

JUMPER

Reaching Young People with
European Political Education

Manual for the simulation game “An EU law against plastic waste”



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



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1. Introduction

The JUMPER simulation game was developed within the framework of the Jean Monnet project "Reaching young people with European political education" (JUMPER)¹ and tested, evaluated, and further developed as part of a two-day workshop (for workshop handout and materials see <http://jumper.uni-goettingen.de/>), so that optimised materials are now available for use. The materials were again updated after the European Parliament elections 2024 to account for changes in the setup of the European Parliament. In developing the workshop and the simulation game, the special needs of young people who have traditionally been difficult to reach regarding political education were taken into account: access is improved by materials that are entertaining, interactive, not very text-heavy, close to everyday life and low-threshold, i.e. no prior knowledge of the topic of Europe/European Union or plastic waste is assumed.

The simulation game aims to give the participants a basic understanding of the European Union (EU) and of politics and political negotiations in general, as well as to promote their interest in politics and their expectations of self-efficacy. Furthermore, the game strengthens their argumentation and political communication skills. During the game, they are confronted with different opinions and learn to understand the respective arguments for these positions. Finally, they have to reason, negotiate, explore compromises and develop strategies for solving political conflicts on their own. The persuasiveness of arguments plays a central role. Free speech and social skills such as the willingness and ability to listen to other participants or the ability to work in a team are also promoted.

The participants take on the role of members of the European Parliament from selected EU member states. The participants learn that the European states and members of parliament from these countries pass common "laws" (in reality: EU regulations and directives, simplified here to suit the target group) and have to make compromises. The negotiation process is often difficult and conflictual

because different countries and political groups have different interests.

The legislative proposal to be negotiated comes from the European Commission and is presented by the game facilitator at the beginning of the game. Through the simulation game, the participants learn that there are different ways of making decisions. In the negotiations, they can fall back on the different modes. On the other hand, they experience the importance of good arguments and how difficult it can be to reach a joint decision. By taking on the roles of members of the European Parliament, they also learn how to change perspectives.

The simulation game was developed together with the Berlin agency planpolitik (<https://planpolitik.de/en>) and is available for free download on the project homepage (<http://jumper.uni-goettingen.de/>), as are the other elements of the workshop, including accompanying pedagogical handouts.

Number of participants

Up to 30 roles can be assigned in the game. If all the roles are filled, there are representatives from five parliamentary groups in the game who negotiate in two committees. If the group is smaller than 10 participants, we recommend that the larger parliamentary groups include fewer participants (see notes on role allocation below). For groups of fewer than ten participants, it is advisable to simulate only one committee. The minimum group size we recommend is 10 participants. More information on this can be found in section 3.2 "Role allocation and settling into the roles".

Note on the procedure of the simulation game

The simulation game lasts approx. 210 minutes (plus breaks) and consists of an interactive introduction, the simulation of negotiations in the European Parliament and the evaluation. In principle, it is possible to spread these three parts over multiple days. However, it is important that the respective parts are each completed on one day. This is especially true for the simulation, during which the participants should not be pulled out of their roles by interruptions. If there is enough time, it is recommended to complete all parts in one day.

¹ The JUMPER project was carried out at the Chair of Political Science/Didactics of Politics at the University of Göttingen (project leader: Prof. Dr. Monika Oberle, research assistant: Märthe-Maria Stamer) and co-financed by the European Commission.

2. Preparation of the simulation game

The basic prerequisite for a successful simulation game is the reflection of the desired increase in competences, which should be adapted as precisely as possible to the target group. Especially for young people who tend to perceive the European Union as being far removed from everyday life and the real world, it is important to build on their own experiences and competences in order to support them according to their abilities and existing knowledge.

It is very helpful to conduct an introduction to the European Union with the participants beforehand (for a short version: see PowerPoint slides for the simulation game; for more detailed information: material for the JUMPER workshop Day 1). They learn that the EU is an association of states in which the member states cooperate in many areas, but also pursue their own interests. Different levels of economic strength, political attitudes, and languages as well as geographical conditions lead to different needs and interests among the countries. Members of the European Parliament belong to different political groups, so that MEPs from one country represent different political opinions in the European Parliament. Nevertheless, they must compromise in order to make cooperation in the EU work.

2.1 Timetable and classroom

The simulation game is designed in such a way that it can be carried out as one unit in 210 minutes (plus breaks). It is recommended to allow more time for the individual parts of the simulation (e.g. introduction to the topic, negotiation and evaluation) if this seems necessary and the time frame allows it. As the simulation game requires a high level of attention and concentration from the participants, sufficient time should be planned for breaks.

Alternatively, parts of the preparation and follow-up of the game - introductions to the EU and the topic of plastic waste, as well as an in-depth evaluation (chapter 4) - can also take place on other days.

However, the explanations of the course of the game with the distribution of roles, the actual negotiations and a short intuitive evaluation should not be separated from each other. An in-depth evaluation can also be carried out at a certain time interval so that the participants have the opportunity to process their experiences with the simulation game. However, this is only advisable if the participants have sufficient attention span, as otherwise important experiences from the simulation game can be forgotten by the time of the evaluation.

