



University of
Pittsburgh

European Studies Center
University Center for International Studies

Guidelines for Model EU Position Papers

Each delegation may submit a position paper that addresses the agenda to europeanstudies@pitt.edu. Papers (in Microsoft Word .doc or .docx format) must be received by **Friday, October 30, 2026** in order to be considered for awards.

Position papers should be written from the perspective of the member nation you represent. Papers in both paragraph form as well as detailed outlines will be accepted. The use of statistics, quotes, or dates are strongly recommended as these help to bolster your position. You are not required to include a works cited page with your position papers; however, you may want to include citations to aid in your own research and preparation for the day of the simulation.

Suggested Outline:

- I. Introduction:
 - A brief overview of the background or history of the issues
 - Importance/relevance of the issues to the EU
- II. Proposal/Agenda Topic #1
 - Application:
 - Why is this issue important to your country? Or why not?
 - How is your country affected by this issue?
 - Resolution: (i.e., Your nation's approval/disapproval of the proposal)
 - What elements of the Commission's proposal does your nation support?
 - What elements of the Commission's proposal does your nation not support?
 - Optional: What concessions does your country need from other member nations to make a resolution? What concessions is your country willing to make in order to come to a resolution?
- III. Proposal/Agenda Topic #2
 - Repeat the "Application" and "Resolution" sections for each proposal/agenda topic.
- IV. Conclusion/Closing Remarks

Format:

- Heading:
 - Your Name(s)
 - Your Country
 - Your School
- Please save your position paper with the following file naming convention: Country_School.
- The length of the paper should be two pages (single-spaced, 11 or 12 pt. font).
- Both agenda items should be addressed in **one document**.
- Please **DO NOT save the document as a PDF** as student names and school names are removed for judging. Please submit as a Microsoft Word document (.doc or .docx).

SAMPLES

***Please note that the sample position papers below are from previous years.**

Sample Position Paper #1 - Belgium

I. Introduction

On the behalf of the sovereign Kingdom of Belgium, the Prime Ministry thanks this international diplomatic body for its continuing commitment to promoting the ideals of democracy, cooperation, and stability through its member states, Europe, and indeed the entire world. It is through these shared values that this body has encountered many challenges like those presented on the agenda today, and emerged successful. Belgium is grateful that the member countries here today will consider its proposals on the issues of the Migrant Crisis, the Rise of Daesh and Foreign Fighters, and the Russia-Ukraine Crisis, and hopes that a much-needed solution to these pressing issues may be reached.

II. Migrant Crisis

As one of the most significant policy challenges Europe has faced in recent years, the migrant crisis has forced many countries to reevaluate their policies towards migrants and consider adjustments to EU law. There are myriad issues which have spurred this crisis, including but not limited to the Syrian Arab Spring and its consequential civil war, the rise of Daesh, or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), in the Middle East, the separatist turmoil in Ukraine, and regional conflicts in northern Africa and the Sahel region. This multitude of conflicts has led to an unprecedented level of migration from the various regions to Europe; especially countries represented in the EU. In fact, over 750,000 migrants have attempted to gain asylum in Europe in 2015, and over 1.1 million people have been displaced in Ukraine. This influx has led to complications over whether European countries are obligated to provide costly shelter and provisions to these migrants, nearly 3,000 of which have lost their lives attempting to travel to Europe, and those who survive often having nothing to return to. The dispute stems from how much refugees will benefit EU countries versus the costs they will and already have incurred.

Belgium, though admittedly one of the smaller countries in this body, still has been affected by the migrant influx in ways similar to its larger counterparts. As International Policy Digest reports, the number of asylum applicants in Belgium for 2015 is expected to be 30% greater than 2014. Additionally, in accordance with the new quota outlines put forth by the European Commission, Belgium is required to take in 4,600 migrants from September through the end of the year. Clearly, the crisis plays an important role in Belgium. However, although the Belgian government recognizes and has actively supported citizens' calls for accepting migrants and offering them various provisions, it also cannot ignore the potential risks involved. Accepting migrants, who are generally harmless, still has the potential to lead to infiltration of terrorists, as exhibited in the recent attacks on Paris by Belgian citizens. Also, Belgium struggles to support migrants. As much as 1,000 migrants are living in a makeshift camp in downtown Brussels as the Foreigners Office attempts in vain to process their piles of financial aid and asylum requests, while housing and protection organizations lack funds to keep facilities running. Also, attempts to enable private actors to provide aid to governmental programs have hit numerous setbacks. All the while, several other members of the Schengen zone are not accepting a reasonable number of migrants in proportion to their size, including Slovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria.

