

# RULES OF PROCEDURE

# YOUTH MUN MADRID

MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The following rules apply to the “European Parliament ” and to the “Council of the European Union” during the YouthMUN Madrid 2022 event.

An assembly of the size of a European Parliament's plenary session cannot work without a strict and binding set of rules. It is therefore of utmost importance for all participants to understand the basic rules of procedure. At the same time, the rules will secure an orderly and productive working atmosphere.

These rules are based on the general rules of procedure at YouthMUN and adapted according to the needs of the European committees'. The aim is to provide a realistic simulation of EU law-making, however, without making it too complicated for participants. Hence, we keep the MUN-rules wherever this is possible and clearly point out deviations made for the purpose of the EU simulation.

As delegates you should know and understand at least the basic rules of procedure. We recommend to all delegates at YouthMUN the Rules Workshop at the very beginning of the conference.

# 2. GENERAL ADVICE & BASIC RULES

Both chambers, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, are chaired by a Chair and a Co-chair (The Presidency). They must ensure the maintenance of order and the respect of these rules of procedure in the house as well as the smooth running of sessions. The decisions of the Presidency have to be respected and followed at any time.

Should a delegate contravene these rules, the Presidency will call him or her to order and remind the delegate of the correct behaviour. Should a delegate violate the basic rules of procedure repeatedly and intentionally, the Presidency can adopt appropriate measures and, as a means of last resort, may even temporarily expel the delegate in question from the session.

As Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) or Ministers of the Council, you may address your chamber in two basic ways:

### **1. By delivering a speech.**

In order to deliver a speech, you have to be on the speakers' list. You may then address the house when your turn has come.

### **2. By introducing a point or a motion.**

Points or motions are raised to appeal to the President and the chamber to change certain aspects of the rules of procedure, such as the time allowed for speeches. These suggestions are then voted upon.

Before going into more detail about the different methods of addressing the house, you will have to memorise the most important and basic rules for addressing the Chair or other delegates:

#### **You may only speak when you have been granted the floor by the President.**

This is the most important rule of all; it guarantees a proper and orderly discussion.

#### **You need not refer to yourself in the 1st person ("I" or "me"), nor to other delegates in the 2nd person ("You").**

This MUN-rule will be slightly different for Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). As an individual MEP, you may use "I" when defending your personal position. However, in the EP you do not represent yourself but European citizens and thus you should refrain from talking in the 1st person too often.

In addition, you will be in a political faction, and you can also express your faction's standpoint ("In the view of the European Peoples' Party...", "We, the Socialists & Democrats, believe that..."). Do not refer to other delegates in the 2nd person, but use the terms "Dear/honourable fellow MEPs", "Honourable members of the house" etc.

Ministers of the Council should generally refrain from using "I". You will represent your country and should use your country's name and refer to other ministers as "the honourable Minister of country X".

## **No points or motions may ever interrupt a speech!**

According to these rules, the correct way of introducing a point or a motion is as follows:

# **3. PROCEDURE**

The state of delegates convening in their respective chamber under the guidance of the Presidency and adhering to the rules of procedure is referred to as “in session”. Your committee will be in session for most of the conference and will only interrupt sessions for lunch breaks or for the night.

The following pages will portray a session chronologically – from the first time you come together on Friday morning to the end of the year’s sessions on Sunday noon.

## **I. Beginning of Session**

### **1. Minute of silent prayer or meditation**

At the very beginning of the very first session, there is the opportunity for a minute of silent prayer or meditation. Any participant may move for a minute of silent prayer or meditation before the first roll call takes place. It is possible to add a special reason to the request. Any decisions concerning this motion are not subject to appeal.

### **2. The Roll Call**

At the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, the Chair will execute a roll call to check participants’ presence. When you are called upon you can either answer “present” or “present and voting”. The difference is significant and will become important during the very last phase of the session: Delegates declaring their country “**present**” may abstain in any substantial voting. Delegates declaring themselves “**present and voting**” may not abstain in any voting.

It is however not possible for any country to abstain on a procedural vote; more on the differences between these kinds of votes will follow later.

If delegates arrive during the roll call or after the roll call, they are required **to send a note to the Chair** to declare themselves present or present and voting. As long as a delegate has not informed the Chair of his status, they will not be allowed to vote on procedural matters or to deliver a speech. All participants that have not informed the Chair of their status until the voting procedure begins are not eligible to vote.