Two rooms are needed to conduct the simulation with a full group, i.e. with two committees negotiating in parallel. The first room, referred to as the side room (SR) in the following, is only used for the negotiations in one of the two committees. A rectangle of tables (RoT) should be set up here, where the participants will negotiate later. The SR remains unchanged throughout the workshop. The other room, called the main room (MR) in the following, should first be prepared so that all participants can sit in a circle of chairs (CC). In a further phase, group tables (GT) will also be needed here for the country and caucus meetings. It is recommended to let the participants work at their group tables or in the chair circle, depending on the phase. Working in groups is suitable for preparation, while the chair circle allows for more direct communication, which promotes negotiations.

Time and room planning for the simulation game:

Welcome & introduction	45 min	MR	SR
Welcome and waiting for late arrivals	15 min	CC	--
Intro: What is a simulation game?	10 min	CC	
Intro: Storytelling	10 min	CC	--
Intro: Quiz	10 min	CC	--
Simulation game	135 min		
Election party (allocation of roles)	10 min	CC	--
Reading of the role profiles	10 min	GT	--
Country delegation meeting	10 min	GT	--
Parliamentary group meeting	15 min	GT	--
Confirmation of positions	05 min	CC	--
Appointing the committee chairs	05 min	CC	--

Final briefing	05 min	CC	--
1st committee meeting	20 min	RoT	RoT
Informal negotiations	10 min	--	--
2nd committee meeting	20 min	RoT	RoT
Finding compromise and preparing the plenary	10 min	--	--
Plenary	15 min	CC	--
Evaluation	30 min		
Intuitive evaluation & reflection	10 min	CC	--
Evaluation jigsaw puzzle	20 min	RoT	--

2.2 Material and technological support

Welcome & introduction

- ❖ Detailed timetable
- ❖ Quiz answer card sets (1 set per 3 participants)
- ❖ Laptop with PowerPoint
- ❖ Projector or Smartboard
- ❖ PowerPoint presentation for storytelling and quiz

Simulation game

- ❖ Detailed timetable
- ❖ Adhesive tape
- ❖ Individual table placards (number of participants SG2, according to the table "role allocation")
- ❖ Role profiles, including the additional profile for the committee chair SG3 (number of participants, according to the table "role allocation")
- ❖ Country and parliamentary group signs for the meetings in the country and the parliamentary groups SG4
- ❖ Ideally: pens for all participants

Evaluation

- ❖ SG5 Evaluation jigsaw puzzle game plan (1 per 4-5 participants)
- ❖ SG6 Evaluation jigsaw puzzle pieces (1 set per 4-5 participants)

Printing manual

- ❖ The quiz answer cards (print template SG1) can be printed in black and white on DIN A4 paper (one-sided printing, 1x per 4-5 participants).
- ❖ The individual table signs (print template SG2) are printed in colour on DIN A4 paper (one-sided printing, number according to the table "Allocation of roles").
- ❖ The role profiles (print template SG3) are printed in colour on DIN A4 paper and stapled as a brochure (print on both sides, mirror on long side, number according to table "role allocation")*.
- ❖ Country and parliamentary group signs (template PSG4) are printed in colour on DIN A4 paper (single-sided printing).
- ❖ The game plan of the evaluation puzzle (print template SG5) is printed in colour on DIN A3 paper (one-sided printing, once per 4-5 participants).
- ❖ The evaluation puzzle pieces (print template SG6) are printed in colour on DIN A4 paper and then cut out (one-sided printing, 1x per 4-5 participants each)

***Note:** The role profiles are designed to be printed as a brochure; they can be folded and stapled together in the middle. To facilitate this, there are corresponding staplers (brochure staplers). However, stapling also works alternatively with an ordinary stapler.

3. Implementing the simulation game

3.1 Welcome, introduction to the EU and to the topic of the simulation game

In this module, the participants first learn what a simulation game is and what their task is. This is followed by a story-based presentation, which introduces the topic of the simulation game and the institutional structure of the EU. Afterwards, there is a short quiz to ensure a common level of knowledge. After the introduction, the participants are ready to take on their roles and start the simulation.

It is important that the participants understand that the EU is a community in which laws and rules exist. The member countries must discuss and negotiate in order to pass these laws and to ensure the cooperation of the EU. The participants will experience for themselves in the negotiation that they can only pass a law together.

Intro: What is a simulation game?

The participants should sit in a semicircle without tables. This ensures that everyone can hear what the workshop facilitator is explaining. After a short welcome, they are told that they will play a simulation game in which they take on the roles of politicians and represent their opinions, even if these do not correspond to their own. The place of the negotiations is the European Parliament. Here, the participants are supposed to discuss a law for the whole EU as politicians. At this point, it is important to inform the participants that the game follows certain rules, which they will get to know in the course of the game and which must be observed as in any other game. Last, but not least, the trainer conveys that everyone has the chance to practise their negotiating skills and that the simulation game can be a lot of fun.

