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Modernising European
Legal Education



Working Group 3:

Simulating Institutional Decision-Making

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**EUROPA-
INSTITUT**
SAARLAND UNIVERSITY

Structure

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- II. Organisational Aspects
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 2. Administrative workload
 3. Timeframe/ Timetable
- III. Substance
 1. Overall topic/ Content
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- IV. Materials

Part I: General Overview

- Simulation exercise to understand the way how institutions on national, EU or international level work and make their decisions
- Based on relevant substantive and procedural provisions of the respective institution
- Exercise allows to get playfully familiar with the procedures of decision-making and the techniques of negotiating
- Ideally 2 sessions on two days but also in one day possible
 - Intro lecture
 - Intro session into gameset, Simulation & Debrief



Part II: Organisational Aspects

- Introductory lecture about the institutional set-up and procedure + topic-related information
- Building of groups and assignment of roles, depending on group size (Unlimited number of groups of participants)
- Provision of a sufficient number of rooms, depending on amount of groups → one big one for plenary sessions
- Preparation of background material and strategy papers
- No selection procedure



Part II: Timetable

- Preparation
 - Select scenario: Decision-making of national (parliament, security committee, etc.), European (European Parliament, Council) or international (UN Security Council, WTO) institution
 - Find students and setup sign-up sheet to join
 - Prepare intro scenario, background paper (if needed) and strategy paper/role handout (see more on next slides)
- Session I
 - Give introductory lecture on institutional set-up and procedure
 - Background presentation on scenario (environmental issues, pandemics etc.)
 - Present intro video (if available → good explanation videos on Youtube)
 - Introduce preparation material to students
 - Assign roles, preferably in teams

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Part II: Timetable

- Give time for students to study the materials and get familiar with their role and team colleagues
- Clarify questions
- Session II
 - Engage students to understand their strategy
 - Start negotiations (make sure nobody is excluded)
 - Facilitate together with the „president of the institution“ possible deals
 - Ask students to prepare and present final statements in the plenary
 - (Re-negotiating possible)
 - Final decision-making
- Aftermath
 - Share real-life solutions or developments
 - Debrief (include their experiences)
 - Share further materials



Part III: Substance

1. Learning Outcome

- Content
- Transversal

2. Overall topic/ Content

3. Assessment

3. Evaluation

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Part III: Learning outcome

Content:

The aim of the decision-making simulation is to make the students experience decision-making and negotiations in a institution with different parties in a current problematic and controversial scenario. Each student will play a role of one of the countries, institutional functions or stakeholders involved in the decision-making process.

This experience will help the students to apply the concepts learned in the class lecture. The simulation will help the students in taking into account the perspectives and interests of other parties involved in the process. They will experience how difficult it might be to find a compromise and to negotiate with many players at the same time.



Part III: Learning outcome

Transversal competences adressed:

- Strengthen the ability to make decisions by analysing and processing given information and formulate alternatives and assessing risks
- Professionally identify, define and solve a problem, including the recognition of long-term consequences of different solutions
- Engage in strategical, felxible and innovative thinking for adapting to changing situations
- Learn to organize and manage a group of persons and identify an efficient way to proceed
- Enhance their team working and negotiating skills, often in a multicultural setting



Part III: Overall topic

Decision-making simulations address three overall topics:

1. The institutional set-up of a country, region, international organization etc.
2. The procedure of decision-making
3. A current topic which is discussed in real life and needs to be decided on
 - New legislative initiatives
 - Extraordinary scenarios, like pandemics, wars, natural catastrophies
 - Other „hot-topics“ which are discussed



Part III: Assessment

This exercise allows for different forms of experience/expertise. This needs to be reflected in the assessment strategy.

Since students discuss in groups a different approach to assessment needs to be applied. There are different efforts which can be graded:

- Participation
- Oral presentation of the last statement

Or additional assignments connected with the topic included:

- Reports
- Essays
- Case



Part III: Evaluation

The evaluation of the simulation should be tailored to the level of expertise and domain knowledge of the participants. Moreover, keep in mind the evaluation procedures at your home university.

Possible points could be the organisation, time management, materials and technical equipment, group dynamics, facilities, quality of lecturers, interest in the topic, learning achievement.

For an easy evaluation it is recommended to do this online. However, outcomes and experiences should be discussed in plenary.



Part IV: Materials

The following materials should be prepared and handed out to the students:

1. Powerpoint slides about institutional set-up and procedure
2. Official information from institution itself (brochure, leaflet)
3. Time table
4. Background paper = Scenario, including legal provisions and empirical and statistical data
5. Strategy paper = Role, including info about the role (member of institution, president/secretariat of institution, press, others) and the position for the negotiations

