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[SPEAKER_00]
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[SPEAKER_06]
Welcome to After Us, Becoming Better Ancestors.
This week, we've had the second edition of the micro module, Negotiating Politics in Deep Polarization.
We've just finished the course, so it's time to get some immediate reflections.
And I'm very happy to be joined by two students who participate in the course.
So if you'd like to introduce yourselves first.

[SPEAKER_04]
Yeah, my name is Lukas.
I'm 25 years old and I'm from Germany, but I study in Sweden at Uppsala University and I'm doing my exchange here in Stavanger currently.

[SPEAKER_06]
Welcome.

[SPEAKER_02]
My name is Angie and I'm 23 years old and I'm studying here in my Erasmus as well and I'm from Germany and I'm studying in the University of Landshut.

[SPEAKER_06]
Great, yes.
And first of all, what made you apply for this course?
What attracted you to the course?

[SPEAKER_04]
For me, it was definitely the layout of the course that was like only this one very intense week and also fit very well with my schedule.
So that definitely helped.
But what really interested me was to see how you can maybe negotiate within the polarization, because nowadays I think it's very polarized in many topics.
And yeah, I think I was very interested in like, especially with the game that you kind of have this negotiations and debates in a playful manner.
And yeah, I said it in the introduction as well of this course.
So last week when you kind of have no consequence here.
So you are in this situation that you're going to negotiate and you want to debate, but there's like no real consequence coming from it.
So yeah, I think that's what mainly made me apply for this course.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah.

And how about you?

[SPEAKER_02]
So I wanted to also experience negotiation because I'm studying economics.
And so it's quite interesting for me to know how to negotiate.
And in Germany, we also have a really like difficult politician situation right now.
So I wanted to get another view, maybe also about the polarization thing.
and to know how older people may think of the politics now and how it was before, even if the Brexit's kind of a similar situation, right?

[SPEAKER_06]
Absolutely, yes.
So to give the listeners a bit more context, so during the week the students played the game How to Win Brexit, which is a simulation game.
It's based on the real negotiations that took place after the referendum between 2017 and 2019.
And in the game, the students can choose either from the UK or the EU side.
They play a real life character.
The characters have different negotiating positions.
So the gameplay is a lot about strategy.
It's about communication.
Unexpected things can happen like breaking news events.
And it's under a lot of time pressure.
You only have 70 minutes with which to strike a deal with the opposing team.
And then you have the possibility for two negotiations.
10-minute extension.
So the students were given some background reading about Brexit, about polarization, to inform them about the wider political and historical context and the materials they needed to prepare for the rules and the gameplay.
But I think that nothing can really prepare you except for actually playing it itself.
Would you say that's a fair assessment?

[SPEAKER_04]
Yeah, definitely.
You definitely need to play the game to kind of get a feeling of it, kind of get the grip.
Yeah.

[SPEAKER_02]
So you can read a lot about the Brexit, but if you actually play under time pressure, it's a whole other experience.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah, absolutely.
This is what we're trying to do with learning by doing and throwing

students into, as you said, a safe way in which to experience conflict and negotiation and conflict resolution in the context of polarized events such as Brexit.
So now I want to think a bit about, so we talked a bit about your expectations and what made you want to come, and now we've finished. Was there anything that you felt, okay, that was quite different from what I expected, that I really didn't expect to experience this, both in terms of the gameplay itself, but also the broader learning context of the weekend?

[SPEAKER_04]
I think in terms of the game, I would say it was kind of how I expected it.
So that we were like on these two sides and with the different characters and stuff.
I think a really, really nice fact of that was actually the time pressure because it was a whole like new experience, like negotiating under real pressure.
I think the I think I would have maybe like expect to have a bit more like real negotiating tactics or something like that but other than that I think was pretty much how I kind of expected it to be

[SPEAKER_02]
For me, it was really interesting that there was multiple winning chances and that we played it two times and we played never the same game.
So even if the rules were the same, you had different teams you played in and you could experience this game in two different ways.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah, so in the course we're teaching about polarisation and one of the main things we sort of say is that when people are divided very much into camps, into sides, within their bubbles, they can often struggle to see the perspective of the people who have a different position.
So by playing either the UK or the EU and then having to very shortly reverse,
onto the other side.
The idea is to give people an insight into how it works on either side, because the students will take a different character.
So if the first game they've been Boris Johnson from the UK side, the next time they might be Emmanuel Macron from the EU.
So the characters have their own cards, as I mentioned, with different strategies.
But it's also an interesting element that
you can choose really in your roleplay how much you want to follow the character themselves or how much you want to take it in your own direction.
So maybe you can reflect a bit on that aspect as well.

