, with a peak of **1.427 users on a single day (20th May)**. The immense amount of work that has been dedicated to the creation of our informational platform has paid off. This assessment even has to be underlined by the fact that after our platform was launched, other websites were created with the same intention, most prominently the webpage of the European Parliament elections, which created a similar informational tool on how to vote. Nevertheless, our *How to Vote* app still holds the leverage of being more user-friendly towards young voters, being simple to use and easy to download. While we are glad that we were able to inform such an amount of voters about the election process, it also points towards problems in the current system.



Usage of howtovote.eu over time

Most of the member states have their registration deadlines for people that need to vote from abroad - if they offer it at all - months ahead of the elections. As the statistics on the usage of our application indicate, a vast majority of people does not plan that far in advance and might, therefore, once they learn about the registration process, still not be able to cast their vote as the deadlines have passed.

Another indicator is the fact that most referrals to the webpage were from Google. One could interpret that people do not know how the voting process works and therefore look for further information on the internet. As a long term goal, elections and education about them should be improved so that there is no need to search for information online.

Three Takeaways

Through our work on the topic, the Y Vote team would like to advocate for its ideas and demands with decision-makers. In order to facilitate voting procedures and therefore engage people in the democratic process the following steps should be taken:

1. Reduce the complexity of voting regulations!

While conducting our research, we found such a broad variety of differences that it was difficult explaining all of them in our application without creating an information overload. While some differences of the voting regulations, such as the specific date of the election, are based on national habits and should therefore not be adjusted, there also exist other rules that could be simplified to reduce national differences. While we are aware of the fact that voting regulations are subject to subsidiarity, we believe that it has to be in the common interest of all democratic governments to increase the accessibility towards elections.

2. Reduce the time between the registration deadlines and the date of the elections!

We are aware of the fact that bureaucratic processes take their time and that formal registration of voters is no different in that regard. However, as we have shown in the graphic above, we have learned that a vast majority of voters did not actively engage with the European Parliament elections until shortly before they took place. Under specific conditions, eligible voters need to proactively register in order to be able to cast their vote. This is especially relevant for European Union citizens living in a country other than the one they have the nationality of, for example for students using the Erasmus program or for people that have changed their country of residence for work purposes. In order to be able to cast their vote, citizens need to be added to the electoral roll of the country they decide to vote in.

For the 2019 elections, the different EU member states applied deviating provisions on the deadlines for registering on their electoral roll, ranging from the end of February in some countries to a few days prior to the elections at the end of May. If we connect these differences with the empirical evidence that we gained from our data - which showed an immense increase of usage only about a week before the elections - we believe that early registration deadlines are an unbreachable obstacle for all those people that do not engage with the elections far ahead of the actual date.



Using the web-app

3. Increase the accessibility of the election for people living in countries other than their nationality!

Besides the differences in the registration deadlines, also the formal regulations on how voting is offered has an immense impact on the accessibility of the European Parliament elections. As we have stated above, the numerous opportunities of the Schengen area have to be met with provisions in other fields of our daily lives in order to not create disadvantages for people leaving their country of nationality to live, study or work. While Directive 93/109/EC aims to guarantee the principle of equality and allows EU citizens to vote either in their home country or, if applicable, in their country of residence, member states influence the degree of freedom by choosing which forms of voting they provide to the electorate.



*Citizens of the Czech Republic, Ireland, Malta and Slovakia
can not cast their vote abroad.*

The most accessible system is the Estonian, which allows its citizens to vote online. Estonians thereby can freely move between places without having to worry about how to cast their vote. While the Estonian system is a positive but isolated case, most other member states of the European Union also provide opportunities for their nationals to vote from abroad. Some countries allow voting by post, others allow their citizens to vote in embassies and consulates. However, there are also member states which do not offer any of those options. The Czech Republic, Ireland, Malta and Slovakia do only allow voting on their national territory. This fact will inevitably lead to European citizens being unable to vote for politicians of their home countries. In the case of Romania, legal provisions were made allowing their citizens to vote from abroad. On the day of the elections, however, the infrastructure was insufficient, leading to reports from several European cities where Romanians were not able to cast their vote. These developments are very questionable from a normative point of view, as European citizens are not treated equally and do not enjoy the same accessibility to the European Parliament elections. We demand all member states to adopt provisions that allow for convenient participation in the European Parliament elections, also for their citizens living abroad.

