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I. Welcoming words

Model European Union is a truly European project that simulates the European Union's decision-making process. The main purpose of the conference is the simulation of the ordinary legislative procedure between the European Parliament and the Council of the EU with the addition of the Commission's representation.

This is the second edition of MEU Blagoevgrad and intends to create a tradition of having this type of simulations at the American University in Bulgaria. Currently, there are 22 MEUs around Europe. In early April 2016, the welcoming small town of Blagoevgrad will become a place where students from all over the world will discuss the important and controversial EU issue of use of genetically modified organisms- GMOs.

Participating in this conference will create a chance for young professionals to strengthen connections, exchange ideas, encounter different cultures and languages, improve their personal skills, experience and learn about the way the European Union functions.

This handbook provides information about MEU in general and MEU Blagoevgrad in particular. You can also find tips and advice on how to prepare from our experienced Commissioners and be a successful participant. Last, but not least, the handbook introduces the conference's Rules of Procedure.

The MEU Blagoevgrad organizers hope you will all find this information helpful for your personal and professional development. The content is not exhaustive; moreover, we want to let you to do most of the research yourselves and live the MEU experience to the fullest.

We wish you an unforgettable simulation!

Yours,

The MEU Blagoevgrad 2016 organizing team

II. Introduction of the Chairs

Welcome to MEU Blagoevgrad 2016, and congratulations for having been chosen as one of the 100 people participating in this year's conference! In order to enjoy the debates and legislative work at MEU Blagoevgrad, you will have to come to Blagoevgrad prepared. The purpose of this guide is to support you in your preparations for MEU 2016. This guide contains a lot of essential information for you. Without knowing the Commission's proposal and the Rules of Procedure of our simulation it will be difficult to successfully engage in the simulation. The contents of this guide are of importance to all participants of MEU Blagoevgrad, no matter whether you are a Minister, MEP, Lobbyist, or a Journalist. In the next days, we will provide you with further preparatory advice specifically about the role you play.

In preparation for your role you should use as much of the information available as possible on how the role you represent behaves during the several stages of the real-life decision-making procedure. You do not need to be a student of Law or Politics to successfully engage in the simulation, but you certainly need to delve into the articles of the proposal. Your main activity as EU legislators is to amend the proposal; consequently, it is necessary for you to have a strong understanding of them. This guide also contains an introduction to decision-making in the EU and at MEU, as well as descriptions of the roles at this simulation.

The Chairs of MEU Blagoevgrad 2016 wish you the best of luck in preparing for your role at the conference. If you have any queries about the procedure of the simulation, please don't hesitate to contact us or write in the official Facebook group.

III. Rules of Conduct

In order to ensure the best possible experience and flow of the conference, you are required to comply with the following Rules of Conduct.

1. General Rules:

1. Please remember to respect the timetable at all times. If you are late, you might be unable to enter the Balkanski Academic Center/have lunch/attend ceremonies, etc. Remember that you are required to attend all the sessions in order to obtain the Certificate of Participation.
2. Do not engage in any activity that may cause harm to yourself/others or damage property.
3. Please dress formally and remember to wear your name/position tag at all times. In case you lose your name tag, contact someone from the MEU Blagoevgrad team immediately.
4. We expect you to behave and treat your fellow delegates, as well as the organising team, with the respect you would like to be treated with.
5. MEU Blagoevgrad is a politically neutral conference, and usage of symbols that can be perceived as provocative is unnecessary. We kindly ask you to only use political symbols of the party you represent in your role.
6. Please remember to respect and follow the instructions of the organising team at all times.
7. In case of an emergency, please inform the organising team immediately.
8. If you are unsure where to go/what to do, ask a member of the organising team.

2. Technical information about Blagoevgrad

Blagoevgrad is the administrative, cultural, economic and transport center of southwestern Bulgaria. The city is situated at the foot of the Rila and Pirin Mountains, just 100 km south of the national capital, Sofia.

The official language is Bulgarian, but English is widely spoken and understood. The official exchange rate is in Bulgarian Lev (BGN). The fixed exchange rate is 1 euro = 1.95583 Leva. It is usually not possible to pay in currencies other than Lev. Exchange offices are to be found in the city center and in the banks. Credit cards are accepted in many places.

Usually, taxis are more convenient than public transport, since you can reach almost any point in Blagoevgrad by cab for 2 leva (around 1 euro).

The region abounds with natural beauty and tourist attractions, including the Rila Monastery, the Bansko ski resort, the spa town of Sandanski, and the Seven Lakes in the Rila Mountains. Blagoevgrad is a picturesque city of 80,000 with a pedestrian downtown and an Old Town with fine examples of 19th-century architecture and numerous restaurants and cafes.

Blagoevgrad is a student-friendly city. The town is the educational center of southwestern Bulgaria with its two universities – the American University in Bulgaria and the South-West University. With its clean quiet surroundings, walking plaza, shops, and restaurants, Blagoevgrad is small enough for students to find anything they need within a few minutes. At the same time, the dynamic environment of outdoor cafes, movie theaters, and recreational facilities makes it possible for students to have a balanced life of both hard work and fun.

