

1



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- One commissioner from each Member State
- Comparable to the government of a country
- Represents the EU



2



COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- One minister from each Member State
- Decision-making body
- Represents the Member States



3



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- Maximum 751 Members of Parliament (MEP)
- Decision-making body
- Represents the citizens of the EU



4



WORKSHEET

IN THE SHOES OF A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

PROCESS

From now on, each of you takes on the identity of a Member of the European Parliament (MEP). You were elected by the citizens of the European Union. They are counting on you to amend (=change), approve or reject law proposals.

On the game board you find cards with the blank side facing up. The cards either show a number or a symbol. Start with card number 1: one member of the group turns this card over and reads what is written on the back out loud. The group then performs the assignments.

After tackling card 1, continue in order with cards 2, 3 and 4. Respect the timing as indicated on the card. Use this worksheet to make notes.

CHANGES REQUESTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Write down the requested changes (amendments) briefly below (card 2).

CHANGES BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Write down your own changes (amendments) to the law proposal of the European Commission below. This is your new law. It is recommended to take into account both the changes asked for by the Council of the European Union (on card 2), as well as the information given by various stakeholders (card 3).

List the arguments / reasons why you, as Members of the European Parliament, believe the law you just created offers the best solution (card 4).

1.

2.

3.

1. LAW PROPOSAL BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON “SMOKING IN THE EU”



To prevent young people from taking up smoking, the European Commission proposes:

Article 1: ... To make health warnings on cigarette packages obligatory, as decided in previous EU-regulations.

Article 2: ... That the design of the packages may no longer vary between manufacturers. All packages must be standardised and only one font type may be used for the name, brand and manufacturer. The packages may not show any other logos.

Article 3: ... That the sale of tobacco products is prohibited for people under the age of 18 throughout the EU.

EUROPE@SCHOOL

Disclaimer: Neither the form, nor the content of this exercise offer a complete and correct representation of reality, nor do they represent the actual points of view of the European Parliament, the European Commission or the Council of the European Union. The goal of this simulation exercise is purely educational, which is the only true basis for the choices made.

2. LAW PROPOSAL BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON “AN EU ARMY?”



To make the EU more powerful in the world, the European Commission proposes...

Article 1: ...The establishment of a European army.

Article 2: ...That this army will be deployed during humanitarian disasters, such as droughts and floods, both in and outside of the EU. It will also be able to intervene in conflicts outside of the EU, e.g. in Syria.

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3. LAW PROPOSAL BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON “THE EU AND GLOBAL WARMING”



In order to keep global temperatures from rising more than the critical limit of 2° Celsius, the European Commission proposes that:

Article 1: ... At least 50% of final energy consumption in the EU should come from renewable energy sources, like solar and wind energy, by the year 2030. By 2050 this must be 100%.

Article 2: ... The EU plays a leading role in international climate conferences and convinces other countries in the world to take serious action.

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4. LAW PROPOSAL BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON “EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY”



In order to better involve the citizens of the European Union, the European Commission proposes that:

Article 1: ... For the European Parliamentary elections all member states introduce compulsory voting. In this way, all citizens will be obliged to reflect on who they choose as their representatives in the European Parliament.

Article 2: ... A ‘European Citizens’ Assembly’ made up of randomly selected citizens that change each time will be providing its input on all newly developed legislation. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union should all take into account the input of the European Citizens’ Assembly in their decisions.

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5. LAW PROPOSAL BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON “REFUGEES IN EUROPE”



In order to deal with the current and possible future arrival of migrants and asylum seekers in the EU; and to ensure a fair sharing of costs, the European Commission proposes that...

Article 1: ... Every EU Member State offers refuge to asylum seekers* according to the European minimum requirements: every asylum seeker has the right to food, shelter, education, healthcare and access to work while his/her application is being processed.

Article 2: ... There should be a permanent relocation plan for asylum seekers throughout the EU. This way each country puts in an equal amount of effort.

Article 3: ... The determination of the number of asylum seekers per country is based on several criteria:

- The gross national product (GNP) of each country
- Population
- Unemployment rates
- Efforts already undertaken for the shelter and the resettlement of refugees from war-torn areas

Article 4: ... There should be a large scale European rescue mission for migrants* in need on the Mediterranean Sea, in order to prevent possible new deaths. Every EU Member State is obliged to contribute to this mission according to its GNP.

* SOME DEFINITIONS:

Migrant: Any person who moves away from his/her country of origin for any reason. This is the umbrella word.

