



**West Coast Model EU 2023**  
University of Washington, Seattle

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# Rules and Procedures<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NOTE: These rules and procedures are based in part on the Rules and Procedures of the 2001 Pitt Model EU as well as that of the 2004 Southwest Model EU.

# I. Introduction and Background

With the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon the European Council became a formal institution of the European Union (EU). Historically, the summit meetings of the political leaders representing every EU member state were always crucial for the success and setbacks of the EU's political agenda. Since 2009 this decision-making body is officially charged with defining "the general political directions and priorities" of the EU and lead the Union at the highest political level. In doing so, the European Council considers the EU's and member states' policies and priorities as an organic whole rather than as separate and competing ingredients.

With the creation of the position of President of the European Council laid out in the Lisbon treaty, the rotating presidency, which rotates among the EU Member States, no longer chairs the European Council. The rotating presidency, however, cooperates closely with the President of the European Council in order to ensure the best possible preparation of the European Council meetings. Many of the issues that are dealt with in the European Council are first handled in the Council of the EU, which is chaired by the rotating presidency. Hence, there is a need for close co-ordination and cooperation. Therefore, the President of the European Council meets on a regular basis with the Prime Minister or the President of the rotating presidency. In our Model EU simulation, we simplify the real-world scenario and have one summit of Heads of Government/State and one ministerial meeting on one day.

The European Council Summits are important but loosely structured affairs with relatively informal rules. However, the summits succeed because they have an established routine and require careful, lengthy and structured preparations. Moreover, since decisions at the European Council Summits are usually made along fairly broad outlines, a more formal implementation procedure through specific actions by other EU Institutions (Council and its secretariat, European Commission and Parliament) usually follows. At the West Coast Model EU, the luxury of only one of these sup-porting features is present. The European Commission will also be represented by a delegation team, without a vote but a consolatory role. As a result, the rules and procedures will have to deviate somewhat from the "real thing" for the purpose of this conference. The two topics debated at the simulation are held in two completely separated but simultaneously held negotiation sessions meetings instead of one common summit. This is also consistent with other EU simulations in Europe and the U.S., which have come to rely on parliamentary procedure. The rules of order at this Model EU conference are similar for the two types of meetings taking place – one at the level of the Heads of State/Government (HoG), and the other at the level of the Ministers.

**To reflect the procedural changes introduced under The Treaty of Lisbon, the individual sessions of the West Coast Model EU will be chaired by the President of the European Council together with the President of the Rotating Presidency (the Presidency).**

## II. Prior to the Conference

### A. Research and Preparation

Prior to the Model EU conference the Presidency will send an official Communication of the Presidency outlining in broad terms the priorities of the meeting and goals. Each participant should do as much advance preparation as possible on the member state they are representing with special emphasis on their positions to the topics outlined in the Communication of the Presidency.

## B. Position Papers

The participants representing the EU member states will not introduce their own comprehensive agenda proposal but will comment from their country's position on each of the issues on the Presidency's agenda. Each delegate should prepare a 1-2 page position paper that describes their country's position on each of the issues on the agenda. Each delegate will communicate their position (by submitting it via the link on the Model EU webpage) to the Presidency **by the date listed on the Model EU webpage**. The Presidency needs the position papers for an appropriate preparation of the summit meetings and to get an idea about the country's position on the topics. *The position papers will be posted on the Model EU website and are available for download to all delegates attending the simulation and the public.* Please be aware of this public exposure of the position papers when writing them. (For more information and a position paper example see *Guidelines for Position Papers*.)

## C. Draft Resolution

Along with their position papers, member states will submit a draft resolution. Each delegate should submit a resolution to each of the issues on the agenda. The resolution should offer a possible solution to each agenda item and lay out the terms to which their country will agree. These draft resolutions will be used by the Presidency to prepare the negotiation sessions. Each delegate will communicate their resolutions (by submitting it via the link on the Model EU webpage) to the Presidency **by the date listed on the Model EU webpage**. *The draft resolutions will not be made public to the delegates and will not be used during the simulation;* it is rather the "homework" for the country representatives to be prepared for the negotiation. (For more information and draft resolution example see *Guidelines for Draft Resolutions*.)

# III. The Conference

## A. Opening Plenary Session

The Model EU conference will commence with an **Opening Plenary Session**. This session, usually at the dinner of arrival day of the delegates, starts with a short address by the President of the Euro-pean Council welcoming the delegates and opening the proceedings. In its speech, the **President of the European Council will outline the Agenda of the Presidency** on how to resolve the issues in question. The person representing the Head of Governments of each country will be asked to lay out their country's main position on each topic in not more than **2 minutes**.

### i. Seating Arrangement

**Members of the delegations** shall be seated in alphabetical order (using the English name of the country) together with members of their ministerial group. Heads of State/Government (HoGs) will then each comment on the agenda and briefly present their country's position.

### ii. Division of Sessions

In the morning of the negotiation day the Model EU conference will then **divide into two parallel round-table sessions**, one of the HoGs, one of the Ministers.

