

MEP BSR PARTICIPANT GUIDE

Created by MEP alumni

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What is MEP?

Explaining MEP to someone who hasn't experienced it before is hard, but on this page we aim to tell you as much as relevant. MEP stands for Model European Parliament, which is a programme for youth in the EU member states, (and other countries) as well as the candidate- and applicant countries to the European Union.

In MEP, you simulate the European Parliament for up to a week. The aim is to teach high school students about European cooperation to teach them how the EU works and what it does, as well as informing about the main issues in Europe. The programme is one of the first big steps into political awareness and understanding of all the different cultures in Europe.

During the sessions, participants take part in different events. The most important ones are the cultural events, discussion forums and meetings. By following the programme, MEP can be a training ground for the leaders and politicians of the future, as well as a challenge for the most talented scholars in Europe.

The sessions in the different countries take place on different scales: from a single school only to giant multinational sessions. MEP itself is organised in four Euroregional sections (MEP Baltic Sea Region, MEP Central and South Eastern European Region, MEP Mediterranean Region and the MEP Western European Region), which all have their own sessions.

We hope this gives you an understanding of what MEP does and its purpose. If you still want to know more, you can visit MEP Europe's website mepeurope.eu and mepbsr.org

The different roles in MEP, and what is expected of them

DELEGATE: A delegate is taking on the role of a Member of the European Parliament. As a delegate you are a member of your national delegation as well as a committee. Together with delegates from other countries you make up a committee. In committee sessions, you and your committee will work out a resolution, a set of proposals (operative clauses or OC's), to solve a specific issue provided beforehand. In this work you should represent your own political opinions, and not the official stand of the country that you represent. On the last day(s) of the session, all delegates attend the General Assembly. The resolution of your committee will be debated in the general assembly, and you should be able to defend it, as other

delegates will try to challenge it. As a result of this, delegates are obliged to be well prepared and well-read on the issue of their committee

DELEGATION: All members of the delegation are allocated to work in different committees. All delegates from one country/region will meet for a delegation meeting at the day after the committee sessions. There the delegations will discuss the resolutions, worked out by the committees. During the General Assembly all members of a delegation sit together.

HEAD OF DELEGATION: Each delegation appoints a head of delegation. The head of delegation introduces his/her delegation at the Opening Ceremony (2 minute speech at the international MEP and 3 minutes in the regional MEPs). The speech should in no way attack or offend other countries or delegates but rather present your own country. This presentation/speech should be prepared in advance. The head of delegation also collects and announces the votes of his/her delegation during the General Assembly. The head of delegation participates as a normal member in committee work.

COMMITTEE PRESIDENT

The Committee President is responsible for:

- setting the agenda for committee discussions
- opening and closing each meeting
- organizing the debate in an orderly fashion (respecting parliamentary procedure, deciding on the length and number of times each delegate may speak on a certain subject.)

The committee presidents can stimulate the debate but are not allowed to voice their opinion. They do not have the right to vote during the committee meeting on the proposed text of the resolution.

VICE/CO-COMMITTEE PRESIDENT

The Vice-Committee President is responsible for:

- typing the resolution during the discussion and highlighting proposed changes
- ensuring that the resolutions are corrected on time and included in the resolution booklet for the General Assembly
- taking care of the 'floor frequency chart', noting how much each delegate is speaking and the quality of contributions

The CP and Vice-Cp should occasionally swap roles so that the Vice-Committee President can obtain experience for future MEP sessions.

PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: The Presidents are in charge of the general assembly. This means that they decide on who gets to speak, but also pick amendments, and decides on textual changes.

Addressing the Presidency, CPs and other delegates

Address the CP (Committee President) with Madame President or Mister President. If you want to speak, you have to raise your placard and wait until your CP allows you to speak. Remember that in the GA, only one placard can be raised per delegation. After you are given the right to speak you have to address the CP first, by saying "*Thank you for the floor, Madame/Mister President.*"

When debating in committee meetings, be very respectful towards other delegates. This means referring to them by their titles, such as "the delegate of Austria".