Refugee: A refugee is a specific migrant: Someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

Asylum seeker: When refugees seek sanctuary in another country, they apply for asylum – the right to be recognised as a refugee and receive legal protection and material assistance. As long as their procedure is running, they are called “asylum seekers”.

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THEME 1: SMOKING IN THE EU



FOUNDATION TO PREVENT YOUNG PEOPLE FROM SMOKING

Young people are seen by the tobacco industry as the 'replacement smokers': they have to make up for all the people dying from the consequences of smoking. That is why we urge the European Parliament to make the age limit for buying tobacco 21 instead of 18.



FACTS AND FIGURES

- 26% of the overall EU population and 29% of EU residents aged 15-24 smoke.
- 80% of smokers begin smoking before they are 18.
- Two in three smokers die from smoking.
- Tobacco is responsible for nearly 700 000 deaths in the EU every year.
- Millions of smokers are suffering from smoking-related diseases, like cancer.
- The EU estimates that smoking is costing Europe's healthcare system about 25 billion euros annually.

1

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

1. Please read the law proposal of the European Commission. (1 minute)
2. Briefly discuss the proposal within the group: What is it about? Ask the teacher for extra information if needed. (1 minute)
3. Each group member takes a moment to reflect whether he or she agrees with the proposal. Afterwards, everybody takes turns presenting his or her point of view to the other group members.

3

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Now it is your turn. As Members of the European Parliament you need to change the law proposal according to what you think is in the best interests of the EU citizens. BUT: you need to take into account the opinion of the Council (see 2), as well as the original law proposal of the European Commission. Also use the information of the stakeholders.

Take these steps:

1. Turn over the stakeholder's cards one at a time and read them out loud (each group member reads out loud one of the cards, take turns). These are the cards with a symbol in the corner. Continue until you have read all the cards. (2 min)
2. Put the cards with the text facing up on the table, so all group members see the information.
3. Discuss the original law proposal in group and go over each article. Start with article 1: who agrees, who disagrees? Use the information from the stakeholders for your arguments. Do so for all articles. (6 min)
4. Make an adapted law all group members agree with. You can change the content of articles, delete them or add new ones. Write your new/adapted law on the worksheet. (6 min)

2

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Council of the EU does not entirely agree with the proposal of the European Commission. We would like to see the following changes:

ARTICLE 2: The logo of cigarette brands may be shown on the packages

ARTICLE 3: Only the Member States can determine the age limit for buying tobacco products.

Please write down these changes (amendments) on the worksheet. (2 minutes)



TOBACCO INDUSTRY

We, the tobacco industry, are not pleased with the new proposal by the European Commission. We ask the European Parliament to reject it. We have already made many efforts: Advertisements for tobacco have been prohibited and there are already large warnings on the packaging. Do not forget that thanks to the tobacco industry governments earn more than €100 billion through tax revenues yearly. We also employ a lot of people. This law could mean the loss of 175,000 jobs in the EU.

4

You've created your own adapted law. Now you have to gather support from the entire European Parliament. Prepare a short presentation of your new law for the other MEPs (your classmates). Use the worksheet and proceed as follows: (3 min)

1. Take the original law proposal of the European Commission and read it out loud.
2. Tell your classmates which changes were requested by the Council.
3. Read your new law out loud.
4. Provide 2 or 3 arguments why you think this is a good measure for the citizens of the EU. Prepare these beforehand and write them on the worksheet.



FOUNDATION AGAINST CANCER

We are very happy with this new proposal. We want to prevent people from taking up smoking and believe the neutral packs will make smoking a lot less attractive.

We encourage the European Parliament to keep this law proposal as strong as possible.



THEME 2: AN EU ARMY



CITIZENS' PROTEST

We do not want the EU to get involved in international conflicts because this is a risk for our safety here in Europe. The chances for terrorist attacks in large European cities will increase.

If an EU army is created, then it should only be deployed for humanitarian aid operations.



FACTS AND FIGURES

- The United States of America leads the world in military spending (USD 649 billion), followed by China (USD 250 billion) and Saudi Arabia (USD 67.6 billion). (2018, Statista)
- The world's military arsenals are expected to double in size by 2030, compared to 2016.

1

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

1. Please read the law proposal of the European Commission. (1 min)
2. Briefly discuss the proposal within the group: what is it about? Ask the teacher for extra information if needed. (1 min)
3. Every group member takes a moment to reflect whether he or she agrees with the proposal. Afterwards, everybody takes turns presenting his or her point of view to the other group members.

3

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Now it is your turn. As Members of the European Parliament you need to change the law proposal according to what you think is in the best interests of the EU citizens. BUT: you need to take into account the opinion of the Council (see 2), as well as the original law proposal of the European Commission. Also use the information of the stakeholders.

