



Tallinn EUDC 2017 – Speakers Briefing

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Acknowledgements and opening remarks

This briefing largely incorporates the equivalent guide at Warsaw EUDC 2016 - which we thought was excellent. Additionally, the helpful section on “Types of Motions” below is lifted from the Dutch WUDC 2017 Debating & Judging Manual. We would like to thank the Warsaw EUDC 2016 Adjudication Team, the Dutch WUDC 2017 Adjudication Team and other adjudicators over various generations, for their contributions to this briefing.

The judges briefing, speakers briefing and speaker scale are complementary documents. They are divided for convenience but we highly advise participants, especially those new to EUDC, to read all of them.

If you have any questions about this briefing, please contact us on email at: eudc2017adjcore@gmail.com

Best,

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I. Introduction

This briefing exists to outline how debating at Tallinn EUDC 2017 should work. The style of debating used at the European Championships uses a small set of rules and tries to focus, as much as possible, on arguments about the motion set for each round.

Before we go any further, it is very important to review the overarching aim of teams and judges in a debate:

*Judges assess which team did the best job at **persuading them** that the motion, in the context in which it was discussed during the round, ought to be affirmed or rejected. Judges do this as an **'informed global citizen'** and consider the strength of the arguments that each team presented. While doing so, judges apply a **small set of technical rules**.*

The rest of this document is simply an examination of the various parts of the above statement, along with some comments on the logistics of the tournament.

II. British Parliamentary Format

In this briefing, when discussing rules in BP debating, we will outline what the rule says, what it does not say, and then how judges should assess rule infringements. Keep in mind while reading all of the following that the aim of the rules is to facilitate logical argument, not to constrain or displace them.

III. Role Fulfilment

What is Role fulfilment?

Role fulfilment, in brief, is the name given to the particular duties given to each team on the table, by nature of their position, above and beyond the general duty to 'make persuasive arguments'. These duties exist to ensure fairness.

For the sake of this tournament, we define the aim of each team to persuade the judges to affirm or reject the motion. Role fulfilment, then, is the context in which that persuasion must take place, i.e. the boundaries that allow each team a fair chance to persuade the judges. Role fulfilment is merely a necessary but not sufficient condition for a team to make persuasive arguments. Decisions will very rarely turn on which team fulfilled their role better.

The Duties of Role Fulfilment

Broadly speaking, the duties associated with role fulfilment are as follows:

- (1) in Opening Government, to define the debate (explained in Section IV);
- (2) for extension speakers, to extend the debate (explained in Section V);
- (3) for all teams, to ensure that their arguments are consistent with all other arguments made by themselves, their teammates, and the other team on their side of the debate (a contradiction is also referred to as 'knifing');
- (4) for summary speakers, not to add new substantive arguments (explained in Section VII);
- (5) for all speakers, to take at least one point of information during their speeches and to offer points of information on a regular basis (explained in Section VIII);
- (6) for all speakers, to demonstrate proper courtesy to fellow speakers, judges, and tournament officials at all times; and
- (7) for all speakers, to speak within the time frame allotted.

Addressing Failures in Role Fulfilment

When deciding as a judge how to handle a team's failure to fulfil their role, the precise remedy will depend upon what element of role fulfilment was violated and how grievous the violation was.

The general rule for violations of role fulfilment is that speakers are to lose any advantage that violating their role might have given them and they are only to be penalised to the extent to which their role fulfilment created difficulties in the wider debate.

In the following page you will see some examples.

<u>Violation of Role Fulfilment</u>	<u>Suggested Response from the Judge</u>
Adding new substantive arguments in summary speech.	The speaker receives no credit for any new arguments. Any time spent making new arguments is deemed to be wasted, as if nothing was said.
Failure to take a POI (or a point of clarification) during a speech, if offered several late in unprotected time (i.e. between 5.00-6.00mins).	Failure to take a POI generally indicates a reduced level of engagement, and judges should penalise teams for that lack of engagement. While this does NOT mean that a team will take an automatic fourth for failing to take a POI, it can (and should) be an important factor in close calls. If a team has clearly won a debate, however, the failure to take a POI should NOT change the teams' rankings. It may however, reduce the margin of victory.
Contradicting a previous team on one's own bench.	Time spent making arguments that contradict material presented by the previous team on the same bench is to be ignored and judged as time wasted; judges should not consider such arguments as adding any value to debate.
Speaking for longer than seven minutes.	The speaker receives no credit for material brought after seven minutes and fifteen seconds.