Therefore, Belgium supports more robust border protection in order to decrease complications in the registry of asylum seekers who may not have legally entered. Also, it will comply with current EU quotas for acceptance of migrants, but opposes any substantial increases. Most importantly, it will oppose any increase if other Schengen zone countries such as Slovakia, Hungary, or Bulgaria do not comply with quotas that are reasonably proportional to their respective populations. As the Prime Ministry has stated, "For some countries there was a desire [to show] solidarity [only] when it suits them."

III. Russia-Ukraine Crisis

Also one of the most significant challenges facing Europe today is the Russia-Ukraine Crisis. Beginning with Ukraine's lack of strong political institutions, and building up to a failure of corrupt president Yushchenko to sign a trade agreement with the EU due to Russian pressure, and his subsequent ouster, the Ukraine crisis is a tale of civil war between the pro-EU forces who currently have control of the government and a pro-Russia sect which has seized control of Crimea and eastern Ukraine. Meanwhile, Russia has by most reliable accounts supplied the separatists with most of their weapons and has annexed the Crimea region, to the condemnation of the EU and the vast majority of the western world. In addition to its condemnation, the EU has brokered a fragile ceasefire between the forces and has levied substantial sanctions against Russia with the intent to discourage further intrusion. Nevertheless, Russia maintains a concerning level of aggression in the region, and calls for increased sanctions persist.

Belgium certainly has a personal stake in this issue. For instance, it of course recognizes that Russia's actions are in direct violation of the terms of the Minsk Agreement, and condemns these illegal actions and the turmoil that has displaced millions, increased regional instability, and even led to the shooting down of a civilian airliner with 298 casualties. Russia's actions are uncomfortably reminiscent of Nazi Germany's violation of an agreement to respect Belgium's neutrality in WWII. However, Belgium would also like to place emphasis on the fact that Russia remains a vital economic and energy partner for Belgium and Europe as a whole, producing 8% of Belgium's natural gas and many manufactured products for European consumption. So, either way, Belgium is affected by sanction policies.

Overall, Belgium continues to condemn Russian hostilities and illegal support of separatists in Ukraine. It will support additional sanctions if Russia grows its incursions into Ukraine, or if Russia attempts to unfairly tamper with natural gas prices. However, as Belgium also respects Russia's economic importance to Europe, the Prime Ministry encourages continued attempts to mitigate between the parties and reach a peaceful diplomatic solution that respects international law.

IV: The Rise of Daesh (ISIL) and Foreign Fighters

As perhaps one of the most important issues in the modern era, ISIL has had a dramatic and horrifying effect on modern society, and has impacted many of the European citizens this body represents on a deeply personal level. The Islamic fundamentalist terror group rose when instability in Iraq along with a surge in the ideals of radical fundamentalism swept through some countries in the Arab region. It gained an even greater following when it expanded into Syria to oppose the Assad regime along with other rebels and potentially seize power if his government collapsed. Today, it continues to gain support from pockets of fundamentalists in North Africa and even in many westernized cities across the globe. Its most recent activities include the bombings in Beirut and massive coordinated attacks in Paris that left hundreds dead. The EU, naturally, has expressed its absolute disgust with ISIL's policies and many of its countries have joined in military attacks against ISIL. The EU also has proposed reforms to security measures in order to both prevent attacks and to prevent Europeans from joining ISIL, which has unfortunately occurred on a wide scale.

Of all the issues on today's agenda, ISIL perhaps most substantially impacts Belgium. Of the numerous people involved in the recent tragic terror attacks in Paris, 9 were from Belgium, including the attacks' mastermind Abdelhamid Abaaoud. In response, Belgian security forces have launched raids across the country to detain and prosecute suspected radical jihadists, and has shut down mosques which are known to teach such radicalism. In addition, due to the unfortunate reality that Belgium represents the highest number of citizens per capita in Europe who leave to join ISIL, Belgium has enacted policies to immediately jail returning jihadists, exchange intelligence info with the UK, and carefully examine passports at critical entryways into the country. Also, Belgium has committed to militarily supporting its ally France in the fight against ISIL by supplying an escort to its carrier Charles de Gaulle.

