

2022 European Union

Background Guide



Henry Dickinson

(They/He/She)

(taken at NUMUN)



-How many years have you been in mun? I have done Model UN every year of high school so far, so this year will be my third.

-Why did you join MUN? I saw Model UN in the show Never Have I Ever, and thought it seemed interesting. When two of my friends told me they were doing Model UN and I should join them (Claudia on staff is one of them!), that sealed the deal for me.

-What is your favorite MUN memory? My favorite MUN memories definitely are from NUMUN '22, my first overnight in-person conference. I went to MADMUN in person in '21, but every other conference I went to was virtual (MADMUN 1x, CIMUN 2x, MIMUN 1x) Being in person with my friends on a college campus, living close to independently, and doing something we loved doing every day was just an absolute blast.

-Why do you want to chair this committee or chair in general? I helped run a simulation for Middletons MUN club this winter as part of our parliamentary role, and I had a fun time doing that. After being elected to the board, I figured since I would be chairing back at Middleton the entire year, it would be good for me to get more experience learning to chair, and I thought it would be fun to try a new MUN experience.

-Why you chose your topics Following the theme of corruption this year, we had many themes to choose from considering we are the EU. Working together, we first came up with a list of all our ideas and narrowed it down from there following a set of criteria. For example, we decided not to do corruption in the UK parliament because the UK is no longer a part of the EU. In another example, our choice was only on a country-wide level, not a global issue. Thus, we narrowed down our topics to what we have for you now.

Monroe Durand

(they/them/theirs)



I'm Monroe Durand, and I'll be one of your chairs for the European Union committee at this year's MADMUN. I am a senior at Middleton High School and this will be my fourth year in Model UN. My favorite part of Model UN is forming blocs, because that creates a good balance of competition and cooperation that I really enjoy. I chose this committee because the European Union faces challenges that are both unique and extremely prescient beyond its borders. Outside of MUN, I enjoy hiking, playing viola, and listening to various genres of punk music. I'm looking forward to this committee, and I can't wait to see you all in December.

JD Fessler
(He/Him/His)



Hi! My name is JD Fessler and I'm a sophomore at McFarland. I'll be your spectacular sophomore sim for the EU. I joined Model UN last year because I like learning about the intricacies of modern politics and I love debating, especially when I have to argue from the perspective of a person or country that I don't agree with. And, you know, it looks pretty good on a college application. We chose the European Union because the problems of the committee are extremely topical right now, and they will become ever more important in the coming years. Issues of national debt and financing plague nearly every nation in today's world. Feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns about the committee. I can't wait to see all of you in December!

Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

The European Union is an organization mired in controversy and division. The recent departure of the United Kingdom from the Union greatly exacerbated these problems. This committee will present you with complicated issues that will require nuance and cooperation to solve. You will need to work together to address the topics at hand, and creativity is strongly encouraged. You will gain experience in a general assembly-style committee, as well as skills in compromise, negotiation, and debate.

We ask that all delegates complete sufficient research on their position, in order to accurately represent the country they are assigned. Thorough research on your country's policies, allies, and issues is critical, as is knowledge of the European Union.

These are real-world problems that real-world leaders are currently struggling to address. As such, we don't expect consensus or perfection. Disagreements and mistakes are inevitable, but we ask that everyone acts with civility and decorum at all times.

Please remember that bigotry of any kind is not tolerated at MADMUN. While accurately representing your position is important, it is far more important to respect fellow delegates and to avoid causing offense. It is also important to remember that positions held in committees do not necessarily represent the real-world opinions of delegates.

As your chairs and sim, our first priority is to ensure that you have an enjoyable experience. Whether it's your first year at MADMUN, or you've been to numerous conferences, we are here to support you. If you have any questions about MADMUN or this committee, please feel free to reach out, using the contact information provided on the MADMUN website.

We look forward to seeing you soon,

Your chairs and sim

Introduction to the European Union

The European Union was officially founded in 1957, with the goal of ensuring economic cooperation and democratization in Europe. While initially consisting of only six member states, all located in Western Europe, the EU has grown to include 27 member states, located all across Europe.

The EU is tasked with passing legislation applicable to all of its member states, in accordance with various charters and the EU constitution. As the European Union, you have the power to pass binding legislation that applies to all European Union member states. In reality, the EU has two legislative branches - the European Union Parliament and the Council of the European Union - but for the sake of simplicity, this committee will fill both of them.

