



Model European Union
Strasbourg 2020

ROLE GUIDE

JOURNALISTS



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WELCOME!

Congratulations, you've made it! You are soon going to be accredited as News Editors and Video Journalists for the 2020 edition of Model European Union Strasbourg.

You are about to experience a week as an "official member of the press and video journalist" in the heart of European politics: the European Parliament.

During an intense week of political simulations, you will observe the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, take the most out of it and liberate your creative mind. You should make the best use of your journalists' colleagues' knowledge: learn, help, discover each other and build something together!

Model European Union Strasbourg is the best place to realise the importance of the old continent's politics and the existing relationships amongst its countries. You'll have to live up to high expectations, but you made it here, so I sincerely believe that you will rock in your role. Always remember that you are not alone, we will be present to support you, coordinate and make sure you are driving in the right direction.

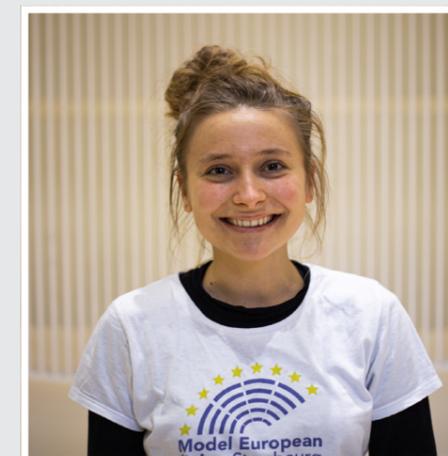
We? But who? Your Journalists Coordinator, myself, Lucile and Maira, your Assistant Journalists coordinator! After having participated in a few MEUs as a Video Journalist and Photographer, like an old addict, I am missing MEUs challenges. I can't wait to live this new one with you and once again be positively surprised.

Maira will be here to help and support you before and during the conference. She caught the MEUS bug when participating as a MEP in 2019. As a freelance journalist and website coordinator for MEUS 2020, she will mainly assist those of you who applied as News Editors. I hope this guide will answer some of your questions and help you to understand and prepare for your role.

Open your eyes, grab your cameras and ... go!



Lucile
Journalists' Coordinator



Maira
Assistant Journalists' Coordinator

1. A FEW WORDS ABOUT MODEL EUROPEAN UNION STRASBOURG

Model European Union Strasbourg (MEUS) is the most realistic simulation of the EU decision-making process that aims to increase your familiarity with its institutions while encouraging political participation and dialogue. Since 2007, we invite roughly 200 young people every year to participate in this hands-on learning experience in which participants take on the roles of MEPs, Ministers, Chairs, Interest Representatives, Journalists, Photographers and Interpreters. Over the course of an intense week of negotiations and debates, you will simulate the EU's legislative process in the attempt to reach a political compromise on two selected legislative proposals from the European Commission.

The two legislative proposals that you will be discussing at MEUS 2020 are the Regulation on setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars and for new light commercial vehicles and the Directive on certain aspects concerning contracts for the online and other distance sales of goods.



2. ORDINARY LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE THE ULTIMATE CHEATSHEET

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

FIRST READING

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission proposes and outlines Proposal A to the Council • Ministers present their opening statements on Proposal A • General debate and proposal of amendments on Proposal A • Debate on proposed amendments on Proposal A • Voting on amendments by Qualified Majority Voting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission proposes and outlines Proposal B to the Parliament • Presidents of political groups present their opening statements on Proposal B • General debate and proposal of amendments on Proposal B • Debate on proposed amendments on Proposal B • Voting on amendments by Simple Majority Voting |
|---|--|