The chamber is in session if quorum is established, meaning if at least the majority of the delegates is “present “or “present and voting“.

### **3. Quorum**

The quorum is the number of Members of the Chamber required to be present for a substantive vote to be valid. The quorum shall be verified at the beginning of each day of debate, immediately prior to any substantive votes and whenever a request for a verification of quorum is passed.

(1) In the Parliament,  $\frac{1}{3}$  of all Members must be present.

(2) In the Council,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Ministers must be present.

### **4. Start of the first Session: Setting the Agenda?**

In contrast to UN-committees, there will be no agenda-setting in the European chambers. In the EU law-making process, the European Commission can be seen as the agenda-setter. In YouthMUN, at the beginning of the very first session, the Commissioner, played by a member of the organising team, will introduce a legislative proposal.

The Commissioner will present the proposal and explain the background and motivation as well as the main elements of the proposal. Participants will then have the chance to ask questions. Therefore, it is crucial that all MEPs and Ministers are well prepared from the very beginning since the question-and-answer session with the Commissioner should be effectively used. After this introduction by the Commission, general debate on the proposal will start right away.

## II. Substantial Debate

Once the proposal is introduced by the Commission, the substantial debate (also: general debate) starts immediately. In essence, the general debate consists of speeches given by the MEPs/Ministers addressing the chamber.

### 1. Speakers' List

As mentioned earlier, it is necessary for you to be on the speakers' list to give a speech to the chamber.

After the President has declared the speakers' list open, they will ask you to raise your placard, so that you can be added to the list.

The President will regularly ask whether MEPs or Ministers would like to be put on the speakers' list. You can then put yourself on the speakers' list by raising your placard in reply.

You may not be on the speakers' list more than once at a time.

You may ask to be added to the list again after you have addressed the house. If you for any reason wish to be withdrawn from the speakers' list, send a written note to the Presidency.

If the speakers' list runs out (the last speaker on the list has run out of speakers' time), the chamber moves *directly* into voting procedure. Hence, if you are preparing amendments and still need some time to finish them, keep the speakers' list long or move for informal debate before it runs out.

### 2. General Debate

General debate is the basic form of debate at this conference. One speaker after the other delivers his or her speech in front of the whole house. Speeches are usually limited to a set speakers' time and there is no cross-talking or interruption allowed during a speech. Also remember the basic rule: No point or motion may interrupt a speech! It is simply a matter of politeness to give everyone the right to deliver a speech without any interruptions. However, the Presidency may call a speaker to order if his or her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

The formal debate can be shaped and influenced by numerous points and motions. Some of these motions are voted upon. Votes on motions are called procedural votes. Again: You cannot abstain on any procedural vote!

In the case of a tied vote, the vote shall immediately be retaken. If this vote also results in a tie, the motion will be considered to have failed.

### **a) Setting the speakers' time**

Any delegate can move at any time to set the speakers' time. Almost every amount of time is allowed, however 1 to 4 minutes has proven to be an appropriate speakers' time. Nonetheless, it is possible to move to set the speakers' time to a lower amount, for example to obstruct your political opponents.

If there are two or more motions to set the speakers' time on the floor, the motion with the longest amount of time takes precedence and is to be voted upon first. The motion requires one speaker in favour and one against. If no one is willing to speak in favour of the motion, it will automatically fail; usually, the delegate that brought in the motion will speak in favour of it. If no other delegate is willing to speak against the motion, it will pass without a vote.

If not announced otherwise by the Presidency the standard speakers' time will be set to **one minute** from the very beginning. **It is not possible to set speakers' time to unlimited.**

### **b) Points and motions**

The Members of the Chamber may raise any of the following points during the debate, where not expressly limited by other Rules, by raising their placards and stating their point. The order of precedence is the following:

- (1) Point of Personal Privilege;
- (2) Point of Order;
- (3) Right of Reply;
- (4) Point of Parliamentary Inquiry;

- (5) Point of Information;
- (6) Verification of Quorum;
- (7) Motion to open the debate;
- (8) Motion to reopen or suspend/adjourn the debate;
- (9) Motion to limit/extend Speaking Time;
- (10) Motion to extend the duration of the last caucus;
- (11) Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus;
- (12) Motion for a Moderated Caucus;
- (13) Motion for a Parliamentary Group Meeting;
- (14) Motion to close the debate.