This does NOT mean that a violation of role fulfilment results in a team taking a fourth. It is perfectly possible for a team to finish first despite having violated role fulfilment. It just doesn't help a team win. All strengths and weaknesses of each team have to be viewed relative to each other. There are no 'automatic fourths'.

IV. Defining the Debate

What is a legitimate definition?

The first government speaker (a.k.a. the 'Prime Minister') defines the debate. This means that they tell the rest of the people in the room exactly what will be debated. They need to say whether there is a policy (i.e. whether someone is doing something) and if so, what that policy is. Remember, debates are about the motion as defined by the Opening Government. It is not about what you thought the words in the motion meant.

The definition forms the subject matter of the debate. If THW Privatise Education is defined as 'making all universities privately run, for-profit business,' (a fair definition) then that is what the debate is about for the remainder of the eight speeches, regardless of what the speakers or judges expected to happen when they heard the motion. Teams would still be entitled to make 'general' arguments against privatisation (e.g. 'privatisation of all public services is bad') provided that those still speak to the model. General arguments, like any arguments, must give the judge reasons to support or oppose the policy. To the extent to which they do so, they are successful.

Generally speaking, the motions that we're going to set at Tallinn Euros will make it clear as to the direction we want the debate to take. That's not to say that there will be no creative room in the definitions that teams try to use, but it does mean that definitions can generally be kept fairly brief and still enable all teams to understand the subject matter.

It is not the job of the judge to attack the definition. If the definition is successfully attacked as being insufficiently explanatory, the OG team should be penalised only to the extent to which a lack of detail prevents teams from making arguments. Judges should give other teams the benefit of the doubt relative to OG where such a deficiency poses a problem and allow other teams to 'read-in' any fair and reasonable assumption about the definition that the first proposition team hasn't fully spelled out.

Worked Example: THW Allow Prisoners to Vote

Example 1:

PM: 'We define this motion as allowing prisoners the right to take part in elections.'

LO: 'The Prime Minister has failed to confine this motion to adults in prison. Thus we must assume that children who are imprisoned will be allowed to vote, which is wrong as children are unfit to vote.'

DPM: 'That's clearly silly. Obviously child prisoners won't be allowed to vote.'

The judges should conclude that the DPM is correct. The assumption made by the LO is unreasonable and should be rejected. The team in first opposition should receive no credit for making a frivolous challenge.

Example 2:

PM: 'We define this motion as allowing prisoners the right to take part in elections.'

LO: 'The Prime Minister has failed to tell us which sorts of prisoners are allowed to vote. This definition is illegitimate because it doesn't tell us which, and that might include murderers!'

DPM: 'That's silly! Of course our model doesn't extend to murderers and the like, that would be completely unreasonable!'

The judges should conclude that neither the DPM nor the LO are correct. There was nothing wrong with the Prime Minister's definition, but it is reasonable to assume that by using the term "prisoners," without any caveats, the PM meant to include all prisoners. It is not fair for the DPM to try to caveat this definition in their speech. Opposition is free to make arguments about why allowing murderers to vote would be a bad idea, but pointing out that the PM's definition did not specifically mention murderers does not make it a bad or illegitimate definition.

What parameters can I set on a debate?

As outlined above, teams have some freedom in defining the debate, but there are certain things you may not do. You may not time or place set a debate (e.g. you cannot turn THW allow abortion into a debate about whether the judges in Roe v Wade should have reached the decision they did then).

You should debate at the level of generality implied in the motion. It is legitimate to exclude anomalous examples ('we're banning cosmetic surgery like the motion says, but not for burns victims'). It is not legitimate to include only anomalous examples ('we're banning cosmetic surgery

like the motion says, but only for children'). Nor is it legitimate to narrow debates to one country, or one isolated instance of a wider phenomenon described in the motion. If we wish a debate to be solely about a specific country (or a specific set of countries) we will state this in the motion.

When and how can I challenge a definition?

We strongly advise that teams do not challenge definitions OR if they do, as far as possible, that they attempt to continue debating the motion the way it was defined anyway.

If the definition provided by Opening Government is illegitimate, then it can be challenged. This must be done during the Leader of the Opposition speech. The criterion for legitimacy is liberal: 'is this one reading of the motion that does not do violence to the words in the motion, including not unduly narrowing the scope of those words?'

If the Leader of the Opposition's speech passes without a definitional challenge, no other speech is allowed to raise a definitional challenge. Only if Opening Government's definition is tautological or forces a team into a position that is unconscionable or impossible to argue can anyone else change the debate after this point.