[SPEAKER_04]
Yeah, so because I actually took very different approaches in my two games.
So in the first game, I was Angela Merkel.

But I was also the leader of the group and we as a team decided that we want to go for a deal in general.
So what I did very quickly was I kind of put my personal interests aside.
So I was not really following the character of the game and I was more focusing on being the leader of the group and just getting a deal and like see that we get something out of it as a team.
But then in the second game where I was the leader of the parliamentary opposition, I
I was very pro EU.
So I was technically being on the UK side.
I was kind of against my team.
So yeah, we first said that we want to kind of like go for the win as well.
But then during the game, I was like, nah, I want to, I just want to go for my personal interest at one point.
Especially because how the game played out.
Uh, with the opposition group as well.
So yeah, I was really just like going more, going into character and just pushing the agenda of the EU side.
So, uh, because I would have gotten points from it, but yeah.

[SPEAKER_07]
Hmm.

[SPEAKER_02]
Yeah, so I played the UK side at first and I was Theresa May.
So I was the leader in that kind of position.
And it was, for me, it was really difficult because everyone had another favor, how the deal would have been fulfilled.
And we didn't make the deal at all in the first round because we had a really strong opponent.
Yeah.
And in the second round, I was Angela Merkel.
And I was a member, so I didn't have that much power.
But in either way, we worked really good in a team together.
So this was a really nice experience.
And I think that was our main goal, to find a strategy that would suit our team.
And we succeeded in some way, so we had a lot of fun.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah.
Do you think it's more enjoyable to be a leader or just to be a participant?

[SPEAKER_04]
I really enjoyed it to be a leader because when I was a member in the second round then, maybe it was also because of my personal agenda and how I wanted to see how the game was going.
Yeah, I think I really enjoyed being the leader more than being a member and having less power and can't really do much about the situations.

[SPEAKER_02]
Yeah, so I would prefer the leader position as well.

[SPEAKER_06]
Two natural leaders here, yeah.

[SPEAKER_02]
Yeah, because you have a lot more overview over the whole game.
But being a member also teach you a lot of being patient and listen and know when to speak when it's your time.
And to understand every position a little bit better because you can say whatever's on your mind without having this much control over the whole game.

[SPEAKER_06]
And what do you think you learn about yourself in this situation in terms of skills and experiences?
And what do you feel you learn about the other people and what you learn from playing with them and also changing within the week, changing to a different set of opponents?

[SPEAKER_04]
What I think one of the best things or like what I learned the most is first of all, different groups can give you totally different outcomes because every person is kind of different.
So and just the group dynamics with the team within like within your own group, but also in the opponent's group.
So I think that's one of the main learnings I had, that you can't really apply one blueprint or one strategy onto many different groups.
It's not going to work.
And then also what I learned as a leader, I would say, is being patient, active listening, listen to the others, listen to your own group as well.
Yeah, I think these were the main takeaways I had from this week.
Yeah.

[SPEAKER_02]
So what I discovered is that we had a lot of strong personalities in our course in general.
So it was kind of interesting to argue in your own team, but also with the other team.
And I think it would be much more fun if someone would be a leader who isn't an extrovert people at all.
So maybe they think a little bit different about a lot of things as well.
But I kind of get it.
We only have one week.
So it's kind of hard to get out of your personality.

[SPEAKER_06]
It's intense and it's called a blended intensive program for a reason.
So we have the online sessions before, we give some context and some

understanding of the gameplay and the broader context around Brexit.
We've had this five-day intensive week and we can also wrap up with another online lecture about polarization today.
So thinking about not just the game itself, but the broader context of polarization.
Brexit has now happened 10 years ago.
So it's something I lived through and it's kind of living history for me.
But what do you think this teaches you about polarization more broadly in the age we live in?
Has it got better?
Has it got worse?
Is it different?