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4. Make an adapted law all group members agree with. You can change the content of articles, delete them or add new ones. Write your new/adapted law on the worksheet. (6 min)

2

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Council of the EU reminds the European Commission of the fact that the Member States decide independently on their foreign and defence policy. Therefore the Council proposes the following changes:

ADDITION TO ARTICLE 1: This European army exists next to the national armies and does not replace them.

ADDITION TO ARTICLE 3: Every Member State decides autonomously about its contribution to the EU army, both in people and resources (money, tanks, airplanes, etc.)

Please write down these changes (amendments) on the worksheet. (2 minutes)



INDEPENDENT THINK TANK

The nature and scope of conflicts and security worldwide are changing. The diverse threats and players are generating new challenges for the defence and security of the EU Member States.

The European Union countries should therefore join forces to play an important role in the world on a military level.



DEFENCE INDUSTRY

We are in favour of a new European army alongside the existing national armies. The safety of the European Union must prevail. The EU needs to develop its own defence policy urgently instead of relying on the US for help.

We ask the European Parliament to provide extra budget for the development of this army. It is in our common interest.

4

You now have your own, adapted law. Now you have to gather support in the entire European Parliament. Prepare a short presentation of your new law for the other MEPs (your class mates).

Use the work sheet and proceed as follows: (3 min)

1. Take the original law proposal of the European Commission and read it out loud.
2. Tell your classmates which changes were requested by the Council.
3. Read your new law out loud.
4. Provide 2 to 3 arguments why you think this is a good measure for the citizens of the EU. Prepare these beforehand and write them on the worksheet.



NETWORK OF PEACE ORGANISATIONS

In Libya and Afghanistan, the situation worsened after military intervention. Weapons cannot solve conflicts. We want the EU to refrain from investing in a European army. The people do not want this army and do not want any more money to be spent on European defence.

One more issue: which language would be spoken in this army? English? French? Or one of the other 24 official languages of the EU?



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

1

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3. Every group member takes a moment to reflect whether he or she agrees with the proposal. Afterwards, everybody takes turns presenting his or her point of view to the other group members.

UN PANEL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS



- The earth is already 1° C warmer since the Industrial Revolution due to the emission of greenhouse gases from human activities.
- If average temperatures increase by 2° C, we will no longer be able to control the consequences (floods, heavy storms, rise in sea level, etc.).
- The EU is responsible for 11 % of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. The EU is the third biggest emitter behind China and the United States.
- 18.9 % of the EU's gross final energy consumption came from renewable sources in 2018 (Eurostat, 2020).

CITIZENS



We think the EU should take strong measures against global warming. We are cautiously optimistic about the European Commission proposal and hope the European Parliament will do everything in its power not to tone it down.

Not to intervene in climate change will have severe consequences for everyone and will cost 934 million euros per year. And, yet again, the citizens will be the ones paying the bill, not the companies.

THEME 3: THE EU AND GLOBAL WARMING

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

2

The Council of the EU is happy that the European Commission is taking climate change seriously. Nonetheless, it requests the following changes:

ARTICLE 2. 30% from renewable energy sources by 2030. Only set measures for 2050 if the US and China also set strong measures.

Please write down these changes (amendments) on the worksheet. (2 minutes)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

3

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THE CLIMATE ACTION



We are happy with this proposal and ask the European Parliament not to bend to oil and coal lobbies. Evidence shows that investing in a green economy also creates new jobs. The EU should therefore continue with these plans, regardless of what other countries in the world decide.

OIL AND COAL COMPANIES



The so-called 'renewable energy' sector is not ready yet. It is therefore impossible to know whether we will be able to rely exclusively on renewable energy by 2050. That is why we urge the European Parliament not to rely on renewables only, in order to safeguard the energy supply for individuals and companies in the EU.

You now have your own, adapted law. Now you have to gather support in the entire European Parliament. Prepare a short presentation of your new law for the other MEPs (your class mates).

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2. Tell your classmates which changes were requested by the Council.
3. Read your new law out loud.
4. Provide 2 to 3 arguments why you think this is a good measure for the citizens of the EU. Prepare these beforehand and write them on the worksheet.

4

THEME 4: EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY



CITIZENS

People should not be obliged to vote. Adults have the right to choose not to vote because they don't think the elections are important or they don't agree with any political candidate or the system.

Moreover, it is better that only those who are really interested in the EU vote, because they will be the most informed. If you force people who are not interested, they may vote at random, simply to fulfil legal requirements, or vote for frivolous or comical candidates.



