



Briefing note for lecturers and students: EUTOPIA virtual simulation exercise on the EU Digital Service Act

When? February 4-5, 2021

Where? Online. Access will be provided to a dedicated VUB course.

What? Simulation exercise on intra and inter-institutional negotiations of the draft EU Digital Services Act (which will be revealed by European Commission on December 2, 2020).

Note that the simulation will take place in English. Sufficient command of English is required.

Phase 0 (Sign-up) by December 18, 2020

Students from EUTOPIA partner universities sign up to participate through their university EUTOPIA simulation contact point, by December 18, 2020:

Vrije Universiteit Brussel: Trisha Meyer, trisha.meyer@vub.be
University of Warwick: Christian Soegaard, C.Soegaard@warwick.ac.uk
University of Ljubljana: Mojmir Mrak, mojmir.mrak@ef.uni-lj.si
Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona: Andrea Noferini, andrea.noferini@upf.edu
CY Cergy Paris Université: Linda Benrais, benrais@essec.edu
University of Gothenburg: Lisbeth Aggestam, Lisbeth.aggestam@gu.se

The contact points serve as intermediaries and assist students in their preparation and participation in the simulation exercise.

Phase 1 (Preparation) by February 2, 2021

In the **first phase**, the VUB EUTOPIA simulation coordinators will assign alter-ego roles to each student, dividing the major roles (presidents of the European Commission, Council Presidency, leaders of political groups) across universities.

Students will receive their alter-ego role and briefing notes by January 15, 2021 and have one briefing session with the VUB EUTOPIA simulation coordinators between January 18-29, 2021.

Then students familiarize themselves with the topic, the background negotiations and the individual position of their alter ego (member state position, political party position, or interest group position). Students need to prepare and submit their alter-ego starting policy position by February 2, 2021.

Phases 2-4 (Simulation) on February 4-5, 2021

In the **second phase**, the simulation starts with meetings of the Council of the EU configuration and the European Parliament committee on February 4 (all day). In these meetings, students present their alter-ego starting policy position and negotiate towards Council configuration and Parliament committee positions.

In the **third phase**, on February 5 (morning), a small group of the Council and Parliament meet with the European Commission in a trilogue setting to present their separate positions and work towards a common position, depending on the evolution of the negotiations.

In the **fourth phase**, on February 5 (afternoon), the Council of the EU configuration and the European Parliament committee briefly meet again to deliberate and vote on the outcome of the trialogue. In a final plenary, the outcome of the negotiations (separate or common positions) is presented.

During the negotiations, the European Commission needs to be in constant contact. Their mission is to make sure the proposal continues to reflect the position of the Commission.

Special roles will be invited to brief the European Parliament and Council on the position of the interest group they represent. EU special bodies will present their opinion in a similar fashion. Special roles are encouraged to lobby their positions creatively throughout the negotiations.

The media is a vital source of information for all parties involved in the negotiations and will keep everyone up to speed with recent developments, as they unfold via social media channels.

Phase 5 (Survey) on February 5, 2021

At the end of day 2, the simulation ends with a survey and **joint focus group** where all participants will share their experience and reflect on specific learning aspects and tactics used in the game.

Why? Puts theory of EU policy-making into practice, allowing students to gain firsthand experience of EU institutional negotiations, rules and strategies!

Students will receive an EUTOPIA badge upon completing the simulation exercise.

Cost? Fee of 100 Euro per participant is required. This fee is paid directly to VUB Institute for European Studies, using the following details:

Institute for European Studies

- By credit card: <https://www.ies.be/payments/general-payment.php>
- By bank transfer:
Address: Pleinlaan 2, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium
IBAN: BE47 3630 6344 2080
BIC/SWIFT: BBRUBEBB
- Please use as reference: EUTOPIA Simulation + your name

Students must receive confirmation from their university EUTOPIA simulation coordinator that they have been accepted to participate in the simulation exercise, prior to proceeding with payment. Only when payment has been completed, will students be granted access to the learning platform where the simulation exercise will take place.

Please contact your university EUTOPIA simulation contact point if the fee is prohibitive.

Context? This EUTOPIA virtual simulation exercise is organised within the EUTOPIA learning community on 'Europe in the World'. For more information, please consult <https://eutopia-university.eu>

The simulation is also part of the Inter-University Winter School on EU Policy-Making: Analyzing Digital Rights in Today's EU, which will take place from 1 to 12 February 2021.

The Inter-University Winter School on EU Policy-Making is a cooperation between the Institute for European Studies, the Diplomatische Akademie Wien – Vienna School of International Studies Vienna and the University of Vienna, is a Jean Monnet Module, and is made possible with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

For more information on the Winter School, please consult <https://www.eu-winterschool.eu/>