Y

LOCAL
ACTIONS

Local Actions

To complement the Conventions we desired more activities to take place in different areas around Europe. For this purpose, we invited both AEGEE members and previous Convention attendees to coordinate events in their home countries. A newly created toolkit made things easier for organisers as it included lots of ideas and guidance for all sorts of events. The toolkit will remain online for potential use and can be accessed at yvote.eu. We've been seeking to provide ideas for different kinds of events to empower youth participation in different forms - from very straightforward gatherings with just a few participants to specialised events where speakers are hosted and more. Additionally, we offered toolkits to organise a conference, have a debate, do a street activity or come up with something completely different.

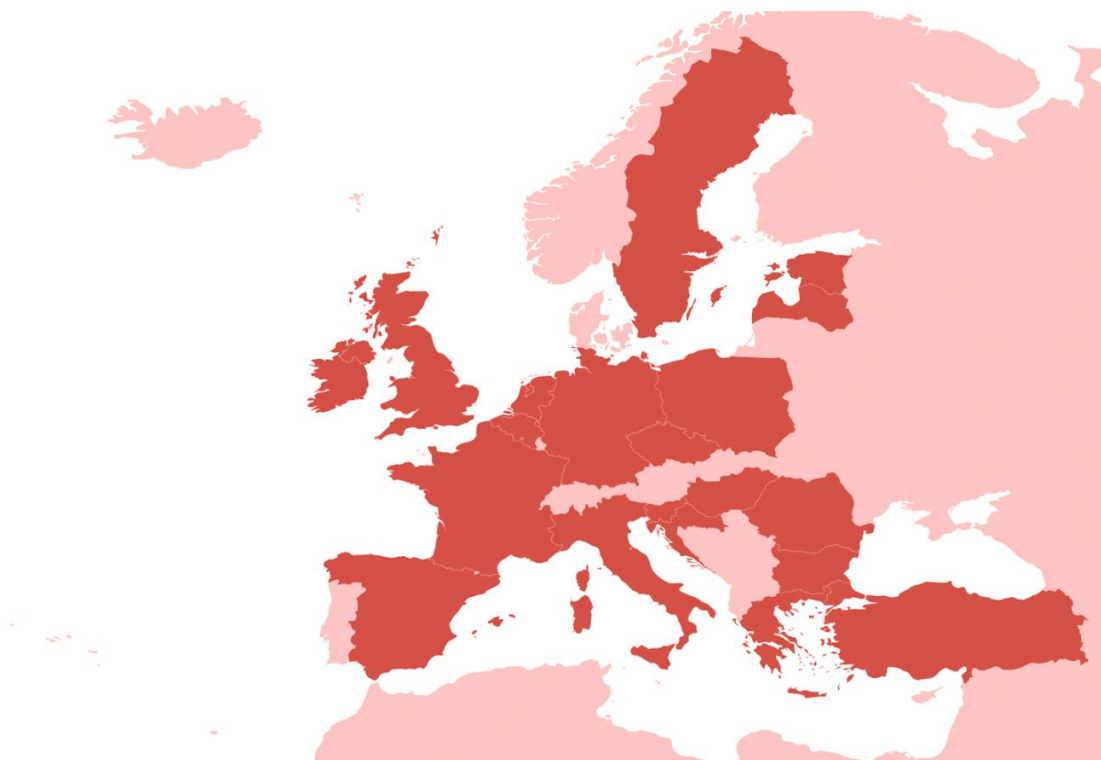
The ideas were very diverse, but all of them contributed to our main aim: on the one hand motivate people for the elections and on the other hand, inform them about the EU institutions and engage them in discussions about European topics. We find the last aspect especially important since it enables people to make informed choices at the elections.

3600

People reached offline

1000

People watched live streams



Y Vote activities happened in 20 countries

The various actions that have been orchestrated have involved a wide range of different audiences and covered a broad spectrum of topics. We conducted panel discussions, simulations of the European Parliament and seminars on the functioning of the EU. Yet, regional planners have also come up with many innovative actions themselves. Here are some of the best ideas:

- Bike tour on election day to pick people up and go to the voting booth together
- Election party on election day to enjoy European foods, to watch the announcement of the results and discuss their implications together
- Future lab about problems students see in the EU and how to solve them
- Selling waffles and talking about the elections with customers
- Debate with local Member of the European Parliament candidates and streaming it online
- Q&A sessions for first time voters
- Informative facebook posts about the elections by AEGEE pages
- Posters in university to remind students to vote



A panel discussion taking place at a University

Elections: 23-26 May 2019

ELECTION PROPHET

THEY ARE COMING...