Intro: Storytelling

The participants continue to sit in a semicircle and turn to the presentation that is shown on the Smartboard or projector. The facilitator reads out the introductory story and shows the photo presentation at a speed adapted to the reading. In this way, the participants are introduced to the problem of increasing plastic waste in the countries of the EU and learn about different perspectives on it. Subsequently, they are shown why the problem can be better solved on a cross-border basis and which institutions at the EU level are responsible for exploring such solutions. They learn about the ordinary legislative procedure in a simplified form and then know what role the European Parliament plays in it. In addition, they are familiarised with the work within the Parliament so that they already know the most important terms at the beginning of the simulation.

Intro: Quiz

After the storytelling, the participants form small groups with their neighbours in the circle of chairs by moving closer together. Each of these small groups is given four prepared answer cards with the letters A, B, C and D printed on them. With the help of the presentation, quiz questions are now asked that relate to the storytelling and can be answered based on the acquired knowledge. The teacher reads out one question and its four possible answers. These are also labelled with letters. After each question, the participants have a short time to discuss in their small groups what the correct answer is. At a signal, all groups hold up their answer card with the letter that corresponds to the answer they chose. This is repeated with all of the questions. At the end, a winning group can be chosen.

3.2 Role allocation and settling into the roles

After the participants have been familiarised with the topic of the simulation game and the functioning of the European Parliament in the course of the introduction, the actual simulation game begins. First, the roles are distributed and the role profiles are read. In order to make it easier for the participants to assume their roles and at the same time to get to know the interests of the other roles represented in the simulation, meetings in country groups, political groups and a position check follow. This ensures that at the beginning of the negotiations in the committees all participants are in their roles and know which positions they represent in the simulation.

Role allocation: the election party

The election party serves to distribute the roles and is the beginning of the actual simulation game. The trainer has a bag (or similar) ready with the counted, individual table signs, the selection results from the table "role distribution". Now the participants come forward one by one and blindly draw a table sign.* They announce openly whom they will play from then on and there is clapping. They remain at the front so that members of the same caucus can stand together.** This is repeated until all participants have individual table signs. The trainer then shows the voting shares of the political groups in the European Parliament with the corresponding PowerPoint slide. It should be pointed out here that the simulation game is a simplified representation of reality and that the distribution of roles in the game therefore does not exactly reflect the voting shares of the groups in the real parliament. Afterwards, the participants sit back in their groups in the circle of chairs. The trainer explains the next steps using the corresponding PowerPoint slide.

*Note: The distribution of roles does not have to be random, it is also possible to assign roles. However, it should be noted that participants have the greatest learning success when they take on roles that do not correspond to their own opinion. For this reason, role trading should also be prevented after the distribution. Special cases are the roles of the right-wing populists of the Nationalists of Europe – this parliamentary group right-wing populist to far-right forces in the European Parliament (European Conservatives and Reformists, Patriots for Europe). In the interests of balancing the game and due to the

proximity of the groups in terms of policy, they were grouped together in the Group of European Nationalists. . This role can be very uncomfortable to play for a variety of reasons. Ideally, the trainer inquires with the participants inconspicuously whether participants feel okay about playing this role.

Role allocation				
Parti- cants**	Name	Parliamentary group	Committee	Country
1	Krol	EPP	Industry	Poland
2	Martin	S&D	Industry	France
3	Amberger	Greens	Industry	Germany
4	Matei	NE	Industry	Romania
5	Sanchez	EPP	Environment	Spain
6	Weinmeister	S&D	Environment	Germany
7	Bennattar	Greens	Environment	France
8	Nowak	NE	Environment	Poland
9	Dumitru	EPP	Environment	Romania
10	Loreo	RENEW	Industry	Spain
11	Pop	RENEW	Environment	Romania
12	Wojcik	S&D	Industry	Poland
13	Bernard	EPP	Industry	France
14	Müller	NE	Industrie	Germany
15	Zapatero	S&D	Environment	Spain
16	Adamski	RENEW	Industry	Poland
17	Martineau	NE	Environment	France
18	Vachon	EPP	Industry	France
19	Ciobanu	Greens	Environment	Romania
20	Hertz	NE	Industry	Germany
21	Piotrowski	EPP	Environment	Poland
22	Rico	S&D	Industry	Spain
23	Kuhn	RENEW	Environment	Germany
24	Beltràn	NE	Environment	Spain
25	Zawadski	S&D	Environment	Poland
26	Stan	EPP	Industry	Romania
27	Arpin	RENEW	Environment	France
28	Scholz	EPP	Environment	Germany
29	Radu	S&D	Industry	Romania
30	Arana	NE	Industry	Spain

****Note:** With group sizes smaller than 10 participants, it must be ensured that there are always at least 2 participants in a fraction and in a country group. This makes it necessary to remove entire fractions (RENEW, then Nationalists of Europe). In such cases, the facilitator must deviate from the given distribution of roles and hand select the roles according to the restrictions and the size of the group.

Reading phase

Once the roles are distributed, the participants are given their role profiles and have time to read them. This is done individually. If there are any questions, the facilitator is available to help the participants.