3. Transportation

You can reach Blagoevgrad by train or by bus from the Central Railway Station and the Central Bus Station in Sofia. They are located next to each other – boulevard Knyaginya Maria Luiza 102A and 100, respectively. For more info, see the official websites of the Central Stations - <http://bdz.bg/index-en.php> and <http://www.centralnaavtogara.bg/>. A train ride costs 8 leva (about 4 euro) and lasts around 2 hours and 20 minutes. A bus will usually transport you in 1 hour and 50 minutes and it costs 11 leva (around 6 euro).

If you are arriving in Sofia, Bulgaria by plane, it would be easiest for you to use the metro line to reach the Central Bus and Railway Stations. Sofia

Airport metro station is located next to the building of terminal 2 of the airport. If you have arrived at Terminal 1, Sofia Airport provides free-of-charge transportation services between Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 at every 30 minutes between 07:00 hrs. and 19:00 hrs. Between 19:00h and 07:00h, free-of-charge transportation between Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 can be requested at the Information Desk.

The metro station at Sofia Airport is located in the eastern part of Terminal 2. The metro trains operate from 5 a.m. to midnight. Ticket machines for metro tickets are located at Sofia Airport Metro Station. The ticket machines accept Bulgarian banknotes and coins, and one of them accepts credit cards, as well. Single ride ticket price is 1 lev (€0.50). Be advised that any piece of baggage exceeding 60x40x40 cm requires a separate ticket.

Once you get on the metro line, you have to change trains from Line 1 to Line 2 at Serdika Metro Station. You do not need another ticket for switching the lines. Your final stop would be Central Railway Station, where both the Central Bus and Railway Stations are located.

If you catch a taxi from Sofia airport to one of the Central Stations, pay attention to the prices per kilometer and per minute on the windscreens and the windows of the cabs. Such cab should not cost more than 15 leva (around 8 euro) and the ride takes around 15 minutes. You can find taxis parked in front of the airport exit.

If you wish to go by public transport: take bus 84 and get off at Hotel Pliska. From there, you can catch any of the following buses: 404, 305, 413, 213, 214. They all have a stop at the Central Railway/Bus Station.

Train timetable:

Route	Time of Departure
Sofia - Blagoevgrad	5:30h; 7:05h; 10:20h; 11:43h; 14:15h; 17:00h; 20:08h
Blagoevgrad - Sofia	6:00h; 7:00h; 9:40h; 11:41h; 14:05h; 15:58h; 19:05h

Bus timetable:

Sofia- Blagoevgrad	6:40h; 6:57h; 7:10h; 7:30h; 8:10h; 8:30h; 9:10h; 9:20h; 9:45h; 10:00h; 11:00h; 11:25h; 11:40h; 12:00h; 12:30h; 13:15h; 13:20h; 13:55h; 14:00h; 14:10h; 14:30h; 14:40h; 15:00h; 15:10h; 15:28h; 15:30h; 15:31h; 15:49h; 16:15h; 16:20h; 16:35h; 16:45h; 17:00h; 18:00h; 19:00h
Blagoevgrad- Sofia	6:20h; 6:30h; 7:10h; 7:37h; 8:00h; 8:03h; 8:10h; 8:15h; 8:30h; 9:07h; 9:10h; 9:11h; 10:10h; 10:21h; 11:10h; 11:37h; 12:10h; 12:21h; 12:33h; 13:00h; 13:40h; 14:08h; 14:20h; 15:00h; 15:08h; 15:20h; 16:08h; 16:30h; 16:43h; 17:06h; 17:48h; 17:49h; 18:13h; 18:21h; 18:44h; 19:20h

For further information about trains, you can call the Customer Hotline (+ 359 2 932 41 90). The phone number of the Central Bus Station in Sofia is + **359 900 63 099**. The number of the Bus Station in Blagoevgrad is +359 73 884 009.

4. Accomodation Venues

The hotels for MEU Blagoevgrad 2016 are:

- Hotel Alfa - ul. "Kukush" 7
- Hotel Korona - ul. "Nikola Y. Vaptsarov" 16
- Hotel Fenix - ul. "Todor Alexandrov" 78

You will receive information about the room distribution from our participants' coordinator – Hristina Mihaylova.

5. Emergencies

In the case of an emergency, please contact at any time Petar Georgiev, Head Organizer of MEU 2016, on +359 895 618 650.

IV. General Information

1. Preparation

Good preparation is essential to a well-functioning MEU and to each delegate's successful participation. With that in mind, here are some general tips on how to better prepare for the topic:

- x Study about the country and the party you are representing. You can use government websites, party websites; national statistics institutes data, social media, newspapers and other sources. Do substantial research and make notes of information that will be helpful in writing your position paper and defending your position throughout the conference.

- x You can use Wikipedia, but do not follow it blindly! Always check sources and use links at the bottom of the page.

- x Be informed – read newspapers, watch TV and follow online news – make sure that you catch any news related to our topic and think about how you can use them, even if they are not directly related to the party you are representing.

- x Meet your fellow delegates through our Facebook page and think about possible “allies” – who can you cooperate with?

- x Be open-minded and ready to think outside the box, but do not go too far away from your party's or country's point of view.