Dos and Don'ts

- Do always stay professional.
- Don't attack anyone on a personal level.
- Don't raise your placard while someone is speaking.
- Don't be disrespectful towards previous arguments.
- Do speak in a nice tone.

Preparation for an MEP session

In order to be well prepared for an MEP session, delegates should read the question given to them by their Committee President (CP). A good delegate should think about the different issues connected to the question, and read all available links. The delegate should consider different solutions to the issue and how to implement them. The delegate is also highly recommended to do research by themselves. A good tip is to do research on the official EU website and on the websites of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations). The EU usually creates yearly summarizations on various topics which may be relevant to the question you have been given.

The delegate should also have an overview of the general legislation regarding their issue in order to get a broader understanding of the topic and potential legal restraints. DO NOT MAKE YOUR OWN RESOLUTION WHILE PREPARING. Delegates should have clear ideas about what their committees' resolutions may look like, but the resolution is written together by the committee.

What is a Resolution?

A resolution could be described as the solution to the problem at hand. The idea of a resolution is to first introduce the problems, in what is called an “Introductory Clause” (IC), and then find the solutions to that problem in what is called an “Operative Clause” (OC).

For each IC (problem), you are expected to have at least one OC (solution).

The two clauses have to be written in a specific way, and so there are only a select few words which are recognized for use in starting an IC or OC. These phrases can be found further down in the handbook.

It is important that the committees use the structure below in the drafts of the resolutions. You can find an example for the structure of a resolution here:

Template resolution

The Committee on [name of the committee] submits the following resolution to the Model European Parliament [name of the place that session is held in]

Resolution about the question of **[question/issue]**

- A. **[ICs here; starting with a capital letter]**
 - B.
 - C.
-
- 1. **[OCs here; starting with a number]**
 - 2.
 - 3. **[Last OC ends with a punctuation mark “.”]**

Example of a Resolution

The Political Committee submits the following resolution to the Model European Parliament.

Resolution about the effects of the Gulf War on European cooperation.

The Model European Parliament

- A. Recognizing the need for the European Community and its individual member states to review their policies as a result of the Gulf War,
 - B. Deeply regretting the use of force and all casualties, especially civilian casualties, caused by the Gulf Crisis,
 - C. Alarmed by the fact that much of the Iraqi arsenal was supplied by Western nations, especially by EC member states,
 - D. Concerned that the EC's attempt at a peaceful solution of the conflict contradicted declared NATO policy in fulfilling the UN resolutions,
 - E. Fully recognizing the damage inflicted by the war effort on the infrastructure and the environment of the Gulf region,
-
- 1. Affirms that the consequences of the Gulf Crisis commit all member states to upholding international laws and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, both inside and outside the EC;
 - 2. Calls for the creation of a common and coordinated European Defence Policy;
 - 3. Resolves accordingly to establish a permanent common European Defense Council (EDC), which is to be constituted equally of representatives of all the EC member states and which will be accountable to the Council of Foreign Ministers;
 - 4. Recommends that the European Defense Council coordinate individual European armies with the prospect of creating a common European Security System, including the possibility of a European Defence force;
 - 5. Insists that member states of the EC are not bound to follow or participate in the military consequences of decisions of individual EDC countries;
 - 6. Argues however that member states (particularly neutral ones such as Switzerland) disagreeing with declared EC decisions in this area of policy must remain neutral and under no circumstances actively oppose the policy;
 - 7. Instructs the President to forward the resolution to the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council of Ministers.

IC and OC Phrases

What is an IC?

An IC is a problem connected to the main issue of the committee. An IC must start with specific words, and present an issue which is solved later in the resolution.

Example:

- A. Recognising the fact that the majority of consumers prefer cheap fossil fuels over more expensive environmentally friendly options,

What is an OC?

An OC is a solution to the problems which the ICs present. Every IC needs at least one OC to solve the IC.

