**European Union Simulation**

Geography 9

**Brief Description**: Students will participate in a simulation of the European Union where they will debate issues and adopt resolutions.

**Time**: Five class periods (1 period for lecture, 3 periods for research and preparation, 1 period for simulation)

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**Objectives**: To discuss and debate views and proposals of members of the European Union and adopt formal resolutions related to the issues being debated.

**Materials Needed**: Handouts 1-3, Internet access

**Order of Operations:**

1. Mrs. Edman will lecture on the institutions of the European Union and the policymaking process within the EU.

2. Students will be assigned a partner. Each partnership will choose a country to represent. One student will represent the leader of the country and the other can represent the foreign minister. The number of countries included will vary depending on class size and issues chosen for debate.

3. In preparation for the activity, partnerships will complete a profile on their country (see **Handout 1** for format). They should also create a placard for the country they are representing.

4. Mrs. Edman will determine the issue that will be discussed during the simulation. Mrs. Edman will provide each partnership with a fact sheet relating to the topic so that each partnership can prepare their proposal for the simulation.

5. In preparation for the simulation, students will develop a proposal for the issue. (See **Handout 2** for format).

6. Mrs. Edman will discuss the procedures to be used during the simulation with students prior to starting the simulation (see **Handout 3**). Prior to the start of the simulation, Mrs. Edman, who will serve as the president during the simulation, will create an agenda and provide copies for each partnership.

7. On the first day of the simulation, students should seat themselves alphabetically by country name.

8. The simulation will start with a *tour de table*, in which each participant will make a brief statement. A representative from each country must speak.

9. Students will present and debate proposals on the issue, following the agenda.

10. At the conclusion of the simulation, Mrs. Edman will put together a summative report of the resolutions for students and post it on her website.

European Union Simulation

**Handout 1: Country Profile**

Each of you will be playing the role of the head of government of your respective country or the foreign minister of your respective country. In order to do so effectively, you will need to have some general knowledge about the country you are representing. This assignment will require you to complete some research about your country. It is imperative that you have an understanding of your country in order to provide an accurate portrayal in the simulation.

­­­­­­­**Country Profile:** Your country profile will require you to research basic demographic, economic and political information. Your profile should be completed using the form provided (below).

**Resources**

CIA World Factbook: http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html

Political Resources on the Net: http://www.politicalresources.net/

**Country Profile**

***Demographically Speaking***

A. Total population:

B. By gender

1. Male:

2. Female:

C. By religion

1. Christian:

2. Muslim:

3. Jewish:

D. By ethnicity (include any group that comprises more than 10% of the total population)

1.

2.

3.

E. By language (include any language spoken as a first language by 10% or more of the total population)

1.

2.

3.

F. Rate of population growth:

G. Life expectancy

1. Male:

2. Female:

H. Literacy rate:

***Politically Speaking***

A. Form of government:

B. Current head of state:

C. Current head of government:

D. Date of most recent election and voter turnout:

E. Year the country became a full member of the European Union:

F. Representative to the European Commission:

G. Number of members in the European Parliament:

H. Voter turnout in the most recent elections to the European Parliament in your country:

I. Provide a brief summary of the major issues (not related to the economy) facing your country today.

***Economically Speaking***

A. GDP (at purchasing power parity):

B. GDP per capita:

C. GDP by sector:

1. Agriculture:

2. Industry:

3. Services:

D. Unemployment rate:

E. Population below the poverty line (%):

F. Currency used:

G. Brief summary of the current state of the economy in your country; make particular note of your country’s economic strengths and weaknesses.

European Union Simulation

**Handout 2: Proposal Format**

Students are required to write a proposal for the issue being discussed during the simulation. Each proposal should be kept fairly succinct and simple using the following format:

NAME OF COUNTRY:

Brief introductory statement of 2-3 issues clarifying the issue and the country's stance on it.

List specific policy proposals to be introduced to the group as a whole for its consideration.

Example: *The government of (country) proposes that:*

*a)*

*b)*

*c)*

Brief concluding statement that clarifies the country's position on the issue.

