



Report on the Simulation Game “Fighting Right Wing Populism”

Flensburg, Germany

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Report on the Simulation Game "Fighting Right Wing Populism"

The main goal of the project "Fighting Right Wing Populism" was to develop and conduct a simulation game that tackles the sources, reasons, dynamics and effects of right wing populism in Europe. The simulation game was developed by a group of experts (academics and practitioners of youth work), tested five times in different contexts and adopted to the needs of young people between 18 and 35 years. As a result of the project we provide this manual for trainers of non-formal education, as well as for teachers at schools and lecturers at universities. It includes a chapter dealing with the definition of right wing populism that we developed within the group, a general introduction to simulation games and a description of how to facilitate and use the method of simulation game, and further suggestions of how to set up a workshop with simulation games. The materials required to conduct a simulation game are attached to this report.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 2014-2015 the ECMI Senior Research Associate Dr. Raul Cârstocea and the ECMI Project Assistant Viktoria Martovskaya participated in an ERASMUS+ "Youth in Action" project on the topic of right wing

populism, in which ECMI was a partner of CRISP Berlin (with other partners from Italy, Greece, Ukraine, Romania, Lithuania, Moldova).

1.1 Overview of project activities

The first part of the project (Stage 1) was divided in four activities.

Stage 1, Activity 1: Training of Trainers (ToT) in September 2014

Place: Berlin

Duration: 7 days

Date: 20th-27th September 2014

Participants:

14 in total: two participants from each of the seven partner organizations: Antigone (Greece), Civil (FYROM), CRISP (Germany), ECMI (Germany), Iskra (Ukraine), Join (Italy) Youth for Exchange and Understanding (Cyprus).

Content:

In the first activity of the project, 14 trainers, youth workers and experts in the field of right wing populism from 7 partner organizations came together for a one week seminar. In the course of this seminar they were introduced to the method of simulation games, followed by an analysis of the problems that can be encountered and a discussion on the learning goals of the simulation game. On these bases, the participants, together with CRISP, developed a simulation game tackling the topic of right wing populism. The simulation game highlights the sources of right wing populism in the EU and should further offer a platform to think of strategies to better deal with this issue. The 14 trainers participating in the first activity attended one additional regional implementation seminar (3 days) and the final workshop (3 days).

Activity 2A: Regional Implementation Seminar

Place: Berlin

Duration: 3 days

Date: 30th October – 2nd of November 2014

Participants:

20 in total: 2 trainers (which already participated in activity 1) and 3 participants from each of the following four partner organizations: CRISP (Germany), ECMI (Germany), Iskra (Ukraine), Join (Italy)

Content:

The newly developed simulation game was tested and improved in Berlin with a wider circle of persons involved in youth work. The game was evaluated with regard to a regional point of view. The trainers got the chance to test the simulation game and their skills as simulation game trainers.

Activity 2B: Regional Implementation Seminar

Place: Thessaloniki

Duration: 3 days

Date: 20th – 23rd of November 2014

Participants:

20 in total. 2 trainers (which already participated in activity 1) and 3 participants from each of the following three partner organizations: Antigone (Greece), Youth for Exchange and Understanding (Cyprus), Civil (FYROM).

Content:

The newly developed simulation game was tested and improved in Thessaloniki with a wider circle of persons involved in youth work. The game was evaluated with regard to a regional point of view. The trainers got the chance to test the simulation game and their skills as simulation game trainers.

Activity 3: Final Workshop

Place: Brussels

Duration: 3 days

Date: 11th – 14th of December 2014

Participants:

14 in total: 2 trainers (which already participated in activity 1) from the following partner organizations: Antigone (Greece), Civil (FYROM), CRISP (Germany), ECMI (Germany), Iskra (Ukraine), Join (Italy) Youth for Exchange and Understanding (Cyprus)

Content:

At the end of the project, the 14 trainers who were involved in activity 1 came together for the final workshop, where the results of the Regional Implementation Phase were presented. The simulation game was adjusted according to the suggestions that arose during the implementation phase. Furthermore, the outcomes of the two simulation games conducted were shared, compared, and served as a basic concept for the formulation of policy recommendations. At the end of the workshop these recommendations were discussed with European politicians in a panel discussion.

The second part of the project was divided into 5 activities: 1 Preparatory Meeting, 3 Regional Implementation Seminars and 1 Final Meeting.

