

Workshop: Municipal elections for “dummies”

Idea and vision:

This workshop should call attention to the upcoming municipal elections in March and should inspire to vote. Especially young people should care about how important it is, to become active to reach a feeling of solidarity through participation. In 2014 the turnout of voters was 54,7% in Bavaria and surveys made clear, that especially young people are not that interested in the proceedings of the community. Each election, if municipal, the election to the Bundestag or the European elections influences our life. With the help of this workshop about the municipal elections, we want to inform people. You get the most important information about the voting system, the basic questions are getting answered and you get to know about all the parties. By visiting this workshop, young people should get a better understanding and an idea, which party may represent their interests. The right to participate and to vote is a privilege and should be used by everyone to reach the best outcome.

Why is this workshop useful? What is the goal?

It should be made clear for everyone, that being active and to participate is very important and everyone should make use of their right to vote. It is important to know, that also young people are concerned by the elections and that the elections are a great opportunity to reveal opinions. General and short information about the elections help to get a basic understanding and a discussion/talk about certain parties and their ideas can lead to the young people thinking about what they want. The youth does not want to read long manifesto and to listen to the drivel of the candidates. The workshop is there to give a summary on the different ideas of the parties and gives an overview in easy language.

Preparations

At first it is important to collect all the information needed. You need understandable and general information on the municipal elections. On the internet you find several FAQ's regarding the elections and with this information you can create a Power Point Presentation. Sub items, like: General information, casting of voting, right to vote or postal vote make it easier to understand the whole system. Besides, there are several terms which have to be explained. The ballot paper is a bit complicated and there are some rules you need to know before filling it out. You find all the information about the ballot paper explained on the internet. There are also sample of ballot papers where you can try it out. We also prepare one sample to give to the participants, so they can get the opportunity to try to fill it out. To “test” what the people already know about the elections, you can prepare a multiple choice quiz about some basics. This should be used as an introduction to the topic. After talking about the elections in general, you can ask the participants about their interests. They can form groups and think about what they want to improve in their city and what they have in mind regarding changes in their community. Weeks before the workshop we did surveys and asked young people about their interest. Our results can

be used in the workshop to give some hints on what to think about if they do not know anything. Next to that, it is needed to collect statements of the parties. We chose the topics climate, digitalisation, traffic/transportation and safety/security and collected the ideas of the parties on these topics. What do they want to change or improve?

Implementation: Content of the workshop

→ See Session Lab

Target participants: People over 18 who have the right to vote

How to make young people aware of this workshop:

You should get in touch with schools, youth organisations and youth centres. Call the schools in advance to ask if it is possible to walk into the classrooms to present the workshop and talk to the pupils directly. You should use flyer and posters to show the people what you are planning. Promote the event online, to reach even more people. You can also, as we did it, walk around in your town and talk to the target people directly. Give them a flyer and inform them about what you are planning. Maybe it is possible to cooperate with youth centres so that they can also promote your activity on their websites and on social media.