



جامعة جورجتاون
كلية الشؤون الدولية في قطر
Model United Nations

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1. About the European Council of Ministers (The Council of the European Union)

The Council of the European Union (sometimes just called the Council and sometimes still referred to as the Council of Ministers) is the third of the seven institutions of the European Union (EU) as listed in the Treaty on European Union. Acts which are directly relevant to the lives of EU citizens and have a considerable international impact are adopted by the Council, usually in conjunction with the European Parliament.

The Council is the EU institution where the Member States' government representatives sit, i.e. the ministers of each Member State with responsibility for a given area. The composition and frequency of Council meetings vary depending on the issues dealt with. Foreign ministers, for example, meet roughly once a month in the Foreign Affairs Council. Similarly, economics and finance ministers meet once a month in the Council which handles economic and financial affairs, called the Ecofin Council.

There are ten Council configurations, covering the whole range of EU policies. Legally speaking, the Council is a single entity, but it is in practice divided into several different council configurations.

Article 16(6) of the Treaty on European Union provides:

“The Council shall meet in different configurations, the list of which shall be adopted in accordance with Article 236 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The General Affairs Council shall ensure consistency in the work of the different Council configurations. It shall prepare and ensure the follow-up to meetings of the European Council, in liaison with the President of the European Council and the Commission.

The Foreign Affairs Council shall elaborate the Union's external action on the basis of strategic guidelines laid down by the European Council and ensure that the Union's action is consistent.”

It is important to understand what these ten different configurations are and what they each represent since each council configuration deals with a different functional area.

Below are them listed, yet in order to know what each one represents please refer to the external sources provided in the final section below for specific definitions.

COUNCIL CONFIGURATIONS:

- 1) General Affairs
- 2) Foreign Affairs
- 3) Economic and Financial Affairs
- 4) Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)

- 5) Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs
- 6) Competitiveness (internal market, industry, research and space)
- 7) Transport, Telecommunications and Energy
- 8) Agriculture and Fisheries
- 9) Environment
- 10) Education, youth, culture and sport

IMPORTANCE OF MEMBER STATES IN REGARDS TO VOTING PROCEDURE:

The EU's laws are made by the Council, together with the European Parliament. In most cases, the Council can only legislate on the basis of proposals submitted to it by the European Commission. It can ask the Commission to submit any proposals it may deem appropriate. Since the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, a million citizens may also sign a petition inviting the Commission to submit a proposal. This is the citizens' right of initiative.

In addition, a Member State may ask for confirmation that the votes in favor represent at least 62 % of the total population of the Union. If this is found not to be the case, the decision will not be adopted.

Distribution of votes for each Member State	
Germany, France, Italy, United Kingdom	29
Spain, Poland	27
Romania	14
Netherlands	13

Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Portugal	12
Austria, Bulgaria, Sweden	10
Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Slovakia	7
Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Slovenia	4
Malta	3
TOTAL	352

2. Brief Background Information on Immigration in the EU

To begin with, what does it mean to be a citizen of the European Union and what does the European Union actually consist of?

The European Union (EU) consists of 27 individual countries, which entitles all citizens to live, travel and work in the country of their choice. Citizens can freely travel, work, retire, or just vacate without any problems in any EU country. The European Union provides individuals and families with choices that other individual countries around the world cannot offer. The "Single Market" that was created in 1993 states that people, money, services, and goods can move freely

within the European Union. Currently over 450 million EU citizens are provided with these options.

Immigration is the process whereby an individual or a group of individuals abandon their home country in order to live permanently in a different place with better working conditions and quality of life compared to their home-country. This entire “process” as we have termed it has been a complicated and controversial issue for years within the EU and the entire world for that matter.

In regards to definitions, it is important to note the difference between legal and illegal immigration. Legal immigration is governed by rules determined and applied by the host state. On the contrary, illegal immigration includes immigrants crossing borders without formal procedures and remains in the host nation without being granted residency or work permits.

Let us look at the historical context in regards to the issue. During the 1950s, high economic development in a number of Western and Northern European Countries led to labor shortages and to a great reliance of foreign workers from developing and poor countries. This is where the entire immigration phenomenon began. As the years progressed, and as economic development subsided, the number of immigrants increased dramatically sparking debates amongst local citizens and the national government. However, despite this, due to family reunification as well as strong local immigrant communities, these disputes were ignored and the total number of immigrants in Europe continued to increase. Since 2000, an increase of immigrants towards Southern Europe and especially in the Mediterranean countries such as Portugal, Italy, Spain and Greece has been apparent.

Due to this evident problem of a raging increase in population, most of the members of the European Union in October 1999 agreed to develop a common immigration policy in order to manage the phenomenon of immigration towards Europe. In 2004, The Hague program was implemented which aim was to set Justice, freedom and security in the European Union between the period 2005-2010.

Although clearly a controversial issue with significant impacts on Europe, most members of the EU have realized that immigration can benefit Europe provided that a common European policy for the management of immigration is implemented.

3. Key Players: Countries, Individual Actors, Institutions.

✓ United Kingdom

In 2004 the number of people who became naturalized British citizens rose to a record 140,795 - a 12% increase from the previous year, and a dramatic increase since 2000.