Stage 2, Activity 1: Preparatory Meeting in Berlin

Place: Berlin

Duration: 4 days

Date: 11th – 15th of July 2015

Participants:

22 in total: 2 participants from each of the 11 partner organizations.

Content:

As a first step representatives of four of the organizations that developed the simulation game met with representatives of the new partner organizations, in order to present them the simulation game which had been developed and tested during the first stage of the project, in 2014. Furthermore, they were introduced to the method of simulation gaming in general. Together with the new partners we analyzed the specific situation in each country, and discussed necessary adaptations for the regional implementation seminars.

Participating organizations:

The participating organizations from the 2014 project were:

Civil (Macedonia), CRISP e.V. (Germany), ECMI (Germany), Iskra (Ukraine),

The new partners were:

CSDC (Italy), EGEA (Moldova), Human Rights Initiative (Hungary), NPI (Lithuania), European Foundation of Human Rights (Lithuania), Plural (Romania), United Society of Balkans (Greece).

Activity 2A Regional Implementation Seminar South/South-East

Place: Skopje (Macedonia)

Duration: 4 days

Date: 23rd – 28th of August 2015

Participants:

24 in total: 16 participants and 8 trainers (which already participated in Activity 1).

Content:

The simulation game was implemented during a workshop format, which provided the participants with a deeper insight on the dynamics of right wing populism in Europe. A

special focus was placed on the influence right wing populist movements and parties have on the democratic culture as such. On the basis of that, we discussed together with the participants how they can counter argue these developments, and which actions they can take individually.

Activity 2B Regional Implementation Central/North-East

Place: Budapest (Hungary)

Duration: 4 days

Date: 29th of August – 3rd of September 2015

Participants:

24 in total: 16 participants and 8 trainers (which already participated in Activity 1).

Content:

The simulation game was implemented during a workshop format, which provided the participants with a deeper insight on the dynamics of right wing populism in Europe. A special focus was placed on the influence right wing populist movements and parties have on the democratic culture as such. On the basis of that, we discussed together with the participants how they can counter argue these developments, and which actions they can take individually.

Activity 2C Regional Implementation Seminar East

Place: Lviv (Ukraine)

Duration: 4 days

Date: 10th – 15th of October 2015

Participants:

24 in total: 16 participants and 8 trainers (which already participated in Activity 1).

Content:

The simulation game was implemented during a workshop format, which provided the

participants with a deeper insight on the dynamics of right wing populism in Europe. A special focus was placed on the influence right wing populist movements and parties have on the democratic culture as such. On the basis of that, we discussed together with the participants how they can counter argue these developments, and which actions they can take individually.

Activity 3: Final Workshop

Place: Rome

Duration: 4 days

Date: 22nd – 26th of November 2015

Participants:

22 in total: 2 trainers (which already participated in Activity 1) from the 10 partner organizations.

Content:

The 20 trainers came together again for a final workshop, where the results of the Regional Implementation Phase were presented and discussed. The simulation game was adjusted due to the suggestions developed during the implementation phase. Furthermore, the outcomes of the simulation games were shared and compared. Regional specifics were evaluated and common findings summarized.

II. INTRODUCTION TO RIGHT WING POPULISM

In recent years, Europe has been experiencing a rise in the number and prominence of right wing parties and movements. Albeit manifesting itself in various forms in different national contexts, today almost all countries in Europe are

experiencing this phenomenon, whether at different levels of intensity.

2.1 Characteristics and roots

Although there is no generally accepted definition of right wing populism, for the purpose of our project we prefer to develop a concept using the method of thick description instead of referring to a short definition that would not be able to cover the complexity of this political ideology and its diverse manifestations in contemporary society. As such, we concentrate on the following **characteristics** that we define as right wing populism:

- A political ideology that **rejects the existing mainstream political discourse** and presents itself as an alternative to it.
- The promotion of **exclusionary discourse**, positing a **clear-cut distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’**. ‘Us’ is usually identified as the nation, the ‘people’, the majority of the population or even the ‘common man’. ‘Them’ refers to the existing political establishment (or, in cases where such parties are in power, to the international political system), which is rejected as not representative of the expectations of the people; and to marginal groups, minorities, migrants, etc. This distinction is typically constructed along national, regional, religious,

ethnic differences (hate speech being often included in the construction of this distinction). Right wing populism is thus often associated with **nationalism, chauvinism and xenophobia**.