The Presidency shall rule on the admissibility and appropriateness of any point or motion raised. If the point or motion is not carried, the Presidency must give their reason for the refusal. If multiple points and/or motions are raised simultaneously, they will be resolved in the order of precedence. If two points or motions of the same type are raised, the Presidency will decide on the order in which they are resolved.

Members may raise any motions during the General Debate, except where expressly stated otherwise. For a motion to be carried it needs to pass a procedural vote in the Chamber. Regarding motions, the Presidency may:

- (1) request for motions to be seconded by another member for it to be voted upon;
- (2) call for objections to the motion and, if no objections are made, consider the motion to be accepted unanimously;
- (3) refuse to entertain a motion at its discretion, provided that a justification is given.

### **b.1) Point of Personal Privilege**

If the proponent is in direct personal discomfort (e.g. unable to hear the speaker) and is unable to take part in the proceedings as a result of the said discomfort. Points of Personal Privilege may be raised at any point during the proceedings, other than informal discussion, and may interrupt a speaker.

### **b.2) Point of Order**

If the proponent believes that an error in following the Rules of Procedure has taken place, the Presidency will rule on the point's admissibility, and if necessary, take remedial action as soon as possible. Points of Order may be raised at any point other than informal discussion. A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker.

### **b.3) Right of Reply**

If the proponent feels that their national honour has been insulted, the Presidency shall request the proponent to concisely explain the request, and if the point is admissible, will grant the proponent a short remark to reply to the comment. The Presidency may also require the original speaker to apologise. A right of reply may not interrupt a speaker, it is preferable to pass a note to the Presidency, who will then take it into consideration.

### **b.4) Point of Parliamentary Inquiry**

If the proponent has a question or a request of clarification about the Rules to the Presidency. Points of Procedural Inquiry may be raised at any point during the proceedings, other than informal discussion. A point of Procedural Inquiry may not interrupt a speaker.

### **b.5) Point of Information**

During the General Debate if a member has a question to the previous speaker, the point may only be allowed if the Presidency permits it and the previous speaker also accepts it. The Presidency may decide to limit the amount of time available for the question or the answer. The point may only be raised during the General Debate and may not interrupt a speaker.

### **b.6) Verification of Quorum**

If the proponent believes that the Chamber does not have the required quorum, they can request for the verification. If the point is accepted by the Presidency, the quorum shall be immediately verified. Verification of quorum may be raised at any point during the proceedings, other than at informal discussions or during substantive voting. A request for a verification of quorum may not interrupt a speaker.

### **b.7) Motion to open the debate**

This motion shall be used only at the very beginning of the first session. The debate will remain open until a motion to close the debate on the very last day of the model.

### **b.8) Motion to reopen or suspend/adjourn the debate**

Whilst the debate is taking place, in order to "leave" the session either for a break, or at the end of the day, the appropriate motion to be used is a motion to suspend the debate, not to close it. Once closed, the debate must not be opened again. If the session is suspended, in order to restart the debate, a motion to reopen it will be needed.

### **b.9) Motion to limit/extend speaking time**

If the proponent wishes to alter the speaking time of the speakers' list, the proponent must specify the requested new speaking time.

### **b.10) Motion to extend the duration of the last caucus**

The motion is used to extend the total duration of a caucus, and it cannot exceed half of the time that the caucus willing to be extended had originally been asked for.

### **b.11) Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus**

In order to have the Chamber move into informal session for a proposed amount of time, the proponent shall specify the requested duration of the discussion that may not exceed 20 minutes.

In an unmoderated caucus, proceedings are not bound by the Rules of Procedure. You may move around the room freely and converse with other delegates. This is also the time to formulate opinions and amendments.

### **b.12) Motion for a Moderated Caucus**

In order to have the Council move into formal discussion, the proponent shall specify the requested duration of the discussion, the speaking time and the topic. The total duration may not exceed 20 minutes.

In a moderated caucus, short speeches are given by the delegates in direct reply to one another. A moderated caucus will have a specific topic and may be moderated by a delegate instead of the Presidency. A moderated caucus may only be used in the Council of the EU and will not be possible in the European Parliament.

During a moderated caucus there will be a separate speakers' list and time. The moderator will call upon speakers in the order in which they signal their desire to speak.