[SPEAKER_04]
I think that it got way worse, especially with being from Germany, with the political situation that we have at the moment.
Uh, I think about way worse.
You have like this kind of like more black and white thinking and it's like, okay, you are more leaning to this political views.
So I'm not going to talk to you and like the opposite.
Um, so I think the way worse, but not only in Germany, but I think in general, or like, especially all of Europe and the world, um, I don't think it really got better.
Yeah.
Hmm.

[SPEAKER_02]
It's a really interesting question because I think because of social media, it seems bigger than it normally is.
Because we never lived in a time where we have to speak to people that much.
So we can always chat or we can always see reels on Instagram.
So I think we have more opportunity to share our opinion without showing ourselves.
And I think that makes it much more easier for people actually share their opinion, but also to have a really strict view about things.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah.
So we're here in Norway and the course teachers are from myself, UK and Jan from Poland and Tanu from India.
So we're already a diverse team of teachers.
And of course, the students coming from many different universities and different backgrounds.
What do you think the game would have been like if you played just in Germany with just German students or just in the UK with just British students?
How would that change the dynamic, do you think?

[SPEAKER_04]
That is a very interesting question.
I don't know if I really have an answer for that especially now that I also study in a very international environment but I think it

might have changed it a bit because like we all would have like different like of course different backgrounds but like
We all grew up in the same country.
We might have, like, yeah, we all know the same political parties.
I was like, the way we grew up probably is at least somewhat similar by, like, growing up in the same culture and everything.
So, yeah, I think it would be different, but I really appreciate it.
Like, I still appreciate the whole vibes, how to sort of say, and their environment of being with so many different nationalities and so many different backgrounds.
Yeah.
Yeah.

[SPEAKER_02]
I think the arguments would be much stronger.
I completely agree.
Yeah.
And I think, but that's also a different way of playing, right?
Because now we had a chance to play for the game and to play for the history.
And I think if you only do it with your own people in their own country, then you would discuss more about the history.
But also it would be harder to change your perspective on the other side.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah, I think we talked in our wrap-up today a lot about how emotion played a big part in the Brexit referendum.
And especially on the Leave side, but not exclusively, people were swayed by emotional arguments around their attachment to the UK or to England even, and individual sort of patriotism or a feeling of belonging to Europe.
And I completely agree.
I think if we played it in the UK,
it might actually just descend into people fighting because it would be, again, so polarised that people have such strong opinions on Brexit unless you've got people who all happen to agree already, you know, this is the problem with the bubbles we talked about.
So I think doing it in this international context, actually, I'm amazed that the way it's played in a very good spirit, it seems to be very actually diplomatic and,
Some people do get into character and there was some good debate and it can get quite kind of heated, but it never descended into kind of insults.
And so that in a way kind of gives me hope because I feel that students debating are more kind of intelligent and more respectful than I see from a lot of politicians.
I really, really think that we do make progress and we do kind of understand each other better by bringing people from different nationalities and different educational backgrounds together.
Yeah.

[SPEAKER_02]
Yeah, and we also have more patience, I think, because when somebody

is international or don't speak your mother language, then you have more patience about the opinion or the way the people speak than with your own mother language people.

[SPEAKER_06]
So if you were thinking, you're talking to a friend and you just did this course and they wanted to know what it was about and they're thinking of signing up, what would you say to them and what would you give them any tips or advice on how to approach it?

[SPEAKER_04]
um first of all i would recommend it and i think what i would tell them is like just be open for it and just like be prepared for like something you probably have not experienced yet um especially like i said earlier with the like whole different backgrounds of the other people
So, like I said, with the backgrounds, we all probably study different things.
And yeah, just like be open for it, but prepare for a lot of fun meeting new people as well, because I think we can't really...
yeah we should not like underestimate the fact that we all come here from all over Europe basically like some people are just gonna come here for this one week and then they're gone again yeah um we're just like meeting all these new people uh is i think a very very fun experience

[SPEAKER_02]
Yeah, so I would recommend that you shouldn't come unprepared.
So you should at least have some knowledge about the Brexit and polarization in general.
And that you should bring your own motivation for that course as well, because otherwise you're just holding people back who really want to play and who really want to get to know something more.
And you go home with a lot more confidence and a lot more confidence I would say self-broadness and somehow because you achieved so many things in this one week.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah, that's really great to hear.
And in addition to confidence, is there anything else you'd like to highlight that game-based learning can teach you which traditional learning couldn't?
Like think about if you just spend a week sitting in a lecture hall and we just gave you one lecture after another about Brexit, about polarization.
How did the game-based learning in the simulation differ from other forms of teaching?