- In some cases the exclusionary discourse can take **violent, aggressive forms** such as **hate speech** and even **hate crimes**.
- A very important dimension characterizing right wing populism is the **‘anti-’ dimension**: such parties and movements (even when in power) often represent themselves as poised against the political establishment, mainstream parties, the European Union, minorities, migrants, religious groups (e.g. Jews, Muslims).
- **Eurocepticism** is an important dimension of right wing populist discourse in some countries (e.g. France, Germany, UK).
- **Claiming to speak for the ‘silent majority’**, pretending to be able to say what common people think but do not have the opportunity to say.
- Importance of **identity** in right wing populist discourse, mostly defined in terms of traditional allegiances, such as national/ethnic, linguistic, religious. Right wing populist ideology has an anti-individualist impetus, favoring **collective interests** over individual ones.

- Promoting an **oversimplified vision of reality** and seemingly providing people with easy solutions to complex problems, shifting responsibility from the in-group ('us') to the out-group ('them').
- In relationship to this, right wing populist organizations are often **single issue or few issues parties**.
- Transferring these oversimplified messages through a discourse appealing to **emotionally-charged concepts** (which they portray as 'natural' or 'taken for granted' by the majority) rather than by using complex rational argumentation. Making extensive use of **slogans** rather than party programs for conveying this type of emotional messages.
- Focus on the fears of the population (e.g. unemployment): **exploiting, propagating and even creating fear** (e.g. migration in relationship to unemployment) in order to achieve electoral goals or obtain / maintain power. The use of apocalyptic discourse is common in right wing populist rhetoric and is linked to this use of fear.
- The employment of the tactic of seemingly **breaking taboos**, addressing controversial topics (e.g. corruption of political leaders, criminality) that mainstream parties often avoid.
- The emotional appeal right wing populists make recourse to, the purposeful choice of controversial, taboo topics and the exploitation of fear often make them **appealing to the media** ('if it scares, it airs'), including new media. As a result, such parties and movements are typically very interested in the media and quite successful in using it for their own advantage.
- Due to the characteristics above, right wing populist groups often have a particular **interest to appeal to young people**.
- Internally, such parties and movements often have an authoritarian structure, where a **charismatic leader** is central for the organization.
- While sharing many of these common characteristics, right wing populism varies **in its forms in different countries**, ranging from parties forming the government to opposition parties, anti-system groups, extremist, far-right organizations, some even include paramilitary branches. Most of these characteristics and tactics are deployed within democratic political systems, although in some cases they are borderline or overtly anti-democratic. More types of right wing populist organizations can co-exist in some countries.

2.2 Influence on the political system

In addition to the characteristics of right wing populism, we also identified a number of reasons that help explain its rising popularity in Europe in recent years:

- The most important of these relates to the ability of right wing populist parties and movements to **exploit existing crises and conflict lines** within societies.
- One such example is the feeling of a **crisis of values and the loss of identity** associated with the rapid pace of change in societies today and the search for new identifications and affiliations. Through the use of emotionally charged concepts and reference to ‘traditional’ values, right-wing populist organizations provide people with a ‘ready to use’ identity. They promise pride, protection and a stable identity instead of instability and insecurity.
- The ability to **exploit real existing problems or dysfunctions of the political system** (e.g. democratic deficit within European institutions, lack of connection between the politicians and the electorate they are meant to represent) which are often not directly addressed by other parties. Right wing populist groups do not offer realistic solutions to such problems, which are inherently difficult to tackle, only simplified explanations.
- Partly related to the issue mentioned above, **growing disillusionment with mainstream political parties** (as shown for example by the general decrease in voting turnout, and the growing interest in new forms of mobilization such as social movements) opens up the political space and provides opportunities for parties that claim to represent an alternative to mainstream politics.
- Such alternatives provide a **sense of excitement** by presenting themselves as something new, and thus manage to involve disaffected voters, while making them feel comfortable with traditional values that many can easily relate to.
- The ability to displace existing complex problems (e.g. youth unemployment) into other issues, with apparently ‘simple’ solutions (e.g. blame immigration).
- The increasing exposure to different cultures, coupled with a lack of understanding of the diversity and relative nature of systems of values and beliefs, often translates into a **fear of the ‘new’ and the ‘unknown’**, which right wing populist parties use to their advantage.
- The **political opportunism** right-wing populist parties often display, as their political agenda is very

flexible, following (and manipulating) people's feelings and concerns when setting their priorities.

- The growing importance of the media in politics and the ability of right wing populist organizations to use the media to their advantage.

