

Simulation Role Cards

20 profiles across 6 typology categories, plus the Ukrainian seat

How to use this deck

1. Cut along each page and shuffle all 20 role cards face down. Do not sort by typology — the point is an unpredictable room.
2. Deal one card per participant, blind. One participant separately takes the Ukrainian Communicator card and does not see any other card's contents.
3. Card contents are never read aloud. Each participant plays tone, task, and typology — the room reads them, not the label.
4. Between rounds, collect, reshuffle, and redeal. A different random mix each round is the exercise — the Ukrainian seat should face a genuinely different room each time.
5. With 8–10 participants, not every card will be in play each round. That's expected — you have more profiles than seats on purpose.

UKRAINIAN COMMUNICATOR

The Ukrainian Communicator

Your tone

You do not know in advance which typology each person at the table represents. You have roughly 60 seconds at the start of the round to read tone, posture, and opening question before you commit to a line.

Your task

Deliver one honest account of the recent cabinet reshuffle and the Fedorov dismissal that a diplomat, an MEP, an IFI representative, and a journalist could each find credible — without conceding ground on Ukraine's institutional stability, and without inventing certainty about contested facts.

Listen for

Your own instinct to over-explain, minimize, or go silent. Notice which one you default to under pressure.

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

INSTITUTIONAL ALLY

EU Commission Register

Your tone

Formal, benchmark-oriented. You avoid emotional language and speak in terms of accession-track progress and institutional stability.

Your task

Press for reassurance that rule-of-law and institutional-stability benchmarks are not affected by the reshuffle.

Listen for

Does the speaker treat the protests as a sign of governance strength, or as a weakness to be managed?

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Can you confirm the rule-of-law benchmarks haven't slipped?*
- *How does this affect the accession-track timeline?*
- *What reassurance can you give Brussels this week?*

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INSTITUTIONAL ALLY

Legalistic-Procedural Register

Your tone

Measured, cautious. You represent a rules-based-order, coalition-of-the-willing perspective and dislike rhetorical flourish.

Your task

Ask specifically what changes, operationally, in joint defense commitments as a result of the reshuffle.

Listen for

A concrete, mechanism-level answer versus a vague general reassurance.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *What, operationally, changes in joint defense commitments?*
- *Who is accountable for continuity now?*
- *Can you point to a mechanism, not just a promise?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

TECHNOCRATIC-CONDITIONAL

Defense-Funding Register

Your tone

Numbers- and schedule-focused, not moralizing. You represent a body with named, funded joint defense programs at stake.

Your task

Find out who now owns the drone-production and funding-schedule commitments the dismissed minister previously managed.

Listen for

Does the speaker name a mechanism or institution that continues the work, or only the person who is gone?

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Who owns the drone-production schedule now?*
- *Is the funding timeline still intact?*
- *What happens to the agreements already signed?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

TECHNOCRATIC-CONDITIONAL

Fiscal-Conservative Register

Your tone

Pragmatic, business-like, wary of grand gestures. You support Ukraine but frame every commitment as fiscally bounded, not open-ended.

Your task

Ask whether the reshuffle signals rising instability that could affect the sustainability case you make to your own parliament.

Listen for

Whether the speaker over-promises stability rather than describing it honestly.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Is this the start of a pattern my parliament will ask about?*
- *Can you still guarantee these commitments are sustainable?*
- *What would you tell a skeptical finance minister?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

TECHNOCRATIC-CONDITIONAL

IMF Register

Your tone

Clinical, program-language: performance criteria, reviews, disbursements. Politically neutral on its face.

Your task

Ask, specifically, whether the reshuffle affects any current reform commitment or benchmark timeline. You are not interested in the politics, only the delivery.

Listen for

Does the speaker distinguish between political turbulence and program delivery, or let the two blur together?

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Does this affect any current performance criteria?*
- *Is program delivery on track regardless of the reshuffle?*
- *Should we expect a revised timeline?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

TECHNOCRATIC-CONDITIONAL

World Bank / Reconstruction-Financing Register

Your tone

Warmer and more forward-looking than a strict lender, but still ties credibility to reform delivery — resilience narrative paired with investment preconditions.

Your task

Ask how the reshuffle affects investor confidence heading into the recovery-financing pipeline.

Listen for

A credible reform-continuity story, or only an emotional resilience story.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *How does this affect investor confidence?*
- *Is the reform story still credible?*
- *What's the resilience narrative here, concretely?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

SOVEREIGNIST / CONDITIONAL ALLY

Historical-Memory Register

Your tone

Blunt, domestically-legible. You name your precondition directly rather than hiding it.