In sum, Belgium will support any and all policies directed towards curbing the expansion of ISIL's sickening and reckless violence, and will continue to cooperate with nations which feel likewise. Additionally, it

supports efforts to more carefully regulate passports and borders in the Schengen area to prevent future terrorism catastrophes, including an airline passenger database which France has proposed.

V: Conclusion

Belgium reiterates its gratitude to the nations within this diplomatic body for carefully considering its positions on these critical issues, and hopes to continue to cooperate on policies which advance the democratic ideals that the EU is founded on.

Sample Position Paper #2 - Netherlands

Migration Crisis

The Syrian Civil War has displaced 7.6 million people, resulting in the largest movement of refugees since the end of World War II. The UNHCR has registered 4.2 million Syrian refugees, about 680,000 of whom have applied for asylum in Europe.¹ With no end to the conflict in sight, refugees have given up hope of returning home and are seeking asylum in countries beyond those bordering Syria. Neighboring countries such as Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Turkey have accepted the vast majority of the Syrian refugees, severely straining their ability to provide refugees with adequate care. As these countries tighten their borders, refugees will increasingly turn to Europe for greater economic and educational opportunities. The European Union must grant legal asylum seekers the better conditions they have sought in Europe but also accept the reality that accepting more refugees is only a temporary fix.

The Netherlands has accepted a disproportionately large amount of Syrian refugees for its size. In 2014, of the 625,920 asylum applicants in Europe, 24,495 refugees, applied for asylum in the Netherlands.² Despite accepting more refugees than proposed by the quotas, the Netherlands has agreed to accept even more refugees under the European Union's new plans. In addition, the Netherlands has pledged 15 million Euros, the largest contribution to the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, designed to combat irregular migration and internal displacement.³ Other member nations must also uphold their responsibility for accepting migrants and assist EU nations that receive the most refugees.

Refugee camps in safe zones in Syria and neighboring countries should be adequately funded to care for refugees until they can return to their homes. These refugee camps must provide proper healthcare and education that encourages moderate Islam. The EU must begin addressing the challenge of mass migration at its source and outside European borders. In addition to seeking solutions outside of the EU, the EU must effectively implement the policies already in place. Article 21 of Schengen Border Code allows national police forces to perform spot checks as long as they are not systematic.⁴ The Netherlands currently conducts random spot checks to stop human smuggling and identity fraud. EU member nations must exercise every right they have under current law to secure their borders. The Dublin Regulation also must be enforced, but EU member

¹ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

² http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report

³ <http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/11/12/netherlands-largest-contributor-to-europes-africa-fund/>

⁴ <http://leidenlawblog.nl/articles/the-dutch-response-to-the-refugee-crisis>

states should be required to provide operational support through the European Asylum Support Office to countries such as Greece who are facing large numbers of migrants. The Netherlands also supports the Family Reunification Directive and suggests improving the Directive through measures such as raising the income requirement for incoming family members and prevent migrants from regularly bringing in new family members. Raising the income requirement will ensure that migrants' family members are economically self-sufficient, and preventing migrants from regularly bringing in new partners will close loopholes that have allowed Syrian child brides to legally enter Europe. All EU members share an interest in ensuring that migrants are economically and socially self-sufficient, but each member nation should determine its own requirements for admitting refugees. Any solution to the migrant crisis should be European when necessary but national when possible.

Salient Foreign Policy Challenges

Threat of ISIS

ISIS's dominance in the Middle East has resulted in Iraqi civilian deaths doubling from the previous years. Since ISIS launched a major offensive to take control of a primary city in Iraq, Ramadi, the average monthly civilian death toll has risen to well over 1,500 individuals.⁵ Many nations that surround Iraq have shown utmost distress as a result of the spread of ISIS. As a result of continued dominance in the Middle East, ISIS has increased the radius of their terrorist activities to Europe. Though ISIS has increased its terrorist activities to areas of Europe, efforts to contain the organization have failed. As ISIS gradually recognizes the lack of resistance, it, as a whole, will continue to spread further into Europe. The European Union needs to work collaboratively in order to find a way to diminish the threat ISIS poses.