FACTS AND FIGURES

- Overall voter turnout for the European elections in 2019 was 50.7 %.
- Only Belgium, Greece and Luxembourg have compulsory voting. In Greece, however, it is not enforced.
- The need for citizens to participate more in decision-making was mentioned explicitly in half of the national European Citizens' Consultation reports of 2018 and 2019.

1

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

1. Please read the law proposal of the European Commission. (1 min)
2. Briefly discuss the proposal within the group: what is it about? Ask the teacher for extra information if needed. (1 min)
3. Every group member takes a moment to reflect whether he or she agrees with the proposal. Afterwards, everybody takes turns presenting his or her point of view to the other group members.

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2

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Council is in favour of citizens participating more in EU affairs. It emphasises, however, that it is the Member States who decide whether to make voting compulsory. It demands the following changes:

ARTICLE 1. The European Commission can only encourage the Member States to introduce compulsory voting. It is the Member States who make the final decision.

ADDITION TO ARTICLE 2. 'This Assembly can only give advice and has no other power.'

Please write down these changes (amendments) on the worksheet. (2 minutes)



INDEPENDENT THINK TANK

Most regular citizens are not experts. Why would the institutions give them such an important role? Instead of an assembly of citizens, our think tank recommends selecting experts in the field, from industry, the academic world and civil society organisations.

3

THINK TANK FOR EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY

We are in favour of introducing compulsory voting for the European elections. This will mean that the election results reflect the opinion of all citizens, including young people. This is important, because research has shown that most voters are from the older generations, which can distort the election results.

Furthermore, people are often less familiar with the EU level. Compulsory voting will change that, because people will have to make sure they are informed before casting a vote.



THE EUROPEAN POLICY ASSOCIATION

Europeans want a greater voice in the functioning of the EU. We are very much in favour of the second part of this proposal, in particular the at-random selection of citizens. There is no point making promises to win a place in this assembly. This also ensures that 'ordinary citizens' are involved in European policy-making. This is important because most of the current participatory instruments mainly target either organised or professional interests, or experts in a particular field.

4

You now have your own, adapted law. Now you have to gather support in the entire European Parliament. Prepare a short presentation of your new law for the other MEPs (your class mates).

Use the worksheet and proceed as follows: (3 min)

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FACTS AND FIGURES

- An unprecedented 70.8 million people worldwide have been forcibly displaced from their homes (UNHCR, 2019).
- 14 % of all refugees worldwide are hosted in Europe (UNHCR, 2019).
- Reasons to flee include war (e.g. Syria), turmoil (e.g. Afghanistan, Libya) and terrorism (e.g. Nigeria, Eritrea).
- Since 2014, over 20 000 people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea (Missing Migrants Project, 2019).

CITIZENS' PROTEST

Our countries cannot host all of the asylum seekers. The only way to maintain our way of life is to accept nobody from outside the EU.

We demand that every Member State decides autonomously how to deal with asylum seekers and how many of them it will take in. The EU may not impose anything onto the Member States.

THEME 5: REFUGEES IN EUROPE

INDEPENDENT THINK TANK

Countries in the south of the EU have the biggest influx of migrants because they are closest to the current migration routes. This means they have to host the most asylum seekers, which costs them money. The other Member States of the EU should support them. That is why we support the legislative proposal of the European Commission.

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Council of the EU is of the opinion that Member States must decide autonomously on this matter. The Council wants the following changes:

ARTICLE 2: Member States have the ultimate decision whether or not to participate in the relocation plan.

ARTICLE 3: The Member States decide autonomously how many refugees they will host.

ARTICLE 4: Every country has the final decision about their contribution.

Please write down these changes (amendments) on the worksheet. (2 minutes)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Now it is your turn. As Members of the European Parliament you need to change the law proposal according to what you think is in the best interests of the EU citizens. BUT: you need to take into account the opinion of the Council (see 2), as well as the original law proposal of the European Commission. Also use the information of the stakeholders.

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

If the EU really thinks that human rights matter, then it needs to take action and save human lives. We ask the European Parliament to support this proposal because a European approach is absolutely necessary. We also urge the EU to provide legal ways to apply for asylum from outside the EU. Currently, people can only apply once they have reached EU soil, which forces them to enter illegally and take unnecessary risks.

EMPLOYERS FOR INTEGRATION

The successful integration of non-EU nationals into the EU labour market represents an opportunity for our societies. When effectively integrated, they can help to improve the functioning and performance of the labour market and support fiscal sustainability. With the European population ageing, this is especially necessary in order to ensure that pensions continue to be affordable.

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