Your task

Use the instability of the reshuffle to reopen an unresolved historical-memory precondition for full normalization. See if the speaker engages with it or deflects.

Listen for

Deflection versus direct, respectful acknowledgment of the named condition.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Where does this leave the issue we've raised before?*
- *Is this the moment to finally address it?*
- *Can we talk about the precondition directly, not around it?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

SOVEREIGNIST / CONDITIONAL ALLY

Atlanticist-Conservative Bridge Register

Your tone

Plain-spoken, security-first, values-driven but conditional on 'reliability.' You bridge to a skeptical domestic right-wing audience back home.

Your task

Ask directly whether Ukraine is still a 'reliable partner' given the internal power struggle. You need a sound bite you can repeat at home.

Listen for

A message that would actually survive translation into a skeptical domestic audience's language.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Is Ukraine still a reliable partner, honestly?*
- *What can I tell skeptics back home?*
- *Give me one line I can actually repeat.*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

VALUES / SOLIDARITY CHAMPION

Frontline-Proximity Register

Your tone

Direct, urgent, personally invested. Your country's own security experience with Russia gives you standing to speak plainly.

Your task

Ask what the protests mean for civic morale — resilience or fatigue? You want directness, not diplomatic hedging.

Listen for

Hedging, which reads as distance, versus direct, matching honesty.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Is this resilience, or is this fatigue?*
- *What does this mean for civic morale, really?*
- *Don't hedge with me — what's actually going on?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

VALUES / SOLIDARITY CHAMPION

Baltic Host-Nation Register

Your tone

Direct, security-first, and visibly invested — your country is organizing the next major international conference on Ukraine's recovery, less than six months away.

Your task

Ask, pointedly, whether this kind of instability is something you will need to manage or explain to other conference co-organizers before it happens again.

Listen for

Does the speaker treat this as a fair, forward-looking question, or as an unwelcome intrusion into domestic politics?

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Will I need to explain this to my co-organizers?*
- *Should we expect this kind of instability again before Tallinn?*
- *What does this mean for reform momentum?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

CONVERTED SKEPTIC / INFORMAL INFLUENCER

Converted Skeptic / Informal Influencer

Your tone

Informal, personal-narrative-driven, distrustful of institutional talking points. You are persuaded by what you can see and touch, not statistics.

Your task

Ask the speaker to explain the protests 'like you would to a regular person,' not like a diplomat. You plan to repeat whatever you hear to an influential contact back home.

Listen for

Does the speaker adjust register for a non-institutional listener, or default to diplomatic script regardless of audience?

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Explain it to me like I'm not a diplomat.*
- *What would you tell a regular person about this?*
- *Why should anyone back home believe this isn't chaos?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

ADVERSARIAL / OBSTRUCTIONIST

Adversarial / Obstructionist

Your tone

Not hostile, but extractive — reframes, relitigates, and introduces false balance.

Your task

Suggest the reshuffle 'proves' Western support is being wasted on a dysfunctional system. Wait to see if the speaker corrects the frame without becoming defensive or aggressive.

Listen for

Firm correction without matching the aggressive register.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Doesn't this prove the system is dysfunctional?*
- *Isn't Western support being wasted here?*
- *Why should we keep paying into this?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

CROSS-CUTTING

International Journalist

Your tone

Neutral-probing. You want a quotable, honest line, not a press-release line.

Your task

Ask the single hardest question you think your editor would want answered. Press once more if the first answer is evasive.

Listen for

A real answer, versus a deflection dressed as an answer.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *What's the one line my editor will want?*
- *Is that a real answer, or a deflection?*
- *Say that again, plainly, for the record.*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

MILITARY-STRATEGIC REALIST

Military-Strategic Realist

Your tone

Blunt, timeline-driven. Your authority comes from operational and security expertise, not institutional office or domestic politics.

Your task

You've recently and publicly argued there is a narrow window — a matter of weeks — for Ukraine and its allies to force movement toward negotiations before the war escalates further. Ask whether the reshuffle helps or hurts Ukraine's position inside that window.

