

Rulebook – Simulation Joint-Decision Making in the EU

Rule 1

The President

- 1.1. The Parliament shall be chaired jointly by a President and Vice- President(s) assisted by a Secretary. The term 'President' in these rules of procedure refers to both President and Vice-President.
- 1.2. The President shall open, suspend and close sittings, temporarily adjourn meetings, direct the debates of the Council or Parliament, rule on the admissibility of procedural points, motions and amendments, ensure observance of the rules, maintain order, call on speakers, close debates, limit the number of speakers permitted within a certain debate, close the list of speakers, ascertain whether a quorum exists, put questions to the vote and announce the result of any vote.
- 1.3. The President must ensure that all Members yield to the rules of procedure at all times. Every Member should respect the decisions of the President.
- 1.4. If questions arise over the interpretation of these rules of procedure, the President shall decide on the correct interpretation.
- 1.5. No Member may speak in the plenary unless called upon to do so by the President. If a speaker departs from the subject, the President shall call him or her to order. If a speaker is called to order twice on the same item of business, the President may, on the third occasion, forbid him or her to speak again on that item.
- 1.6. A speaker may not be interrupted except by the President.
- 1.7. The President may take immediate measures against Members who disrupts the conduct of a session (see Rule 2).
- 1.8. The President shall not vote on any matter on the agenda. When in the Chair, the President shall not speak in debate. If the President wishes to speak on an item on the agenda, he or she shall not occupy the Chair for any part of that item.

Rule 2

Maintenance of order

- 2.1. Words or expressions which affront human dignity or which may prejudice orderly debate may not be used.
- 2.2. The President shall call to order any Member of the Parliament who causes a disturbance during proceedings.
- 2.3. If the offence is repeated, the President shall again call the Member to order, and this shall be recorded in the report of debate. Should the disturbance continue, or if a further offence is committed, the President may deny the offender the right to speak and/or exclude him/her from Parliament for the remainder of the sitting. The President may also resort to the latter measure immediately in cases of exceptional gravity.
- 2.4. Should disturbances threaten to obstruct the business of the House, the President shall close or suspend the sitting for a specific period of time to restore order. If he/she cannot make himself heard, he/she shall leave the Chair; this shall have the effect of suspending the sitting. The President shall reconvene the sitting.
- 2.5. Mobile phones should be turned off during sessions.

Rule 3

Official Language

- 3.1. English is both working and official language for all organs of MEU.

Rule 4

Co-decision procedure for the Council and Parliament

- 4.1. The Commission proposals at MEU shall be treated under a modified co-decision procedure described hereafter.
- 4.2. The first Commission proposal will be submitted to the Council and a second proposal to the Parliament. At this point a representative of the Commission shall outline each proposal to the

respective bodies, illuminating both the key articles of the proposals and any matters that the Commission deems it important to emphasize which may be of importance to debate. Furthermore, the Commission may be summoned for clarification during debate subject to an absolute majority vote.

- 4.3. After the proposals have been submitted, both the Parliament and the Council will start the first Reading of the respective proposals. During this reading, the Council or Parliament can adopt amendments with a qualified majority [Council] or an absolute majority [Parliament].
- 4.4. When the Council and the Parliament have concluded their readings, they exchange the proposals including any amendments passed.
- 4.5. Parliament and Council will elect one or two representative(s) to present the amendments to the other body and to answer questions from the respective bodies' Members. Members who want to put themselves forward as a candidate shall raise their placards when requested to do so by the President and will be put down on a list. After that, the President can give them the opportunity to present themselves in a short speech if he/she deems it necessary. Otherwise, the Parliament/Council will vote immediately. The candidate(s) who get the most votes will be elected.
- 4.6. Second Reading: In the reading of the proposal that has already been amended by the other body, the Council or Parliament can:
 - a. Approve the proposal as amended by the other body. A qualified majority [Council] or an absolute majority [Parliament] is needed. The proposed act is then deemed to be adopted.
 - b. Propose amendments. For each amendment, a qualified majority [Council] or an absolute majority [Parliament] is needed.
- 4.7. When the Parliament and the Council have concluded their readings of this proposal they will exchange the proposals as (potentially) amended a second time.
- 4.8. In the final (third) reading, the Council or Parliament can:
 - a. Approve the act with qualified majority [Council] or an absolute majority [Parliament]. It is then deemed to be adopted; or
 - b. Reject the act with qualified majority [Council] or an absolute majority [Parliament]. It is not adopted.