European Union Simulation

**Handout 3: Simulation Procedures**

***Background***

The European Council is the forum in which the leaders of the EU member states meet to formulate policies and develop initiatives to be considered by the European Commission. The European Council has the power and authority to resolve major issues and reach key decisions. The European Council is comprised of the heads of government of the EU member states, their foreign ministers, and the President of the European Commission.

The Council normally meets twice per year and each meeting takes place in the member state holding the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Decisions made by the European Council are not legally binding, but its proposals and resolutions have typically been turned into law by the European Commission, Council of Ministers, and European Parliament.

***Procedures***

In the actual meetings of the European Council, the heads of government determine among themselves how best to use their meetings; therefore, the European Council has no formal rules of procedure. However, in this simulation the following procedures will be implemented:

**- Chair**

The head of government of the member state holding the Presidency of the European Union will be chairing the summit meeting. For our purposes, Mrs. Edman will serve as the Chair. The Chair has the power to open and close sessions, recognize speakers, and control debate on the floor. Mrs. Edman will also serve as the secretary, keeping notes of the proceedings.

**- Seating Arrangement**

In our Council meetings, the heads of government of member countries will be seated alphabetically by country, with the representative from the country holding the Presidency of the European Council at the "head" of the table.

**- Placard**

Students are expected to have a cardboard placard on the day that the summit begins. The placard should have your country’s name. You are also encouraged to include a depiction of your country’s flag (in color, if possible). It should be able to stand on your desk.

**- Agenda**

The Chair will set the agenda for the summit, thus determining the order in which the specific things are discussed.

***Proposals and Debate***

After the members are seated, the Chair will call the meeting to order. The first order of business will be a *tour de table*, where each member makes a statement (approximately two minutes) reflecting his/her country's opinion on the topic and issues to be discussed. It is a broad statement of goals not a presentation of specific proposals. The Chair will be the last member to speak.

Next, the Chair opens the floor to specific proposals on the first issue on the agenda. Initially, all proposals related to that issue should be presented with the secretary keeping a list of the proposals. Once all proposals related to the issue have been presented, they can be debated individually. Members indicate their desire to present a proposal or participate in the debate by raising their placards. Proposals that initially appear to have broad support will require a limited period of debate. Proposals that do not appear to have broad support will be debated further and/or modified.

***Resolutions***

Ultimately, the goal of the Council is to come up with resolutions based on and including one or more of the proposals presented on an issue.

*Sample Resolution:*

*Resolution proposed by member countries \_\_\_, \_\_\_, \_\_\_, \_\_\_, and \_\_\_ pertaining to Agenda Item \_\_\_. The Council of the European Union wishes to address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and would like to proceed by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*

Once a resolution has been created, it should be handed to the Secretary who will read it to the members. If there does not appear to be a consensus, a *tour de table* may be necessary. If there does appear to be a consensus, the resolution will be brought to a vote by the Chair.

***Voting Procedure***

The Council usually does not take formal votes, as its goal is to make decisions through consensus. However, for the purposes of our simulation, votes will be taken on proposed resolutions. (Note that the President, in this case, Mrs. Edman, may participate in the discussions, but is not allowed to vote.)

Votes will be made by roll call in alphabetical order by member country and recorded by the Secretary (Mrs. Edman). The President does not have a vote. Members can vote one of three ways: "Yes," "No," or "Abstain."

In order for a resolution to pass a consensus must be reached. This does not mean that all member states have to vote "Yes" on a resolution. Members who are unable to fully support the resolution have the opportunity to have their reservations or objections heard but will ultimately abstain from the final vote.

Each member state has the power of veto if its leader feels that critical national interests are at stake in an issue under consideration. The veto is very rarely used and each delegate will only be able to use his/her veto once. However, the threat of a veto can be used during debate in order to gain leverage on a particular issue.

Following the resolution of all agenda items, a comprehensive report will be issued summarizing the individual resolutions.

**EVALUATION**

Each part of the simulation will be evaluated separately. They will be weighted as follows:

Country Profile = 25 points

Proposals = 25 points

Placard = 10 points

Participation in the Simulation = 40 points

*TOTAL POINTS: 100*