

# ProDemos

House for Democracy and the Rule of Law



## VoteMatch: A voting guide for everyone

### A VoteMatch for your country

Voters often have a hard time finding objective information about the positions of candidates during elections. A lack of knowledge about political parties and their positions on relevant issues is an important cause of lower voter turnout. That is why ProDemos has developed VoteMatch: an online voting guide that shows voters which parties share their opinions. Research shows that voting guides are one of the most effective ways to motivate people to go out and vote.

[prodemos.nl/votematch](https://prodemos.nl/votematch)



# What is VoteMatch?

**VoteMatch is an online voting guide that offers objective and clear information on a diverse range of political views from all participating political parties. It offers clear results that show users which parties match best with their views and beliefs.**

## How does VoteMatch work?

VoteMatch consists of a maximum of 30 statements covering the most important topics of the elections. Users give their opinion on the statements by choosing 'agree', 'disagree' or 'neutral'. They can browse party positions and their explanations. At the end, users can see which of the political parties share their views. They can easily compare the positions of two or multiple parties on topics that they find especially important. All of this combined provides users with objective information about party positions and helps users reach a more balanced and carefully considered voting choice.

## Who makes VoteMatch?

ProDemos – House for Democracy and the Rule of Law makes VoteMatch. ProDemos is a non-profit organization based in the Netherlands. Our aim is to increase knowledge of and promote citizen participation in democracy and rule of law at municipal, provincial, national and European levels.

Our mission is to promote participation in democracy. We offer objective information that is accessible to everyone in order to contribute to a fair and just democratic election process. VoteMatch contributes to that goal. We expect partners that use VoteMatch to share our goals and ascribe to the quality procedures of the method.

Visit our website: [en.prodemos.nl](https://en.prodemos.nl)

## Four reasons to use VoteMatch

### 1. VoteMatch is accessible to a wide audience

In the Netherlands, VoteMatch has existed since 1989 and is immensely popular. It is widely used and appreciated among all layers of society. The tool was used 7,8 million times in the 2021 parliamentary elections. That is more than 60% of all eligible voters in the Netherlands. VoteMatch uses clear navigation and language and high accessibility features so that users with visual impairments or difficulty reading can easily make use of the tool.

### 2. VoteMatch is transparent and clear

Transparency and clarity are the highest priority for VoteMatch. We do not use hidden algorithms or complicated calculation methods. Users can easily and simply see on which points they agree with the parties, and on which they don't. All we do is add up the results.

### 3. VoteMatch is safe and privacy-friendly

VoteMatch does not require or store any personal information from users. They do not need to create an account. Personal results cannot be tracked by third parties (or even by us). VoteMatch answers are only stored locally: only anonymized data are sent over the internet.

### 4. VoteMatch is unbiased

The purpose of VoteMatch is to support the democratic process. VoteMatch therefore does not exclude any party. All parties that participate in an election can participate in VoteMatch and will be treated equally.

# How will you make a VoteMatch?

**When we create a VoteMatch outside the Netherlands, we always work with local partners: they play a vital part in formulating the statements and contacting parties. Of course we provide careful guidance and advice during the entire process.**

## Planning

The entire trajectory takes at least three months. Please contact us half a year before the election at the latest.

### Step 0: Preliminary consultation

Before we start, we would like to get to know you first and discuss the process so you know everything that lies ahead and what you can expect from us.

### Step 1: Training session

We will train your organization to develop a good VoteMatch and provide clear and useful guidelines for the whole process. The workshop covers how to come up with good statements, tips on who to involve with formulating statements and how to engage with parties. We will also

show you possible design elements and explain what kind of support ProDemos can offer you. The workshop will last a day. We prefer to do this on site with the people who will create VoteMatch.

### Step 2: Collecting topics and formulating statements

Following our tips and methods, you will come up with relevant topics and formulate about 60–70 statements linked to these topics. ProDemos will give you advice and critical feedback on these statements.