If the motion is challenged, and it does change, then judges must weigh the contributions teams made to the debate as they found it at the time. That is, if OO won very clearly, and made substantial contributions to, the debate that OG set, but CG successfully changed the definition based on the fact that it was tautologically untrue and made a significant contribution to this 'new' debate, then we must compare OO's contribution to the debate in which they were involved with CG's contribution to the debate in which they were involved. We should not disregard OO because 'the debate became about something else'. This is not their fault. Of course, it may be that moments where OO and CG engage directly (say, on POIs) may be particularly important to the comparison.

If a team challenges the definition, they must explain their challenge. That is, they must argue that the definition is illegitimate and explain why. In challenging the definition, the Leader of the Opposition has two choices:

First, they can complain about the motion having been defined unfairly but proceed to debate it anyway. This is preferable if the motion proposed is not a fair reading of the motion but is still debateable

Second, they can discard the motion and redefine it. They should tell the judge and the other debaters what a proper definition would be and should then proceed to argue against that case.

Don't punish teams for having a 'definitional debate'. This might be boring, but being boring doesn't automatically imply that a team loses.

Please bear in mind that definitional challenges are incredibly rare and more a 'last resort' than a first-line of defence against a proposition case.

Worked Example: THW Allow prisoners to vote

PM: We would allow all wrongfully-accused prisoners to vote, after having released them from prison.

LO: This is a completely unacceptable narrowing and twisting of the definition which creates a completely impossible debate. We're redefining: the correct debate allows prisoners of all sorts to vote, some of whom may have committed crimes. We oppose such a policy for the following reasons...

The judges should conclude: Opening Opposition has done the right thing by replacing the unworkable definition with a workable one. Teams should follow Opening Opposition's lead and debate the motion as they have set forth.

Types of Motions

Motions can come in a few different guises, often hinted at by the words used to introduce the motion ("This House would...", "This House believes that..." "This House supports...") and again, this can affect the burdens teams face and how they should define the debate.

Adjudication Teams do not use these openings so consistently that we can set hard and fast rules on what they tell us about the motion, but here are some general guidelines:

Motions of the form "This House would [do X]" almost always involve Government enacting some sort of policy, X – a concrete course of action that they wish to convince the judges should be implemented. Such motions are about whether the House should do X – with Government teams arguing that they should and Opposition teams arguing that they should not. These debates are not about whether the entity the House represents (usually but not always state governments) will do the policy in question in the real world, or whether they are doing the policy at present. As such, it is never a valid line of opposition to such motions to state that "but the government would never do this" or, more subtly, "but politicians would never pass this law". For the purposes of the debate, the Government teams are that government and the politicians that make it up, and the debate is about whether they should or should not do a policy, not whether their real world counterparts will or will not.

Motions that open "This House would, as [A], do [X]" are somewhat special. These motions are more specific about the entity (A) doing (X) and so invite a closer examination of the perspective of the entity about what they should do, with all teams arguing from actor A's perspective.

So if, for example, the motion is "This House would, as Turkey, intervene in the Syrian Civil War", this debate should take place from the perspective of Turkey, as both the proposed agent to intervene in the Syrian Civil War and the proposed target of argumentative appeals.

By contrast, if the motion is "This House believes that Turkey should intervene in the Syrian Civil War", the motion does not take place solely from the perspective of Turkey – instead, the debaters are simply trying to convince the judges of the truth of the statement. The latter debate takes place from an outside perspective as opposed to an actor perspective. In this latter debate arguments that proceed on the basis of a prioritisation of Turkey's interests over others need to justify that prioritisation. To put it in the language of the ordinary intelligent voter, in the former type of motions, the ordinary intelligent voter takes up the position of Turkey in deciding what to do. This doesn't strictly rule in or out certain arguments or appeals to the debate – the ordinary intelligent voter imagining themselves as Turkey is still an ordinary intelligent voter, and can, as Turkey, be persuaded by various moral appeals, predicted consequences, claims about Turkey's key interests,

and so forth. But the arguments of the sides in the debate, and the burdens they need to prove, are orientated around actor A – and a team cannot plausibly stand up and say “Turkey should intervene in the Syrian Civil War, because it will be very good for American businesses”, without explaining why what is good for American businesses ought to be a reason for Turkey to do something.

Motions that open “This House believes that [X]” generally do not involve Government enacting a policy, but instead require Government teams to argue for the truth of the statement represented by X, whilst Opposition teams argue that X is false. Governments could still offer a policy as a manifestation of their belief in X – for example, if the motion is “This House believes that all individuals are entitled to a minimum standard of living”, Government could productively specify a policy they would enact to provide for this entitlement. Some “believes that” motions are more explicitly about policies, including motions of the formulation “This House believes that [actor A] should [do action X]”.