III. INTRODUCTION TO SIMULATION GAMES

Simulation games are a method that has the potential to allow participants to achieve several learning goals; furthermore, the way of learning is experienced-based, meaning that the participants construct new knowledge themselves by combining what they already know (theory, soft skills, etc.) in order to act within the simulation game. Thus, the knowledge gained within a simulation game has a lasting learning effect. However, it is just a method, meant to achieve one or several learning goals. If the simulation game works out successfully all participants are actively involved and learn a lot. On a second level, the facilitators channel the participants' experiences and ideas in order to summarize and evaluate the main aspects regarding the overall goal.

3.1 What is a simulation game?

A simulation is a model of reality, isolating a certain detail of reality, transformed into a certain setting, which allows the arising of a

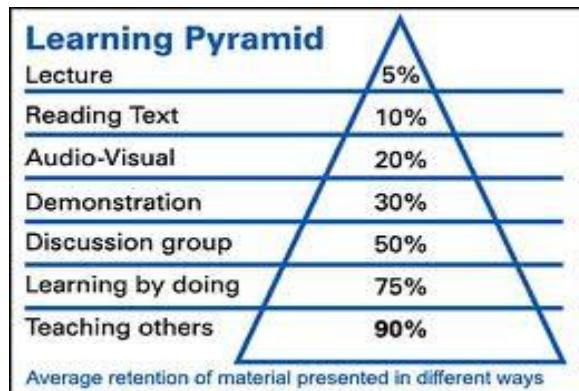
particular dynamic created by the players themselves. In general, simulation games train the capabilities of the players to make decisions. Furthermore, simulation games offer possibilities to test communication and organizational skills in a risk-free environment.

All in all simulation games enable the players to plan, execute and optimize their action strategies. In a simulation game individual actors or groups slip into certain roles and interact with each other within a predefined framework. In the initial stage of the simulation game there is typically a salient problem, usually a problem calling for action or decision-making. Generally the settings (scenario) of simulation games include a conflict-prone relationship between the different actors and groups and/or a topical conflict. The simulation game is structured in different phases, while the mutual reactions between the actions of the participants (actors) and the environment of the simulation game permanently create new situations.

3.2 Why use a simulation game?

The Learning Pyramid below shows that practice by doing, such as the one provided by simulation games, is much more effective than just listening to a lecture.

Role-playing is a useful exercise in overcoming some of the limits of traditional lecture-based teaching. While lectures presuppose the existence of a knowledgeable professor transmitting



information to overall passive students, role-playing requires both the redefinition of the professor / student relationship and the active involvement of students. Such role-play is designed to achieve three main results: support students to take a more active role and ownership of their learning process; develop students' research, writing and presentation skills; and apply their knowledge to a specific case.

The basic assumption of experience-based learning methods, like simulation gaming, is that knowledge is produced through active individual construction, which mostly takes place within a group. Hence, due to a constructivist approach, knowledge is generated within a person, as a result of the actions of a subject, based on his/her values, beliefs, opinions and pre-experiences (see Neubert, Reich and Voß 2001: 256).

The learning concept underlying the method of simulation gaming can be summarized into the following phases:

- Active experimenting
- Gaining experiences
- Reflecting group dynamics

- Generalizing findings
- Expressing consequences.

Consequently, it is important not to present any content as fixed. In fact, the players must have the freedom to construct knowledge themselves by interpreting, observing, reflecting and generalizing. In the course of the simulation game, attention should also be paid to the elements of authenticity. Thus, the problems encountered in the simulation game should correspond to reality and be relevant for the life-reality of the participants, in order to create interest and an emotional reference point. Furthermore, the problems of the simulation game should be embedded in different situations that allow taking different perspectives. This prevents a situation where knowledge is applied in a strict and rigid way; the players should be enabled to apply their knowledge differently in manifold situations. In this framework, the learning environment should be designed in a way that stimulates cooperative learning in groups. By taking this into consideration the setting of the simulation game should include a variety of actors that contribute an additional angle to the problem/conflict AND allow for each single actor to find possible partners for cooperation (other actors) and opponents. The participants to simulation games expand their knowledge through exchanging ideas and experiences, discuss problems and evaluate problem-solving proposals.