2. Flow of the simulation

Decision-making within the European Union is a complex process involving not only Heads of State and Government and Ministers, but also democratically elected Members of the European Parliament and the powerful European Commission, charged with drafting legislation. The following paragraphs will give a brief introduction to the ordinary legislative procedure (pre-Lisbon called the “co-decision procedure”), and the types of legal documents available to policy-makers while focusing on the features of this process to be simulated at Model European Union Blagoevgrad 2016. The two most important sources of secondary legislation within the EU are regulations and directives.

A regulation is “binding in its entirety” and “directly applicable in all Member States”. This means that the whole text of the legislation will

become binding law at the same time in all Member States. Directives on the other hand are only binding “as to the result to be achieved”.

Member States must implement all measures set out in a directive within their respective national legal framework. In theory, therefore, Member States have more leeway in implementing directives although, in practice, this is not always the case as directives are often drafted very tightly and leave little room for interpretation by Member States.

3. The Legislative Procedure at Model European Union Blagoevgrad

Below is a brief overview of the legislative procedure at the simulation. For a more detailed account of all relevant procedures, please have a thorough look at the Rules of Procedure. A strong understanding of these rules is essential in order to successfully participate in the simulation. At the core of the legislative process is the fact that the legislative proposal is being discussed at the same time at both of the institutions.

The procedure begins by the simultaneous introduction of the proposal to the EP and to the Council. During the course of the simulation the positions adopted upon the proposal, are being exchanged several times between the EP and the Council, with both institutions having the chance to pass amendments to the Commission proposal. Once the positions are adopted they are going to be exchanged between the Council and the Parliament. There is also going to be a trilogue meeting with representatives from the Council, the Parliament and the Commission for a final reconciliation of the positions. Once a common position is being adopted there is going to be a final vote separately at the two institutions.

4. Role Descriptions

a) Ministers in the Council of the European Union

The Council of the EU, also known as the Council of Ministers, is the institution where government ministers from each member state meet to discuss, amend and adopt laws, and coordinate policies. As one of the 28 national ministers, representing the interests of their countries in the given policy area, you will have to voice your opinion and

defend your position through heated debate. It is important to remember that, in order to push forward the political interests of your government, you will have to find powerful allies and remain in close contact with MEPs, who have the power to vote down your amendments as co-legislators of the Union.

The proposals, laid down by the Commission, will be discussed in the Council of the EU and ultimately amended. This will happen through qualified majority voting (QMV) or consensus. Amendments to the proposals will then be taken to a trilogue meeting, at which Council representatives, rapporteurs from the EP, and Commissioners will build a common strategy and reach a general agreement over the issue.

The position of a minister in the Council of the EU brings vast responsibilities and greater decision-making power than the role of an MEP. Being in the Council means that you should suggest practical solutions on behalf of your government, form alliances, and gain the support of other ministers, MEPs and lobbyists, who will push your position forward.

b) Members of the European Parliament

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are directly elected every five years in order to represent the voice of the citizens of the 28 EU Member States in the European Parliament. In a similar fashion as in national parliaments, these representatives work together in eight separate political groups at an EU level. However, as MEPs in political factions in the EP protect national interests, these coalitions are sometimes ideologically loose and a common faction position is difficult to achieve.

During debates at MEU Blagoevgrad 2016, MEPs shall work with their colleagues in order to first reach a common position within their respective factions and then try to create consensus in the EP and ultimately with the Council of Ministers, the co-legislative body of the European Union. In order to facilitate cooperation between the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, rapporteurs will be elected to attend trilogue meetings, which will involve Council representatives, as well as the Commissioner, responsible for each legislative proposal.

MEPs will also work closely with lobbyists and journalists in order to get their point across and form greater alliances. Once the conference begins, faction leaders will be appointed. These positions play a very important role throughout the conference as they provide both leadership and official representation during press conferences and heated negotiations with other factions.

c) Faction Leaders

The members of the respective political groups will elect faction leaders on the first day of the simulation. Every MEP may stand at these elections in their respective parliamentary group. The faction leaders have the task of organizing and coordinating the work of their faction. They chair the meetings of their political groups and organize the drafting of amendments to the legislative proposals. At the beginning of the debate on the proposal in the EP, they hold introductory statements outlining the general position of their faction to the house.

d) Lobbyists

Policy formulation and decision-making processes on an EU level have a direct or indirect effect on national legislation across all member states. Lobbying consists of all activities, carried out with the objective of influencing such procedures through consultation and recognized dialogue with EU institutions. There are currently over 30,000 lobbyists around the EU who represent diverse interest groups, from corporate giants to environmental NGOs. Because of the secretive and manipulative reputation of such individuals, you will be challenged to excel and win politicians' trust through persuasive skills and expertise.

Your role as a lobbyist will be to meet with MEPs and persuade them to pass amendments that coincide with your employer's interests. You will have to decide who to approach and develop different strategies to convince MEPs with contradicting positions. Lobbyists have the opportunity to present valuable research that can change the course of debate in Committees and provoke further discussion. Access to ministers of the Council of the EU will be a more difficult task. Lobbyists will have to network effectively and make use of coffee breaks, informal meetings and social events throughout the conference to secure their desired legislative outcome.

e) Journalists

Journalists have one of the most exciting tasks at MEU Blagoevgrad 2016! They have the capacity to form the public opinion and influence important political decisions. Journalists scrutinize actions, motives and results of the both legislative bodies, select and filter facts and news relevant to the participants and the interested public. Producing a daily newspaper and news shows, keeping all the participants updated on the progress of discussions and further events during the conference are some of the tasks of a journalist at MEU.

