

CASE STUDIES

At the School of Transnational Governance, we develop the case method to provide students with leadership and decision-making skills. These are essential capacities to build better judgment and to drive individual reflection. The 'STG case method' exposes students to the complexity of transnational governance by giving the possibility to investigate and reflect on real small to medium scale transnational decision-making cases and testing the limits of theoretical arguments. Case method also develops soft skills that are expected in policy leaders such as active listening, empathy but also collaboration and communication.

This method is built around several original STG case studies that use real life scenarios to illustrate complex decision-making challenges. In class the cases put students in the shoes of a decision-maker sharpening their analytical, leadership and decision-making skills.

List of case studies

2022 (i) Nowhere to hide: The political drama behind the EU license renewal of Glyphosate (2015-2016), Author: Jonas Brendebach

Description

It was Monday 6 June 2016 when the President of the European Commission, Junker, had returned from the G7 Summit in Japan and was preparing for a ministerial conference at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva. All the while, the Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis, was about to agree with EU member states regulators the renewal of the license for the weedkilling substance glyphosate. But when Andriukaitis called, he had to tell Junker that member states had refused to approve the European Commission's proposal and what initially was thought to be just a technical issue seemed to have turned into a political drama. With only one procedural card left to play, the European Commission was up against a deadline on 30 June to solve the problem.

2022 (ii) A train to Warsaw, Author: Jaras Gwizdak

Description

"There are only a few moments when you can be proud of being a judge beyond the courtroom" older colleagues told you. "Especially when you go to Warsaw, the capital city of Poland to get appointed for a judicial office and you shake hands with the president and get your chain with the eagle". This is the artefact of power that is given to judges, the perfect celebration of their professional achievements.

This case study investigates the ethical questions surrounding the life of a young polish judge in front of a difficult personal decision: whether to accept the promotion and abide to the political power or to stay independent and refuse to appear in front of the High Judicial Council.

2022 (iii) The AI Act and the ban of facial recognition technologies. Opportunities and challenges of a human rights organisation, Author: Gaia Taffoni

Description

The case follows the activities of a fictional civil society organisation called “Eudigirights” that advocates for a balanced approach to artificial intelligence (AI) and considers citizen’s fundamental rights calling for the need to ban biometric mass surveillance.

The organisation launched an European Citizen Initiative (ECI) in January 2021 named *ReclaimYourFace* together with other European organisations. The intention was to call the Commission to end indiscriminate and arbitrarily targeted uses of biometric data in ways which can lead to mass surveillance or any undue interference with fundamental rights. The time has also now come for the AI law proposal to be discussed, voted and approved by the Parliament and the Council with high risks of having a final text transformed. The case steps into this conundrum and asks to consider the opportunities at disposal of the advocacy organisation ‘Eudigirights’. It also discusses the strengths and weakness of an ECI and the advocacy efforts of the organisation.

2022 (iv) Tony’s Chocolonely. Changing the industry from the inside? Author: Emma Lees

Description

In 2003 Teun van de Keuken attempted to prosecute himself for complicity in slavery after consuming a number of chocolate bars. During the case, he called as witnesses former child laborer on cocoa plantations. He was joined as a defendant by more than 2000 other individuals who all attempted to impose hail terms upon themselves for complicity in slavery, child exploitation and trafficking.

This case study follows the activities of Tony’s Chocolonely, the ethical chocolate industry founded by Teun van de Keuken, and the issues raised by the corporate structure of the industry. In particular, the factory that manufacture some of Tony’s products, owned by Barry Callebaut, was found not vigilant in its supply chain for what concerns forced and child labor. The case study asks to reflect and justify whether the strategic partnership with Barry Callebaut should be renewed or not.

2022 (v) Dogs of war. Keeping the Wolves at Bay, Author: Dorien H. Braam

Description

In the context of global crises, including increasing conflict, disasters, reduced food security, and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic, questions around human and animal mobility and health are becoming increasingly complex. While animals are often not facilitated in humanitarian and refugee responses out of concern for zoonoses, animals are essential to livelihoods, nutrition and mental health.

