



United Nations
Student Association
Maastricht



Guide to the Rules of Procedure

EuroMUN 2018: Shaping the
Future from the Heart of Europe

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Introduction

The Rules of Procedure of the European Model U.N. is a detailed document and may seem quite complex document for the uninitiated. That is why we wrote the guide you are reading: to walk beginners through the procedures that apply before, during and after a Model U.N. session. We encourage you to read this in parallel with the actual Rules, which are more detailed.

This will probably be overwhelming, but we at EuroMUN were also first-time delegates once, and we can guarantee you that it will all become clear in the first hours of session. Besides, your chairs and our team is there to help you if you have any question.

Part I: Diplomatic Conduct

Like any Model U.N., EuroMUN is an exercise of diplomacy. Hence, it comes with a set of rules that apply when you speak, and regulate how you should behave at the conference.

Perhaps most importantly, we demand that respect and courtesy be shown to all participants and staff members at all times (Rule 1). EuroMUN is a very diverse conference, full of participants from different origins and with different opinions, and in the U.N. spirit of tolerance, we ask you to respect this.

The dress code on the conference site is Western business attire (Rule 2), and to avoid shocking or offending anyone, we will not allow national or political symbols to be worn during the conference – however just your cause may be.

The language of the conference is English – with exceptions made for Spanish and French (Rule 3). We would like you to try and speak it as much as possible during the conference (even at socials).

Rule 4 explicitly allows electronic devices to be used within reasonable bounds – i.e. not disturbing the sessions. EuroMUN strives to be as sustainable as possible, and therefore we encourage you to take your laptop or tablet along to avoid using paper.

Finally, there are unsaid rules of conduct in Model U.N. conferences. Cross-talking during formal debate is not allowed; you can speak when the Chair gives you the floor. When given the floor, stand up and speak clearly.

Avoid using the pronoun “I” as much as possible. Possible replacements are: ‘we’, ‘this delegation’, ‘the [country] delegation’. Also, avoid pointing at other delegates. It goes without saying that diplomatic language is in order at all times – no swearing, no slang.



Part II: The Secretariat and the Staff

The staff of EuroMUN and its organizing team are headed by the Secretariat, composed of one Secretary-General, five Under-Secretary-Generals and the Chief of Staff. The respective role of each member is described in Rule 5, paragraphs (b) to (f).

Part III: Opening of the Session

When you arrive in the committee room, you won't start debating right away; there are some procedural aspects to settle before that.

First, the Chairs will conduct a roll call (Rule 7): they will call out all countries that should be represented and when your country is called, you should answer 'present' or 'present and voting'. The difference is that if you are voting, you will not be allowed to abstain from the substantial vote (see Part V). The first roll call of the conference is the number of Delegates on which they will base most calculations when voting.

Every morning and afternoon, the Chairs will keep count of all Delegates present, and if 40% of the number of Delegates who were present on the first day are still present, the debate can start or 'quorum has been established' (Rule 8).

In the first session, after the roll call, you will need to set the agenda for the meeting (Rule 9). This means that you will propose a motion to set the agenda to your preferred order of discussion for the two topics, explicitly describing this order. After seconds and objection, there will be four speakers (two in favour, two against) of the first agenda proposed (since you can only propose two).

Once the agenda is set, move to open the debate; this passes automatically.

Part IV: The Session

Once you are in session, the 'real' part of the debate starts. The way a session works is as follows.

General Speakers' List

The backbone of the debate is called the General Speakers' List (Rule 12). It is always open (unless decided otherwise by the committee), and as soon as it no longer contains speakers, the List elapses, the debate is automatically closed, and the committee moves into voting procedure. Therefore, it is important to always keep the List running by adding yourself as a speaker – you would not want to vote on nothing!



When the committee returns to the List, two things happen. First, the floor is open for points and motions, which means that you can submit a motion to put the list on hold by entering another procedure (see below), or raise a point. Second, the Chair will give the floor to the Delegations on the List, who will be allocated time to speak. These speeches are generally more broad than on other procedures – this is where you outline what you did, what is left to do, how the negotiations are going, some particular position, etc. If you finish your speech before the end of your time, you have to yield the floor (Rule 12 *bis*). You can yield to the Chair, who will then move on with the debate, to another Delegate, who, if she accepts, will speak for the remainder of your time, or to points of information, where other Delegates may ask you questions.

Most of the motions you will raise require seconds, that is, someone agreeing with your motion by saying ‘second’ out loud when asked. Then the chair will ask for objections. If there is no second, your motion fails automatically; if there is no objection, it passes automatically. If there are both, you will move into a procedural vote (see Part V).

Caucuses

The most common deviations from the List are the caucuses; they are of two sorts. The first type is the moderated caucus (Rule 13), which is a formal debate in which the Chair gives the floor to Delegations raising their placards. To enter this, you must submit a motion for a moderated caucus. Such motion can be phrased as follows: ‘motion for a moderated caucus of 10 minutes, one-minute speaker’s time, on the topic of ...’. The idea here is to focus the discussion on some particular aspect of the debate, therefore, try to be specific when enunciating the topic. Bear in mind that the maximum duration is 20 minutes.

The second sort is the un-moderated caucus (Rule 14), which is an informal debate. In such a caucus, you can move around and talk to any of your colleagues directly: this is the lobbying part. It is also a great time to write down working papers. Because of that, you do not need to give a particular topic or speaker’s time in the motion, only a duration (max. 20 minutes).

Both types can be extended by a limited amount of time (Rules 13(e) and 14(c)).