Being a journalist at MEU 2016 is a “never-ending” task: from trying to gather as much information as possible during debates and coffee breaks to keeping one’s eyes wide open during the social program, everything is important. MEU provides the perfect setting for journalists to get to know all facets of newspaper journalism in progress. Journalists, on one hand, will have the opportunity to learn all about the process of editing a broadsheet – from the daily editorial conference to the final newspaper copy.

Besides writing articles their daily work comprises not only looking out for headlines by following debates, conducting interviews and taking pictures, but also acting as agenda-setters by selecting relevant from less relevant news and structuring the content of the newspaper. Last but not least, journalists are also responsible for editing and designing the newspaper’s layout. Their work is going to start before the conference – doing research on the Commission’s proposal and the participant’s positions and preparing the first broadsheet.

V. Preparation for Model European Union

1. Position papers

The position paper is a brief and concise description of a state’s- or national political party’s position for the given topic. The position paper allows participants to plan their course of action before the conference. Another importance of the position paper is that it serves as a basis for your opening speech which will demonstrate main arguments you will advocate during the conference.

The position paper helps you prepare for the conference. It also a way for organizers to assure that you have prepared well and possibly

assist you prior to the beginning of MEU. Should you need any assistance with writing your position paper, do not hesitate to contact your respective chairs or other organizers.

General Tips:

European Parliament

Start your research by simply looking up the composition of the European Parliament, why it was founded, what powers it can exercise, how voting works, its different political groups and generally its role within the EU's political system. This will give you an idea of the Parliament's role in relation to the one of the Council of Ministers and also of the role of the factions that are represented in the Parliament.

The type of preparation for Members of the European Parliament is quite similar to the one of the preparation for Ministers. It is very important to research your faction's position, the impact that each of the proposals would have on your constituents and generally the points which you think are most important or controversial to you as an MEP and to your faction as a whole. You must therefore be well aware of the Parliament's role and the type of influence that MEPs can have varies greatly between both procedures, so make sure you arrive prepared.

MEPs, unlike Ministers, have two different aspects of representation to take into consideration: both their assigned country of origin and their political beliefs. It is crucial that MEPs keep both of these aspects in mind at all times, during debates in the Parliament, faction meetings and negotiations with other MEPs and with the Ministers of the Council. Both these aspects therefore involve two separate areas of research which you then need to combine when writing your position paper and then apply to your role throughout the conference. You must, of course, look up your country's profile generally and pay particular attention to its role in the EU, how the proposals would impact the country and the national political situation. You then also have to research the faction you belong to: its core principles and values, how it situates itself relative to the other factions and within the Parliament's political spectrum, and finally its views on both topics.

As a final point, previous participants and all the organizers will tell you that the more you put into Model European Union, the more you will get out of it. This starts with how much you prepare before the conference, given that during the conference itself you will not have time to do any research. So, on your keyboards... get set... Google!

Council of the European Union

As a Minister of the Council you are a member of one of the most influential actors in the European Union. The atmosphere in the Council is somewhat more intimate than in the European Parliament and thus there is more potential time to make your country's position known. This is therefore a demanding role and there are no backbenches to hide. Consequently, a substantial degree of preparation is needed so that the level of the debate is high and the overall experience of the simulation is maximized.

Once you have read the piece of legislation under discussion, the first thing you should do is to look at what the government of your respective country was made up of at the time when the legislation was going through the EU institutions. This will give you general knowledge of the country's political orientation with regard to the legislation under discussion. If there were changes of government, it would be recommended to stick to one position. No extensive reading is needed here, but it can serve as a good way of putting yourself in the shoes of the country at that particular period.

More detailed knowledge about the legislation can now start to be taken in. europa.eu and eur-lex.europa.eu are both useful links for finding background information on the legislation and its real path through the EU legislative process. By now, your country's position will have begun to amalgamate and opinions on the legislation will follow. From this point, one could take note of actual amendments proposed and take some inspiration from them. As a Minister, you may wish to propose the exact same amendment or craft one yourself. There is a great deal of political freedom in this respect.

A position paper must be written from this information. The sooner position papers are uploaded, the better. Debate can start virtually almost instantaneously, permitting the creation of amendment 'alliances'. One should not be too strict or inflexible; you should leave some room for maneuver and allow yourself to find

compromises when the conference comes about. One also does not need to research the technical details of the legislation – that is the role of lobbyists. Some background knowledge should suffice

a) Content

The paper should be clear and concise, and contain the following information:

- x A general sentence in the beginning clearly stating your country's- party's- or group's position;
- x A succinct policy statement for each topic representing the relevant views of your assigned delegation;
- x An elaboration of your position (you should draw from one or more of the following: quotes from the national and EU legislation; agreements/resolutions your state/party/group has ratified; quotes from statements made by relevant figures in your country/party etc.). Feel free to use any credible sources you may find.
- x References to your state/party past experiences with the topic – if applicable;
- x Recommendations for actions to be taken by the committee;
- x A conclusion restating your country's position on the topic;
- x Please cite any relevant statistics, quotes etc. (in any widely accepted scholarly citation format).

b) Format

Do **not** use first person in your position paper. You are presenting your country's/ party's position, not your personal one, so please write your paper in their names.