Voting is a basic citizen right - and very important one! Elections are usual events in the different member states every year. Looking at the calendar, it's easy to identify that elections are a frequent events: They reach from local to regional, parliamentary to presidential ones, referendums and of course the European parliament elections which happen every five years.

For citizens, it is of importance who rules, and therefore who holds the power in the EU. Getting votes in past elections is talking about the future as well. So, a party having been elected in your country usually has a high chance being elected into the European parliament this May. Because anti-European movements are part of many national parliaments, the reflection of them in the European parliament is not what we want to see.

And now the big questions is: how many death eaters of the European idea - the integration, values and identity - will manage to get elected after May 2019? Do Nigel Farage and Marine le Pen have their followers uprising or multiplying in Europe? And how we can stop them?

One way out is to motivate the part of the society that feels European the most and enjoys the perks of the European union, the open borders and studying anywhere in Europe. Oh, wait, that's us - the young people in Europe! So let's change the current path together and come to the voting booths!

HOW DO YOU CAST YOUR SPELL?

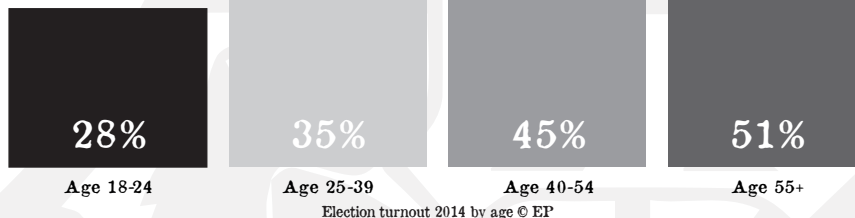
Many citizens have different options when it comes to voting. The most classical one is of course going to the nearest voting booth and making your cross. Citizens in Estonia don't have to use pens anymore - so far the only EU country with online-voting! So while lying on the couch at home, making a potion or while traveling in Italy they can cast their votes. The other EU citizens are not as flexible, but many can send their vote by owl. When holding the citizenship of two EU-countries, there were even cases when citizens voted twice, so in both countries. But this is not fair and should be prevented. Elections should be free and secret, there is a universal suffrage for everyone. It is up to the voters to decide on their preferred way from the ones offered in their country. Although voting is usually voluntary, five countries have made it compulsory to go to the voting booth.

IS THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT A RETIREMENT HOME?

Overall, the average MEP is 54 years old. Poland and Luxembourg send the oldest MEPs with 59 on average. The youngest representatives are from Bulgaria, with an average age of 45. In comparison, the median age of the whole EU population is 42.6 years. The youngest member in the current EP is 28 years old, whereas the oldest has an age of 90 years. The youngest MEP ever was Ilka Schröder, who joined the EP in 1999 with only 21.5 years. Joining the EP is also connected with the passive vote regulations which tell who can run for an election. In Italy, Greece and Romania Ilka Schröder would not have been allowed to run as the minimum age for candidates is higher. In the other member states, it is either 18 or 21. Are you ready to put your name in the Goblet of Fire? Or should we only allow older candidates?



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



JOIN DUMBLEDORE'S ARMY

The European elections in May will decide how the EU will develop over the next five years. Do we want the member states to continue backing off from the European project or do we want them to work together to face global challenges as one entity? The EU parliamentary elections are the only way in which the wizards and witches of Europe can have a direct influence on EU politics, which is why it is so important to not let this opportunity slide by. The Brexit referendum has shown, that those who - like us - believe in open borders, common market and joined foreign policy need to get up and vote! In the last European elections, only 28% percent of young people voted, and that is not enough. We do have a voice if we all speak up - a chance we only get once every five years! Let's join the club of people who make their voice hear, let's join Dumbledore's Army!