Listen for

Direct engagement with the timeline claim, or a retreat into general solidarity language that avoids the hard question.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Does this help or hurt inside the window we have?*
- *Can Ukraine still move fast enough?*
- *What's the operational cost of this instability?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

SKEPTICAL / OBSTRUCTIONIST NEIGHBOR

Domestic Russia-Sympathetic Register (Slovakia)

Your tone

Nationalist-populist, transactional. You maintain a working bilateral channel with Kyiv while running Russia-friendly rhetoric at home and obstructing EU-level measures.

Your task

Note that your government has kept phone diplomacy open with Kyiv even while opposing sanctions and blocking EU funding packages. Ask the speaker to explain, honestly, why that contradiction shouldn't just be read as bad faith.

Listen for

Does the speaker distinguish between the bilateral relationship and the EU-level obstruction, or collapse the two together defensively?

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Why shouldn't I read that as bad faith?*
- *Which is real — the bilateral channel or the obstruction?*
- *What do you actually want from us?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

SKEPTICAL / OBSTRUCTIONIST NEIGHBOR

Domestic Russia-Sympathetic Register (Bulgaria)

Your tone

Pragmatic-realist framing over ideology. You call your position 'practical relations, not pro-Russian,' and you now hold executive power, not just a symbolic office.

Your task

Push back on any assumption that your position is fringe — you head a government now, with a parliamentary majority, elected partly on this platform. Ask what Ukraine offers Bulgaria in return for support, concretely.

Listen for

Whether the speaker treats your position as a negotiating reality to engage, or dismisses it as illegitimate.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- What does Ukraine offer Bulgaria in return, concretely?
- Why should my position be treated as illegitimate?
- What would change my government's calculation?

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

SKEPTICAL / OBSTRUCTIONIST NEIGHBOR

Contested-History Neighbor — Active Obstruction (Hungary)

Your tone

Reformist-branded but unmoved on the substantive issue. You campaigned on resetting relations, then as head of government continued and hardened obstruction of EU accession clusters.

Your task

Cite your own public justification for the obstruction — that accession must be strictly 'merit-based.' Ask the speaker to respond to the substance of that argument, not to your reputation as a reformer.

Listen for

Does the speaker engage with the merit-based argument on its own terms, or fall back on assuming your reformist image means goodwill?

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *How is this different from what your predecessor did?*
- *Respond to the merit-based argument directly.*
- *Was the reconciliation promise real?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

SKEPTICAL / OBSTRUCTIONIST NEIGHBOR

Contested-History Neighbor — Managed Tension (Romania)

Your tone

Warm, partnership-oriented, but the underlying historical sensitivity (minority rights, Northern Bukovina) is real and not fully resolved — it's managed, not erased.

Your task

Acknowledge the current strategic partnership warmly, then ask what Ukraine is doing to make sure the same fault line that Hungary weaponized doesn't reopen here if the political mood shifts.

Listen for

Complacency (treating the good relationship as permanent) versus a realistic answer about active maintenance.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *What's stopping this fault line from reopening?*
- *Are you taking this relationship for granted?*
- *What are you actively doing to maintain it?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

EQUIDISTANT BALANCER / NON-WESTERN MEDIATOR

NATO Member, Equidistant Register (Turkey)

Your tone

Calmly transactional. You call Russia and the West 'equally reliable' and see no contradiction in selling drones to Ukraine while maintaining deep economic ties with Moscow.

Your task

Position yourself as the indispensable broker — note your control of the Bosphorus and your ongoing efforts to convene talks. Ask why Ukraine should treat you as more than a self-interested middleman.

Listen for

Whether the speaker can name a concrete reason to value the mediator role without either flattering it or dismissing it outright.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Why should Ukraine trust a self-interested middleman?*
- *What's in it for you, honestly?*
- *Are you a broker, or a bystander?*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.

EQUIDISTANT BALANCER / NON-WESTERN MEDIATOR

Non-Aligned Gulf Mediator (UAE)

Your tone

Calm, humanitarian-branded neutrality. You quantify your credibility in numbers — dozens of successful prisoner-exchange mediations — not in political alignment.

Your task

Ask the speaker directly whether Ukraine sees your neutrality as genuinely useful or merely convenient for Russia. Make clear you expect a real answer, not diplomatic flattery.

Listen for

A substantive answer about the practical value of neutral mediation, versus vague gratitude that avoids the question.

A few starting questions (a nudge, not a script)

- *Is your neutrality useful to us, or just convenient for Russia?*
- *What do you actually want out of this role?*
- *Give me a real answer, not gratitude.*

Do not disclose this card's contents aloud. Play the role; let the room read you.