Specific format guidelines are:

- x The paper should be typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, single-spaced, double-spaced between paragraphs, and with justified alignment.
- x The position paper itself should be no longer than 1 page. Additionally, you can use second page to provide sources or simply put them in the footnotes.
- x Please name the file with your position in the following way:
-For Ministers: CEU, Name of country

- For MEPs: EP, Faction, National Party, Country
- For Lobbyists: Lobbyist, Name of company/organization

- x Please name the email subject in the same way
- x Please publish the papers to the respective Facebook groups, so that they are visible to other participants in advance.

c) Deadline

The deadline for submission of position papers is **March 30th, 23:59 EET**

SAMPLE PAPER EP (S&D, Czech Republic)

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare

After the last two enlargements of the European Union (hereafter the EU) the number of its member states grew (from 15 to 27) as well as the number of the "European citizens". As long as those, possessing EU citizenship are being recognized the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States another significant right – the right to health and quality health service, should also be safeguarded within the EU. This is in accordance with the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice establishing the right of patients to benefit from medical treatment in a Member State other than their own. For these reasons, we welcome the Proposal for a Directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare.

The reimbursement issue is very important one, especially when taking into account the different standards in the different EU Member States and also having in mind the difference in the development of the health systems as well as the problems of the health systems that some of the newly joined Members still experience. The Czech Republic is on its way solving the main issues (having in mind the fact that a lot of reforms in the health care policy were recently introduced) like the financial instability and deficits of the statutory health insurance system and hospitals. In my opinion, here it comes the difficulty and careful consideration should be given to the so called "health tourism". Attention should be paid on the possibility countries with cheaper and at the same time medical

service of high quality to be overflowed with patients – as the latter can have a negative impact on the “weak and reforming” anyway healthcare organization at national level.

Having in mind everything said above, as generally I support the proposed Directive for the introduction of general framework with the idea of guaranteeing the safety, quality and efficiency of cross-border healthcare provision.

However, I suggest some amendments to be made - countries should have greater freedom when demanding prior authorisation for treatment, particularly for “specialised and cost-intensive” care.

SAMPLE PAPER COUNCIL (Portugal)

Directive on the Application of Patients’ Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare

Portugal understands both the social need and legal obligation of a directive to deal with cross-border healthcare due to increased citizen mobility and diversification and specialization of healthcare systems in the European Union Member states. A cross-border healthcare would increase the living standards of patients with certain conditions who find treatment as less acceptable in quality in their country of citizenship. The creation of healthcare tourism is eminent if left unregulated by the governments individually, or collectively.

The issue at hand is of great national importance for all parties involved – be it the recipient of patients, or the donor. The perception of citizens going abroad to seek medical assistance in a certain field where a higher quality of treatment is offered can possibly trigger wide perception of the nation’s healthcare system being of unacceptable quality, and needlessly spark unemployment in the health sector, not to mention the opposite problem of queues and also a decreased quality of healthcare in recipient countries. Taxpayers’ funds allocated abroad, thus financially depriving citizens of the quality of services they have been adequately been receiving. A decreased demand can have adverse effects on the patients remaining despite shorter queues there would be less revenue for large scale purchases such as building hospitals or the purchase of multi-functional equipment which is expensive, but is designed to treat a large group of patients.

Patients should only be granted financial aid or full reimbursement of the costs carried out abroad if the domestic healthcare system has been ruled as inferior to another in a certain field, or in a certain case depending on the patient at hand. It must be stressed that the Directive is to increase the living standards of citizens of the European Union, and not turn healthcare into a branch of industry that should compete with fellow states, and fueled by governments themselves.

SAMPLE PAPER LOBBYIST

Croatia has made an important progress on Chapter 23, which concerns the judiciary and fundamental rights. However, Human Rights Watch considers that the Croatian government needs to work more on the issue of human rights so that the European integration could be successful.

Our 2013 report¹ states that multiple aspects of human rights necessitate further improvement, such as the rights of persons with disabilities, the accountability for war crimes, freedom of media, return and reintegration of Serbs, asylum and migration etc.

First of all, regarding the inadequate accountability for war crimes, Human Rights Watch noticed that there are some key obstacles in solving the cases such as the fairness of prosecutors or judges, lack of cooperation from certain institutions (e.g. the police), and neighboring states, witness protection mechanism etc. The cooperation of police in investigating war crimes often lacks because police officers involved in the actions during the war still hold office. Moreover, the cooperation between the states involved in wars is problematic, even if there are agencies of cooperation on judiciary matters.

Secondly, a greater effort concerning the rights of persons with disabilities is still needed. The Human Rights Watch recommended the Croatian government to replace the institutions for intellectually or mentally disabled with support programs that could help them to a greater extent. The process of deinstitutionalization lacks concrete measures and the policies adopted by the Croatian government are limited to children.