IV. SIMULATION GAME ON RIGHT WING POPULISM

4.1 *Learning goals and target groups*

The primary learning objectives of the simulation game we designed are the following:

- To facilitate the understanding by participants of the above-mentioned characteristics of right wing populism and their working in practice.
- To acquire first-hand and personal experience of the functioning of right wing populist parties as a participant in a simulation game.
- To understand how the presence of right wing populist parties influences the political system and the political culture in a certain country. In this sense, the simulation game shows how, even when they are not in government and represent relatively small groups within the political spectrum, right-wing populist parties can still dominate the political debate, imposing their own vision of society, which other parties cannot ignore and are obliged to react to.
- To take into account the role of personality: as it becomes visible in the simulation, the personality of the actors playing the role of right wing populist politicians significantly influences the results of the game. Participants are thus made aware of how important the impact of the personality of certain political actors on the political debate is also in real life.
- To acknowledge the difficulties of devising strategies for countering the discourse and actions of right wing populist parties, and the easiness with which these can define certain issues ‘in their terms’ and force other political actors to respond to these accordingly.
- To understand the potential of spillover effect from often small but strongly motivated political parties that focus on one or a small number of issues to mainstream politics, and the space for maneuver this flexibility of the agenda offers to right wing populist parties.
- To understand the importance of media in transmitting (or not) the messages of right-wing populist movements and parties and their ‘sensationalist’ potential.
- To understand the complexity of negotiation processes in politics and policy-making and the need for compromises in democratic societies.
- To transfer the experience of the simulation game to participants’ own life to encourage them to think of

ways how to counter right wing populist discourse in their own contexts.

4.2 *Description of “Vulkania”*

The scenario takes place in the fictional country of Vulkania, neighbouring the EU. The country is populated mainly by ethnic Vulkanians and two minorities. The bigger minority consists of the Betian ethnic group and the second, smaller one, of Rehans.

The country is facing major problems: poor economic situation, high unemployment rate, corruption, political instability, and an unstable educational sector. All of these factors have led to the rise of ethnic tensions between the majority population and the two minorities.

The simulation game takes place 6 months before the elections in Vulkania. The government, currently led by the conservative party, being under pressure, is trying to regain popularity by inviting all the political actors to a ‘conference of national unity’. During the conference, reforms of the educational system and of the security sector are introduced and left for the participants to address.

Participants take the roles of the delegates attending the conference.

- Government: trying to show the willingness to collaborate with other actors on the most urgent/crucial issues, without renouncing the ownership of the action plans.

- Main opposition party: tries to prevent the success of the government policies, but cannot avoid participating in the conference and seeking allies to win the next election.
- Betian party: their main interest is to improve the situation of the respective minority, both in the education and the security sector. The party does not have clear preferences on forming coalitions.
- Rehans: try to prevent being blamed for all the problems of the country and being used as scapegoats by other political parties. Hence they try to raise awareness at the European level about the situation of the minority in the country.
- Movement for Vulkania’s Rebirth: trying to gain political influence and public support by destabilizing the situation and blaming other parties and in particular the minorities.
- Civil society: trying to raise awareness, ease the situation, work against rising tensions and discrimination.
- EU: demanding stability in Vulkania to avoid tensions and a potential flow of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants at its borders.

- Media: trying to report objectively on events taking place in the country before the elections.

All the actors try to pursue their goals by negotiating compromises in different settings. During the free negotiations phase of the simulation game, actors can conduct certain actions (demonstrations, campaigns, side deals), pressuring other actors and influencing their decisions. In the end, the government tries to come up with an action plan that includes as many actors as possible.

V. FACILITATION

The basic idea of the method of simulation gaming is learning by playing, thus the main tasks of the facilitator is to provide the necessary framework and to make sure each participant gets into his/her actor's role and into the game.

During the simulation game, it is up to the players themselves to have their own experiences and to create new knowledge, so the role of the facilitator is more comparable to the one of a navigator.

The facilitator is counseling the process of learning, but NOT guiding the simulation game. Thus, his/her role is similar to the one of a coach who is assisting in carrying out a gymnastics exercise (Ripsas 1997: 266). The facilitator is consequently focusing less on transmitting content and more on enabling the participants to achieve an independent

definition of the problem and on diagnosing and developing particular problem-solving strategies.

Golden rule: Facilitators should interfere as little as possible and as much as needed.

This means the facilitator remains mostly passive during the simulation game and motivates the players towards active and self-directed participation. As most of the participants are used to a much more passive role, the facilitator should point out this alternative learning atmosphere.

In general the facilitator should not react judgmentally on any questions: there are no stupid questions, only stupid answers. But of course he/she does not have to answer all questions, but try to elicit answers from the participants themselves. Thus, the facilitator should support and accept alternative problem-solving ideas, instead of pushing through his or her own.