SECOND READING

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission outlines amended Proposal B to the Council • Representatives of the Parliament present the passed amendments on Proposal B in the First Reading • Ministers present their opening statements on Proposal B • General debate and proposal of amendments on Proposal B • Debate on proposed amendments on Proposal B • Voting on amendments by Qualified Majority Voting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission outlines amended Proposal A to the Parliament • Representatives of the Council present the passed amendments on Proposal A in the First Reading • Presidents of political groups present their opening statements on Proposal A • General debate and proposal of amendments on Proposal A • Debate on proposed amendments on Proposal A • Voting on amendments by Simple Majority Voting |
|--|--|

THIRD READING

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of the Parliament present the passed amendments on Proposal A • General debate on final version of Proposal A • Final vote on Proposal A by Qualified Majority Voting • General debate on final version of Proposal B • Final vote on Proposal B by Qualified Majority Voting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of the Council present the passed amendments on Proposal B • General debate on final version of Proposal B • Final vote on Proposal B by Simple Majority Voting • General debate on final version of Proposal A • Final vote on Proposal A by Simple Majority Voting |
|---|--|

TRILOGUE MEETINGS

In order to facilitate cooperation between the Council and the European Parliament, trilogue meetings will regularly take place in MEUS 2019 just as in reality.

Trilogue meetings shall be organised during coffee breaks. These meetings will be attended by:

- the Commissioner responsible for the proposal, who will lead the discussions;
- three Rapporteurs from the European Parliament. For reasons of fair representation, it is recommended that one MEP be elected from the EPP, one MEP from the S&D and one MEP from the smaller political groups of the EP;
- the two Rapporteurs elected by the Council.

The participants of the Trilogue meetings shall work towards facilitating negotiations and achieving consensus, as well as to inform each other about the state of matters in the institution that they are representing. Due to the lack of the Conciliation Committee, Trilogue meetings will play a key role in achieving the preliminary and/or final consensus.

After each trilogue, the Rapporteurs will be allowed to take the floor in their respective institutions to update its members about the progress of negotiations.

3. ROLE DESCRIPTION

As a **Journalist**, you will be the watchdog of the **European Parliament and the Council**. During the five-day simulation held on the premises of the European Parliament, you will have the opportunity to challenge MEPs and Ministers by pointing out their inconsistencies and manipulations; by asking them **hard-hitting questions** in heated **press conferences**; by conducting impromptu yet directed **interviews** to gain an informational competitive advantage; by **investigating** on the inner workings and negotiations and, last but not least, actively **supporting and defending** Ministers and MEPs whose opinions reflect your agenda.

As a **Video Journalist** you will capture more than words thanks to the daily video format you will produce with the help of the **Journalist Coordinators**. These ten-minute long videos will be broadcasted each morning before the debates start in the EP and the Council. During the day you will gather content from interviews, press conferences and background investigations.

As a **News Editor** you will constantly publish **breaking news** in real-time on a designated platform. You will not only cover what happens in the hemicycles but also connect the outer world and the European Parliament by reporting on selected incidents from outside the EP.

Working as a close-knit team and making good use of our **collective skill set**, we will build journalism at MEUS 2020 and put it at the **center** of the debates!

4. OVERVIEW OF YOUR WORK

During the day, you will listen to the debates *and* write down every important information you can get your hands on. Be prepared to turn on your camera at any moment. We will ask participants our questions mainly in their “free time”, during coffee breaks and informal discussions. Take the chance whenever you have the possibility to interview someone. Of course, you can also plan an interview with a certain participant ahead of time. Either way, preparation is vital! While following the debates you should always keep in mind your own agenda, and write down the pressing questions you want to be answered. During the interviews, you will mainly work in duos: one journalist with a microphone asking questions and one journalist filming the Q&A sequence, even if it’s short. You will have the opportunity to get some breaking news from the participants right after the debate sessions. Use this chance to capture their emotions! Investigate with one goal in mind: scrutinizing MEPs, Ministers and Interest Representatives’ opinions by deep going and impartial reporting. Do not forget that the longest part will be the preparation and the realization of the video news. In the morning, after the presentation of our video news format from the previous day of the simulation, we will jump right into our quest.