Despite the progress made on freedom of speech, the Croatian journalists are sometimes hampered when it comes to requesting or accessing public information from government.

Journalists investigating corruption and organized crime cases are often harassed because of the awareness their articles raise.

In conclusion, Human Rights Watch considers that more needs to be done in the human rights sector by the Croatian government in order to be entirely prepared to access the EU. Therefore, our position is against the accession of Croatia to the EU until the emphasized problems are being solved.

VI. Rules of Procedure

1. European Parliament

A. GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

Rule 1. *The President*

1.1. The Parliament shall be chaired jointly by a President and a Vice-President assisted by an Amendment Assistant. 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 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. The decisions of the President regarding the procedural issues cannot be appealed.

1.7. A speaker may not be interrupted except by the President or a point of personal privilege.

1.8. The President may take immediate measures against Members who disrupts the conduct of a session.

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 the Chamber 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*

English is both working and official language for all organs of MEU Blagoevgrad and shall be spoken at all times.

B. CONDUCT OF DEBATE

Rule 4. *General Course of reading in the Parliament*

4.1. A reading consists of: introductory statements; general debate on the topic; debate on specific amendments; voting on amendments.

4.2. At the beginning of a reading, there will be time for introductory statements from each leader of a group in the Parliament. Each introductory statement should not exceed 3 minutes.

4.3. After the introductory statements, there will be a general debate on the topic.

4.4. The general debate ends when there are no more speakers on the list of speakers for the general debate or when a motion to close general debate has been granted.

- 4.5. The President can limit the number of speakers permitted during a debate beforehand and close the list of speakers during the debate.
- 4.6. When the general debate on a topic has been closed, the President will announce debate on proposed amendments.
- 4.7. 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 Parliament moves to voting procedures on the amendments.
- 4.8. Only amendments that have been debated can be voted on during an amendment voting session.

Rule 5. *Types of Debate and Right to Speak*

- 5.1. There are 2 types of debate: the Formal Debate and Informal Debate.
- 5.2. Formal Debate:
- 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.
 - d. The speaking time is one minute unless altered by a decision of the President.
 - e. When the speaker has finished his speech, they will be asked by the President whether they are open to questions or short remarks (points of information) 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. A maximum of two questions and two remarks is allowed. One Member may pose only one question or only one remark to the speaker. 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 the 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 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. 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.

5.3. Informal Debate:

a. An Informal Debate can be proposed by the President or the Members at any time via the “Motion to move to an Informal Debate”, specifying the time limit of the Informal Debate. This time limit may not exceed 20 minutes.

b. During an Informal Debate, Members shall stay in the chambers.

c. The President does not moderate and the discussion is unofficial.

d. The Presidency will inform the Members about the remaining time.

Rule 6. Procedural Motions

6.1. 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.

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

6.3. No motion may interrupt a speaker.

6.4. A simple majority is required for all procedural motions unless otherwise stated.

6.5. There are the following procedural motions:

a. “Motion to move to Informal Debate”

A Member may make a motion to move to Informal Debate so that disputed points can be clarified in an informal setting. The President shall put the motion to a vote if there are objections to the motion. A simple majority is required. The President also has the possibility to declare a temporary adjournment of the session at his or her discretion.

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. Two Members may speak in favour and two Members may speak against the motion. 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 for the speaking time. This motion can be raised only when the President asks for points and motions. The President shall put the motion to a vote if there are objections.

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

6.7. The President is allowed to dismiss dilatory procedural motions at his or her discretion.

6.8. The President can, taking into consideration the good functioning of the Parliament, propose to make changes in the Rules of Procedure if they notice that some of the rules are not contributing to the quality of the debate. President will have the right to explain thoroughly why the changes are necessary and how will they be implemented. The President shall put the proposal to a vote. An absolute majority is required.

Rule 7. *Procedural Points*

7.1. Point of information: After each speech in a Speakers’ List, the Members may pose questions and make short remarks to the previous speaker. The questions/short remarks 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 Parliament and are interrogatory in form.

7.2. Point of Order: This must be confined to raising questions of procedure for a ruling from the President. 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.

7.3. 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 8. *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 Debate.
6. Motion for Closure of Debate.

C. COOPERATION BETWEEN ORGANS AND READINGS

Rule 9. *Legislative procedure for the Council and Parliament*

- 9.1. The proposals of the Commission at MEU Blagoevgrad shall be treated under a modified co-decision procedure described hereafter.
- 9.2. The Commission's proposal will be submitted to the Parliament and to the Council. 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 important. Furthermore, the Commission may be summoned for clarification during debate subject to an absolute majority vote.

Types of Meetings in the Parliament

- 9.3. The President shall convene a meeting of the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO), the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee (AGRI), and the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI) during the second day of the conference. The Committees shall discuss the Commission proposal and prepare the agenda for the amendments during the following Plenary session. No amendments shall be voted upon during the Committee Meetings.
- 9.4. The participating factions shall elect their leaders, not more than 1 per faction, during the first day of the conference. The leaders will be determined by plurality, or where the number of the faction members is small, by consensus. Members of Parliament may vote only for their own factions.
- 9.5. During the second day of the conference, the European Parliament shall elect 2 rapporteurs and 2 shadow rapporteurs, who will represent the EP in the so-called "trialogue", a tripartite meeting with representatives of the Commission and the Council aiming at the facilitation of the legislative procedure. The rapporteurs will be elected by plurality. Any MEP may nominate himself or another MEP for a rapporteur,

whereby the nominee has the right to accept or reject their own nomination.