Clarifications

If the debate is particularly not fruitful, and no specific proposals or agreements seem to emerge, you can propose to postpone this debate and move on with the agenda, using a motion to reconsider the question (Rule 17).

A less drastic measure is to invite a representative (Rule 18). If the topic is unclear for some reason and you feel the committee needs some explanation, you can consult the chairs on



inviting the representative of an institution, country, even company. This motion passes automatically if it has the approval of the Chair.

Consultations

If you want to clarify certain points or for strategic needs, you can move to consult the whole (Rule 23). The idea here is somewhere between the moderated and un-moderated caucus. You are still holding the floor one by one, but once you are done speaking, you can decide to pass it on to another Delegate. This consultation can last up to 20 minutes.

Another consultation is the closed type (Rule 24). In such a consultation, you can ask up to four other Delegates to come with you outside the room and hammer out an agreement or rephrase something in your working paper.

Written proposals

In a Model U.N. conference, the final goal is to pass a resolution, but there are steps to take before voting on it. First, you will write down the ideas and proposals you discuss in a working paper. One more thing you should keep in mind is that it needs sponsors and signatories – as explained in the chapter on resolution writing. In particular, to present your working paper to the whole committee – when it becomes a ‘draft resolution’ –, you will need at least four sponsors if your committee has more than 20 Delegations, or 20% of the first roll call if it has fewer. If your working paper fulfills these conditions and is properly formatted (see chapter on resolution writing), you can introduce it to the committee (Rule 21), that is, read it out loud in its entirety.

If you have questions about a draft resolution that was introduced, or just want to roast its sponsors, you can invite the Panel of Authors (Rule 22). If this motion passes, up to four sponsors of the draft will come in front of the house and, after briefly expressing their position about it, answer all questions you may have.

Finally, when a draft resolution is being introduced and you believe that it proposes to do things that are outside the mandate, or powers, of your committee, you can move to question the competence of the committee to discuss this proposal (Rule 25). This motion will only be voted upon if the Chairs, after consulting the Secretariat and the Legal Office, agree with it. You will then be given the floor to explain your point of view, and the motion will be subject to a vote. If the motion passes, the draft will be withdrawn immediately. Of course, an amended – and legal – version can be re-submitted later on. Bear in mind that the Legal Office may censor a draft at any point if it considers that it is illegal or outside your mandate.



Amendments

When draft resolutions have been introduced, you may not agree with everything they propose to do. Instead of submitting a slightly different version, you can propose amendments – i.e. changes – to it (Rule 34). An amendment can do three things: add, replace or strike out. Please use the template that has been provided for your amendments. To introduce it, follow the same procedure as for working papers; you only need one signatory for amendments.

There are two types of amendments: friendly and unfriendly. A friendly amendment is one that has been agreed upon by all sponsors, which the Chair will ask after the amendment is introduced. If all sponsors agree to the amendment, the amendment will be included in the draft resolution before the final vote. If at least one sponsor disagrees, the amendment is deemed unfriendly and it will be voted upon at the end of the debate (see Part V).

Part V: Voting Procedure

In MUNs, there are two types of voting procedures: the procedural and the substantive voting procedures.

The Procedural Vote

A procedural vote occurs when a motion is proposed and has to be voted upon (save few exceptions): as indicated by the name, it is only used when deciding which procedure to follow. In a procedural vote, the most disruptive motion will always be voted upon first. Such voting does not allow for abstentions: all members of the committee present in the room have to cast a vote by raising their placards, including observers.

The Substantive Vote

Voting to adopt draft resolutions and amendments is a substantive vote. Once in a substantive voting procedure, the room is closed and no more points are allowed. Delegates listed as 'present' may abstain, delegates listed as 'present and voting' have to cast a vote. Observers are not allowed to vote in a substantive vote.

Only unfriendly amendments are voted upon. If one passes, it is included in the draft resolution and sponsors are no longer required to vote in favour. Once all amendments have been voted upon, the draft resolutions are voted upon in the order in which they were introduced, as amended.



There are different ways on how voting on a resolution can be conducted. First, one can motion to divide the question, leading to a vote on the resolution in parts, for instance to fight one particular clause. Splitting the house leads to the prohibition of abstentions.

The default vote is by a show of placards. A vote by roll call means that each country has to state its vote loud and clear, one after another. When voting by roll call, delegates can vote with rights to explain their vote in a one-minute speech after the voting procedure has been closed. If a delegate moves to vote by acclamation, unless there are objections, the resolution passes automatically and the committee applauds.

Part VI: Points

Next to motions, you can raise points; these are remarks or questions. There are four types of points: of order, personal privilege, parliamentary inquiry or information. A point of order can be raised when you believe that the Chair is incorrectly applying the Rules of Procedure. You can raise a point of personal privilege if you feel bad, can't hear, can't see, are cold, etc. A point of parliamentary inquiry is used to ask a question about the Rules of Procedure – if you are not sure how to proceed or do not understand what is happening. Finally, a point of information can only be raised when another Delegate yielded the floor to points of information: it is a question of substance to the Delegate.

Part VII: Miscellanea

Chairs have discretion over most motions, which means that they can overrule them. There is a possibility to appeal such decisions (Rule 39). If such a motion is put forward, the Chair will justify the decision he or she took, and the committee will vote on it. If the motion passes, the Chair will change his or her decision. The Secretariat will also be notified.

If another Delegate outright insults you or your country, you may ask for a right of reply by simply raising your placard and asking for the right to reply. If the Chair decides to grant you this right, you will have thirty seconds to reply (as diplomatically as possible).

Before a roll call, you can move to hold a minute of silence or meditation for any reason – subject to the Chair's approval.