The EU is critical to preventing conflict across Europe, as it mandates peace between its members, and serves as a mediating body. While there are disagreements among EU member states, these have never turned to armed conflict, in large part because of the European Union's influence.

History and background information

According to [Merriam-Webster](#), corruption is defined as “dishonest or illegal behavior, especially by powerful people (such as government officials or police officers)”, and “inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means (such as bribery)”. This form of corruption will be our focus, as it most closely relates to the world of governance and politics.

In October 2003, the UN held the United Nations Convention against Corruption. According to the [UN](#), this is “the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument.” The UN further states, “The Convention covers five main areas: preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange. The Convention covers many different forms of corruption, such as bribery, trading in influence, abuse of functions, and various acts of corruption in the private sector.” As of November of 2021, this convention has 189 parties. Thus, almost every UN member has agreed to this convention.

The EU takes corruption seriously and even creates entire programs to combat this issue. One such recently created one is the EUACI or the European Union Anti-Corruption Initiative. The EUACI consists of three main components, **Component 1** provides “Enhanced independence, effectiveness and resilience of anti-corruption institutions functioning within a sound strategic framework.”, **Component 2** assists with “Enhancing the capacity of local self-government, civil society, media, and business to contribute to the fight against corruption.” and **Component 3** that is “Increasing culture of integrity issues in Ukraine through the engagement of the business sector, civil society, and media.” ([The EUACI](#)). As you may have guessed from the third component, the EUACI focuses heavily on helping Ukraine, although the program was

established in 2017. Because of the war, the EUACIs focus has changed. Their four new pillars of work include

1. Facilitate that upcoming reconstruction (and current humanitarian) aid are managed and utilized with respect for integrity, transparency and accountability.
2. Support EU integration in anti-corruption, including appropriate reforms and legislative developments that will bring Ukraine closer to the EU.
3. Enhance asset recovery and tracing work to support the policy of sanctions against Russians that are supporting the aggression against Ukraine.
4. Promote resilience of the anti-corruption infrastructure and ensure that EUACI's partners can continue to function during the war and after Ukraine's victory." ([wartime goals](#))

The EUACI is a step in the right direction toward supporting democracy and combating corruption in the EU. Although their policies have shifted to directly supporting Ukraine in wartime, their main components are still great starting points on how the EU works to combat corruption.

Topic 1: Democracy in Decline

Democracy is under threat in every region of the world, and Europe is no exception. *Freedom Index* reports that democracy has been in decline for fifteen consecutive years worldwide (as of 2021). While the majority of European Union member states are consolidated democracies, republican/fascist nations like Hungary and Poland serve as outliers to this rule. As the European Union, you must consider how to protect democracy within and outside of the European Union's borders.

Shortly after the fall of the USSR, Francis Fukuyama declared the "end of history", referring to an end of authoritarianism and armed conflict. This hopeful vision seemed realistic, as many African and Asian nations were breaking free of colonial control, nearly a dozen former soviet states were emerging democracies, and the United Nations and European Union were protecting global peace. Democracy was at an all-time high. However, things have gone substantially downhill since then.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries outside of Europe, many promising African and Asian democracies turned to authoritarianism in a series of coups, military takeovers, and gradual backslides (the Democratic Republic of Congo and Chile are particularly notable examples). These democracies were often ended by the very colonial powers that once held dominion over these nations. In Europe, most democratic backsliding occurred within the twenty first century, with former soviet states like Russia and Belarus falling to authoritarian leaders who consolidated power around themselves. Much more recently, Hungary faced declining democracy, as President Viktor Orbán rewrote the Hungarian constitution to restrict freedom of

speech and the press, in order to consolidate power around himself. More stable democracies like France, Germany, and Sweden face growing far-right and anti-democracy movements that often overtly model themselves after Orbán's Hungary.

The European Union has an obligation to protect democracy. In 2000, just a few years after the founding of the EU, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights was declared. The Charter mandates that every EU member state respects the democratic rights and personal freedoms of its citizens. However, in recent years, many member states have seemingly violated several clauses of the Charter as they've gradually slid into authoritarianism. Hungary's suppression of the free press, assembly, and democracy in general; and Hungary and Poland's discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community are some of the most egregious examples of these violations. The EU has a clear obligation to act. How, or if, they act is up to you.