## B. Individual Sessions

In the morning of the negotiation day, the Plenary will split up into two individual sessions – one at the level of the HoG debating Europe’s response to Brexit and the other on the level of Agricultural Ministers debating CAP reform. The goal of individual sessions is to debate the ideas and proposals of member state and through negotiation agree upon a formal set of Conclusions of the European Council for each session. The Conclusion is the main document of the European Council summit (see *x. Resolutions* for more details).

### i. Assignment of Agenda Items / Setting the Agenda

The **President of the European Council** has the **right to propose** the areas that will be negotiated by the HoGs and those negotiated by the Ministers, as well as the order of the agenda. If there are NO objections there shall be NO VOTE on the agenda. However, a delegate may also move to “set the agenda.” In this case courtesy requires that the delegate be given a maximum of one minute to explain his/her rationale. If at least two other delegates second the formal proposal (motion), it will immediately be put to a vote (see Voting Procedures). The Chair will declare the agenda set as such if the vote is successful. The Chair will say: *“The President of the European Council wishes to set the agenda as follows, unless other proposals are put forth at this time.”* If there is an objection by a delegate, he/she will respond: *“<Country Name> moves to set the agenda...”*

### ii. Role of the Chair

In order to provide structure to the sessions themselves, modified **rules of parliamentary procedure** apply (with certain exceptions). **The President of the European Council chairs all sessions.** As the Chair, the President of the European Council will have sole and final power to open and close sessions, recognize speakers, place limits on speaking time and control discussion and debate. It is important to recall that these are proceedings among delegates of equal rank. They would usually have known each other for some time and would have interacted often. Thus, the atmosphere is one of collegiality, equality and congeniality. This includes the relationship between the Chair and the other participants. While the Chair is formally in charge of the proceedings and entitled to all courtesy and respect, he/she would usually “propose” and “suggest,” than “decree” and “dictate.” The Chair, more than any other participant, is interested in a harmonious and consensual outcome of the conference. In cases where parliamentary procedure is unclear or in doubt, the Chair shall use his or her judgment to settle the matter and proceed with the session. Main Goal of the Chair is to get different small resolutions passed during the session and summarize into a Conclusion document at the end of the negotiation day (see *x. Resolutions* for more details). Note that the meetings will be chaired by the President of European Council, not a member state.

### iii. Roll Call (Quorum)

The first order of business for each of session will be to establish roll and a quorum. This is done by the Chair at the beginning of each individual session and does not require a motion. The Chair may record absentees informally by referring to seats left vacant. The Chair may also call on countries to identify themselves as present (Note: there is no “present and voting”). If member state representatives will be delayed temporarily for some reason, courtesy requires that they notify the Chair beforehand.

### iv. Debate Format

The “real” European Council generally meets twice a year. These meetings include an opening plenary session, a formal dinner, an (sometimes even more important) informal and confidential “fire-side chat,” bilateral working breakfasts, and further plenary sessions. While we strive to accurately simulate the workings of European Council meetings, the format of our Model EU has been structured to facilitate negotiations and student learning. There will be two types of debate used at the Model EU, formal and informal.

**Formal debate** will require participants wishing to speak to raise their placard and be recognized by the Chair. It is the Chair's obligation to ensure and guide the flow of communication and to afford each member an equal opportunity to speak. The Chair keeps track of the proceedings including the fair administration of the right to speak. The length of speaking time will be set by Chair. The proceedings correspond roughly to a "moderated caucus" at a Model United Nations and will constitute the default form of debate during the Model EU. Participants make their statements while seated around the table. Participants need not address each other through the Chair. The Chair, however, may comment on statements and express his or her view like all other delegates. Participants may yield the remaining speaking time to a fellow member state by indicating so at the end of their speech. If not, the Chair may call upon another participant.

**Informal debate** allows participants to leave their seats. Heads of Government/State and Ministers are expected to mingle and speak amongst themselves. At the "real" EU summit these informal de-bate sessions can be more important than the formal debate because HoG or Ministers can talk more privately about their dispute and settle it outside the public arena. This time should be used to negotiate and write/edit working papers and resolutions. These proceedings correspond roughly to an "unmoderated caucus" at a Model United Nations. The Chair or any participant may call for in-formal debate for a specified time and (if necessary) be given a maximum of one minute to explain his/her rationale. If at least two other delegates second the motion, it will immediately be put to a vote (see Voting Procedures). The Chair will determine the length and will allow for no more than forty minutes of informal debate within any given hour. Once informal debate time has expired, formal debate will resume.