This case investigates whether current laws and regulations are fit for the purpose. Following the events of a young migrant and her Bernese mountain dog, this case introduces an often neglected question around forced migration: what do we do with the animals?

2022 (vi) Once, twice, three times a schrems. Privacy, data protection and the future of the EU-USA relations, Author: Adrien Bradley

Description

The Schrems cases at the ECJ have tested the legality of transatlantic data transfers, which underpin US-EU economic relations worth yearly \$1 trillion. This case study illustrates the paths the EU could take in trying to manage its relation to the US regarding the trade-offs between digital trade and privacy protection.

2022 (vii) President Mujica's decision. Protecting democracy in regional governance organizations

Author: Carlos Closa

Description

This case study revolves around the impeachment of President Fernando Lugo of Paraguay. Lugo's removal from office triggers a political crisis, leading Mercosur leaders, including Mujica, to consider suspending Paraguay's membership in the organization. The case explores the complexities of regional politics, the impeachment process, and the dilemma faced by Mujica in either aligning with the larger regional powers or supporting a like-minded president. The case underscores the challenges of balancing principles, regional dynamics, and geopolitical interests in the context of a complex political scenario.

2023 (i) A Masoud Life. An urban refugee's journey, Author: Sema Merve Is

Description

This case study follows the journey of Masoud, a young Syrian refugee arriving with part of his family in Turkey. It describes the life of Masoud and his family in Istanbul and the legal framework that governed his life's decisions. As a Syrian refugee Masoud faced a difficult choice: whether to remain in Turkey or to hit the road and try to reach Germany to seek a better life risking, however, to not be able to see his family anymore.

2023 (ii) Measuring (what) matters. The intertwined journey of economic and welfare measurement, Author: Petra Krylova

Description

This case study describes how the measurement of national income changed over time. From GDP to the recent Sustainable Development Goals, the strive for a more comprehensive, multidimensional assessment of welfare was at the center of the many efforts to measure what really matters moving beyond economic metrics. This case makes the point for a multidimensional wellbeing measurement and asks to think about the challenges posed by classical economic measurements and what concepts and indicators should rather be included.

2023 (iii) Can Better Regulation help cycling shift to next gear? Author: Daiva Repeckaite

Description

European policy makers are increasingly expressing their support for promoting cycling as a crucial shift in urban mobility, and a necessary means for reducing transport emissions. To this end, the EU makes funding available, but the precise locations and the shape of the infrastructure to be built with these funds are determined by local governments. The results are extremely uneven, with some municipalities designing unsafe or otherwise unusable cycling infrastructure. Does it mean that cycling policy should be tackled at a different level of multi-layered governance in the EU? This case study sums up various stakeholders' views and recent developments in the EU before proposing different scenarios to move forward.

2023 (iv) The case of Inuit women in the Arctic region of Canada. Understanding the kinds of knowledge used in decision-making Author: Gaia Taffoni

Description

The Inuit community's traditional knowledge was possessed by women and men equally. However, in the past 25 years, the founding of local and regional organizations for the management of Inuit land has produced unequal opportunities for Inuit men and women, particularly in specific public roles. As a result, recent policy decisions regarding the Inuit community are made without the substantive input of women. This case study reflects on the impact of this bias on the effectiveness of policy decisions, specifically in the environmental policy area.

2023-2024 (i) A turning point – EU leaders' discourse and policies on enlargement following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine Author: Wojciech Białożyty

Description

The case discusses the shift in the neighbourhood policy of the European Union following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine on 24 February 2022. It zooms into the critical days of February and March 2022 during which the European leaders faced a full-scaled war at EU borders and assessed the Russian invasion of Ukraine as “a beginning of a new era” for the continent.

The case reflects not only on the EU enlargement policy but on EU internal governance and external relations. It offers three main paths to be explored that refer to the EU's foreign and security policy, the EU's decision-making processes as well and to relation between the discourses of main EU political leaders and their institutional portfolios.