Example:

1. Requests to ban the production of new fossil fuel road vehicles by 2040;

ICs

Every IC must start with one of the following phrases:

Affirming	Noting with deep concern
Guided by	Deeply disturbed
Alarmed by	Noting further
Having adopted	Deeply regretting
Approving	Noting with approval
Having considered	Desiring
Aware of	Observing
Having considered further	Emphasizing
Believing	Realizing
Having devoted attention	Expecting
Bearing in mind	Reaffirming
Having examined	Expressing its appreciation
Confident	Recalling
Having studied	Expressing its satisfaction
Contemplating	Recognizing
Having heard	Fulfilling
Convinced	Referring
Having received	Fully aware
Declaring	Seeking

Keeping in mind	Fully alarmed
Deeply concerned	Taking into account
Noting with regret	Fully believing
Deeply conscious	Taking into consideration
Noting with satisfaction	Further deplored
Deeply convinced	Taking note
Viewing with appreciation	Further recalling
Welcoming	

OCs

Every OC must begin with one of the following phrases:

Accepts	Recommends
Further proclaims	Declares accordingly
Affirms	Reminds
Further reminds	Deplores
Approves	Regrets
Further recommends	Draws the attention
Authorizes	Requests
Further resolves	Designates
Calls	Solemnly affirms
Further requests	Emphasizes
Calls upon	Strongly condemns
Have resolved	Encourages
Condemns	Supports
Notes	Endorses
Congratulates	Trusts
Proclaims	Expresses its appreciation
Confirms	Takes note of
Reaffirms	Expresses its hope
Considers	Transmits
Further invites	Urges

Procedure of the General Assembly

1. The Presidency calls for the members of the first committee to present their resolution to the general assembly. (The committee is usually seated in front of the GA).

2. Textual Changes: The Presidency announces any proposed textual changes that they have accepted as being purely grammatical. This be spelling mistakes or unclear phrasing. The textual changes **cannot** and will not be accepted, if they change the impact, the meaning or anything else of a substantial nature in the understanding of the operative clause. No further discussion or vote will follow.
3. Reading of the operative clauses: One priorly appointed committee member will read out the Operational Clauses (OCs) loud and clear as they are written in the resolution accepted by the correction panel. The committee member should read the OC's without any personal additions or remarks, but including the textual changes as announced by the presidency.
4. Answering of factual questions:
Questions are asked by members of the general assembly upon permission given by the presidency. The committee will then be expected to answer these questions in order to clear up any misconceptions.
Only definitional questions is allowed at this point. The Presidency will refuse questions that they consider to be argumentative. No further discussion will follow.
5. Amendment: Before the GA the Presidency has chosen an amendment proposed by the general assembly. Amendments will usually be chosen based on the amount of signatures it managed to gain during the lobbying session. The Presidency reads out the proposed amendment and invites the proposer to the stand.
 - a. The proposer now has the opportunity to defend his/her proposal.
 - b. The GA and members of the Committee have the possibility to ask open questions (open debate). The Presidency limits the number of questions.
 - c. A delegate from the Committee (chosen in advance) will address the GA about the amendment. Here he/she can - on behalf of the Committee - support or reject the proposed amendment.
 - d. The amendment is voted upon. Abstentions are not allowed.
6. Opening speech from the Committee on the resolution: A delegate from the Committee (chosen in advance) will address the GA with the opening speech on this resolution.
7. Open Debate: The Presidency moderates the open debate on the resolution. The GA has now the possibility to ask open questions and discuss about the resolution. The members of the Committee have to answer the questions/ the critisism in order to defend their resolution.