AEGEE is one of Europe's biggest interdisciplinary student organisations, striving for a democratic, diverse and borderless Europe. As a non-governmental, politically independent, and non-profit organisation AEGEE is open to students and young people from all faculties and disciplines. Founded in 1985 in Paris, today AEGEE has grown to a Network of 13 000 AEGEEans, present in 161 cities in 40 countries all over Europe. Through our activities, we empower students and young people in Europe to take an active role in society. We create a space for dialogue and learning opportunities as well as act as their representative towards decision-makers. AEGEE strengthens mutual understanding among young Europeans and brings Europe closer to young people.

Made with ♥ by Y Vote.
www.electionprophet.eu

FIND OUT HOW TO VOTE

Voting should be easy, right? For the European Parliament elections, every member state is partially free to choose their own voting system. This can make it really hard to find out how to vote, especially if a person is not living in the country where they have citizenship. We believe that young people need the tools to inform themselves about the European elections and how to vote in their country. For this, we have developed an app which provides information on how to vote in different countries: howtovote.eu.

THE HEADS OF THE

Who is the president of the EU? You don't have a clue? Don't worry, that's because there isn't one! However, the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Commission and the Council of the European Union all have their own presidents. Let's get an overview! The European Parliament is elected by EU citizens in May for five years, and elects its president every 2.5 years - currently Antonio Tajani.

The president of the European Commission is proposed by the European Council, but the Parliament holds a certain power in the decision: If everything goes well, the position is filled by the "Spitzenkandidat" of the European party that got the most votes in the EP elections for the entire 5 years of the Commissions term. Currently, that is Jean-Claude Juncker from the European People's Party. He supervises the 27 commissioners.

The European Council, consisting of the heads of states, is lead by their president. They get to appoint this position every 2.5 years. The post is currently filled by Donald Tusk.

The Council of the European Union comes together in different thematic rounds - all the ministers concerned with the same policy area come together to discuss.

The president of this institution is not a person, but a country! Every six months, another member state has the presidency and is responsible for inviting to meetings and such. This role is currently taken on by Romania, and will be followed up by Finland when the sixth month dies.

THE NEXT MINISTER OF MAGIC?

If magic exists, the main engine behind it is the institution that can propose legislation in the EU: the European Commission. It is often said that it is too boring or too bureaucratic but safeguarding the treaties has always been a tough job. And to make sure that the 27 autors (commissions) fighting for different issues within and outside of the EU do their job in the best possible way, there is the minister of magic (president of the commission) to hold them together. To accomplish that task, the president creates its own prophecy of "How the EU should work".

In 2009, the new revised Fundamental Laws of Magic ("Treaty of Lisbon") established a new rule for all European parties in the European parliament. They can choose a person or a team to be their "Chosen one" for being the President of the European Commission if their party wins the Parliament Elections. This "Chosen one" is then called Spitzenkandidat, which comes from German politics and it means a lead candidate. The process has been created to make the European Commission close to the people. Has this goal been reached? Are the people feeling more motivated to vote when they see a concrete candidate for being the next president of the European Commission? Or is there still the gap of the EU citizens not feeling close enough to the European Union politics?

Y Vote is a European wide campaign designed to encourage young people in making choices at the elections. We believe receive better information regarding the European institutions and the general to become active citizens. Therefore we organize conventions and local actions for AEGEEans and young citizens and develop a voting guide to help you find out how to vote in your country.

DEVELOP
EMPOWER
INVOLVE

making use of their first chance to vote. about the elections in class could lead to more young people vote combined with good wizard education and discussions later stage. When 16 and still in Hogwarts, the chance to stay a voter all his life. If people don't vote at the first time lowering the voting age is that a first-time voter is likely to order to strengthen no democracy. One main argument for "Youth must be taken seriously and offered real influence in the development of nowadays children is more rapid unless the development of an earlier age is unlikely and duties such as using magic in everyday life and not only includes coming of age. No, say some, important decisions? let youngsters take 16 years old. Is it citizens to vote when Austria stands out, elections is 18. Member for the European countries.

16?

VOTING AT





MAYOR'S MANIFESTO

Mayor's Manifesto

The fourth pillar of the Y Vote project was created to bring the European idea to the local level. Signing the Mayor's Manifesto was meant to motivate youth organisations to strengthen their relationship with local city administrations. Through this, local AEGEE groups would get the chance to advocate their ideas and possibly profit further from the established contact in future collaborations. Local non-governmental organisations are always in need of strong partnerships with local partners which is what we wanted to contribute to.