### **b.13) Motion for a Parliamentary Group Meeting**

This motion can only be used in the European Parliament, and it cannot exceed 10 minutes. The Parliamentary Groups may work separately in order to solve a particular issue, or to share thoughts between MEP's from the same European alliance.

They are recommended to be brief, or even substituted by Unmoderated Caucuses, where interaction between all MEP's is allowed.

### **b.14) Motion to close the debate**

In order to close the general debate or the debate on amendments, a motion to close the debate shall be raised. Once a motion is carried, the debate shall be closed immediately and none of the speakers still on the list of speakers shall have the possibility to give their speech. A two-thirds majority is required for this motion to pass.

### III. AMENDMENTS

The aim of the EU simulation in YouthMUN is to pass a piece of legislation. Therefore, you will have a final vote on the EU Directive or Regulation under discussion and will hopefully pass it in the end. Your main work during the conference will be to discuss the controversial points of the legislative proposal and to amend it accordingly. This may happen by introducing totally new articles, new sub-clauses to articles or simply by changing the wording of an article. The scope of amendments can vary dramatically.

It is possible to change only a single word of an article, but it is also possible to delete a whole article. In order to achieve this, you must submit draft amendments which will then be debated and finally voted upon. During the conference, amendment sheets will be distributed to you. On these sheets you can write down the proposed new article or wording and then send it to the Presidency when they ask for it.

Amendments will be accepted by the Presidency if they fulfil all formal obligations. The most important obligation is that it must be clearly stated which article of the Directive or Regulation under discussion the amendment addresses and in what way this respective article is desired to be changed. Therefore, it makes sense to write down the original wording and subsequently the newly proposed wording. If you want to introduce a totally new article or a subparagraph (e.g., 'article 5b'), please also clearly indicate by writing "new article" or "new subparagraph to article X".

A second requirement is the clear indication of the author(s) and sponsors of a draft amendment. To be a sponsor means that you support the amendment in substance, and you will vote in favour of it. Each amendment sheet that is sent to the Presidency must indicate the author(s) (MEPs or countries in the Council) and its sponsors.

All amendments must be signed by at least 3 Ministers (1 proponent and 2 supporters) or at least 4 Members of the Parliament (1 proponent and 3 supporters), respectively. Support may be withdrawn at any point prior to the commencement of the voting procedure on request.

Where there is a situation of withdrawal of support, the Presidency shall verify the fulfilment of the criteria previously expressed. If the criteria are not met, the amendment shall be dismissed. If the proponent of the amendment withdraws their support and the criteria are still met, the Presidency shall ask for another signatory to take up proposing the amendment. If no signatory wishes to do so, the amendment shall be dismissed.

After having been accepted by the Presidency, all amendments are reviewed by the legal service, which ensures that the content of the amendments is in line with the current EU legal framework. If the legal service expresses a positive opinion, the amendment is considered accepted and may be debated in the chamber. If the legal service gives a negative opinion, the author and the sponsors will be asked to change the amendment as deemed necessary by the legal service, which will then check the amendment again.

After being accepted by the legal service, the amendments are brought to the floor by reading out the new wording / explaining at least the main changes to the article wished to be amended. The draft amendments may then be debated upon in general debate. Finally, all accepted amendments will be voted upon in the voting procedure.

## **IV. VOTING PROCEDURE**

The ultimate purpose of the sessions is the adoption of a legislative proposal and the production of amendments to the proposal. These must be voted upon to be passed or rejected by the chambers. In the voting procedure, special rules apply.

First of all, the doors of the house are closed during the voting procedure. Note-passing will be suspended, and all delegates must stay in their seats until voting has ended. They may only leave the room in case of emergency. Any delegate that is not present in the house when the voting procedure begins will not be able to return before voting has ended. Obviously, this can have severe consequences for the outcome of the voting.

*Remember:* If you have not declared yourself 'present' or 'present and voting' before the start of voting procedure, you will not have the right to vote. This is also where the difference between the two declarations will start mattering!

There is an additional motion that may be used only in substantial voting procedure:

## **1. Motion to vote by roll call**

For the EU simulation at YouthMUN, the vote by roll call may only be allowed in the Council and will generally, due to time constraints, not be possible in the European Parliament. Only for the final voting on the whole proposal a vote by roll call might be allowed in the EP as well. This will be left to the discretion of the Presidency.

If the exact voting behaviour of other nations is of interest to you, you may move for a roll call vote. This motion requires no procedural vote. This means that you will vote by roll call whenever one of the Ministers requests this.