We will build and structure the scenario of the next video all day long, based on fresh information. To draft the main idea of the next video, we will use a shared document to help us in our communication. Before lunch, we will have some time to discuss the scenario more precisely. We will also decide on the next publications, the breaking news of the day and the next tasks. We will distribute those tasks (editing, publishing, writing, filming roles before and during the press conferences, etc.) for the rest of the day. We will also write and film the skeleton of the video news format: presenting the following news, explaining or simply giving the audience details of the breaking news we posted the previous day.

The time needed to edit the video news format will be our main challenge. Communicate with your colleagues and think about the editing process during the filming process! This will make your day easier (and maybe your night too, so think about it!). Do not hesitate to ask me any questions or consult with your colleagues, we are together to share our skills. The editing process needs to be finished and checked by me and some of your colleagues before stepping out of the parliament in the evening. We will also hold press conferences at the end of each day so keep in mind that the editing has to be as efficient as possible even though some of you will be editing while the others will guide the press conference.

On top of that, you will post ongoing news from the debates and the outside world on a dedicated platform on our website. In order to make the reporting process more realistic and relevant, you will not only focus on the conference, but also include selected information about events from the “real world”, outside the EP. Interest Representatives will provide you with a list of incidents from outside the Parliament. It is up to you to choose pieces of information to use when posting the breaking news.

Press conferences will take place at the end of the day. While some of you will probably be editing or filming, at least two of you will lead the press conference. You will have a dedicated time slot to prepare for the press conferences, where you will ask the representatives of the EP and the Council between five and ten questions.

5. TASK ROTATION

MEUS is an incredible opportunity to share our knowledge. We are going to be together for a week of learning and sharing skills, tips, stories and help each other.

We thought it was important to create a task rotation in the Journalists team to experiment with different things, face different problems and solve them with your teammates.

I highly encourage you to practice new techniques, we are in a place where we can experiment and where we can help each other. Feel free to try talking in front of a camera, even if it's just for one question.

During this whole week, you will be able to work with the camera, the microphone, the website, editing software, you can write the news or the scenario, prepare or guide the press conference and you can be the reporter asking questions to the source. Enjoy this opportunity!

6. VIDEO NEWS FORMAT AT MEUS 2020

GENERAL INFORMATION

You will be the first official Video Journalists participating at MEU Strasbourg, how exciting! However, press journalism is still a very important part of journalism in general. Even though newspapers and written articles are the legs of journalism, we believe that the news format brings new ideas and is an interesting way of sharing information. We aim at becoming the head and hands of journalism by using this aesthetic tool allowing to condense news which is the video.

The video format is actually one of the most efficient ways to be heard. During this intense simulation, every participant will be busy. The team will be running around to follow the busy schedule. This means that you will obviously have a lot of news to share and they will have little time to read them. Using the video is a way to be heard.

Why did we decide that videos will be the new tool of journalists at MEUS?

Every morning, participants will have dedicated time to listen and watch your video. This video will set the tone of their day, giving you a key role in every institution of this simulation. They will get a visual reminder of the fact that journalists exist, and they will be more open to give interviews and share breaking news or gossip afterwards. With the right approach, good materials and some skills, the memories of the simulation will double, maybe triple! Participants will keep visuals and remember the evolution of the decision-making process during the simulation.

VIDEO FORMAT

- **Intro:** designed before the conference.
- **Content:**
 - Newscaster, explaining the evolution of the debates.
 - Discussions, interview (official), reactions of participants.
- **Outro:** designed before the conference.

Maximum: 7 minutes

Other video formats: Press conference, published on the website (can be longer).

PROCESS

- Firstly, use your News Editor and Video Journalist's skills: looking for news, filming and interviewing people.
- Secondly, putting this information together and writing down the scenario of the video: the frame of our presentation the next morning.
- Thirdly, you will find the last details, words or faces you need and start to film the designated speaker that will present the video news.
- Finally, editing the video while some of you might still be filming and asking questions during the press conference.