### Step 3: Selecting the statements

You will present the 60–70 statements to all participating political parties and ask for their responses. For each

statement the parties will indicate if they are for or against, or if they are neutral. Note that VoteMatch will only include statements on which the parties clearly differ from each other. Statements that all parties agree on will be dropped, even when the topic is important: in these cases there is nothing for the voter to choose. This process will result in a list of 25–30 statements which will be included in VoteMatch.

*Optional:* parties can include explanations for their positions on the various statements. These explanations can be consulted by the users.

### Step 4: Finalization & launch

ProDemos will create a VoteMatch on the basis of the selection of statements and party information. You will provide us with logos and website URLs of participating parties and check the answers of all parties to ensure they match quality standards. We will decide on a launch date for VoteMatch together.

## Additional information

### Answering options

VoteMatch consists of a maximum of 30 statements. For each statement, users choose Agree, Disagree, or Neutral. These three answer options are the clearest for users, and they also reflect how the democratic decision making process works, where 'slightly for' and 'slightly against' options are not possible. Users can skip statements altogether, and these will not be included when calculating the end result.

### High priority issues

After answering all statements, users can indicate which topics they find especially important by giving certain statements higher priority, which they can do on the handy overview screen. Statements with higher priority will

count double when calculating the end result.

### Select parties

All parties on the ballot will be included in VoteMatch. After selecting important topics, users can decide which parties they want to take into consideration in the end result. There are a number of options: all parties, only the parties that already have a seat in parliament, or the user's own selection with a minimum of three parties.

### Results screen

The results screen will list the top 3 parties that correspond most to the users' views. Beneath the top 3 the remaining parties will be listed in descending order. By clicking on the

'Compare Parties' button, users can compare the answers of a number of different parties and read the explanation of each party's position. Users can also change their answers to see what effect it has on their result.

### Website traffic statistics

If you want to take a look at the traffic statistics of your VoteMatch, we can install a Google Analytics ID (you will need a Google Analytics account for this) or Matomo.

**Visit [eu-eng.votematch.net](https://eu-eng.votematch.net) to see how VoteMatch works. Here you can find the VoteMatch we used for the European Parliament Election (May 2019).**



### Budget

This information is only an indication, and not legally binding.

### Price

One-time license of VoteMatch, including:	€ 5,500.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsive webtool for desktop, smartphone and tablet</li> <li>• Use of back end (taken care of by ProDemos)</li> <li>• Project management</li> <li>• Online IT support (max 16 hours)</li> </ul>	
Design front end (after consultation)	€ 2,040.00
Implementation workshop VoteMatch method	€ 2,080.00
Travel expenses	PM
Additional support	PM
Extra language options	PM
Total (excluding PM)	€ 9,620.00

### Preconditions

#### Hosting

As a partner you can host the tool yourself or let ProDemos do it for you (subject to availability). You cannot make your own adjustments to the tool.

#### Layout/look and feel

VoteMatch has a fixed format. An example can be found on [eu-eng.votematch.net](http://eu-eng.votematch.net). There is space for small adjustments within the format (colours, logos, and of course the name). We can discuss your requirements and tell you which adjustments are possible.

#### Publicity

You are responsible for any publicity activities related to VoteMatch in your country.

#### Accessibility

VoteMatch always automatically has a version that is compatible with software for the blind or visually impaired.

#### Planning

We would like to jointly determine the exact planning for making the statements and launching VoteMatch online together. Assume a lead time of at least three months.

### Licensing

The agreements that will be made are subject to a one-time license. This license gives you the rights to use VoteMatch during the specific election that the trajectory is focused on. New agreements need to be made for the use of the tool with other elections or after the agreed upon period.

### More information

For more information, please contact Anne Valkering (project manager of VoteMatch) by phone: (+31)6 213 302 39 or by email: [a.valkering@prodemos.nl](mailto:a.valkering@prodemos.nl).



ProDemos – House for Democracy and the Rule of Law is an independent national organisation whose aim is to provide citizens with information on the democratic rule of law, and encourage them to play an active part in the country's political and judicial system.

## ProDemos

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