Meeting in country groups

After the reading phase, the participants meet in country groups, whereby the origin of the person they are playing determines the allocation. In the country groups, they have the task of exchanging their positions and convincing the other MPs of their opinion. In this way, they learn to represent their positions and understand that the origin of parliamentarians may or may not be necessarily decisive regarding their interests.



Meeting in parliamentary groups

Following the meetings in the country groups, the parliamentary groups come together for the first parliamentary group meeting. Here, too, there is first an exchange about the individual positions, followed by a discussion about a common position.

The aim is for the participants to develop a common strategy for the negotiations and at the same time to recognize the different interests within their parliamentary group. At this point, possible compromise solutions can already be discussed.

Position check

The position check is the last element of the process of settling into the roles. The trainer sticks a line on the floor with tape and marks the middle. Afterwards, the articles to be negotiated are read out and the participants are asked to place themselves on the line according to the position of their role. The facilitator makes it clear beforehand which end of the line represents which option. Once the participants have distributed themselves, they are briefly asked for arguments for their position. The aim is to train the participants to represent the opinion held by their role and to find new arguments. The positioning is repeated with the second article. Then the participants are ready for the negotiation phase.

3.3 Negotiation phase

The negotiation phase is the core of the simulation. It consists of the negotiations in the committees, informal discussion phases and the vote in the plenary. Before formal negotiations commence, the chairpersons of the committees are determined, and a final briefing of the participants takes place so that everyone is clear about what their task is during the negotiations.

Appointing the committee chairs

In both committees, one or two participants are needed to lead the negotiations. To determine this team, the participants line up according to their committees. They then decide which two people should chair the meeting. The facilitator should explain that the task is to chair the meeting and find a compromise. At the same time, the committee chair must guarantee a fair meeting and ensure that everyone is heard. The facilitator should point out that this is a very exciting and responsible role. On the one hand, they should encourage the participants to take on the role. At the same time, they should make sure that no one is pressured by other participants to take on the role involuntarily. If in doubt, the facilitator can subtly encourage the role to be taken on by participants who are neither among the most active and dominant people in the group nor would have particular problems in fulfilling the role, e.g. due to lack of language skills. Once it is clear who the chairs are, they are given an extra role profile for committee leadership. It is a good idea to have a break afterwards. This allows the committee chairs to read their extra profile and the WL has time to explain the role to them in detail.

Final briefing

In a final briefing before the first committee meeting, the facilitator explains one last time what the task of the participants is in the meeting. They make sure once again that the chairpersons have understood their role and then explain the rules for the negotiations to the other participants. In detail, this means:

- ❖ The meeting is chaired by the chairpersons.
- ❖ Participants should speak up if they want to say something, and the chairpersons give the floor.
- ❖ The two articles are discussed one after the other.
- ❖ At the end, there is a vote in which the majority decides. The chairpersons also have the right to vote.
- ❖ The participants can choose one of the three options given for each article. They can also develop new options.
- ❖ The facilitator appeals to the participants not to give in. After all, they represent Members of the European Parliament and have an opinion that they represent. The participants should only compromise if the others also accommodate them.
- ❖ There are a total of 2 committee meetings, so the participants do not have to commit themselves in the first committee meeting.

After the briefing, the facilitator sits quietly next to the negotiation table and only intervenes if the participants are unable to find their way into the game for a longer period of time. A certain amount of chaos at the beginning is normal and usually resolves itself after a short time.

Note: If there are two committees meeting in parallel, it is a good idea to do the briefing with all participants together and then divide them into two rooms. It is easier if there is a second facilitator so that each facilitator can accompany one committee.

1st committee session

During committee meetings, the facilitator sits quietly next to the negotiating table and ideally does not intervene at any time. She only supports the committee chair in time management. The WL also coordinates so that in two-committee meetings both committees finish their negotiations at about the same time and then gives the signal for the informal negotiations to start.



*Meeting in parliamentary groups and finding compromise among the chairpersons **

After the first committee meeting, the committee chairs sit down together in one of the rooms and have the task of working out a joint compromise proposal from the interim results of the two committees. It is important here that they record what they have agreed on. The facilitator stays with the committee chairs the whole time to be able to help them. In the meantime, the other participants have the task of meeting in their parliamentary groups and finding out what the state of negotiations is in the individual committees. As a group, they should think about what they should achieve now.

2nd committee session

The committee chairpersons present the compromise proposal developed with the other committee chairpersons in their committee. The discussion then continues on the basis of the proposal. At least 15 minutes before the end of the committee session, the facilitator advises the chairpersons to hold a vote soon. The chairs take the result of this vote to the next phase: the preparation of the plenary.



*Finding compromise and preparing the plenary**

After the committee meetings have ended, all participants, except for the chairpersons, have the task of meeting in their parliamentary groups. There, they must prepare a speech of about 1 minute for the following opening of the plenary, in which they have to explain their desired result and justify it with arguments. They also must agree on who from the parliamentary group should give the speech. At the same time, the committee chairs of both committees meet and prepare a compromise proposal that serves as a voting document in the plenary. If there is only one committee, the chairpersons attend the caucus meetings like everyone else. The result of the (one) committee meeting then serves as the voting document for the plenary.