[SPEAKER_04]
Yeah, I mean, it definitely just helps you because in the game-based learning, you're just way more interactive and it kind of feels like more natural the way you learn it because I'm not like the best learner when it comes to like classic lectures anyway.
So I think if you would have just stood in front of a class for this

one week and just gave lectures about all this, I don't think I would take away that much from the course.
But with this game-based approach, I think it's very, very...
easy also like it's definitely easier to learn and to take something away from it because you just you have to experience it you are experienced it and then uh especially with the like post-game discussions and like you think about this whole um experience that you just had with playing the game and like the different situations that you were in and you kind of take away something from it if not like consciously you you learned something so

[SPEAKER_02]
So yeah, you can't hide behind your phone, right?
So you have to bring yourself into this and be part of the Brexit and the polarization.
And so because you have to have your own opinion and also convince other people about your own opinion, it's getting more interesting to learn these things and to really live these things for a short period of time.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah.
And we really want to develop the skill of critical thinking as well, because you said you can't hide behind your phone and you could maybe use it for preparing in terms of using AI to summarize the readings or maybe prepare a strategy.
But under 70 minutes time pressure, you'd just be wasting time if you started to get out your phone and start using AI to help you prepare.
So you do have to think on your feet.
And that's something we're trying to also achieve with our teaching in the age of AI, when people often are
using that more and more to outsource their critical thinking or they're just learning at home we still really place a strong value on on physical interaction and kind of dynamic uh group-based active learning approaches that mean you have to kind of come in person as you said prepared and motivated and be ready to think on your on your feet yeah so we can uh we can wrap up do you have any final reflections

[SPEAKER_04]
Yeah, definitely would do it again.
It was really fun with all the human interactions that we had.
And yeah, I don't think there's any more to say from us.
Yeah.
Yeah.

[SPEAKER_02]
So I wanted to say that it was really interesting to step into someone else's shoes and to see things from both perspectives, because we don't get a lot of chances to do that, that intense that we had this week.

[SPEAKER_06]

Thank you.
Thank you so much both for joining me.
Really appreciate it.
Thank you.
Okay, so welcome back.
I'm joined by three more students now, if you'd like to introduce yourselves.

[SPEAKER_05]
Okay, so hello, I'm Jonathan from Czech Republic.

[SPEAKER_01]
Hi, I'm Simona.
I'm also from the Czech Republic.

[SPEAKER_03]
Hi, my name is Benjamin and I'm from here locally, Stavanger, Norway.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yes, so you guys came from Czech Republic.
Do you want to say a bit more about which university you're from and how you experienced Stavanger, if it's your first time in Stavanger or Norway?

[SPEAKER_05]
We are coming from University Hradec Karlova, shortly named UHK.
I must say that this experience has been great so far.
We got the opportunity to experience not traditional Norwegian weather, which really helped the whole experience.
And I must say, we are coming from a small university.
Never have I seen such a big campus.
So that's been the biggest takeaway from the whole experience here.

[SPEAKER_01]
And it's the first time in Norway for me as well.
And it's been a real wonder so far.
I love the weather, you know, even though it's not that common here as I have heard.
But yeah, it's been a great experience so far, as Jonathan said.
And the course was great.

[SPEAKER_06]
Thank you.
That's nice to hear.
Yeah.
So we'll get back into the course in a minute, as we did in the first half.
But I just want to hear some of your highlights of the visit, just the social side and things you've experienced while you've been here, not in the course, but other stuff.

