Category Democracy

Can your democracy withstand pressure?

Democracy

No democratic system exists without conflict (as a sustained disagreement) or crisis.

The challenges below showcase potential situations that test the endurance, flexibility and fairness of your system.

Make sure to discuss the implications of the challenges and, if necessary, to adapt your rules to respond to them.



Democracy

Falling Participation

Foto: AI-generated with ChatGPT

Falling Participation

Only 10% of students are showing up to vote.

Your system's legitimacy depends on active participation, but students have become disengaged as demonstrated by falling turnout rates.

What would you do to improve student involvement and legitimacy of the structure you built?



Foto: Hochschule Rhein-Waal

Democracy

University Interference

University Interference

The administration overturns one of your decisions.

Student autonomy is under pressure.

How can your system defend its independence and legitimacy while keeping constructive relations with the university administration or a higher authority?



Democracy

Excluded Voices

Foto: Unsplash

Excluded Voices

A minority group claims their interests are ignored.

Representation is challenged.

How can your structure guarantee inclusion and fair treatment without paralysing decision-making?



Democracy

Crisis Decision

Foto: Unsplash

Crisis Decision

A sudden issue demands a quick response.

There is no time for a lengthy debate. The crisis demands a decisive resolution.

Does your decision-making rule allow timely action while maintaining legitimacy and principles of democracy?



Foto: AI-generated with ChatGPT

Democracy

Budget Cuts

Budget Cuts

Your budget is suddenly reduced by 30%.

You have to decide what to prioritise and what to sacrifice given the budget constraint.

How would your economic model handle scarcity while maintaining fairness and solidarity?



Foto: AI-generated with ChatGPT

Democracy

Social Polarisation

Social Polarisation

Students are deeply divided on a controversial topic.

Tensions between groups make compromise on the topic difficult.

How can the system you designed navigate the disagreement without silencing minority voices?



Foto: AI-generated with ChatGPT

Democracy

Erosion from Within

Erosion from Within

Key actors undermine the principles of democracy in your system.

Internal dynamics threaten your democracy — rules are violated, actors abuse their authority and power concentrates informally.

How does your system prevent the death of democracy from within and restore trust and accountability?