It is necessary to share your work with the rest of the team. During the day, everything will be happening at the same time. By sharing your work and using the same tools to work, we are going to avoid misconceptions and mistakes.



BONUS

If you are a Video Journalist and you are reading this today, I believe you have a real passion for the video-making process. Feel free to film during the socials and other unofficial moments. MEUS is not only about politics, it's also time to share cultures, dances, stories and start international friendships. Having videos of those funny moments would be a blast and I would love to help you filming, editing and publishing on the participants' groups those videos.

PREPARATION BEFORE MEUS

Together, we will prepare the intro and outro of the video news a few weeks before the conference. This way, we will save precious time on the first day.

I'm going to plan a few meetings with you before MEUS starts, to plan and discuss our common project. It's time for you to show your creativity and share ideas! Creativity and politics are not enemies. I believe that from one crazy thought we can get five interesting and feasible ideas. We will have meetings to discuss our vision of the crisis simulation, the Interest Representatives reports and we will set some guidelines for the press conferences that we will attend during this week.

Of course, you will have access to the website and I will show you the basics of it.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS (PROJECTION, SOFTWARE, CAMERAS, TOOLS):

- A camera
- A microphone
- Headphones to edit
- Editing software (example: Premiere Pro)
- Computer with access to the PLATFORM and Google Drive (shared doc with the scenario, rushes, pictures, etc.)



7. NEWS EDITORS AT MEUS 2020

SCENARIOS

The brand new video format involves several new tasks. One of them is writing the script for the news show. You will work on the frame of the video and shape the scenario during the morning to be able to film during the day and edit afterwards.

You don't have to spend your day on the layout of the scenarios, use your time to talk to participants, negotiate your voice and discover the truth and gossip.

ARTICLES

Written articles are still a part of journalism at MEUS 2020. At least two of them are going to be published on the website during the simulation, one in the middle of the week, and another one at the very end.

Print journalism is the foundation of every type of journalism. It will still play a part for the influence you will have during and after this experience. We need some words to share with our partners who helped us shaping and building this edition of MEUS. Working on multiple formats will allow us to reach another type of target: public relations. Yes! MEUS does have a real impact on our real life, so make the most out of it!

BREAKING NEWS

Ongoing news from the EP and the outer world, published in the shape of short statements, quotes or questions. The platform will be a dedicated section on our website, which participants can access through a QR code.

8. THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY:

IMAGE

We will obviously use tripods as much as we can to have a clear and clean image. Think about the light, take some time to adjust your camera and the participants you want to ask questions to will have time to think about what they are ready to share with journalists.

Lights are best adjusted like a "Mercedes star". One from above and one from each side (left and right). Trying to mimic this as well as possible will improve the way the main focus of the picture is seen, also giving it visual importance.

EDITING

Editing requires precision. Even if we are working to tight deadlines, the editing of the video **needs** to be professional and reflect your skills.

NEWSCASTER

Speaking in front of a camera is like interviewing someone asking them a question you just drafted in the corner of a room: it's part of the real journalist's life. Public speaking is an exercise that, I'm sure, you will enjoy at the end of the week (if not before.) Don't forget that it's not a live video! This will help you stay calm and natural while talking and asking questions.

GRAMMAR

I highly encourage you to use Grammarly for Chrome during the conference. This way we won't have to spend that much time correcting texts.

Quality is not just about technique:

People are building their career during this week and you are too, in your own way. Make sure you remember it when you shoot a video, when you interact with people during the conference and when you publish some news.

You for sure already know the basics of journalism. Use sources to be credible and slate the positions of the people you talk to.

Communication is key. It is your responsibility to make sure your coworkers and participants know what you are doing and what you are talking about. You will have to talk to a lot of people, from Ministers to Interest Representatives, and search for information. Journalists' dream is to have information before everyone else. It won't happen that easily but use the coffee breaks and every minute of free time to look after your treasure!



9. INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES

The importance of the relationship with Interest Representatives (IRs) cannot be denied. They are key to a lot of information. During MEUS, News Editors, Video Journalists and Interest Representatives' team will have the chance to share a very similar schedule. Working together is a way to have exclusive news and interest in people.

The goal of Interest Representatives will be promoting their actions through our media outlets. But this doesn't mean we don't get to benefit from it too! For helping Interest Representatives promote their work, we must get something in return and the "currency" **is information!** IRs willing to spread their influence and to buy time with journalists must give out some juicy/expert information required by the journalist in return!

Another "currency" during MEUS, exclusively used by Interest Representatives in their work is "points of influence". The Interest Representatives Coordinator will give to each Interest Representative a set amount of "points of influence".

The Influence System used by Interest Representatives as well as the opportunities that it presents for Journalists and for cooperation between Journalists and Interest Representatives are explained more in detail below.

COOPERATION BETWEEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES AND JOURNALISTS AT MEUS 2020

The Influence System is, simply put, an innovation and a tool that Interest Representatives use at MEUS to advance their agendas. It enables them to engage more with other participants as well as to have a larger impact on the final outcome of the decision-making process. This is because IRs receive the opportunity to perform many of the activities their real-life colleagues use every day to make a change. Ksenjia is in charge of the IR coordination. Each IR at MEUS receives their initial "influence" - the in-game capital, based on their preparation and completion of a given task. Each day of the simulation, additional influence will be rewarded to each participant, with an opportunity for IRs to earn extra influence by completing specific tasks.

In order to encourage IRs and Journalists to work together during the simulation and utilize the benefits of the opportunities they have, **we decided to introduce the opportunity of cooperating at an earlier stage**, roughly two or three weeks before the conference:

- The IRs will be presented with a task, completion of which will result in 5 extra influence (*the influence will be awarded at the beginning of the conference based on their preparation: IS strategy, Position Paper, a small quiz based on their topic and this task*). **Each of them should get published by a journalist or either schedule an interview before the conference!** This is important as it empowers cooperation between the roles and also prepares participants a bit more, as they will be discussing topics and their agendas. Be prepared to answer their requests soon.
- On the other hand, we will encourage you, Journalists, to reach out to IRs as well and get something published before the event, on the platform.

During MEUS, there will be several options enabling IRs to work with us using the IS system! We hope these options will be just an incentive to work together even more.

- 1. IRs may buy “ad time” each day**, either for their own cause, for a politician or for a team if they are working with another IR. The duration of “ad time” which can be bought with influence will be decided by myself, the Journalists Coordinator. It will be around 2 minutes of our daily video. This will be quite expensive and therefore encourages IRs to team up!
- 2. In extreme cases, IRs who wish to splurge on a truly big step may also buy the option to publish one piece of gossip or disinformation, if both Ksenija and I, or Maira, approve.** This does not affect any individual Journalist as their name would not be associated with the gossip. This option, however, must not be overused and therefore, it will be approved only in extreme cases. We decided to go for it as in real life, it definitely happens and complete lack of such possibility decreases the authenticity of the simulation.

YOUR CHOICE

You have the choice whether or not you wish to be involved in this whole system. This would introduce **an additional option, for an IR to buy time with you** (either to lobby more for a certain article, gossip, or just to try and get additional info). However, remember that we must get something in return! Ask to be remunerated in our “currency” - **information** and don't hesitate to ask for juicy/expert info, as well as spend their influence.

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM YOU

First, to use this simulation to connect with people, try new techniques and enjoy this week! Secondly to meet your commitments. Keep in mind that we are a team and the the help of everyone if useful and valued. We will work together before the simulation to prepare this busy week together. I can't wait to start this collaboration!

“A good journalist learns to speak as a toddler, to write as a kid and to listen as an adult.”

**Model European Union Strasbourg 2020
Journalists' Guide**

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