What the Mayor's Manifesto is and how is it used

The manifesto was created by the project team taking the youth goal areas as its structure. This makes it more tangible for the city administration to work with and to fulfil the new youth goals. For the manifesto, we came up with 15 possible example activities a city could implement to bring Europe closer to their citizens. Additionally, a toolkit with explanations and tips was created for the youth organisations using it. As we identified the issue of a lack of knowledge on policy and advocacy, we developed a workshop to train people in this field. AEGEE as an organisation has put emphasis on the field of advocacy, so this workshop is a perfect tool to further contribute to these efforts. It introduces participants to policy and advocacy in general and challenges them to put this knowledge into practice via a case study. It helped them to develop a strategy to communicate with officials, participants said.

In practice, youth organisation should get in contact with local authorities and agree on at least two out of the 15 activities to make the manifesto count. To choose these two activities, local representatives of youth organisations and the city administration are meant to discuss in a meeting which activities are most needed in the city and which ones are most realistic to carry out in their community. With the signature of a local authority, the manifesto becomes a pledge to work on the activities in the upcoming year, giving the youth a say in the development of their local community and a tool to hold authorities accountable.

How the manifesto can be used in the future

The enthusiasm for this pillar was followed by a lack of implementation when it came to AEGEE members actually having their municipality sign the manifesto. For us, this shows that much more has to be done to strengthen the voice of youth in local communities. Increasing the number of workshops to ease participants into representation work seems to be the way to go. AEGEE-Europe is constantly trying to empower young people to advocate more effectively and the toolkit we created can be used by future projects to achieve this goal. Thus, we see huge potential in this pillar of the project and plans to continue the work on this are already being made.

The basic idea of the Mayor's Manifesto is how we envision Our Agenda for Europe can be used further by youth organisations. Now, these recommendations need to be put into practice as a tool to advocate for a stronger involvement of the youth in the formation of Europe by addressing concerns at a European as well as a local level.



yvote

Develop. Empower. Involve.



STATS & FACTS

Social Media

During our whole process, Social Media and online communication was a crucial part of our work. Sharing results and asking for input helped us with our goal to reach 200.000 people via the internet, but also made it possible to stay in touch with young Europeans from all over the continent and see their development.

To successfully reach our target group - young European first-time voters (18-24 years) - on social media, we focused on Facebook and Instagram. On Facebook, 43% of our followers were in that exact age group, while 87% were young Europeans under 35. On Instagram, we could reach even more first-time voters, 43% of our followers were 18 to 24 years old, while 92% were 18 to 34 years old. On both platforms, our followers were 60% female and 40% male, and we were able to reach people from all EU member states.

On Facebook, open calls for our Conventions and reports about these were the posts with the biggest reach, which led to well-attended events and even more people profiting from their outcomes. Interactive posts, such as polls asking to agree to statements about the EU, had a big reach and engagement effect on our followers. In the months before the European election, also posts about our Voting Guide reached a big audience. On Instagram, a picture-based platform, posts with highly visualised content performed best, so we could inform people about the European elections and reasons to vote.

In our highly successful weekly column #EUNews, we informed about news from the European Parliament, a detailed overview of the political events in Brussels and Europe. Over 48 weeks we reached on average almost 1000 people per column, on Facebook and on our [homepage](#).

Reflecting on the impact our social media activities had, we can see that young people are actively interested in news about the European Union and were just in need of a way to get these in an easy to understand and - sometimes - with a funny way. The European youth wants to be engaged in discussions and debate about the future of Europe - especially if the content is prepared in a youth-friendly way and accompanied by eye-catching visuals and interactive tools. Youth-led campaigns and projects can play a strong role in reaching out. We are hoping to see more and more in the future.

Why European Parliament Workshops

The "Why European Parliament" project worked closely with Y Vote from the first half of 2018 on - more than a year before the elections - to start implementing our knowledge-based approach in making young Europeans educated voters. For this purpose, workshops have been set up and given to more than 1,000 citizens in 15 countries.

The scope of this project with practising workshop methodologies so early, and with spreading awareness and knowledge so far in advance, was a huge boosting factor for our later work. It gave us the confidence needed to start our Convention season without any doubts. The full results are available on yvote.eu.