[SPEAKER_05]
For me personally, the biggest experience I can take out of this

course is, it's not connected to politics, but we had a football match on Wednesday with all guys, Spanish-speaking guys.
So we arranged a football match, it was amazing.
I think these are the moments when the cultures really mingle.
These are the moments when you really feel like, okay, we are all one big family.
If put in the right environment, we can all talk to each other and share ideas.
That's lovely.
Who won the football match?
I think our team won.
Because we had a guy from Mexico who was stunning.
Oh.

[SPEAKER_06]
Ah, so you mixed, it wasn't just Spanish on one side and... No, no, no, no, no.

[SPEAKER_05]
We had Javi, Javi Marcelo from the course and then the other guy.
So yeah, that's for me the biggest imprint that I got.

[SPEAKER_07]
Okay, yeah.

[SPEAKER_01]
Right, so I love the whole social experience here because I feel like I've made a lot of friends from different countries and even from our team, but as well as from the whole course.
And to be honest, just exploring Stavanger is, it's very nice with a group, but I also have done it by myself and it's also an amazing experience to just go through the city center and
to walk through it, see just a different culture than my own.

[SPEAKER_06]
Benjamin, you're a local.
How does that feel to hear these nice things?

[SPEAKER_03]
It is very nice to hear these nice things about Stavanger, which is my local city.
It's very interesting to be in a classroom full of Erasmus students, me being maybe one or two of the Norwegian local guys, and having the opportunity to share my city with you.

[SPEAKER_06]
Do any of you come from a political science background?
I study political science.
Do you feel I gave you an advantage in the course?

[SPEAKER_03]
A little bit, yes.
A little bit.
I could maneuver a bit differently.

And also I know as the game was UK-EU, I do study the EU as a whole organization.

[SPEAKER_06]
Okay.
So before you came to the course, did you have any particular expectations that then now we finished that you're really different to what you thought you were going to learn about?

[SPEAKER_05]
um when when the whole brexit thing happened i was very young i was like 14 14 15 so i i didn't didn't have the opportunity to really explore it but um i can say that after this uh beautiful course i i i can say that i i know i know some things i i can i can really orient i hope i'll use it during my state exams in from politology hope yeah

[SPEAKER_01]
So politics in general are really out of my comfort zone.
I really don't usually dive into that.
And I thought this would be a nice experience for me to go into something that I'm not very experienced at.
And it turned out it was a great opportunity for me.
I didn't even know that much about Brexit in the beginning, but now I see how much of a complex issue it was and how long it was.
And as Jotun said, I was really young as well, and I didn't know that this was such a complex issue at the time.
And now, yeah, it's been a really eye-opening experience in this way.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah, I wasn't so young myself, unfortunately.
I was 29 and I very much lived through it.
And so for me, it's just really fascinating to teach it as a historical experience.
event, but also what can we learn from it in order to not repeat it?
And when I say that, it's not a judgment on everyone that voted for it, but a lot of the debate around it and the way both the campaign and the negotiations was played out was very much in this polarizing fashion that I don't think is necessarily the best way to do things because it just divides people and it doesn't create good dialogue.
How much did you feel like when you were in the negotiations in the actual game, you could kind of, in a way, empathize or kind of relate to the characters you were playing?

[SPEAKER_03]
As the first round, I played as Theresa May, which I could sympathize as I didn't understand before playing the game that she wasn't really for Brexit and then switched, which in politics, it's very hard to...
have to lead a position that you really don't stand as your ground position.
So I could sympathize with her how hard it was for her to step down as she also had to kind of maneuver to this turbulent time in her

career.
Which gave me more sympathy towards her than I might have had before.
I'm not sure about Boris Johnson.
I haven't gotten real deep into how he maneuvered it, but... And it's hard to sympathize with, I have to say.
I could, you know, if I dived a bit more into the whole thing, I could see probably a side.

[SPEAKER_05]
Yeah, how he goes.
I think there were two ways to go.
You could either be like the character, try to imitate him, try to be like him, or you could develop the character.
You could use your own imagination, your own strategy.
And maybe as a leader, as a leader myself, I kind of, I gave up.
I gave up on her, on, you know, on Theresa May for personal interests because I, at the end, I wanted to win.
Yeah.
And I wanted to make a deal at least.
So, yeah.
But I must say that the game really allows you to look deep into the needs, into the personal preference of the characters.
So I think you can really explore it from a different perspective than you can get from news, for example.