#### v. Temporary Adjournment

A Chair or a delegate may call for a temporary adjournment of a meeting for a specified time (no more than ten minutes), and (if necessary) be given a maximum of one minute to explain his/her rationale. **If at least two other delegates second the motion**, it will immediately be put to a vote, and requires the **support of at least a simple majority** to succeed. The Chair determines the length and will allow no more than TWO temporary adjournments within a 60-minute period. No one delegate may call for an adjournment more than once in any one meeting. A delegate would say: "*<Country Name> moves to have a temporary adjournment for the purpose of an informal consultation.*"

#### vi. Points and Motions

Delegates may rise to **points of order** (always permitted, except during a speech and actual voting), **points of information** (after a speech is completed, whenever the Chair asks "are there any points and motions at this time?"), and points of **personal privilege** (extremely rare, always permissible). **Motions** may also be used to combine or divide agenda items, to table an issue, or to refer an issue to a committee for further study. Motions are also in order (determined always by the Chair) to "close debate on an issue" and bring it to a vote. Motions are always subject to a "second" by two delegates and are brought to a vote immediately.

**Point of Order.** If, during a meeting, a delegate feels that the meeting is running in a manner contrary to these Rules, he/she may rise to a point of order. The Chair may overrule, or accept the ap-peat. If accepted, the Chair may make an immediate ruling or ask the delegate to speak on the point of order for a maximum of one minute (but he/she may not speak on the subject of the debate). The Chair will then immediately rule on the point of order.

**Point of Information.** If a delegate wishes to obtain clarification of procedure or of any other matter, he/she may rise to a point of information and receive clarification from the Chair or anyone else designated by the Chair.

**Point of Personal Privilege.** If a delegate wishes to raise a question, leave the room for an extended time, or make a request relating to personal comfort or his/her treatment by other delegates, he/she may rise to a point of personal privilege and receive an immediate ruling by the Chair.

**Rule: All motions by any participants (other than the Chair) are always subject to a second by two delegates. These may be asked to give an explanation of the rationale (no more than one minute). If successful they will be brought to a vote immediately.**

## vii. Tour de Table

A device known as a *tour de table* may also be used, at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair will ask each head of government in turn to give a short summary (up to 2 minutes) of their thinking on the matter under discussion, thus ensuring that every member state is able to outline its position, and allowing the Chair to determine whether a compromise is possible.

## viii. Closure of Debate

The Chair will normally decide on the closure of a debate, but a delegate may move for closure, and (if necessary) be given a maximum of one minute to explain his/her rationale. If at least two other delegates second the motion, it will immediately be put to a vote and requires the support of at least a simple majority to be successful. The Chair will declare the debate closed if the vote is successful.

## ix. Voting Procedures

Where votes are taken, they should normally be open and made by roll call in alphabetical order by member state, and recorded by the Chair. The Chair will be the last called to vote. Voting will be verbal and expressed either as “Yes,” “No,” or “Abstain.” Once a vote has been declared open, no one will be allowed to speak other than to cast his or her vote. No one may approach or leave the room. Once all votes have been cast, the Chair will tally the vote and immediately announce the result. The decision of the Chair on a tally will be final.

- **Voting on procedural issues** (e.g., adjournments, informal debate) requires a **simple majority** of the delegates **present** in the session including Presidency. **One member, one vote!**
- **Voting on matters of the agenda** (sequence, division, combination of agenda items, tabling and delegating the agenda as well as opening and closing debate) requires a simple majority. The President of the European Council may vote. **One member, one vote!**
- **Voting on substantive issues**, such as resolutions, requires **consensus**. (**Note: in the European Council, the Presidency only calls rarely for a vote.**)
- Note: there is no “present and voting;” or “present” rule in the EU!

## x. Resolution (Conclusions of the Presidency)

A resolution on an agenda item, essentially a brief paragraph prefaced with the following operative phrases “recommends,” “emphasizes,” “insists on,” “notes,” “welcomes,” etc. must have five signatures from five participants (one of whom may also be the Commission President). Due to time constraints, in this simulation the Conclusions of the European Council will be submitted in an out-line format and will contain the resolutions agreed upon by delegates during negotiating sessions. A proposed resolution must be submitted to the Chair before it can be formally considered for the Conclusions of the Presidency. Multiple resolutions can (but do not necessarily have to) be agreed upon for each agenda item, so long as they are not conflicting. As Conclusions of the Presidency are agreed upon through consensus, (voting is used only as a last resort) resolutions should have considerable support before they are formally proposed

and discussed in formal debate. The Chair will ask if there are any member states who are opposed to the resolution. If there are none, the resolution will be passed and be included in the Conclusions of the Presidency. If there are objections, debate and negotiation will continue until a consensus is reached or the resolution is abandoned. A vote on a resolution can be used if consensus cannot be reached to pass resolutions, but this is **considered a last resort and only occurs in rare circumstances**. Heads of Government/State and Ministers should be careful not to be found out of character by unjustly proposing a vote.

### **C. Judging and Awards**

The judges and members of the presidency will both be involved in the judging deliberations. The members of each session will make nominations for awards. Participants are evaluated on their preparedness, accurate representation of country position, and use of diplomacy including correct use of parliamentary procedure, negotiating skill, and ability to make compromises (see “Judging Criteria” for more details).