9.6. The President shall convene a Party meeting on the second day of the conference, during which the political groups shall draft their amendments. Those amendments shall be presented in the following Plenary. Later on the same day, the President shall convene another Plenary for a review of the amended proposal as submitted by the Council of the EU.

9.7. Following the review of the amendments as submitted by the Council, the rapporteurs will take place in the triologue referred to in Article 9.5.

9.8. During the final day of the conference, a final voting on the amendments negotiated between the three institutions shall take place.

D. AMENDMENTS AND VOTING

Rule 10. *Amendments to a Proposal*

10.1. Any amendments will be debated during the amendments²² debate, 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. Only two Members may speak in favour and two Members may speak against the amendment in question. 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. If the amendment can make changes that can reflect on other paragraphs of the proposal, the Member who proposed it shall submit additional corrective amendments in order to preserve the integrity and consistency of the act.

10.7. The Member who proposed an amendment may withdraw the amendment at any time.

10.8. Friendly amendment: A Member who discovers a spelling, grammatical or stylistic mistake in the proposal or in an amendment may propose a friendly amendment orally 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 a simple 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: being the session; enter voting procedure on an amendment; enter voting procedure on the 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. *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.

13.3. Members may vote in favour, against or abstain. It is not possible to abstain when voting on procedural motions.

13.4. 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. When called upon, MEPs shall declare if they vote "Yes", "No", or "abstain". After a voting via a roll-call, no additional vote can be taken.

13.5. Every Member has one vote. A simple majority of votes of all Members 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 two different kinds of majority and one type of plurality:

a. An absolute majority.

Every Member has one vote. A majority of votes of all component Members is needed.

b. A simple majority. Every Member has one vote. A majority of the votes of all Members present are needed.

c. A plurality. The MEP receiving the largest number of votes is elected to the position.

2. Council of the European Union

A. GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

Rule 1. *The President*

1.1. The Council of EU shall be chaired jointly by a President assisted by a Secretary.

1.2. The President shall open, suspend and close sittings, temporarily adjourn meetings, direct the debates of the Council of EU, 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. The decisions of the President regarding the procedural issues cannot be appealed.

1.7. A speaker may not be interrupted except by the President or a point of personal privilege (see Rule 7.3).

1.8. The President may take immediate measures against Members who disrupts the conduct of a session (see Rule 2).

1.9. The President shall not vote on any matter on the agenda.

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 Minister 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 the Chamber 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*

English is both working and official language for all organs of MEU Blagoevgrad, and should be spoken at all times.

B. CONDUCT OF DEBATE

Rule 4. *Decision Making Procedure in the Council of the EU*

4.1. The decision making procedure consists of introductory statements; general debate on the topic; debate on the draft proposal of the Council meeting; debate on specific amendments to the draft; voting on amendments to the draft; voting on the Position of the Council meeting. Members shall work towards creating a unified position of the Council which will be presented in the final text, namely the „Position of the Council meeting“.

4.2. At the beginning of the procedure, all 28 Members will have the opportunity to outline their country's position on the topic in an introductory statement. Each introductory statement should not exceed 2 minutes.

4.3. After the introductory statements, the general debate on the topic begins (see Rule 5).

4.4. The general debate ends when there are no more speakers on the Speaker's List for general or when a motion for a closure of general debate has been granted.

4.5. 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.

4.6. When the debate on the proposal has been closed, the President will announce debate on proposed amendments to the proposal.

4.7. The debate on a specific amendment ends when there are no more speakers on the list of speakers for this amendment or when a motion for closure of debate has been granted. The Council moves to voting procedures on the amendments.

4.8. When voting procedures on the amendments finish, the Council moves to voting on the (potentially) amended draft Position of the Council.

Rule 5. *Types of Debate and Right to Speak*

5.1. The parliamentary debate consists of 3 stages: the Speaker's List, Formal Debate and Informal Debate

5.2. Speaker's List:

- a. Each Member who wishes to speak 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 stand up and held their speeches.
- d. The speaking time is two minutes unless altered by a Motion to extend or limit the speaking time.
- e. When a speaker has finished his or hers speech, the speaker can state whether he/she is open for questions and/or additional remarks. The time limit for a question/short remark is thirty seconds. A maximum of two comments and two remarks is allowed.
- 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. The President will allocate questions and/or additional remarks.
- 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.

Rule 5.1. *Formal Debate*

- a. Formal debate interrupts the session for a specified time and gives Members an opportunity to address the Council of EU without a Speaker's list. Minimum duration of a formal debate is 5 minutes and the maximum is 20 minutes.
- b. If a Member wishes to speak he or she may do so by raising his or her placard. The President will then decide and designate the speakers, taking into consideration equity, good functioning of the Council and context of the debate.
- c. A motion to enter formal debate can be brought up at any time when the floor is open. A formal debate must be held on a specific topic. The Member shall briefly outline the topic and specify a time

limit for the debate and each speaker's time. The motion shall be voted on immediately, with a simple majority required for it to succeed.

d. After completion of the formal debate it is up to the discretion of the President, taking into consideration equity, good functioning of the Council and context of the debate to entertain a motion to extend the formal debate. This extension may not be longer than the original formal debate and may only be entertained once per formal debate.