Especially in cases when groups are larger than 20 participants, one should consider involving more facilitators. The number of team members varies according to the number of participants and also to the scenario of the simulation. A special focus has to be laid on the evaluation and debriefing sessions that are carried out immediately after the simulation game is completed. Some general examples are described below.

VI. WORKSHOP CONCEPT

6.1 Before the simulation game

6.1.1 Session 1 – Democratic values and society

Title: Democratic values and society

Summary and learning goals (examples):

The participants discuss different values important for a modern pluralistic and democratic society – a society they would like to live in.

Time frame: 90 minutes

Structure:

- a. Plenum discussions and brainstorming the question: “What should be the value-basis for a modern society we would like to live in?” The answers are summarized and discussed. (30 min)
- b. Small groups (4-6 persons per group) working on the questions: “Where can we find these values in our personal society/societies? Which are the shortcomings?” (20 min)

Material needed: Flipchart, cards, markers

Optional Session:

Title: Basic introduction to human rights

Summary and learning goals: The introductory session on human rights intends to equip participants with basic knowledge

on the definition(s) of human rights and the relevant legislation.

Time frame: 60 min + 45 minutes (optional)

Structure: Basic definitions

- a. Powerpoint presentation in a quiz-like format, where the following questions will be answered during the discussion: “What is a human?”, “What are rights?” and “What are human rights?” → Answers will be collected on a flipchart; definitions will be shown in the Powerpoint afterwards. (15 min)
- b. Powerpoint presentation on the basic values and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights. (15 min).
- c. Possibility of including video clips produced by Youth for Human Rights (recommended videos nr. 1-5, 18, 19, 26, 28-30).¹ Each video clip should be followed by a short comment by volunteering participants or the workshop leader.
- d. Interactive discussion on the impact of human rights at individual and collective level (accompanied by screening of the short film “Impasse” by Bram Schouw, followed by a

¹ <http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/>

discussion related to the film's content)²

Material needed: video projector, laptop, internet access, flipchart and markers.

6.1.2 Session 2 - Political orientations and representative party systems

Title: What is left, what is right? Political orientations and representative party systems

Summary and learning goals: The participants discuss various political parties and ideological orientations, from the far left to the far right, and define the location of right wing populism. They discuss and get to know also the differences in structure and appearance of right wing populist organisations and their supporters in different countries and contexts.

Time frame: 45 minutes

Structure: The trainer draws a line and together with participants collects examples of parties/movements, positioning them on a left-right axis. At the end of this exercise, the differences between the positions on the line should be clear. Also, the position of right wing populist movements/parties should be discussed in order to distinguish

² "Impasse", short film, Director: Bram Schouw, Netherlands, 2008, 5 min. Synopsis: The film depicts an encounter between a white boy and an African girl in a night train. They look at each other: he wants to, but doesn't dare. She lets him, but stays elusive. When the train stops at the next station and she leaves the train, he has to show his colors. He looks out the window and we can see a huge Swastika tattoo on the back of his neck. Find it on: <http://vimeo.com/102732508>

them from conservative parties or neo-Nazi extremists. This can of course be different from country to country.

Material needed: Flipchart, markers, party symbols/pictures of political leaders (printed or in a Powerpoint presentation)

6.1.3 Session 3 - What is right wing populism

Title: What is right wing populism?

Summary and learning goals: The participants will define the term "right wing populism" and be provided with additional information on the subject. Finally they will discuss the reasons why right wing populism presents a threat to a democratic society. By the end of this session, all participants will have a clear understanding of right wing populism and will be able to recognize its characteristics and strategies, as well as a number of ways to tackle it.

Time frame: 90 minutes

Structure:

1. The participants will address **three guiding questions:**
 - a. What is right wing populism?
 - b. Why is it popular?
 - c. How to fight it?

They will be divided in groups and asked to discuss and answer the above-mentioned questions on

differently colored cards. Then each group will present their answers.

2. The facilitator will provide participants with a **document** with useful resources and links regarding right wing populism:

Chip Berlet, “What is Right-Wing Populism?”, *Research for Progress* at <http://www.researchforprogress.us/concepts/populism-rightist/>

- a. Tony Barber, “European democracy must keep rightwing populism at bay”, 16/09/2014, at <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/16aed0d2-3ce8-11e4-9733-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3Lmz5Sif1>
- b. Ruth Wodak, “Re-inventing scapegoats – right-wing populism across Europe”, *The Mark*, 3/3/2014 at <http://www.themarknews.com/2014/03/03/reinventing-scapegoats/>

Material needed: Flipchart, colored cards, markers, Internet access and laptops (optional).