[SPEAKER_03]
I think it's hard to sympathize with the characters that are less known, but it's also fun to see as, for example, the prime minister of Netherlands where he works today and how he kind of, uh, I didn't know before, before the game that he also had a say in, in this discussion and to see where he is in his career now, it's quite impressive to, to see.
Yeah.

[SPEAKER_01]
I think even though you come into this game with some preconceptions about the Brexit and how it went, I think this game is really great to experience different perspectives from the other side as well.
So maybe like you see different perspectives of the people involved and maybe you understand a little bit more as well.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah, so what did you learn, not just about the characters, but about yourselves in this situation?
Were there particular skills that you developed?
Were there particular things you thought, oh, I didn't really realize I could be like that?
Or things you found challenging about the experience?

[SPEAKER_05]
I've
think the biggest biggest um like obstacle you have to face is to stand stand behind your your views stand behind your strategy

because um as a leader um you're always getting questioned you know so um it's it's important to to believe in what you are trying to do and convince people or at least seem to believe it
Yeah, of course.
Fake it till you make it.
Yeah, that works.
So I learned that sometimes not being popular doesn't really mean not being right.
So sometimes it's important to stand against the tide and believe in your strategy.
Whatever it is, it can be wrong, it can be true, it can be correct.
But if it's wrong, at least you can get experience from it.
That's true.
So yeah, maybe to be more steady and stand behind your opinions.

[SPEAKER_01]
I think the leader role was so important in this game and you just realize how much a leader must know and what characteristics he must have for the people to follow him.
He must be able to control the situation but at the same time listen to the people, what they're saying and their interests.
Um, it's, um, it's just, uh, such a complex role to have in this game and to do it properly, it turns out not, it's not as easy always.
So, um, uh, I guess, uh, I guess it's, um, yeah.
Hmm.

[SPEAKER_06]
Did you all get to experience being a leader?
Yeah.
Yeah.
Okay.
Same in the last one.
We were a team of leaders.
People volunteering for podcasts.
Let's really have leadership qualities.
Absolutely.
So one question I had to the others, which I find fascinating, is imagine if you played the game and the whole course, but only with Czech or only with Norwegian students, only with students from your own country.
How do you think the dynamics would have been different?

[SPEAKER_05]
I think from my personal perspective, the language barrier is always there.
No matter how fluent you are, it's always a thing.
But I think what other language or second language allows you to maybe be more open about what you are trying to say.
Because some words are just words.
We don't always feel the connotation.
In the second language.
Yeah, in English.
So, yeah.

So it's easier maybe to offend someone or, you know, to be more strict because it's not our mother tongue.
So we don't usually feel the real consequence behind it, the real meaning, but the real connotation.
We don't have the memories connected with these words.
So it's easier for us to be more, let's say, strict, open, maybe even more radical.
In the second language.
Yeah, yeah.

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah, yeah.
Now it's a good point about the connotations because in one of my presentations I said that the language became very toxic and very charged.
So Remainer, it just means you vote to remain, but it became kind of a coven of insult.
Even Brexiteer, and people were saying if you voted for Brexit you were old and stupid and racist, and if you voted to remain you were more obsessed with Europe and you had no interest in your own country.
So language is very important in how we kind of frame our discussions and how we negotiate.
But I think that from what I saw, it was negotiated mostly in a very good spirit, good discussion.
And I think that emotion did, well, you guys tell me, did emotions ever take kind of hold and you felt, oh, I'm getting really frustrated or worked up in the situations?

[SPEAKER_03]
Not really.
And I would point this to as you learn a new language, you also develop a new personality.
What kind of vocabulary you gain in that language.
We saw this in our last game where everybody was not a participant, but a viewer of the last game, which got quite heated up because it was in a native language towards the other.
You were in probably that group, the opposite team.
When the Italian was very, very passionate in the way.
And I would suggest that also it has to do with the personality you have in language.
Because as English is probably our second language, we gain like a monotone kind of personality where we can discuss different things.
But if I would have it in Norwegian, probably...
With only Norwegian, it would probably get more heated or the same if I would do it in Romanian, it would get super heated as you have also a much broader language of vocabulary to use in your native language.

