

Simulation: European Parliament Election

If you have questions or comments, please contact info@yvote.eu

About the Simulation:

In this simulation the participants can get experience on how the European Parliament election actually takes place. They will learn how it is to be a politician and campaign and how the results from the member states are put together to create the European Parliament. Additionally, they will discuss a proposal in the parliament. This simulation includes only three countries of different size in order that also smaller groups can carry it out. Still, also in other regards it is not completely the reality but resembling it very closely.

Aims:

- The participants will learn about political campaigning and put themselves in the shoes of a politician.
- The participants will discover voting procedures in different countries in the European Parliament Elections.
- The participants will learn about debates inside the EP.

Prerequisites:

- Participants: 28-30
- Trainers: 3
- Room: A big room where participants can move around freely, as well as the possibility for three groups to sit together. For simulating the parliament, chairs in a half circle are needed. The room must have a projector and WiFi.
- Time: 120 minutes
- Materials required:
 - Ballot box
 - laptop, projector
 - crepe adhesive tape
 - blank paper and pens
 - flipchart and markers
 - printing:
 - [Role cards](#)
 - [Ballots](#)
 - [seat distribution](#)
 - [Description](#) of the proposals
 - [voting register](#) + name tags
 - just online: Election tool for counting votes (see excel table)

Session:

0. preparation

Print out all the material. Cut the role cards and name tags. Either use name tag holders or, you can use the tape to stick the names on people's clothes. Write the schedule on a flipchart.

Every trainer should take care of one of the three countries. Additionally, one has to moderate the parliamentary discussion. Decide beforehand, who has which responsibility. .

1. Introduction (15 min)

Explain the goal of the simulation game and what steps it will include to the participants. For this show the written schedule on the flipchart. Make sure that people understand that they will represent somebody else during the game.

Then divide the participants into the country groups and hand out their role cards and corresponding name tags. Give them a short time to read them and to answer possible questions afterwards.

2. Election campaign (30 min)

The three different country groups should be separated from now on. Each country should have a trainer. Also within each country, the pax are separated by their role: the politicians have time to prepare a 1 minute speech for their campaign to convince the other people. At the same time, the polling officers get a briefing by the trainer of what they should do (see later point xxx). The citizens should use this time to prepare questions to the politicians.(15 min)

In each country the campaign is held. The politicians have 1 minute for their speech to convince the citizens of voting for him/her. The citizens are allowed to ask questions afterwards until the time is up (15 min).

3. Election (20 min)

The election happens in each country separately. The polling officers take care that the voting happens without disturbance. The citizens vote secretly and only once. For that they have to sign the voting register and are then handed a ballot. After voting they are put in the ballot box.

After everyone voted, the polling officers count the votes and fill the results into the excel sheet. This automatically calculates the corresponding seats in each country. The trainers check that the results fit.

Project the excel sheet on the wall. Explain how the calculations are done and that there is a different system in each country (the rules are in the excel sheet). Then announce the results.

4. European Parliament discussion (40 minutes)

Arrange the chairs in a half circle for the parliament. The elected politicians sit down in the correct place. To find it there is the seat distribution sheet. The rest sits in a second circle around them as the audience.

One of the trainers takes the role of the moderator. Present the proposal on increasing the Erasmus + budget. Hand out the proposal sheet to all parliament members. (15 min)

Now, the members of the parliament have the time to discuss this proposal and state their opinion on it. Due to the short time, amendments are not allowed, the voting will take place only for yes/no. The audience can ask questions as well to the MEPs, when the time allows. (20 min)

The MEPs vote on the proposal. They can be in favour, against or abstain. A simple majority wins, the moderator announces the results.(5 min)

5. Debriefing (15 minutes)

Make a big circle with everyone. Make clear that the simulation is now over and everyone is their own self again. Make sure that when talking about what happened, the participants address the former roles (the politician from country xy did...) and **not** the people themselves (Anna did ...).

Two options to start:

- A) The participants fill in a short "happiness survey" via slido.
 - a) Are you satisfied with the decision taken in the parliament?
 - b) How do you understand the EP election system compared to before?
 - c) How was the voting procedure: hard to understand - very easy (1-5)
 - d) How much do you know about the work in the EP compared to before?
 - e) How satisfied are you with the work of the EP?

- B) No survey

A debriefing should always consist of three parts. The debriefing is the actual learning phase, when participants can reflect and discover what they take from the simulation. This means, you have to give them enough time to think! There may be periods of silence, but except when people start doing other stuff or look at you expectantly, they may just be thinking about the question, so wait a bit before asking another one. The following questions act as a guideline, **don't ask all of them but rather pick a few.** How many depends on how much the participants talk. The order of the three parts should be kept the same.

1. Expressing emotions as well as observations (don't ask for judgements yet!)
 - a. How do you feel now?
 - b. How did you feel acting as someone else?
 - c. What do you think .. felt like when...?
 - d. What happened when...?
 - e. What did you notice during the election/ parliament phase?
 - f. What was your goal ?
 - g. How did ... affect what happened?
 - h. How did you proceed?

2. Interpretation
 - a. Did you reach your goal?
 - b. Why did ... act like this in situation ...?
 - c. What could you have done better?
 - d. How could you have behaved differently?
3. Transfer to reality - make what was learned practical
 - a. Where do you find similar situations?
 - b. What do you learn from this?
 - c. How could you transfer what you learned?

After finishing the debriefing (and stating clearly that it is over), you can ask what they want more knowledge on (you can tell about sources of information) or if you did the survey, go through the results and discuss noticeable points.