Most new citizens came from Asia (40%) or Africa (32%); the largest three countries of origin were India, Pakistan and Somalia with Indians making the largest group. In 2005, an estimated 565,000 migrants arrived to live in the United Kingdom for at least a year, primarily from Asia and Africa, while 380,000 people emigrated from the country for a year or more, chiefly to Australia, Spain and the United States. Criticism in the United Kingdom is frequently targeted at the many South Asians, particularly Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Indians, who have moved there in recent decades.

✓ Sweden:

Immigration has been a major source of population growth and cultural change throughout much of the history of Sweden. The economic, social, and political aspects of immigration have caused controversy regarding ethnicity, economic benefits, jobs for non-immigrants, settlement patterns, impact on upward social mobility, crime, and voting behavior. As of 2010 however, 1.33 million people or 14.3% of the inhabitants in Sweden were foreign-born. Of these, 859,000 (9.2%) were born outside the European Union and 477,000 (5.1%) were born in another EU member state.^[2] Sweden has been transformed from a nation of net emigration ending after World War I to a nation of net immigration from World War II onwards. In 2009, immigration reached its highest level since records began with 102,280 people migrating to Sweden while the total population grew by 84,335. The largest party in Sweden that seeks to reduce immigration are the national conservative Sweden Democrats. The most frequently used arguments against Sweden's immigration policies center around the high crime and unemployment rates and tendencies to segregation among immigrants from non-western countries. The Sweden democrats argue that it is necessary for Sweden to reduce immigration in order to cope with the major integration issues that the country struggles with.

✓ France:

There were 5.3 million immigrants in 2008, corresponding to 8.5% of the total population in France (63.9 million in 2008). 42% were from Africa (30% from Maghreb and 12%

from Sub-Saharan Africa), 38% from Europe (mainly from Portugal, Italy and Spain), 14% from Asia and 5% from the Americas and Oceania.^[4] Of this total, 40% have assumed French citizenship. In addition, 1.8 million people born in foreign countries (including 1 million in Maghreb) with French citizenship at birth were not included in this total. As of 2010, Eurostat estimated that 7.2 million foreign-born immigrants lived in France corresponding to 11.1% of the total population. Of these, 5.1 million (7.8%) were born outside the European Union and 2.1 million (3.3%) were born in another EU member state. The region with the largest proportion of immigrants is the Île-de-France (Greater Paris), where 40% of immigrants live. Other important regions are Rhône-Alpes (Lyon) and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (Marseille). In France, the National Front seeks to limit immigration. Major media, political parties, and a large share of the public believe that anti-immigration sentiment has increased since the country's riots of 2005.

✓ The Hague Program

The issues contained in this program include:

- 1) Fair treatment for third countries nationals
- 2) A common European asylum system
- 3) The development of partnerships with countries of origin and or transit
- 4) An analytical approach to the management of migration flows
- 5) A European framework to contribute to immigrant's better integration to the host nation.
- 6) A policy to return illegal immigrants back to their home town.

- 7) Common visa rules and measures for foreigners to legally work in Europe.

4. Main Problems/Existing Solutions

There are a major of impacts due to this high rate of immigration that need to be noted.

Currently, the economic impacts are of highest importance. Within the European nations, we can see that immigrants are actually the significant consumers. There is an increased demand for ethnic products and development of marketing campaigns with the immigrants as the target groups. We can see that this would be a blow to the home market. Additionally, there is an increased outflow of capital from the host nation to the country of origin in the form of income remittance. Hence, the money earned within the European Union is being sent out back home. Therefore, there is less money circulating within the European Union damaging the economy. Moreover, small business's made by immigrants or they so called "ethnic entrepreneurship" have influenced European economies.

However, in addition to this economic problem, we can also see cultural impacts. This can be seen from a positive aspect as diversity is added. Changes of the European Cuisine and food consumption, yet this also means that local food is less consumed. Furthermore, there is a new tradition of sports brought in and also immigrants have influenced fashion and arts. This could be seen as competitive competition which is only healthy OR by some it is views as less opportunities given to the people of the European Union.

A simple way to understand the issue is to make two categories of push factors and pull factors.

THE PUSH FACTORS INCLUDE:

1. Unemployment
2. Lack of safety
3. Lack of services
4. Poverty
5. Crop failure
6. Drought
7. War, civil unrest
8. Hazards
9. Isolation

THE PULL FACTORS INCLUDE:

1. Potential for employment
2. A safer atmosphere
3. Better service provision
4. Greater wealth
5. Fertile land
6. Good food supplies
7. Political security
8. Less risk of natural hazards
9. Friends and family

5. Questions to think about:

- ✓ Does the cultural background of each potential immigrant affect the economic impact on the European Union?
- ✓ What relationships are there between the home nation and the potential destination that could either fuel immigration or cause conflict?
- ✓ Is poverty a substantial reason for immigration to be acceptable?
- ✓ What levels of immigration should be opposed? What is the acceptable amount?
- ✓ How does healthcare come into the issue?
- ✓ Are the European Union being too harsh?
- ✓ Are developing countries simply taking advantage of opportunities?
- ✓ What do local people of the European Union think of the immigrants coming into their nation? Acceptable or not?
- ✓ What could possibly be a solution for the immense amount of people coming in?
- ✓ What happens if all immigration is made illegal?
- ✓ Do member nations have the power to oppose the developing country's needs?
- ✓ Why are some countries in favor of immigration whilst others are not?

6. Works Cited

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