What actions, if any, should the European Union take to conserve democracy? How should its member states respond to the threat of authoritarian regimes both in and outside of the European Union? How should member states respond to anti-democracy movements within their national borders?

Topic 2: COVID Response

COVID rocked the world in 2020. Nearly every nation in the world enacted laws or restrictions to try and stop the spread of COVID-19. However, some nations and leaders also used the virus for personal and political gain. In 2020, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán created and passed a law that sent the country into a state of emergency. It also decreed that any person breaking quarantine or spreading "misinformation" about the virus can be punished with jail time, and it gave Orbán the power to suspend any existing laws and create new ones as desired. Any of these new laws would receive the de-facto approval of parliament due to the state of emergency. This emergency order lasts indefinitely. He effectively legally made himself a dictator.

Not only did Orbán make new laws that made himself more powerful, but he also made discriminatory laws and statements against LGBTQ people. Since 2020, their constitution has had anti-inclusive phrases such as "The mother is a woman, the father is a man". Orbán has even made racist and other derogatory statements to attempt to appeal to right wingers and to try to seem superior to others. Said Orbán, "The horrors of Nazism and communism happened because some Western states in continental Europe abandoned their Christian values", and "We do not want to become peoples of mixed race".

Orbán has even accused the EU of "sabotage" and attempting to unseat him because the EU threatened to cut funding to Hungary for Hungary's violation of European law. Orbán signed a law into effect that criminalized activists and lawyers that attempted to help or did help immigrants trying to get into Hungary. Orbán went as far to claim "The whole process, from the point of view of the unity and the future of Europe, is the most brutal sabotage. This is what shatters the EU", which is ironic considering that Orbán has installed numerous anti democratic laws himself.

Throughout the EU, individuals have used the COVID pandemic for their own gain. A Transparency International survey revealed that 29% of EU residents used personal connections to gain access to better medical care and that 6% of residents used bribery to receive medical care. This is a serious problem on multiple fronts. Firstly, it reveals a normalization of corruption, as many see it acceptable to give or receive bribes or preferential treatment of personal connections. Secondly, it reveals underlying problems in COVID response, as many saw it necessary to turn to corrupt means of accessing care.

What actions, if any, should the European Union take against Orbán? Is his rule unconstitutional, or just morally questionable? What actions should the EU take against those who indulge in corruption? How should the EU tackle the underlying causes of corruption? What steps should be taken to prevent corruption during future crisis events?

General Guiding Questions:

How can we determine corruption?

What, if any, punishments should corrupted officials or corporations face?

Is there a specific type of corruption we should focus on?

Should we focus on corruption in a certain area of government?

What are potential solutions to a corrupted government?

How can we preemptively work to prevent corruption in the future?

How can we prevent corruption from happening?

Sources and Bibliography:

We recommend that you use these sources to research our topics and the EU in general and that you do additional research on each topic. We *strongly* recommend doing thorough research on your country, its policy, and its allies, in order to accurately represent your position.

General:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union

https://european-union.europa.eu/index_en

Topic 1:

<https://freedomhouse.org/issues/democracies-decline>

<https://freedomhouse.org/explore-the-map?type=fiw&year=2022>

<https://carnegieeurope.eu/2018/07/24/nature-of-democratic-backsliding-in-europe-pub-76868>

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/european_government/eu_law/character_of_fundamental_rights.html

https://ec.europa.eu/info/aid-development-cooperation-fundamental-rights/your-rights-eu/eu-charter-fundamental-rights_en

Topic 2:

<https://www.transparency.org/en/news/gcb-eu-2021-survey-people-worry-corruption-unchecked-impunity-business-politics>

<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/43239/queer-hungarians-in-berlin-we-can-finally-hold-hands-in-public>

<https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-pandemic-worsened-corruption-in-eu-survey/a-57895128>

<https://www.dw.com/en/hungarys-orban-urges-us-conservatives-to-take-back-institutions/a-62717379>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-59748173>

History and Background Information

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/corruption>

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/uncac.html>

<https://theconversation.com/lessons-from-the-massive-siemens-corruption-scandal-one-decade-later-108694>

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2021/August/unodc-and-siemens-ag-strengthen-partnership-for-business-integrity.html>

<https://euaci.eu/what-we-do/components/>

<https://euaci.eu/who-we-are/about-programme>