

Landuse as a game

German school kids play being politicians that have to decide about a new town planning project.

A new way of learning about the sustainable use of land.



In Germany, land is being used for town planning and building to a growing amount. Therefore the presented role game concentrates on sustainable and reasonable use of land.

As in Germany all land use decisions used to be made by local governments the role game is set in the town hall with most of the pupils being there for the first time.

Attending to school kids the role game needs the participating pupils to enter different political parties.

The entire process of decision making is to be undergone, pupils have to elect a mayor, build the council and having all that they are asked to make decisions on different scenarios as for example where to locate a new residential area.



Further:

Another idea to bring land use closer to school contents is realised by a specific GIS-supported software that enables pupils to plan areas in their hometown. Forthcoming the Bonn Science Shop and its partner will release a computer game on land planning with dynamic development processes.

Suggestion:

If you want to play a role game in a very short time go to an authentic area, where real decision-making processes take place. In the case of this example the students could use the town hall. Pupils will feel much more important in a place like that and therefore will be more serious about the game.

Main Steps:

The first step was to develop the game materials with a group of researchers, teachers and pupils.

Then two test games have been played with different schools to improve the materials and the course of the game.

Currently about thirty role games have been played – organised and led by the Bonn Science Shop and its partners (a network of towns in North Rhine-Westphalia). All materials have been optimised by teachers, pupils and scientists and are free to download at www.lag21.de

There are three main objectives:

1. Pupils learn the process of decision-making in local parliaments.
2. The field of land use and the conflicts between different demands becomes more realistic than by reading theoretical cases.
3. The pupils improve their ability to make deals, looking for compromises, and to follow their own opinion.

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