In 2014, the Netherlands joined the fight against ISIS by sending 6 F-16 fighter jets to collaborate with the US-led coalition in Syria.⁶ The Netherlands entirely supports efforts led by the European Union against ISIS. Mark Rutte, prime minister of the Netherlands, states that, "We are dealing with an armed conflict in Syria and Iraq. ISIS is our enemy and that is why we are at war. We are not at war with a religion or Islam and that is the way it is."⁷ As stated by Rutte, an attack on France is an attack on the entire European Union, and the Netherlands will fully back all efforts made against ISIS.⁸

Ukraine-Russia

In addition to the threat of ISIS, Russia has continued to demonstrate aggression against Ukraine. Without intervention from the European Union, Russia may very well continue to extend its regime into its western, neighboring countries. Although Russia has since been embargoed by the European Union, as well as the United States,

⁵ <http://www.cnn.com/2015/01/01/world/meast/iraq-civilian-deaths/>

⁶ <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2015/06/19/dutch-participation-in-fight-against-isis-and-un-mission-in-mali-to-continue-for-a-further-year>

⁷ <http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2015/11/the-netherlands-is-at-war-with-isis-says-dutch-prime-minister/>

⁸ <http://www.businessinsider.com/the-netherlands-is-joining-the-fight-against-isis-2014-9>

recent economic complications have caused many pertinent countries in Europe, such as Germany, to request lifting the embargo from Russia. The European Union must recognize that without asserting the importance of independent nations to Russia, Ukraine may very well fall under Russia's aggressive regime.

The Netherlands, in addition to all countries attached to the European Union, has already embargoed Russia. Though these efforts have proved fruitful over the past few months, many countries in the European Union are suffering from the lack of ability to trade with Russia. In order to stop Russia's unjust aggression against Ukraine, the European Union needs to draw attention and enforce the sovereignty of independent nations worldwide. The European Union, as a whole, needs to ban visas from Russian travelers, as well as freeze all Russian assets in national banks.

Sample Position Paper #3 - Netherlands

I: BACKGROUND

On the behalf of the sovereign state of the Netherlands, the Prime Ministry would like to thank this international diplomatic body for its recognition and consideration of the Dutch positions on the crises to be addressed on the agenda: the Ukraine crisis, the rise of the terrorist group known as ISIL (or the Daesh), and the current migrant crisis.

Following political instability in Ukraine in late 2013 and early 2014, Russia made an incursion in Crimea in late February 2014. In March 2014 at a referendum hosted by the Crimea parliament, there was an almost unanimous vote to join Russia, sparking conflict that grew into a violent civil war that continues today. This caused a deep rift between Russia and the West. This issue was further compounded when a Dutch airliner was shot down in July 2014, claiming the lives of 298 passengers. EU members have imposed economic sanctions on Russia and have condemned the Ukraine attacks.

Instability in Iraq, combined with another surge of the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism, led to the creation of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in 2009. Two years later, during what is now known as the Arab Spring, there was a populist uprising against Syria's then-and-current dictator, Bashar al-Assad. ISIL began to gain a reputation (negative but to some, positive) in the fight against al-Assad. Today, ISIL has become increasingly prominent in Lebanon, Libya, and the Sinai region of Egypt as well, along with multiple pockets of support across the globe. Many Western and Middle Eastern nations have conducted airstrikes against ISIL, including the Netherlands. Other countries, including Russia and the al-Assad regime, have ordered ground troops into the ISIL caliphate to begin fighting against the terrorist group.

The aforementioned Syrian Arab Spring grew very rapidly into a civil war. This has created a large outpouring of refugees from countries like Syria, Iraq, and more. The refugees have spilled into neighboring Middle Eastern countries as well and into nations of Europe, fleeing both ISIL and the al-Assad regime. About 1.1 million refugees have fled from the civil war in Ukraine. Some 750,000 refugees have attempted to gain asylum in Europe between January and November 2015, up from 280,000 refugees in 2014. This massive influx has been correlated with another massive inflow of economic migrants, who, unlike refugees, generally intend to apply for citizenship rather than simply seek asylum. This large number of immigrants has posed complicated issues for the EU, including border security, unemployment and social pressure from a growing xenophobic sentiment among Europeans.