[SPEAKER_01]
You can definitely make better arguments as well, right?
Yeah, and as you mentioned, I was speaking with the Italian leader and it turned into chaos in the end a lot.
I mean, everyone saw it.

Because there was also the question of the time pressure on us, which was a big deal and the whole game turned into chaos in the last 10 minutes.
We couldn't just come up with a deal, right?
And everyone's shouting at each other at different hours and

[SPEAKER_03]
You also had spectators, which could probably bring you to like the House of Commons, where you do have like, and everybody shouts and you need to always to say "order!" in the House of Commons.

[SPEAKER_01]
That's exactly how it felt.

[SPEAKER_03]
Yeah.

[SPEAKER_06]
I mean, how did you feel in terms of which side, we discuss this quite a lot in the week, but which side do you think was sort of easier to play in terms of UKE?
Which one did you enjoy more?
What are your reflections on playing the different sides?
And was it valuable to be able to switch?
Would you have liked to just continue with the same side?
Yeah.

[SPEAKER_05]
I think when you play for the UK, you're already losing 1-0.
Because it's so hard to really win with UK, because you have, as already all of us mentioned, I guess, UK is very polarized in terms of political opinions and ideas.
So as a leader, you really have to work hard.
You really have to develop a special strategy because to win with UK means a lot.
I think EU has an advantage from what I have observed.
So I think if you're looking for a challenge, then go for the UK.

[SPEAKER_03]
Yeah, but it's also more enjoyable.
Kind of being the underdog and be the...
Trying to beat the UK.
Of course.
And as building alliances between the teams, it's harder to beat the EU because you have so, it depends on the character you play, but you have so little individual agendas.
you quite have a united agenda and the UK has a lot of divided so depends what your motive is in the game if you want to forward your career which personal points or in the team career yeah

[SPEAKER_01]
So on my first game, I was the UK and looking at it backwards, like I think that I would have preferred it the other way, like to start with the EU because, you know, you learn the game a little bit more

and it's not that hard to look after your team and decide on a strategy.
But the UK side, you know, we said it is harder.
And for the first game to be on that side, it's quite difficult to negotiate.
But, you know, it was fun either way, so...

[SPEAKER_06]
And as a British person, someone that lived in the UK for most of my life, except for the last six, I'm really interested to hear, did it change your perception of British politics, British culture, British media?
Did you come out of this with a different view of us as a country and how we govern ourselves and how we behave?

[SPEAKER_01]
Well, I think that I still view Britain as this like what used to be like the empire, like the huge country that controlled a lot of the world once upon a time.
And I still saw that this was true to some level, but now I see that it's really diverse within and that's changed my perspective a lot.

[SPEAKER_05]
Yeah, I think we as Czech people, we don't usually go that deep into the politics of the Great Britain.
So it was interesting to see how fragmented they really are, how the society differs.
The differences between people.
How is it like?
I thought they are united in a way because they are United Kingdom.
But at the end, it's not like that.
And I thought, I was like, okay, Great Britain, it's only England, but England is the biggest.
But we really saw that it's not like this.
And yeah, it was also from a sociologist aspect of view, it was an interesting insight into the British society.

[SPEAKER_03]
Yeah, I don't think it has changed my view as governing the UK and England, as it is quite polarizing with the different sections.
You have Ireland, Northern Ireland, the whole island region is quite polarized.
And that's history.
And yeah, it hasn't really changed the view of governing England.
But, um, yeah, what, what was the core of the question?

[SPEAKER_06]
Yeah.
If you learn new things or it changed your perception of the UK and you learn new things about the political kind of culture or the media culture or the sociological culture, as Jonathan mentioned.

[SPEAKER_03]
I don't think it has learned me a new thing about the culture in a

sense, but I'm thinking more of the UK also seeing it as a class society.
As you have different classes, it differs.
And my question is how can Britain change that view in the coming years?
Because I feel like in England or the UK has seen itself as England and not partly.
It has always had the history of we're not European.
And then the rest of Europe is like, but you are kind of European.