Rule 5.2. *Informal Debate:*

a. An informal debate can be proposed by the President or any Member any time via the "Motion to move to an Informal Debate", specifying the time limit of the debate. This time limit may not exceed 20 minutes.

b. During an Informal Debate, Members shall stay in the room.

c. The President does not moderate and the discussion is unofficial.

d. Members are to return to their seats once an alert is given by the President that the informal debate is nearly over.

e. After completion of the informal debate it is up to the discretion of the President, taking into consideration equity, good functioning of the Council and context of the debate to entertain a motion to extend the informal debate. This extension may not be longer than the original debate and each informal debate can have only one extension.

Rule 6. *Procedural Motions*

6.1. 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 as long as it does not interrupt a speaker. Procedural motions cannot be raised during Informal Debate and voting procedures.

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

6.3. All Procedural Motions require a simple majority unless stated otherwise. There are no abstentions during votes on procedural motions.

6.4. There are the following procedural motions:

a. "Motion to move to a Formal/Informal Debate"

The President can either approve the motion or put it to vote immediately if there are objections to the Motion. The President also has the possibility to declare a temporary adjournment of the session at his or her discretion.

b. “Motion to Limit/Extend 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.

c. “Motion for Closure of Debate”

A Member may make a Motion for Closure of: the general debate; the debate on the amendments; the debate on a specific amendment. In case there are objections to this motion, it should be put into vote. Two Members may speak in favor and two Members may speak against the motion. 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.

d. “Motion for Roll-Call Vote”

A Member may propose a Roll-Call Vote when all debates are closed and the Council shall vote on the adoption of the draft conclusion. A Roll-Call Vote requires that the President ask each Member to vote individually and state whether the Member vote

“in favor”, “against”, “in favor with rights”, “against with rights”, or abstain. Members who vote “with rights” shall explain their vote. The President shall call upon Members to vote in alphabetical order, beginning from an arbitrarily chosen Member.

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

Rule 7. Procedural Points

7.1. Point of Information: After each speech in a Speakers’ List Speakers’ List, the speaker may use any remaining time to respond to questions or comments. Any Member 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 Council and are interrogatory in form.

7.2. Point of Order: This must be confined to raising questions of procedure for a ruling from the President. 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.

7.3. 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 8. *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 Formal Debate/Motion for Informal Debate.
6. Motion for Closure of Debate.
7. Motion for Roll-Call Vote

C. VOTING, QUORUM AND DEBATE

Rule 9. *Amendments to the Draft Conclusion*

9.1. 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 point, 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.

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

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

9.4. 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.

9.5. An amendment can make changes to several points 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 points at a time but could be split up into several amendments.

9.6. 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.

9.7. 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.

9.8. 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. Qualified majority is needed for the amendment to be accepted, meaning that an amendment will pass if there are votes in favor that represent 55% of the Member States that represent 65% of the EU population. Members can vote in favor, abstain or against. Also there can be a blocking minority of at least 4 Member States that represent at least 35% of the EU population.

9.9 All passed amendments will then be integrated into the position of the Council regarding the proposal.

Rule 10. *Quorum and Voting procedures*

10.1. Quorum is the number of Members necessary to be present in order for the Council to: open the session; enter voting procedure on the draft conclusion. The presence of two thirds of Members is required for a quorum. Prior to any substantive vote, the President shall check that there is a quorum. If there is no quorum, any vote is void unless it is a vote on a procedural motion.

10.2. No Member shall enter or leave the room during voting procedure, nor speak or raise a motion except for points of order concerning the voting procedure. Guests may be asked to leave the room.

10.3. No Member may be called to speak during a vote.

10.4. Members may vote in favor, against, or abstain. In order for the conclusion to be adopted by the Council, the above mentioned Qualified Majority is required of all voting delegates.

10.5. Members can vote by raising their placard or by a roll-call vote if a Motion for Roll-Call Vote is adopted.

10.6. The President shall declare the voting closed and announce the final result.

10.7. For all procedural issues, a simple majority is needed, unless otherwise stated.

VII. Information Regarding the Topic

The Commission document will regard the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the use and/or cultivation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on their territory, through reassessing and amending Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003, Regulation (EC) 1830/2003, Directive (EC) 18/2001, and Directive (EU) No 2015/412.

The four aspects that will be included in the Communication of the Commission and in its final proposal will be:

Title I – Environmental Protection (on Regulation (EC) 1829/2003)

Title II – Cultivation of GMOs (on Directive (EU) 2015/412)

Title III – Regulations on Imports (on Directive (EC) 18/2001)

Title IV – Traceability and Labeling (on Regulation (EC) 1830/2003)

Expect the Commission Communication on the MEU Participants' Facebook group about **TWO** weeks before the conference. The final proposal will be ready **ONE** week prior to the conference. You will then have 3 to 4 days to write a brief position paper.