Plenary

The plenary is the highlight of the simulation game. The participants sit down together in the circle of chairs, according to the political spectrum of their parliamentary groups. The facilitator then takes on the role of the parliamentary president and asks a person from the committee chairperson team to read out the voting proposal. She then calls on the political groups one after the other to make their speeches. The facilitator then prepares the vote by show of hands. She points out that although the deputies often form groups, there is no compulsion to do so. Each delegate must vote freely according to his or her conscience. Once this point has been clarified, the facilitator conducts the vote by show of hands. She asks for votes in favour, against and abstentions and then announces the result. At the end of the vote, the participants clap once more and the simulation game moves on to the evaluation.

Note: If the number of participants is fewer than 10, only one committee simulation will be played. The committee membership indicated in the profile is ignored. In this case, the chairpersons do not compromise with each other after the committee meeting. Instead, they meet with their group colleagues and discuss the extent to which the negotiations are going according to their ideas.

3.4. Evaluation

After the game, an evaluation of about 30 minutes should take place in which the participants can first share their immediate impressions (intuitive game analysis). As a first step, they hand in their name tags and step out of their roles. It is very important for a reflective discussion about the game and its outcome that the participants take on their actual identity again. This is followed by a thematic evaluation with the help of the evaluation puzzle.

Intuitive evaluation & reflection

The intuitive evaluation of the game gives the participants the opportunity to describe their individual impressions directly and thus to step out of the game emotionally. In particular, participants who have played roles with more controversial positions often feel the need to distance themselves from their role in a way that is perceptible to all. Any conflicts that may still be smouldering from the simulation game can be resolved here. The facilitator's task is to give all participants the opportunity to speak and to encourage them to do so without necessarily commenting on what is said. Typical questions for the intuitive evaluation are, for example:

- ❖ How did you fare in the game? What happened?
- ❖ How did you feel as politicians?
- ❖ How did you feel about playing a different role?
- ❖ Did anyone find their own role particularly difficult or unpleasant?

If there is enough time and the participants are motivated enough to ask further questions, a first reflection on and distancing from the game can take place. The aim is to find out how the course that the game took can be explained. Typical questions here are:

- ❖ Are you satisfied with the result? If yes, why? If no, why not?
- ❖ Did you achieve your original goals? If no, why not?
- ❖ How far have you moved away from your original goals?
- ❖ What arguments convinced you? And why?
- ❖ Was it difficult to reach an agreement? If yes, why? If not, why not?

After the intuitive evaluation, the participants are asked to question the potential impact of their game result were it to be implemented in reality. To do this, they should briefly discuss the following questions with the person in the next seat:

- ❖ In the introduction, the characters Anna and Matteo were introduced.
- ❖ What impact could the result have on their lives? What advantages and disadvantages would they have as a result of the outcome of your game?
- ❖ What would the result mean for you in concrete terms? What do you personally think about it?
- ❖ What is your personal opinion on the issue of plastic packaging for fruit and vegetables in supermarkets?
- ❖ Has your personal opinion on this topic changed as a result of the simulation game?

The aim of this step is to illustrate the impact of European policies on the lives of citizens. This is followed by the evaluation jigsaw puzzle, the last part of the evaluation.

Evaluation jigsaw puzzle

The evaluation jigsaw puzzle serves to compare what was experienced in the simulation game with reality. To facilitate this, the participants are divided into groups of 4-5 persons and sit down at group tables. Each group is given a game board with two columns containing several fields. These are labelled with the categories "Only in the simulation game" and "Also in reality", thus representing the categories "realistic" and "unrealistic" in a simplified way. Each group now receives a set of playing cards on which statements and aspects of the simulation game are written (e.g. "All EU environmental laws consist of 2 articles"). The participants should assign these playing cards to the game fields and thus classify them into realistic and unrealistic aspects. Once all groups have finished, the results can be compared and discussed together. This ensures that the simulation game does not lead to a distorted perception of reality.

4. Background information

Below is some background information on the articles, the legislative process and the topic of plastic waste in the EU. This should help to answer possible questions from the participants and to put the topics of the simulation game into the right context in the evaluation.

Background information: plastic waste in the EU

The avoidance of plastic waste is a very current and easily accessible topic for young people. The simulation game picks out two points of contention. Article 1 deals with a ban on single-use plastic packaging, which could quickly reduce the amount of plastic in our oceans. At the same time, companies and consumers would be potentially restricted in their freedom of choice. One way to get around this is to add a surcharge to single-use plastic. Here, the choice is left to the consumer, with less affluent people more likely to go without plastic. Irrespective of the type of restriction, the resulting reduction in plastic production could mean a loss of jobs in the producing countries, should it not be feasible for them to produce reusable or compostable packaging alternatives instead.

Article 2 deals with the deadline for the introduction of the regulation discussed in Article 1. An immediate introduction of a ban could burden food producers and retailers by forcing them to switch to more costly alternatives. Plastic producers would also have little time to switch their production to more environmentally friendly packaging. However, an extended deadline could lead to a further dramatic increase in plastic pollution in the world's oceans.