Objectives

Aim 1: Develop skills, knowledge and motivation of young Europeans to vote in an informed way

Inform 2.000 people on the functioning of European Institutions



Inform 50.000 people on how to vote



Share top 10 reasons for young people to vote and not to vote



Aim 2: Empower young people in Europe to take an active role in society


Reach 200.000 people on social media through the project



Get 100 local institutions to support a Pro-European Manifesto




Organise Local Actions in 20 European Countries




Aim 3: Involve young people in the political processes by discussing current youth issues and creating recommendations towards Policy Makers

Organise 8 thematic Conventions on the topics of the current EU Youth Strategy



Draft 24 recommendations within the process of the Structured Dialogue



Foster discussion of 2.000 young people with policymakers



Financial Sustainability

“My Europe, My Say!”, “Why European Parliament” and more

As voluntary work can be a non-exhaustive superpower having the financial resources to support your project and the activities in it is a vital part of the success and the impact of it. Therefore, we would like to thank the European Union for all funding schemes aimed at youth-led projects and mostly for creating extra opportunities especially for the European Parliament Elections in 2019.

In the case of our project, we have had the support of several funding opportunities. The first one was a grant by the European Parliament that helped us develop content on how the EU works and strengthen our social media outreach between March and August 2018. The **“Why European Parliament”** project helped us a lot in the beginning of our campaign for the creation of content as well as to start financially stable long before others established their plans for the European Parliament elections in 2019.

From October 2018 on until its end Y Vote was a core part of the **“My Europe, My Say!”** project which is a partnership project between the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and AEGEE-Europe granted thanks to the newly established call of the European Commission “European Youth Together”. We managed to cover five of our Conventions with the financial help of this grant as well as the development of the voting app and several dissemination events to promote our campaign and tools.

Two Conventions, namely the one in Düsseldorf and the one in Utrecht, were granted with financial support in the Key Action 3 by the National Agencies of Erasmus+ in their respective countries. Additionally, Utrecht received several local grants in the Netherlands for a better implementation of their event and for organising a youth festival during their Convention.

It is worth mentioning that AEGEE-Tartu also received an additional grant from their government in Estonia for the Convention on Social Inclusion with which we managed to have an event that is economically inclusive to the participants. AEGEE-Passau got financial support from their university for the Convention on Creativity and Culture.

Money cannot buy happiness, but it can help you implement your project and ideas in the best possible way and create more opportunities and space for young people from different economic backgrounds to participate. Grant schemes and philanthropy enable motivated volunteers to establish great projects everywhere and are a valuable asset to civic engagement.

Cooperation with Partners

We would like to thank all our partners, the organisations and individuals we cooperated with during this project to achieve the impact we had.

- The **European Youth Forum** for inviting us to the YO!Fest in Brussels, promoting our content and giving us a place to exchange with other organisations and their board members.
- The **Erasmus Student Network** for spreading the word in their big international student network about our Voting Guide App as it was exactly created for an audience of young and mobile Europeans.
- The **Young European Federalists** for inviting us to events of their different sections to train their members and to present our project, creating common promotion material for the Voting App and our events and cooperating in the communication with the Members of the European Parliament.
- The European Civic Forum for offering the frame of the **Make Europe Great for All campaign** to label our events and its outcomes, for promoting our events and giving visibility and for finding like-minded people in different parts of Europe.
- The german grassroots think tank **Polis180** for helping each other to promote the various online contents we had created, sharing our offline activities such as Local Actions with each other and joining our events like the Final Conference.
- The **European Movement International** for including us in their events calendar, promoting the events through their channels, inviting us to the Dem!Fest in Texel and letting us join their initiative "on our watch".
- The European Parliament campaign '**This time I'm voting**' by offering a framework to reach many people before the elections, creating a partnership with AEGEE-Europe, giving access to a big community of organisations and spreading the Voting App through the partners' newsletter.
- **EDUopinions** for offering us a partnership and financial contributions to our campaign.
- **Eyes on Europe** for publishing articles about our project and especially the Voting Guide in their online magazine and for cooperating to make Facebook live interviews with some of our patrons in the European Parliament studio to bring politicians closer to young people.
- The **European Parliament** and the **European Parliament Liaison Offices** in all European members states for supporting us in the data collection for the Voting Guide (especially the German Liaison Office) and giving us the opportunity to present our project at different occasions.
- The **World Organisation of the Scout Movement** for establishing the partnership with AEGEE in the "My Europe, My Say!" project and giving us the possibility to access grants, resources and a network of partners.
- **The EU40** platform of young Members of the European Parliament for helping us to find patrons among the Members of the Parliament and to circulate our results among them especially to convince the younger politicians to support the youth.
- **The GaragErasmus** project for creating a handout for people to find out about the voting process.