II: THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CRISIS

Historically, the Netherlands has generally had a positive relationship with Russia. Politically, the Netherlands has tended to be an ally of Russia. Economically, the Netherlands is a major trading partner with Russia, as \$52.1

billion worth of goods traded between the two countries in 2013. After all, corporations founded in the Netherlands or multinationals based in the Netherlands (including the oil and gas company Shell and Gasunie) have had large success in Russia because the nation invested in Gasunie's Nord Stream oil project. Still, recent actions undertaken by Russia are enough for the Netherlands to reject the recognition of Crimea as part of the Russian Federation and to condemn Russian incursions in the area. These actions include Russia's support and arming of the rebels invading Crimea. This invasion is condemned by the State of the Netherlands. The same rebels Russia supported then shot down a Dutch civilian airliner, an act that is seen as direct offense to the Dutch people. The Netherlands remains adamant in its belief, however, that total hostility is no diplomatic option for its transactions with Russia. The EU has imposed economic sanctions on Crimea; blocked the importing/exporting of goods and services between the EU and Crimea; and has restricted long-term EU involvement with major Russian energy companies, defense companies, and banks. These sanctions may be intended to harm Russia's economy, but it also sends a blow in many EU economies. Besides the Netherlands, Germany and Italy are major trading partners with Russia; Germany has traded \$46.7 billion in goods with Russia and Italy has traded \$34.3 billion in goods in 2013. Overall, Russia is the EU's third-largest trading partner. EU member states Finland, Slovakia, and Lithuania (and more) almost exclusively depend on Russia as an energy supplier. To continue the economic sanctions would not only damage the EU-Russia relationship that has allowed for prosperous trade and a reliable source of energy for many EU countries, but would also damage the EU economy, especially for Northern and Eastern Europe. The Netherlands will not recognize Crimea as a sovereign nation or provide military aid to Ukraine separatists, but will push for an end to all economic sanctions on Russia.

III: THE RISE OF ISIL

The Netherlands would like to proudly reaffirm its firm stance against ISIL. Since September 2014, the Netherlands has been a part of the U.S. led coalition against ISIL. By being a member of the coalition, the Netherlands has also maintained their condemnation of all trade with ISIL and discourages any financial donations or ransom payments to the group. To even further ensure this stance against ISIL, the Netherlands was one of the many countries to commit to the Building Partner Capacity (BPC) program in May of 2015, which intends to aid the Iraqi government in preparing forces to respond to ISIL attacks and to regain land it has lost to the militant group. It should be noted that the Netherlands is only militarily intervening in Iraq and not Syria. Even so, the Netherlands has extended its military campaign through October 2016. Four Netherlands F-16 fighter jets are being used in the airstrike campaign in Iraq and the country is aiding in the training of Iraqi soldiers, delegating roughly 450 personnel to the cause. The country will not aid in the efforts of sending ground troops into Syria because, in the words of Dutch foreign minister Bert Koenders, "This is a transformation in the Middle East, and should be done by the Middle East itself." The Netherlands believes that to send ground troops to fight ISIS in Syria would to walk directly into the traps the ISIS has set.

IV: THE MIGRANT CRISIS

The Netherlands has seen a large influx of refugees applying for asylum in the nation and is the eighth-largest center for refugees seeking asylum; between January and October 2015, there was a total of 24,355 applicants. While the Netherlands understands the gravity and the morality of the situation at hand, it also must keep its own interests in mind that would best suit its people and the refugees themselves. Firstly, the Netherlands is experiencing a rapid growth in asylum applicant numbers, which in 2015 have went up 87% from 2014. This already puts a large stress on government officials to coordinate providing an asylum for refugees. Secondly, the Netherlands is already taking in a fairly large number of refugees compared to its size; France and the UK are taking in fewer refugees, yet all three nations have much larger populations and economies than the Netherlands. Thirdly, accepting too many refugees into this nation could wreak socio-economic havoc. Other European and Middle Eastern countries, such as Turkey, Greece, Hungary, and others, have seen many xenophobic riots correlating with the massive influx of migrants. Furthermore, refugees could be subject to homelessness,

unemployment and lower safety than citizens if more migrants (refugee and economic) are allowed to enter the Netherlands. Therefore, the Netherlands would like to restrict the number of refugees and economic migrants entering the country.

V: CLOSING REMARKS

In summation, the Netherlands reiterates its gratitude for the consideration of its stances on the issues that are being addressed in this summit, and will thoughtfully consider the positions on these issues by other member states.