A roll call vote is quite like the roll call at the beginning of each session. The Chair will read out all countries' names in alphabetical order. On your country's name you may answer 'Yes', 'No', 'Pass' or 'Abstention' if you are present. If you are present and voting you may answer 'Yes', 'No' or 'Pass'.

If you answer with 'Pass', the President will continue the roll call and immediately afterwards ask you for your vote. You will then have to answer 'Yes' or 'No'. You may not answer 'Pass' a second time and you may not abstain even if you are present.

## **2. When to introduce this motion?**

The motion to vote by roll call applies only to the next item you will have to vote on. If you want to vote by roll call concerning an amendment, you should entertain that motion immediately before voting on this amendment. If you want to vote by roll call on the final proposal in the end, wait until just before final voting.

The Presidency shall ask for any points or motions on the floor at least before voting on the proposal.

### **3. The general procedure of voting**

In substantial voting procedure the chamber will vote on all amendments that are on the floor when voting procedure begins.

Remember that each draft amendment needs to be accepted by the Presidency and the legal service and therefore needs to fulfil certain formal requirements.

The Presidency shall rule on the order in which the amendments are voted upon. Normally, voting shall start with the amendment which would alter the legislative proposal most extremely. This is at the discretion of the Chair; however, deletion of articles is looked upon as more “extreme” than the mere change of articles. Therefore, an amendment that seeks to delete only a single article will be voted upon before an amendment that aims to change several articles or paragraphs.

Each amendment requires a simple majority to pass in the European Parliament, and a qualified majority to pass in the Council of the EU (further explained in the next point). This is a substantial vote. All delegates that are ‘present’ may vote in favour, against or abstain. All delegates that are present and voting’ may not abstain.

After the committee has voted on all proposed amendments, you will do the final voting on the entire proposal, as it is now (altered by all the amendments that have passed).

For further information on how to write amendments, or any of the information that has been stated, please refer to your preparation guide. You may also at any time approach your Chairs during breaks or rise to a point of information to the Chair if you believe that your question is urgent and of great importance for the on-going proceedings.

#### **4. Majorities and voting shares.**

In the European Parliament, the majorities are simple and straightforward: the vote on amendments as well as the final vote on the whole proposal both require a simple majority, meaning 50% of the MEPs present plus 1. For example, if there are 30 MEPs present the simple majority will be set to 16.

For the Council of the EU, it is necessary to distinguish between procedural and substantial votes. Procedural votes only require a simple majority of the members present, provided that the quorum is established. The majority required for substantial votes is instead determined by the relevant Treaty provisions, depending on the legislative procedure.

At YouthMUN 2022, the amendments pass inside the Council of the EU following the ordinary legislative procedure, with a qualified majority. This means at least 55% of the members of the Council, comprising at least fifteen of them and representing Member States comprising at least 65% of the population of the Union. A blocking minority must include at least four Council members representing at least 35% of the EU population, failing which the qualified majority shall be deemed attained.

At YouthMUN 2022, the last voting inside the Council of the EU is considered as part of the special legislative procedure, and therefore the majority needed changes into unanimity. Reaching an agreement between all Ministers is a hard task. However, the debates that will take place in every session should aim at achieving general acceptance of the final resolution.

## **4. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The behaviour of the delegates in session, and out of session must be with utmost respect towards their fellow companions and the authorities of the Model.

The dressing code must be in accordance with the formalities of the event, and the role represented, and therefore should follow the Western Business Attire rules.

Female delegates: A professional dress; a blouse-skirt combination with an optional suit jacket; a full suit. No trainers, jeans or festive attires will be allowed.

Male delegates: A full suit, or a pair of pants and a suit jacket, shirt, tie (or bow tie), and formal shoes. Again, no trainers, jeans or festive attires will be allowed.

## 5. FINAL WORDS

The participation in this model, and in the EU committees in particular, means that the rules that have been presented are accepted and will be followed. The organizing team may change these Rules of Procedure, with immediate notification to the delegates.

This concludes the Rules of Procedure for the EU simulation in the YouthMUN Madrid 2022 event.

Once again, for all delegates of YouthMUN (not only for beginners) we strongly recommend the Rules Workshop on the opening day of the conference. The conference will be much more interesting and enjoyable to all of you, if all delegates have a good knowledge of at least the basic rules of procedure.