The team



From left to right: Florian Wagner, Elitsa Hadzhieva, Katharina Krüll, Leonie Riebesam, Dorothea Harles, Anna Süß, Philipp Blum and Leonardo Manganelli.

The whole project, from finding interested people until closing the last event - every smiling and enthusiastic face I encountered was worth it. I am happy we could play our part in increasing youth participation in such an important election.

Philipp Blum, Project Manager

Y Vote showed me that I can combine my passion for youth activism and voting and transmit it to other people. It was a great pleasure sharing my love for the European Union with peers for two years and empower them to be active and vote.

Elitsa Hadzhieva, Financial & Fundraising Manager

We could witness many young people taking part in our events and becoming excited about European issues and youth activism. It was a pleasure to pass on this motivation to people just as the Y Vote 2014 edition did for me. Who knows, maybe some of our participants will be the organisers of Y Vote 2024?

Leonie Riebesam, Local Actions Manager

Since civic education and engagement is one of my favourite topics it was clear for me to join the project. Y Vote offered not only an opportunity of education but the place for young people to raise and make their voices heard in politics. I consider this empowerment of young people highly important to continue in the future.

Dorothea Harles, External Relations Manager

This project restored my faith in humanity! Well, jokes aside, I was glad to see that there still is a will to discuss and share opinions on different topics no matter the ideological differences. Not only but the project allowed me to witness the creation of what I believe is the next batch of active young Europeans who'll work for a positive change in our societies.

Leonardo Manganelli, Content Manager

Y Vote gave me the space to discover my team value, working on the project gave me insight on where Youth must contribute in policymaking and I now have even more energy to deliver on what I and many others stand for.

Katharina Krüll, Administrative Manager

Combining my growing interest in European politics and youth activism with my knowledge about social media and communication was my motivation to join Y Vote. What I got was much more: growing with my tasks, meeting enthusiastic young people, and motivating young Europeans to become more active.

Anna Süß, Communications Manager

When I heard about the new edition of Y Vote for the 2019 elections to the European Parliament, I decided that being frustrated about political disenchantment and the lack of knowledge about the EU was no longer enough. I wanted to get active on these issues and this group of committed young people helped me to both stay active and grow with the tasks that we had faced during Y Vote.

Florian Wagner, Voting Guide Manager

We especially want to thank

Our appointed members from the Comité Directeur of AEGEE-Europe, namely **María Ballesteros Melero, Viola Bianchetti** and **Álvaro González Pérez**, for their guidance, time and commitment which lasted throughout two years from the very beginning until the very end of the project.

Aliénor Pierlet, Aniko Paróczai and **Melina Schumacher** for being part of our team at times.

Nadia Deis for being our first hand on the communications part of the “Why European Parliament” project and our biggest support from the office chair on “My Europe, My Say”.

Cornelis Boon and **Jan Häusler** for spending countless hours on the programming of the *How to Vote* app and their effort to solve problems.

Desirée van Langen, Edina Knabe, Dorothea Harles, Jonathan Lessing, Sanne van de Voort, Antonia von Richthofen and **Marco Melatti** for being the content managers in our Conventions.

Khrystya Lishchynska and **Luca Baggi** for helping us as our PR task force.

Everyone that helped us by organising or participating in our events, checking our materials or giving us input for this project - especially all of the people we met that went home and organised events in their cities connected to the elections and Y Vote. With them, it was possible to reach an even greater amount of people.

The European Commission and the European Parliament with their different funding schemes, as well as many local sponsors and partners for supporting our project financially.

The people who will run the next edition of the project. We don't know you yet, but we are waiting with anticipation for the day when you will email us about a European election campaign for 2024 called Y Vote.



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
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“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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