6.2 After the simulation game

6.2.1 Session1 - De-briefing

In the de-briefing phase participants reflect on what has happened in the game, why has it happened and which conclusions could be transferred to real life.

The de-briefing phase is meant to reprocess the experiences acquired during the gaming phase. A fruitful exchange of the participants’ perceptions and findings is the goal of the de-briefing phase, so that participants can mutually benefit from their personal achievements.

As stated at the very beginning, simulation gaming is just a method and not an end in itself. Based on the events that took place during the simulation game, conclusions are drawn in line with achieving a further transfer to reality of the participants’ experience. Usually participants remember quite well the emotional moments of the simulation game, both the positive and negative ones. The reflection is based on their experiences of the successful and ineffective strategies they applied during the game. For the overall learning effect it is useful to reflect on ineffective strategies or failed actions as well as successful ones. The facilitators have to be aware of the emotions and personal conflicts of the participants in the game!

The de-briefing could focus on some guiding questions and be consequently structured as follows:

How do you feel?

→ Emotional reflection

- a. Stepping out of the roles
- b. At the beginning of the simulation, participants are asked to step into the roles, by providing a short

introduction to the role they are playing for the benefit of the other participants; at the end of the simulation, they are asked to step out of their roles. The method used for stepping out of the roles does not necessarily have to correspond with the one used to get them into the roles.

- c. Give the participants space to describe their feelings after the game to point out differences in their perception of the game and release inner tensions.

What has happened?

→ Development/processes and outcome reflection

- a. Discussion of particular observations participants had, reconstruction of the development of the game, evaluation of actions, decisions and outcomes;
- b. Group dynamics/behavior, leadership, decision-making, etc.
- c. Questions by facilitators concerning the overall learning goals/purpose of the game

What have you learned?

→ Personal findings, perceptions and knowledge gained

- a. Transferring of experiences into personal learning effects

- b. Identifying patterns and making generalizations about observed behaviors, mechanisms and strategies (e.g. personal opinion versus opinion of the actor played within the simulation game)

What is the connection between the game and reality?

→ Transfer experiences and learning effects

- a. Comparison between the patterns, mechanisms, strategies and behaviors identified within the game and reality (on personal and societal level)
- b. Identifying differences between the dynamics of the game and reality

What would have happened if...?

→ Alternative developments/scenarios

- a. Discussing possible different/alternative behaviors in the game
- b. Impact of different actors, rules and scenarios on the outcome of the game

What's next?

→ Goals and consequences from the game

- a. Discussing of behavior in real life in similar situations: how should the relevant real actors/participants behave?

6.2.2 Session 2 – Focus on different countries

Title: Strategies of right wing populist actors and organisations and the reactions of political parties to them in different countries

Summary and learning goals: Based on the experience of the simulation game, the participants will explore how right wing populist actors operate and how they influence the political system in different countries in real life. If a group of participants is from one country, then international experiences and practices (on the community, regional, national levels etc.) can be discussed.

Time frame: 90 minutes

Structure:

- a. Participants conduct some research on the topic of right wing populism individually – they surf the Internet, read prepared handouts on the particular situation in a certain country. The guiding question is “What strategies and positions were/are used by right wing populist actors to influence the political process?” and “How did/do the established political parties react to them?” (45-60 min)
- b. The groups present their findings and discuss them in the plenum. (30-45 min)

Material needed: Laptops, internet access or pre-prepared handouts on certain cases, flipchart, markers, party symbols/pictures of political leaders (printed or in a Powerpoint presentation)

6.2.3 Session 3 – Right wing populism and its effects

Title: Right wing populism and its effects on your life

Summary and learning goals: After analyzing right wing populism and its effects on society as a whole, this session is meant to allow participants to transfer the findings from the simulation game and previous transfer session back to their personal lives, as well as to prompt them to consider their personal abilities to do something to counter right wing populism. This includes discussions on how to react to right wing populist statements and/or argumentations, how to prevent people from becoming followers of right wing populist movements, and how to deal with radicalised persons. Therefore, personal experiences of the participants should be included in the discussion.