There has already been an agreement to reduce plastic waste from single-use plastics in the EU. Since July 2021, plastic cutlery, plastic tableware, plastic drinking straws, polystyrene packaging for hot food and drinks and plastic cotton buds have been banned. However, many observers criticise the limited number of plastic products that have been taken off the market. With plastic packaging, one of the biggest sources of plastic waste is still not covered. The regulation of plastic packaging for fruit and vegetables, which is negotiated in the simulation, continues to be the subject of discussion in the European institutions and beyond.

The draft law in detail

The law that the participants negotiate in the simulation game consists of two articles, each of which has three options. The articles are discussed by the participants one after the other in the committee meetings. The articles and their respective options are briefly outlined below:

Article 1

How should plastic packaging of fruit and vegetables be dealt with in the EU?

Options:

- It should be banned.
- People should pay 1 € extra for plastic packaging.
- Companies should voluntarily do without plastic packaging.

Note: The participants need to understand the difference between the mandatory ban and the voluntary character of the last option. In addition, they need to be aware that the middle option means a compulsory payment on any plastic packaging if this is not specified in the course of the game.

Article 2

From when should the law apply?

Options:

- Immediately
- In two years
- In ten years

If the participants are still unclear about the articles and their meaning after the introduction, these elements should be clarified before the start of the game phase in order to prevent confusion during the simulation game.

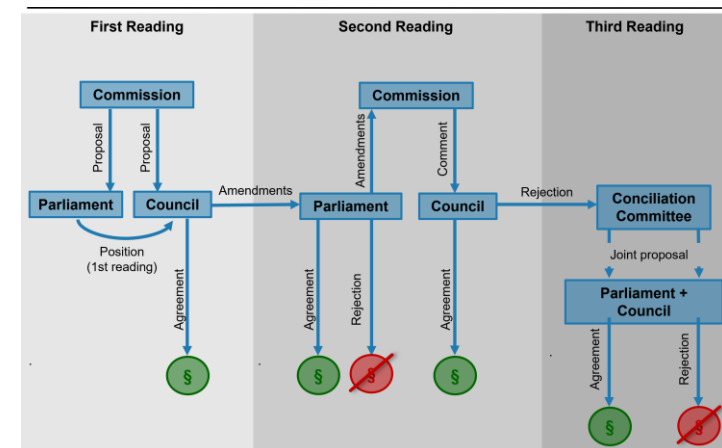
In the test sessions, it has proven useful to make it clear once again before the game that the draft law is about plastic packaging for fruit and vegetables, not about plastic packaging in general.

Background information: ordinary legislative procedure

The most common legislative procedure in the EU is the "ordinary legislative procedure" (also called "co-decision procedure"). Here, as always, the European Commission has the right of initiative and makes a proposal for a directive or regulation to the European Parliament and the Council of the EU (the so-called EU Council of Ministers). After the Parliament has discussed this proposal, amended it if necessary, and voted on it, the Council negotiates on the basis of the Parliament's decision.

The simulation game deals exclusively with the negotiations conducted by the European Parliament after it has received the proposal from the Commission (reading 1). For pedagogical reasons, the procedure in the Parliament has been greatly simplified, and certain terms have also been replaced by simpler, more comprehensible words. For example, the terms "regulation" and "directive" are replaced by the word "law" to make it easier for the participants to understand.

The Council and the Commission are not represented in the game. In reality, the Parliament's decision would be submitted to the Council for amendment and vote. If the Council does not adopt the Parliament's bill, further readings follow. It is important to mention that the Council and Parliament must agree on a joint draft in order to adopt a regulation or directive.



5. Detailed timetable for implementation

Time	Programme	Details	Goal	Room & seating	Material & tech support
5'	Waiting for late arrivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator thanks participants for arriving on time and informs them that the meeting will start in a few minutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be at least 10 participants on site before the event starts. 	(Semi-) circle, no tables	--
10'	Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator introduces himself and welcomes participants. Short presentation of the schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants get to know the facilitator. 	--	Laptop, projector, presentation
10'	What is a simulation game?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator explains what a simulation game is and what will happen today. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants know what to expect and are motivated. 	--	--
10'	Storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator reads the introductory story while showing the photo presentation at a speed adapted to the text read. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants are informed about the topic of the workshop and its relevance. Participants get to know the institutions of the EU. Participants have a first impression of how the work in the European Parliament is conducted. 	Chairs turned so that everyone can see the presentation.	Text "Storytelling"
10'	Quiz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the story, quiz questions are asked. Three participants sitting next to each other play together. Each group receives answer cards A, B, C, D. After each question, groups decide on an answer and place the card on the floor in front of them. The question is then solved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants check whether they have understood everything via play. The facilitator can address gaps in knowledge relevant to the simulation game as needed. 	Participants move to sit closer to each other in groups of three.	Quiz, response cards, one set per three-four participants

