





Timetable | Topic: Environmental Protection (180 minutes)

GT= Group tables | CC = Circle of chairs

Tasks of the facilitator	Tasks of the students	Material/ Preparation
Introduction to the topic: Plastic waste		45 minutes
Who of you has something made of plastic today? Facilitator shows different types of plastic waste (manual for examples). Where else do you encounter plastic in your everyday life?	Students name some examples. Students name the types of plastic and where they know them from. Students name a couple of examples.	CC, plastic waste
Facilitator explains the difference between disposable and reusable plastic. Facilitator hands out the cards and asks the students to guess what takes the longest and what rots the fastest. Facilitator explains what takes how long. This makes it clear that plastic should not end up in the environment. It is best not to produce it in the first place. It is better to use alternatives. The facilitator asks what alternatives to plastic there could be.	Plastic bottles or lunch boxes can be used again and again. Other plastic can be recycled well, while some plastics are very difficult to recycle, e.g. thin films or plastic bags for fruit and vegetables. Students sort the cards from "fast" to "slow". An apple peel (2 weeks), orange peels (2–3 years), paper bags (6 weeks), aluminium foil (200-400 years), plastic bags (100-500 years), plastic bottle (450-5000 years; "If the ancient Egyptians had had plastic bottles, you could still find them in the environment today!"). Students name examples (cardboard, metal, glass, new recycled materials).	CC, rotting-period cards
Facilitator explains that plastic packaging is used a lot for fruit and vegetables, for example. Facilitator then explains what the current regulations are for a plastic ban on fruit and vegetables in Germany and the EU.	Since 2023, hard-to-recycle single-use plastic for which there are alternatives (e.g. straws, disposable cups) have been banned in all EU countries. Polystyrene food containers are also banned. This is not so easy with fruit and vegetables. Here, plastic can still be used as packaging. However, a joint law could be passed in Europe that would ban plastic for fruit and vegetables throughout the EU. Germany does not have such a law yet, but France and Spain already have such laws in their countries.	CC
Facilitator discusses the advantages of the law.	The advantages of the law are: ❖ Less plastic is used. This way, the environment is not polluted. ❖ A ban encourages producers of fruit and vegetables to consider alternatives to plastic packaging. ❖ It is easier to buy loose fruit and vegetables in small quantities. Many people do not want a bag of oranges, but rather just one or two.	CC
Facilitator discusses the disadvantages of the law.	The disadvantages of the law are: ❖ Some fruit and vegetables stay fresh longer in plastic packaging. This way, no food is thrown away. Food waste is a big problem in the EU. ❖ Plastic trays for fruit and vegetables are convenient because you do not have to just put the fruit and vegetables in your bag. ❖ There are people who buy salad or cut fruit to eat healthy. It is difficult not to pack this in plastic. ❖ For some packaging there is no good alternative or alternatives are too expensive. ❖ Plastic packaging can be more hygienic.	CC

Tasks of the facilitator	Tasks of the students	Material/ Preparation
Explanation of the gameplay		15 minutes
<p>The aim of the simulation game is to pass a good law. For this purpose, the ministers meet and discuss. Good reasons/arguments are important to convince the other member states of their position.</p> <p><i>Practice with your students what good reasons/arguments are.</i></p>	<p>The students formulate example sentences: "I don't want to do homework today because...".</p> <p>The focus is on the argument/justification being as convincing as possible.</p>	GT
<p>What are the options for agreement?</p> <p>The meaning of the different modes of agreement should be worked out with the students in advance. Here, a visualisation/ backup of the results is useful.</p>	<p>There are different ways to arrive at an agreement for a shared law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Direct voting: the (simple) majority decides (disadvantage: if the decision is close, many people are dissatisfied with the result); ❖ Compromise by consensus: everyone gives in and the solution lies in the middle. If everyone agrees with this middle way, the decision is made by consensus (advantage: everyone supports the result; disadvantage: often a long, exhausting process); ❖ Barter: Everyone gives in on one thing and gets what he/she wants on another (advantage: partial successes for everyone; disadvantage: result as a whole may be illogical or impracticable); ❖ The strongest prevails: one person decides (disadvantage: no participation of all). 	GT, board
Allocation of roles & country presentation		45 minutes
<p>The facilitator takes on the role of the EU Commission: he/she proposes to the ministers (played by the students) the draft law that has already been formulated and enclosed.</p> <p>The European Commission presents its idea for the law in three parts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. when? 2. must or can? 3. fine? <p>Proposed law of the EU → Pin on the board</p> <p>Each group table corresponds to a country and is given the corresponding table placard.</p>	<p>The students are experts of the countries and meet in the Council of the EU (also called the EU Council of Ministers). They are assigned to country groups, for example, by drawing the table cards or name tags.</p> <p>In this way, the students take on the position of the respective country representatives, rather than their personal opinions.</p>	<p>GT,</p> <p>board, proposal of the European Commission,</p> <p>Country labels for sticking on, table placards</p>
Allocation of role dossiers (one per student, according to the country)		GT, role dossiers