- a. **Proposal to delete an entire OC:** After the open debate a delegate from the GA has the possibility to deliver a spontaneous speech, in which he/she proposes to delete an entire controversial OC; no changes are allowed. The OC:
 - i. must have been discussed in the open debate
 - ii. and the Discussion on this OC was indeed controversial. The Presidency sees to it that these conditions are fulfilled and if not rejects the proposition as ungrounded.
 - b. A priorly chosen delegate from the Committee will speech on the proposal to delete the OC. Here he/she can - on behalf of the Committee - support or reject the proposal.
 - c. In order to save time, this voting is by raising hands in favour or against. Here the voting can only be in favour or against, no abstention. If this procedure is not clear, the usual voting procedure per delegation will decide.
8. Speech against: A delegate from the GA has the possibility to deliver a speech against the entire resolution.
9. Speech in favour: A priorly chosen delegate from the Committee will give a speech to refute the speech against.
10. Voting procedure
- a. Voting per delegation on the entire resolution: Every delegation consults its members for a minute. The Head of Delegation announces the votes in this exact order: in favour / against / abstentions to avoid misunderstandings: zero, one, two, etc. At international MEPs a distinction is made between the votes of the member states, the candidate member states and the guest delegations/observing delegations.
 - b. Parallel to the voting of the delegations the Committee and the combined Committee Presidents vote as well. The votes of the Committee Presidents are not included in the result. Their votes are announced as: with the approval/disapproval. The Presidency will abstain from voting.
11. Declaration of the voting by the Presidency. When the Resolution passes, applause is allowed; if the resolution doesn't pass, it is not and neither are comments in order to keep the respect for the Committee. A resolution passes when there are more votes in favour than against; abstentions do not count as votes against.
- a. Note: All the voting procedures can be performed by means of electronic voting. If the venue of the GA is fitted with this equipment after which the results show on the board.

Speeches in the General Assembly

In MEP the delegates have a lot of possibilities to express their thoughts in the debate. As well as this, a lot of speeches will be held with which they can profile themselves. These speeches will be presented here in chronological order as they appear in the debates, defined and their importance explained, so that everyone knows what to expect.

Reading the OCs of the Resolution (Member of the Committee)

A member from the Committee goes to the podium and reads out the OCs of the resolution. While included here, one would not necessarily call this a speech.

- Remark: Personal additions or comments to the Resolution are not allowed. Redactional changes can be done by the presidency, but they are presented at the very start of this Resolution at the GA.

Amendment speech (delegate from GA) (2 Minutes)

In this speech the delegate from the GA explains his/her motives for his/her wish to change an OC. This could include additions (= to change an OC by adding something or deleting the OC partially) or strikes (= deleting the OC completely). He/she has handed in the amendment form with the Presidency in advance.

- Remark: The delegate has to be prepared to stand in front of the entire GA, because he/she has to deliver a speech, and he/she needs to answer questions from the Committee and the GA. A well-prepared amendment speech is an incredible enrichment to any debate and is one of the best possibilities to influence constructively on an already finished resolution.

Speech reacting to an Amendment (Member of the Committee) (2 Minutes)

With this speech the member of the Committee reacts directly to an Amendment. This member can react on behalf of the Committee in favour or against the amendment. He/she must improvise a majority of his/her speech, as he/she couldn't predict the coming or the content of the amendment. He/she should therefore know all the OCs very well.

- Remark: This member of the Committee should have a view on how the Committee would „vote“ on the amendment before going to the microphone to present his/her speech. As this could be a strategically very important decision for the further debate on the resolution, he/she shouldn't make a decision on his/her own accord.

Opening Speech (Member of the Committee) (2 Minutes)

This speech in favour of the resolution is made by a member of the Committee in the beginning of the Open Debate on the resolution. It stresses the importance of the issue in the Resolution by underlining what makes the resolution such a good solution to the problem. Therefore it is necessary not to rush through OCs, but the entire resolution must be emphasized.

- Remark: Advantage of the opening speech is that it can be written before the GA.

Speech against the Resolution (Delegate from the GA) (3 Minutes)

Any delegate can write a speech against any resolution. The speech against the resolution points at the resolutions faults. It can pinpoint one or several OCs.

Criticism must not refer to the ICs or the Issue.

- Remark: With this speech the delegate makes him/herself a self appointed speaker for the opposition against the resolution. It is a great opportunity to show how well one can argue. In this speech mutual respect and a well mannered attitude is expected. Personal and verbal attacks on the Committee or delegates are not accepted.