Time	Programme	Details	Goal	Room & seating	Material & tech support
10'	Election party (role allocation)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the quiz, the facilitator announces that the votes have been counted and that the election party will now take place. Participants go to the front one by one and draw a name tag. They then remain standing at the front. There is always clapping when someone is "elected". The participants then sit down in their groups back in the circle. The facilitator briefly presents the election results (with a graphic of the actual distribution of seats). The facilitator goes through the parliamentary groups on the slide and the group members raise their hands and gather together when their group is named. The facilitator then explains the rest of the PS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants enthusiastically take on their roles; the excitement of election night is simulated. The atmosphere is stirred up by the clapping. Participants stand and sit together in their parliamentary groups and have seen their colleagues before. Participants get an overview of the political groups represented. Participants know approximately what will happen during the PS. 	Semicircle, enough space in front for the groups	Individual table placards
10'	Reading the role profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants receive their role profiles and read them (especially page 2). Sometimes the participants ask how far they can deviate from the role. The facilitator should explain that the role can be augmented with arguments that fit the opinion of the role. However, a conservative must not become a leftist. The facilitator is available for individual questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants get to know their roles. Points of confusion are clarified. 	--	Role profiles, pens
10'	Meeting in country delegations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants are instructed to meet with the other MPs from their country and their positions. The task is to convince the other person. To avoid confusion, the participants should be told in the task for this phase that MEPs from the same country do not necessarily have the same position and that this phase also serves to bring to light these differences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants learn to defend their own position. They become familiar with other positions. Participants understand that members of parliament from one country may have different opinions. 	Country signs hung in different places in the room	Country signs, adhesive tape

Time	Programme	Details	Goal	Room & seating	Material & tech support
15'	Meeting in party groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants meet in parliamentary groups at tables and are asked to share their positions. Participants may initially find it difficult to understand the difference between the parliamentary group meeting and the previous meeting in the country groups. If there is any confusion, it can be addressed directly. The participants should be told that in the country groups they have met people who may have very different political attitudes despite having the same background. In the parliamentary group, on the other hand, everyone is of the same political orientation. But even here there can be disagreements that must be overcome on the way to a common parliamentary group line. Announcement: "Try to convince one another of your positions with good arguments. Write down the best arguments. If possible, find a common position. But it is important that you do not simply give in – only do so if it makes sense from the point of view of your role. There is no compulsion to be of the same opinion." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants learn that MPs from different countries work together in parliamentary groups. Participants understand that not everyone in a parliamentary group necessarily has the same opinion. Participants learn about each other's arguments and can write down good arguments for the committee meeting. 	5 separate tables (with lower number of participants, number of parliamentary groups present)	

Time	Programme	Details	Goal	Room & seating	Material & tech support
5'	Position check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two articles are read one after the other. Participants are asked to position themselves along the tape. After each positioning, the facilitator asks for some arguments. Announcement: "Do not just give in during the negotiations. You are elected representatives and you want to get your opinion accepted. Only make compromises if you gain something in the process. In the end, you can choose one of these three solutions - or you can develop a new, alternative idea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone sees again how many supporters there are for their position. Participants ideally get to know some more arguments. Participants are motivated not to simply give in. 	A line of adhesive tape in the middle of the room	Adhesive tape
5'	Appointing the committee chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announcement: "Now please line up according to your committees." "In each committee we need a team of two people to run the meetings. They must make sure that everything is done in an orderly way, that a compromise is found and that everyone gets a chance to speak. At the same time, as parliamentarians, they also represent their own opinions. Who can see themselves doing that?" The facilitator makes sure that participants are chosen who seem to be reasonably up to the role. However, the roles should not necessarily be given to the "usual" best in class or the more dominant participants in the group. The decision to intervene in the process is up to the facilitator and should only be made if absolutely necessary. When participants are determined, they come forward and are given their chairperson profile and a short briefing. Before the break, the participants are told in which room which committee will meet after the break. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee chairs are appointed and the meeting can start immediately after the break. Participants know where they are going after the break. 	--	Role profile for the committee chair

Time	Programme	Details	Goal	Room & seating	Material & tech support
20'	<i>Break</i>				
5'	Final briefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator briefly explains the procedure to the committee and discusses with the chairpersons whether they have understood everything. "The meeting is chaired by the chairpersons. When you come forward, they will ask each of you to speak in turn.. The first article is discussed first, then the second. At the end there is a vote, and the majority decides. You can choose one of the three solutions or come up with a new idea. First of all, everyone introduces themselves in turn. I will now hand things over to the chairpersons. Good luck!" "Very important: do not just give in! You are MPs and you have an opinion that you represent. You can compromise, but only if the others also accommodate you." "There will be two committee meetings, which means you do not have to make a final decision in this first meeting." The facilitator then sits next to the chair, remains silent and only intervenes in an emergency, i.e. if the chair seeks help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants know the rules of the meeting. Committee chairs know what their role is. The facilitator is always there as a backup. They discreetly give advice directly to the chairs or to the whole committee. 	2 rooms with tables arranged in a square; parliamentary groups sit together.	European Union flag for the committee chairs, bell for the chairs
20'	1st committee session **	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants introduce themselves. They then negotiate the two articles one after the other. They each start with a "tour de table", in which each person states their own position on the Commission's proposal. At the end of the session, the first vote is taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants get an overview of who is at the table. Participants conduct political negotiations: They structure the meeting, express and justify their positions, find a compromise and formally vote. 	--	--