Tasks of the facilitator	Tasks of the students	Material/ Preparation
Continuation Allocation of roles & country presentation		
<p>The focus is on ensuring that all students understand the arguments in the role dossiers and are able to reproduce them meaningfully in order to be prepared for the negotiation.</p>	<p>The students read their role dossier. In the group, they first discuss the idea of the commission and try to understand their own country position. (Potentially, further arguments for the country positions can be considered and written down).</p> <p>Afterwards, the students can present their country (e.g. step forward as a group and take turns reporting).</p> <p>Afterwards, the students should present their country's position on the Commission's legislative proposal. The aspects "from when", "must/can" as well as the option of "fine" should be dealt with and supported with the corresponding arguments from the role dossiers (supplemented by the arguments they have thought of themselves, if necessary).</p> <p>To ensure that the students listen and pay attention, they can be given the ambassador slips here to note down which countries have which positions. Optionally, an "ambassador phase" (see manual) can be played.</p>	<p>GT, role dossiers</p> <p>Ambassador sheet</p>
Negotiation		60 minutes
<p>Stick a positioning line with two opposite poles ("this year" and "never") on the floor (or a table) (in the middle of the CC).</p> <p>The EU Commission again explains its idea on the first part of the law (from when should the law apply?) and positions its table placard along the positioning line.</p>	<p>The ministers (one person per country group) set up the table according to their position. Other students in the group may give one or two arguments for the position.</p>	CC, masking tape for positioning line
<p>The EU Commission moderates, proposes compromises if necessary and helps the countries to reach agreement.</p> <p>It grants the ministers short breaks in the discussion to agree on their justifications or to come up with new ones.</p> <p>The aim is for the ministers to agree on a joint law.</p> <p>Facilitator records the result of the first negotiation on the board.</p>	<p>Ministers may change their position on the line if the majority within their country group is in favour.</p>	CC, board
<i>The negotiations on items 2 and 3 of the draft bill follow analogously to the above procedure.</i>		CC

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Summary Evaluation		15 minutes
The European Commission presents the whole law.	The students may take off their flag tags and thus step out of their country role. This concludes the simulation game.	CC
<p>Reflect on the simulation game with the class:</p> <p>How did you feel in the simulation?</p> <p>How was it to negotiate the law?</p> <p>How satisfied are you with the result?</p> <p>Do you think it would be a good law for Europe?</p>	Here, the students should have the opportunity to express not only praise but also their frustration or discomfort during the game.	CC
<p>The facilitator draws the comparison to reality.</p> <p>The facilitator explains (again) the tasks of the institutions (ordinary legislative procedure, see manual 3.3). Here it is particularly important to emphasise once again that in addition to the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament must also negotiate and co-decide!</p> <p>This is followed up by some additional information on the three institutions mentioned:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EU Parliament (democratically elected representatives of the countries, number: currently 705, etc.). 2. European Commission (Commission consists of 27 commissioners and the president. The members of the Commission are proposed by the governments of the EU states and appointed for five years after approval by the European Parliament). 3. EU Council of Ministers (rotating ministers, one representative per member state; depending on the policy area, the Council meets in different formations). 	<p>Further info and download of all materials: www.pep.uni-göttingen.de</p> <p>This material has been developed within the framework of the Jean Monnet Project "Simulation Games for Action-Oriented EU Education in Primary Schools" (PEP) with the support of the European Commission. This publication reflects the views of the authors only, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any further use of the information contained therein.</p> <p>Project lead Professor Monika Oberle University of Göttingen (Germany) Concept and development planpolitik Design Stephanie Piehl</p> <p>© PEP, 2023</p> <p>  GEORG-AUGUST-UNIVERSITÄT GÖTTINGEN <small>IN PUBLICA COMMODO SEIT 1737</small> </p> <p>  bpb Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung </p> <p>  planpolitik </p> <p>  Erasmus+ </p>	<p>CC,</p> <p>Pictures of the European Commission, the Council of the EU, and the European Parliament <i>(not included in materials)</i></p>