



Shadow Cabinets

Type of event: Interactive learning simulation on EU decision-making and active citizenship

Target group: Young people interested in understanding EU institutions, human rights, and civic engagement

Short description of the workshop:

The Shadow Cabinet is a dynamic and participatory method that helps young people understand the functioning of EU institutions and their role in shaping European society. Through simulations, debates, and collaborative problem-solving, participants experience decision-making processes, connect them with human rights frameworks, and develop actionable plans on current EU topics. The workshop fosters critical thinking, teamwork, and an understanding of how youth can actively influence policies and engage in civic life.

Framework (structure)

Before the workshop (online)

- **Pre-engagement survey (Google Forms):** Collect expectations, prior knowledge of EU institutions, and main interests.
- **Introductory video:** Short explainer on the structure of EU institutions and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

During the workshop (in-person)

1. **Introduction & icebreaker – Web of Connections (20 min)**
2. **Participants introduce themselves in a circle, creating a yarn “web” that connects names, expectations, and personal interests.**
3. **Simulation – The New Planet (60 min)**
4. **In small groups, participants imagine rules for a new society on another planet, then compare them to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.**





- **Moving Debate about the EU (15 min)**
- **Participants physically position themselves according to their opinions on statements about EU policy, rights, and participation.**
- **EU Silent Puzzle (60 min)**
- **Teams work silently to match responsibilities to EU institutions using puzzle pieces, followed by debriefing questions on institutional roles.**
- **Let's Take Action (60 min)**
- **Groups choose an EU-related issue, prepare an action plan (causes, solutions, youth engagement, strategy), and pitch it to others, followed by commitments to action.**

After the workshop (online)

- **Shared action tracker (Trello or Notion): Monitor follow-up steps from group action plans.**
- **Reflection wall (Padlet): Participants post key learnings and how they plan to apply them.**
- **Follow-up webinar (1 month later): Exchange on actions taken and impact stories.**