Time	Programme	Details	Goal	Room & seating	Material & tech support
10'	Meeting in party groups / Finding compromise among committee chairpersons**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participants come back from the committees and meet with their group colleagues. They inform each other about what happened in their committee. Meanwhile, the chairs meet and try to develop a compromise proposal together. They record what they have agreed upon. Announcement: "You must be able to explain to the others how you arrived at the draft together!" Facilitator stays with the chairs and helps them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a compromise for the 2nd session. Chairs develop compromise proposals. 	Table where chairpersons can talk to each other in peace in one of the committee rooms.	Guiding questions on the board
20'	2nd committee session **	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator calls the participants back to the committees. Announcement: "The committees initially arrived at different proposals. The chairpersons have tried to work out a compromise proposal. They will present it to you in a moment. Then there will be time to negotiate again. This is your last chance to get your opinion accepted. Give it your all!" Chairpersons present their compromise proposal in their committees and explain how it came about. Negotiations then continue on this basis. At the end of the meeting, a vote is taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants try to assert their opinion one last time. There is not an overly hasty agreement. 	Like first committee session	Like first committee session
10'	Finding compromise among the committee chairs and preparing the plenary in parliamentary groups**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The chairs share the results from the committees and try to create a promising plenary submission. At the same time, the other participants meet again in their groups and prepare for the plenary. Announcement: "In a moment, the chairs will present a draft for the vote in plenary. Before the vote, each parliamentary group will give a short speech (max. 1 minute). In it, you say what you would like the outcome to be and why. Now you have time to write down your speech. Decide who from your group will make the speech." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The voting paper for the plenary is ready. Participants are ready for the plenary and know what to expect. Participants have prepared a statement to be read out before the vote. 	Table where chairpersons can talk to each other in peace in one of the committee rooms; corners where the parliamentary groups can meet	--

Time	Programme	Details	Goal	Room & seating	Material & tech support
15'	Plenary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator, as President of the European Parliament, leads the session and welcomes the participants. At the beginning, the facilitator asks one of the chairs to read out the draft. The facilitator then asks the political groups to make their speeches. After everyone has made their speeches, the facilitator explains that the vote will now take place. In casting their votes, the MEPs are asked to consider whether they can vote in favour of the voting draft with a clear conscience. They are told that although they form parliamentary groups together, there is no compulsion to form a group when voting. The vote then follows. The facilitator asks for yes/no/abstentions and counts out loud. The facilitator abstains from voting. The result is then announced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants become familiar with a plenary session. Facilitator makes the plenary session formal and "ceremonial". 	Chairs in a semicircle, separated from each other by fractions with tape, in front of table signs for the fractions	Table signs, adhesive tape, bell, EU flag
10'	Intuitive evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator declares that the simulation game is over and thanks the participants for their great work. As a symbolic end to the game, all participants hand in their name tags. Q: "How was it for you? How are you doing now?" Participants have time to comment and resolve any arguments from the game. If there is time for a second question: "How satisfied are you with the result?" Announcement: "In a moment we will revisit together what the simulation game has to do with reality. But now, there is a 15-minute break." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants return to reality and distance themselves from the game. Disagreements that arose in the simulation game can be clarified. Participants can make it clear once again that they have only played a role. 	--	Bag for individual placards
15'	Break				

Time	Programme	Details	Goal	Room & seating	Material & tech support
20'	Evaluation jigsaw puzzle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants form small groups of 4-5 people and are each given a puzzle set consisting of a board and puzzle pieces. Announcement: "There are cards on the table in front of you. On them are terms or key points that have something to do with what happened in the simulation game. Now you have to discuss within the group whether what is written on the cards is realistic (i.e. the same as in reality) or not realistic. Talk about each card and then put it on the board, either on the "realistic" side or on the "unrealistic" side. Then, we will compare your results." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants reflect in the group on what they have learned in the PS and transfer it to reality. Distorted images of individual aspects can be corrected by the facilitator. Participants have a basis for a potential subsequent discussion with a politician. 	3 tables with 4–5 chairs each	Sets of the evaluation puzzle according to number of participants (with 15 participants 3 sets)

***Note:** With group sizes smaller than 10 participants, it must be ensured that there are always at least 2 participants in a fraction and in a country group. This makes it necessary to remove entire groups (first Renew, then ID). In such cases, the facilitator must deviate from the prescribed distribution of roles and select the roles according to the above-mentioned requirements and the size of the group.

****Note:** If the number of participants is under 10, only one committee will be played. The committee membership indicated in the profile is ignored. In this case, the chairpersons do not compromise with each other after the committee meeting. Instead, they meet with their group colleagues and discuss the extent to which the negotiations are going according to their ideas.