Time frame: 60 min

Structure:

- a. The participants are teamed up in small groups of 4-5 people, where they discuss and wrap up the arguments and actions of right wing

populist actors they are familiar with from their own life contexts and come up with solutions and recommendations on how to react to those. (30 min)

- b. Plenum discussion – each group presents one of the examples discussed before and initiates a discussion with the whole group. (30 min)

Material needed: Flipchart, cards, markers

Optional

Title: Plenum discussion with politicians

Summary and learning goals: The participants discuss the outcomes of the simulation game and previous transfer sessions with representatives of political parties, addressing the political dynamics concerning right wing populism.

Time frame: 90 minutes

Structure:

- a. During the last 30 minutes of the previous session, participants are preparing the questions they would like to ask the guests. The questions should relate to the outcomes of the game and the seminars. Additionally, some background information on the parties represented in the discussion (especially with regard to their

relations with right wing populist actors) should be provided.

- b. One or more representatives of political parties will shortly present themselves and the strategy of their party with regard to right wing populism on local/national/EU level .
- c. Representatives from right wing populist parties or movements could be invited as well. In this case, possible arguments of right wing populist actors should be discussed and counter-arguments should be prepared among the participants prior to the discussion.
- d. In the discussion, it is up to the participants if they act as a moderator or a facilitator.

Material needed: none

Optional:

Title: Perception, use and misuse of media

Summary and Learning goals: This session should provide answers to three main questions about how media were perceived, used and/or misused by various actors and stakeholders in society in the course of the simulation game.

Time frame: 90 minutes

Structure:

- a. Perception of the role of the media in the simulation game – what were the highlights?

b. Participants will evaluate the work of the media team. The questions to be answered are:

- a. Has the media team managed to be inclusive and objective enough?
- b. Was the media team under pressure, biased and exclusive?
- c. Use of the media by various actors in the simulation game.

c. Drawing parallels between the role of the media in the simulation game and in reality. The main questions could be:

- a. To what extent were media sources used by the participants?
- b. What went well and what could have been done better?
- c. Misuse of the media.

d. As in reality, it can happen that the media is also misused in the simulation game. Therefore, we will try to answer these questions:

- a. Did participants misuse media in order to gain popularity?
- b. Did they provide disinformation and how did that work?
- c. How did this affect the simulation?

This session will be conducted in smaller groups of participants who give answers to each question on moderation cards provided in different colors, and report on the findings/answers in a plenary.

Material needed: Flipchart, cards, markers

VII. SCHEDULE (EXAMPLE)

7.1. "Fighting Right Wing Populism" Workshop (5 days)

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Arrival</i>	Political orientations and representative party systems	Simulation game	Simulation game de-briefing: transfer to reality	Optional
	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
	What is right wing populism?	Simulation game	Strategies of right wing populist actors	Evaluation of the seminar
	<i>Lunch break</i>	<i>Lunch break</i>	<i>Lunch break</i>	<i>Lunch break</i>
Welcome & Teambuilding	Introduction to the simulation game and distribution of roles	Simulation game and stepping out of the roles	Right wing populism and its effects	<i>Departure</i>
<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	
Democratic values and society	Simulation game	Simulation game de-briefing: what has happened?	Right wing populism and its effects on your life	

VIII. THE ECMI TRAINING UNIT AND THE ECMI AS AN ERASMUS+ PARTNER PROJECT

The ECMI has solid experience in the application of different methods of teaching (both formal and non-formal education methods). It offers various modules which cover topics ranging from a broad perspective on minority protection and minority issues to more specific areas of current challenges connected for example with the rise of right wing populism (see above), minority empowerment (project “*3E to 3I: Exchanging-Empowering-Engaging to Increase-Innovate-Include*”, see more: http://www.ecmi.de/uploads/tx_lfpubdb/ECMI_Report_67_final.pdf), or social inclusion in society (the youth exchange project “*Raise your Voice*” (see more: <http://www.ecmi.de/publications/detail/63-a-youth-exchange-project-raise-your-voice-cisternino-italy-10-20-december-2013->

[289/](#)). In addition to the ECMI projects and related trainings (e.g. in our regional offices in Kosovo and Georgia, within the Eastern Partnership Programme in Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine), the ECMI also conducts an annual Summer School and an MA course on European Minority Rights at the University of Southern Denmark and Europa Universität Flensburg.

Through its involvement in the implementation of ERASMUS+ projects in recent years, the ECMI has set up a network of partners that covers not only the member states of the European Union, but also various organizations from Georgia, Armenia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, etc. The ECMI, together with its partners, will continue to use the methods of formal and non-formal education developed and tested during the implementation of these projects in its further work.



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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION SEE

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