Speech in favour of the resolution (also known as Closing Speech) (Member of the Committee) (3 Minutes)

The speech in favour of the resolution is the last speech to be held in the GA for each resolution. When the speech is finished the GA will move straight to voting, no further comments from the Assembly are allowed. This speech functions as both a reaction to the speech against the resolution, as well as taking into consideration what has been discussed during the GA. Because of this, the speech will be mostly improvised. The speech in favour is arguably the most important speech due to its ability to shift the view of the GA.

- Remark: If you are not confident as to how the structure of this speech could be, you could take into account the format used by the previous speakers.

The assignment of the speeches should always run in the same order:

1. Speech in favour of the resolution
2. Speech in reaction to an amendment for a change
3. Opening Speech
4. Reading of the OCs

This order shows in decreasing order the importance and the difficulty of the speeches.

Timeline

1. Preparation at Home
2. Opening Ceremony
3. Committee Meetings

- a. Brainstorming about issues regarding the topic
 - b. Creating Introductory Clauses (ICs)
 - c. Brainstorming about solving the ICs
 - d. Creating Operative clauses (OCs)
 - e. Voting on the resolution
 - f. Selecting speech-holders
4. Delegation Meetings
- a. Discussing every resolution
5. Lobbying
6. General Assembly
- a. Textual changes
 - b. Reading the OCs
 - c. Opening speech
 - d. Informative questions
 - e. Amendment (Speech in favour and against, voting)
 - f. Open debate
 - g. Erase an OC (speech in favour and against, voting)
 - h. Speech against
 - i. Closing speech
 - j. Voting
7. Closing ceremony

How to debate

Essential phrases to be used by delegates:

Beginning

I would like to begin by...

To begin with...

At the outset...

I would like to make a few remarks concerning...

Introducing a new point

I would like to comment on the point of...

I would now like to draw your attention to...

I would now like to turn briefly to the problem/question of...

The next issue I would like to focus on is...

Turning to...

I would like to mention briefly that...

Ordering

First of all, we must bear in mind...

There are a few points which should/must be borne in mind.

Firstly, ... Secondly, ... Thirdly, ...

First, ... Second, ..., Third, ...

In addition to that...

Additionally...

I might add that...

I'd like to add something here, if I may?

I'd just like to point out that...

Before we go any further, may I point out that...

If I could just say a word about...?

Furthermore...

Moreover...

As well as..., there is also...

Not only..., but also...

Giving an example

Let me give an example...

To give/name an example...

A case in point is...

To illustrate this point, let us...

Balancing

On the one hand..., but on the other hand...

Although..., we mustn't forget...

Whereas..., we have to remember...

Despite/In spite of..., I still think/believe...

Despite the fact that..., I...

Generalising

On the whole...

Generally speaking...

By and large...

All in all

Stating preferences

I'd rather..., than...

I (would) prefer to...

I tend to favour...as opposed to...

...has an advantage over... in that...

The main/principal advantage of... is that...

Agreeing

I (completely) agree.

I agree entirely with your point of view.

I'm of exactly the same opinion.

I think we are in agreement on that.

I'm fully in favour of...

This proposal has my full support.

I entirely approve of...

I think I can/could accept your position on that.

I see no objection to that.

Partial agreement

I would tend to agree with you on that, but seen from another angle...

I agree in principle/on the whole, but it could/should/must be said that...

By and large I accept your views, but if we look at it in another light...

Although I agree with most of what you have said,...

I agree to a certain extent/up to a point, but...

You have a point there, but...I see/take your point, honourable delegate, but have you considered...?

Disagreement

I'm afraid,/With all due respect, I completely/totally disagree with you.

Frankly,/To be quite frank,/ To put it bluntly,/ With respect, I don't agree at all.

I disagree entirely.

What you are saying is just not feasible.

Under no circumstances could I agree to that.

I can't help feeling that...

I'm not totally convinced by your argument.

Proposing

I (strongly) recommend/propose/suggest that...