[SPEAKER_06]
And that's always been a problem, really, and it has this island kind of mentality.
So there's some famous newspaper headlines that there was bad weather, so you couldn't get the boat from the mainland to England before they built the tunnel.
And they said, fog in the channel, continent cut off, you know, like that.
We're so important that they're cut off from us.
And then, you know, in the end, we cut ourselves off.
And actually, we're this sort of strange place that is obviously geographically next year and in Europe, but culturally maybe somewhere between Europe and America.
I mean, of course, for the state and the structure, we have free health care.
We don't have guns and so on.
So in that way, we're more similar to Europe.
But in terms of the polarization, the media culture, the kind of even the adversarial nature of the politics being like by enemy and shouting at each other,
That, I think, is maybe more similar to America, where Democrats and Republicans just don't want to talk to each other.
That is very true.

[SPEAKER_03]
Brexiteers and Leavers and so on.
And it's always a problem with the island states, I feel like.
The same way the UK has the problem as they don't feel either way or separate.
You can also put the question for Greenland, if it's European, if it's the same.
Where does the line go, kind of?

[SPEAKER_06]
Okay, bringing it back from politics to an educational question, how do you feel learning in this way, this intensive week, and with the game at the very core of it, how does it differ to a more traditional form of just being in lectures and seminars and so on?

[SPEAKER_05]
I think the biggest difference is in the time, like the time, the distribution of time, because we got a lot of hours.
It's not a thing in schools.
So we had an opportunity to experience those experimental ways of

learning.
And I think when you're having fun and that's the moment when you're learning the most.
So I think I can speak for myself.
I think I'm speaking on behalf of all of us to say that, yeah, we had fun.
And I think we learned a lot on the way.
so um that was the main difference and even the even the like basic stuff like sitting around not behind the desk yeah yeah like the the atmosphere of classes like big classes um big big rooms airy a lot of windows sometimes sometimes yeah some certain days everything was like um very very open even that atmosphere so yeah that was that was the biggest difference yeah

[SPEAKER_06]
I mean we're living in an inattention or even inattention economy and I feel if we just spend all day just standing at the front and you're behind the desk and we're lecturing very quickly people are going to be looking at their phones or not paying attention right so it's our job to of course give you the context the knowledge guide you but then you're on your own you're kind of self kind of learning and we as we said many times I think learning by doing is so important because otherwise yeah you can just be passive and as I said before like
You can summarize the course material with AI and you can take shortcuts in terms of doing that.
But if you're actually in the game, you don't have the time to suddenly start Googling stuff or using ESO.
You really have to think on your feet.
So that's what we're trying to do in terms of immersing you in this experience.

[SPEAKER_03]
What I also think about when, like, immersive games like this, it is very interesting to have the, like, how to win Brexit, because it's in the past, like 10 years ago, but it would be very, very interesting to see, to make a simulation about the future, future games.
This, for example, while doing the presentation today, I was thinking it would be very interesting to have a simulation of if the...
Central Asian countries had the Schengen way.
How that would be simulated.
Because they have been talking about it.
But making it simulate to the future would be an interesting perspective than the past.
But the past is much easier to make the game.

[SPEAKER_01]
I think I'm coming back to the point that you mentioned that you really have to think on your feet, right?
You have to think in the moment and it doesn't matter how much you prepare before, something unexpected still might come your way and you have to come with that.

And I think that's the best learning experience there is in this way.

[SPEAKER_06]
Great.
Thanks.
Any final reflections?

[SPEAKER_03]
Are you doing another game, immersive game, in the future?
About Brexit?
About any... We have a plan maybe to do the rejoin game.

[SPEAKER_06]
Because we've talked a lot this week.
One day maybe, maybe the UK will rejoin the EU.
And if it does, what does that look like?
What will we have learned from the previous negotiations and how complex and difficult they were?
How would we even sell this to the public?
The demographics have shifted, but the media is very powerful still, so...
Yeah, there's lots of elements we can do.
There is a whole other micro module called Game the Bias, Adult Centrism and Educational Relationships, which looks at game-based learning more broadly outside the concept of politics.
So we will do another podcast about that.
So I hope you guys will listen to that as well.
But yeah, we're very interested in getting game-based learning as a tool.
And we hope it's been valuable and enjoyable for you guys.
Thank you very much for joining.
Thank you for having me.
Thanks a lot.
Bye.

[SPEAKER_00]
You have been listening to a podcast from the University of Stavanger.