Rule 5

General Course of a reading in the Parliament

- 5.1. A reading consists of introductory statements, general debate on the topic, debate on specific amendments and voting on amendments (first/second reading only).
- 5.2. At the beginning of a reading, there will be time for introductory statements by a representative from each group in the Parliament as selected during group meetings. Each introductory statement should not exceed 3 minutes.
- 5.3. After the introductory statements, there will be a general debate on the topic. Every Member who wishes to speak may do so.
- 5.4. The general debate ends when there are no more speakers on the list of speakers for the general debate or when a motion for a closure of general debate (see Rule 7.4) has been granted.
- 5.5. The President can limit the number of speakers permitted during a debate beforehand; he or she can also close the list of speakers during the debate.
- 5.6. When the general debate on a topic has been closed, the President will announce debate on proposed amendments.
- 5.7. The debate on a specific amendment ends when there are no more speakers on the list of speakers for the debate on this amendment or when a motion for closure of debate has been granted. The House moves to voting procedures on the amendments (see Rule 11).
- 5.8. Only amendments that have been debated can be voted on during an amendment voting session.
- 5.9. When voting procedures on the amendments finish, the House moves to a general debate or to voting procedures on the draft proposal in question (third reading only).

Rule 6

Types of Debate and Right to Speak

6.1. There are 2 types of debate: the Speakers' List and Informal Discussion.

6.2. Speakers' List:

- a. Each Member who wishes to speak during a debate within a Speakers' List must ask to be put on the list by raising their placard when they are asked by the President, by making a 'Motion to be put in the Speakers' List' or by passing a note to the President.
- b. The President can limit the number of speakers permitted during a certain debate before it begins. He/she may also close the list of speakers at any time.
- c. The President will call upon the Members on the Speakers' List when their turn comes. The Members will approach the microphone and hold their speech from their seat.
- d. The speaking time is usually one minute. The chair can announce a change of the time limit for a set of speakers or for individual speakers at his discretion. Motions to extend or limit the speaking time are in order.
- e. When a speaker has finished his speech, he or she will be asked by the President whether he or she is open to questions (a.k.a. points of information) or short remarks of other Members. The speaker has the right not to answer any question. Both the President and the speaker can limit the number of questions/short remarks they want to permit. The time limit for a question/short remark is thirty seconds.
- f. Members who wish to pose a question or make a short remark to a speaker on the rostrum should raise their placards when they are asked to. They will be put on the list of questions /short remarks and called upon to stand up and speak.
- g. When the Member has finished his question/short remark, the President will ask the speaker to answer the question or will give him/her the opportunity to comment on the short remark. The President can also decide not to give the speaker the opportunity to answer.
- h. In exceptional cases, the President can allow that Member who asked the question to comment on the answer of the speaker.
- i. If speakers whose names have been duly entered on the list and who are actually present, are not able to speak due to lack of time, they have the right to hand in the text of their speech to the President in writing, in a final and legible form, provided that it does not exceed the speaking time they would have been allowed. A 1-minute speech is normally equal to 1/2 page. The President may make a summary of the speeches of those speakers in the end of debate.

6.3. Informal Discussion:

- a. An Informal Discussion can be proposed by the President or the Members of the House at any time via a "Motion to move to an Informal Discussion", specifying the time limit of the Informal Discussion. This time limit may not exceed 20 minutes.
- b. During an Informal Discussion, Members shall stay in the room.
- c. The President does not moderate and the discussion is unofficial. d. The Secretary shall project a countdown on the board.

Rule 7

Procedural Motions

7.1. A Member shall have a prior right to speak if he or she asks a procedural motion. Members can raise procedural motions at all times, except for during Informal Discussion and voting procedures.

7.2. To raise a procedural motion, a Member raises their placard and states the type of the Motion.

7.3. No motion may interrupt a speaker.

7.4. There are the following procedural motions:

- a. "Motion to move to Informal Discussions" A Member may make a motion to move to Informal Discussions so that disputed points can be clarified in an informal setting. The President can either approve the motion or put it to vote immediately. An absolute majority is required. The President also has the possibility to declare a temporary adjournment of the session without a motion from a Member.

b. "Motion for closure of debate" A Member may make a motion for closure of the general debate, the debate on the amendments or the debate on a specific amendment. In case there are objections to this motion, it should be put into vote. One Member may speak in favour and one Member may speak against the motion. Again an absolute majority is required. Once a motion for closure of debate has passed, the debate will be closed immediately and none of the speakers still on the list of speakers will have the possibility to hold their speech.

c. "Motion to extend/limit speaking time" A Member may propose to change the amount of time each speaker may speak. This motion can be raised only when the President asks for points and motions. The President may put this motion into vote. Again an absolute majority is required.

7.5. There are no abstentions during votes on procedural motions.

7.6. The President is allowed to dismiss dilatory procedural motions.

Rule 8

Procedural Points

8.1. Point of information to the Speaker: After each speech in a Speakers' List, the Members can ask questions to the previous speaker. The question should refer to the last speech heard only. The President shall ensure that the questions fall within the competence and sphere of responsibility of the House and are interrogatory in form.

8.2. Point of order to the Chair: This must be confined to raising questions of procedure for a ruling from the Chair. If the right to raise points of order is misused, the President may forbid the offending Member to speak for the remainder of the item of business.

8.3. Point of personal privilege: A Member may raise a point of personal privilege when experiencing discomfort, such as not being able to hear another Member's speech. This point can be raised without the president asking for points and motions. This is the only point that may interrupt a speaker.