My proposal/suggestion is/would be that...

I advise you (most strongly) to...

In my opinion/view, the only viable solution is...

I just wonder if we shouldn't think about...

Actually, to my mind/ in my opinion...

Misunderstandings

I'm afraid there seems to have been a slight misunderstanding.

Perhaps I should make that clearer by saying...

Perhaps I haven't made myself clear.

Basically, what I'm trying to say is...

With all due respect, that is not what I said/ that isn't quite what I meant.

Asking for more information

Could you/the honourable delegate from... (please) be a little more specific/precise?

I'm sorry, but could you/the honourable delegate from... (please) explain in a little more detail?

Could you give us some details about...?

Would you care to elaborate/expand on that?

I'm afraid I'm not quite clear what you mean by that.

I'm (terribly) sorry, I didn't quite follow what you were saying about...

Would I be correct in saying that...?

Correct me If I'm wrong, but...

If I understood the honourable delegate form... correctly, he/she was saying that...

Am I correct in assuming that...?

I'm sorry, but when you say..., do you mean that...?

So, basically, what the honourable delegate was saying is...

Making time

That's a highly/very interesting/complex question/topic and...

I'm afraid I'm not in a position to comment on that just yet, but we were actually talking about...

I think we can leave the problem of...aside for a moment, the real issue/problem is...

I don't think we have enough time to consider all aspects of this broad/complex problem.

Summarising

In short...

To sum up there seems to be...

If I could just sum up the discussion...

To summarise, I think we are in agreement on...

Briefly, the main points (that have been made) are...

Concluding

Let me conclude by saying...

I'd like to conclude by saying/stating that...

Allow me to conclude by highlighting (the fact) that...

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that...

How to give a speech

There is no recipe how to give a good speech but there are a few tips you should keep in mind:

Structure:

1. The introduction needs to be catchy and thereby draw attention to the speech
2. In the beginning it's important to clarify the intention and focus of the speech as well as the arguing in favour of the intention, and take up counter arguments.
3. Give proposals for solving the thesis and by that be constructive.
4. Explain the consequences if the receivers will or won't do as the sender asks.
5. Encourage the receivers to take action as the sender requests.
6. End with your main message (Most of the time that the delegates should vote or shouldn't vote for an resolution ect.)

Language and presentation:

1.
Stay professional
2. Use stylistic devices like
 - a. Rhetorical questions
 - b. Building up to a Climax

3. Emphasise important words or points
4. Speak clearly and not too fast so the receiver can follow you
5. Pauses can help underlining the message of the speech.
6. Remember to look towards the audience from time to time, and try to stay independent from your manuscript
7. Use Body Language to reach out to the audience
8. Ensure that you stay within the time limit, as the presidency are allowed to end your speech after the set time limit.

Speech Preparation

- Prepare the opening speech fully
- Prepare the Closing speech and amendment speeches on the forehand, and during the GA
 - Forehand:
 - Beginning and ending
 - Important solutions
 - Responses to things heard at lobbying
 - During GA
 - Follow the debate
 - Think about responses to the criticism from the General Assembly
- Know it by heart

Dress code

Women

When not in the GA, wear smart casual:

- Tops, blouses or button down shirts (non-transparent)
- Sweaters, cardigans etc.
- Dress or tailored trousers
- Dresses or skirts (knee-length or longer)
- Tights
- Smart footwear

Men

When not in the GA, wear smart casual:

- Sweaters, cardigans, turtlenecks, polos etc.
- Button down shirts
- Straight or chino trousers
- Smart footwear

When in GA, dress formal:

- Suit
- Smart dress
- Combined suit (eg. skirt and a blazer)
- Dress shoes or smart boots

When in GA, dress formal:

- Suit (2 or 3 pieces)
- Dress shoes or smart boots

Don't wear

- Leather or denim jackets
- Jeans
- Sneakers

Dictionary (abbreviations)

- GA = General assembly
- CP = Committee President
- VCP = Vice Committee President
- IC = Introductory Clauses
- OC = Operative Clauses