Rule 9

Order of Precedence of Points and Motions

In case of more than one procedural point or motion at the same time, the order of precedence shall be as follows:

1. Point of Personal Privilege.
2. Point of Order.
3. Point of Information.
4. Motion to Limit/Extend Speaking Time.
5. Motion for Informal Discussions.
6. Motion for Closure of Debate.

Rule 10

Amendments to a Proposal

10.1. Any amendments will be debated during the amendments' debate and after the general debate. They will normally be debated in the chronological order they have been delivered to the President. If two or more contradictory amendments relate to the same paragraph, the amendment that differs most from the text shall have priority over the others and shall be taken first. If it passes, the other amendments thereby fail; if it is rejected, the amendment which is next in priority shall be considered, and similarly for each of the remaining amendments. In case of doubt as to the order, the President shall give a ruling.

10.2. Any Member or group can propose amendments to a proposal. Amendments should be submitted on paper to the President and may only be debated once displayed to the House.

10.3. An amendment which would tend to delete, replace or render inoperative the whole of a draft text is not in order. The President can dismiss dilatory amendments.

10.4. Amendments may be handed in at all times during a reading.

10.5. When a proposed amendment is to be debated, the President calls upon the Member who submitted it to present it. Apart from reading out the text of the proposed amendment, the Member should explain it in a few sentences. After that the President shall open a speakers list

for and a speakers list against the amendment. No speech on amendments may last for more than thirty seconds and no representative may speak more than once on a particular amendment.

- 10.6. An amendment can make changes to several paragraphs in the text if these changes are linked with each other and if it would make no sense to split the amendment up into several amendments. The President can dismiss an amendment on the grounds that it changes several paragraphs at a time but could be split up into several amendments.
- 10.7. The Member who proposed an amendment may withdraw the amendment at any time. If he/she does so, the President will ask whether another Member is willing to propose the amendment. If no other Member immediately announces a wish to propose the amendment, it is deemed void.
- 10.8. Sub-amendments (a.k.a. Amendments to the Amendments) shall relate to an amendment previously discussed and may not contradict the sense of the amendment. A sub-amendment may not be further amended.
- 10.9. Friendly amendment: A Member who discovers a spelling, grammatical or stylistic mistake in the proposal or in an amendment being debated may propose a friendly amendment. The friendly amendment should be in a written form and may be delivered to the President at any time. The integration of a friendly amendment into the text of a draft proposal is at the discretion of the President. The President may also propose a friendly amendment.

Rule 11

Voting on Amendments

- 11.1. Upon closure of debate on amendments, the President will announce the beginning of the amendment voting procedure. No amendments may be submitted during the voting procedure and no Member is allowed to enter or leave the House. Guests may be asked to leave the room.
- 11.2. Amendments that have been debated will be voted following their order of appearance in the text. The President will read out the text of the amendment to be voted. After that, Members will vote directly, without debate. A vote in favour by an absolute majority of Members present is needed for an amendment to be accepted. Abstentions are not permissible in the Parliament.
- 11.3. All passed amendments will then be integrated into the text to become such that it becomes an amended proposal.

Rule 12

Quorum

- 12.1. Quorum is the number of Members necessary to be present in order for the Parliament to enter voting procedure on an amendment or draft proposal. The presence of one third of Members is required for a quorum. Prior to any substantive vote, the President shall check that there is a quorum.
- 12.2. If there is no quorum, any vote is void unless it is a vote on a procedural motion.

Rule 13 [Parliament]

Voting procedures

- 13.1. No Member shall enter or leave the room during voting procedure, nor speak or raise a motion except for points of information concerning the voting procedure. Guests may be asked to leave the room.
- 13.2. No Member may be called to speak during a vote.
- 13.4. Members may vote in favour, against or abstain. When voting on procedural motions, however, it is not possible to abstain.
- 13.5. The Parliament shall vote by either a show of hands or the raising of placards. If the President decides that the result is doubtful, a fresh vote shall be taken via a roll-call vote. During the roll-call, the President will call upon MEPs present. Voting shall be by word of mouth with Members declaring "Yes", "No", or "I abstain". After a voting via a roll-call, no fresh vote can be taken.
- 13.6. Every Member has one vote. An absolute majority of votes of all Members present is needed, if no other provisions are made.

13.6. The President shall declare the voting closed and announce the result, which may not subsequently be modified. The numerical result of a vote on a piece of legislation shall be displayed publicly in the Parliament.

Rule 14

Majorities

There are three different kinds of majority:

- a. An absolute majority. Every Member has one vote. A majority of votes of all Members present is needed. An absolute majority is needed when voting on procedural matters in the Council and for most votes in the Parliament.
- b. A two-thirds majority. Every Member has one vote. Two-thirds of the votes of all Members present are needed. This majority is only needed for a motion for closure of debate for both the Council and Parliament.
- c. A qualified majority [Council]. The number of votes for each Member State is outlined in Rule 13 [Council]