Motions that open “This House supports/regrets [Z]” also usually need not involve Government proposing a policy (though again, they may choose to do so). Instead, the Government teams need to argue that they would either symbolically, politically, materially or in some other manner support the person, group, institution, cause, idea, value, or statement expressed by Z. Opposition needs to argue that Z should not be supported in that way.

V. The status quo and the opposition

What is the role of the opposition teams?

Government gets to decide what they want to do (i.e. a policy) or what they want to say is true (if a motion does not require a policy). What about opposition?

In a debate about a policy, the opposition must say that we shouldn’t do it; that is, that something is better than doing this policy.

This can be the status quo in some countries, or it can be something which is currently done nowhere. It may be described as ‘doing nothing’ rather than ‘doing the policy’ (though naturally, teams doing this don’t necessarily recommend wholesale government inaction, but are running the comparative ‘whatever other broadly sensible relevant policies one is carrying out, the addition of this one makes things worse’). So long as opposition teams provide reasons not to do the policy, this is fine. There are many ways for someone to disagree with a policy, and – as long as they actually constitute disagreements – the judge should be willing to accept them.

Keep in mind that at an international tournament like this, there is no domestic policy status quo of significance. There are, obviously, material conditions in the world which are relevant to the debate.

Can I provide a ‘counter-proposal’?

There is no requirement to have a ‘counter-prop’ – the vast majority of debates involve Opening Opposition simply disagreeing that the policy proposed is a good one.

A counter-proposal which is not mutually exclusive with the policy is not acceptable. This isn’t disagreeing with the policy. Valid counter-proposals must involve the same actor stipulated by the motion as set up by Opening Government.

Worked Example:

Motion: THW Invade Syria.

Example One:

OG: We believe that the United States should invade Syria at once and install a new government.

OO: We believe that the United States should invade Syria at once, but they should also give economic assistance to a new Syrian regime.

The judges should conclude that the Opening Opposition's counter-prop is not mutually exclusive with Opening Government. Opening Opposition should not receive credit for this.

Example Two:

OG: We believe that the United States should invade Syria at once and install a new government.

OO: Rather than invading, the US should give military aid to rebel groups within Syria.

The judges should conclude that Opening Opposition's counter-prop is not strictly mutually exclusive with Opening Government's case, but they have set it up as an alternative (in effect saying that "we suggest the policy of a) not invading and b) giving military aid"). Depending on the arguments that follow, they may be able to successfully show that their policy is preferable to Opening Government's.

Example Three:

OG: We believe that the United States should invade Syria at once and install a new government.

OO: The United States should not invade. The Chinese should invade instead.

The judges should conclude that Opening Opposition's counter-prop is not strictly mutually exclusive with Opening Government's case. However, if Opening Opposition provides arguments as to why the United States should not invade at all, then they can still beat Opening Government. Their counter-prop is not relevant to the debate, as it involves fiating the action of a state other than the one indicated by Opening Government. To that extent arguments as to why China would be a better actor than the US are irrelevant, unless the opposition shows that the Chinese are likely to intervene.

VI. Extension Speeches

What is an extension?

The third speaker on each side of the debate (the first speaker on each of the Closing Government and the Closing Opposition teams) is responsible for contributing an extension to the debate.

An extension is defined as anything that hasn't yet been said by that side of the debate. An extension can take a number of forms including:

(1) new arguments which have not yet been made in the debate

(2) new rebuttal

(3) new examples

(4) new analysis or explanation of existing arguments

In short, any material that goes beyond the material presented in the first half – in some sense – constitutes an extension.

How do you assess extensions?

The requirement of an extension helps us to better understand the second-half's contribution by assigning the third speaker credit only for those arguments (or portions of arguments) which are meaningfully different from those which have already been made.

As a result, extension speakers do not defeat the first team on their side of their debate merely by 'having an extension' (any more than first proposition teams win the debate for 'having a definition'). A high-quality extension will bring out material (substantive or responsive) that contributes significantly to persuading the judge that the motion should be affirmed or rejected.

VII. Summary Speeches

What is a summary speech?

Summary speeches should summarise the debate from the perspective of their side. A good summary speech will note the major disagreements in the debate (points of clash) between the two sides and will make use of the best arguments from each team on their side to make their case that the motion ought to be affirmed or rejected.

A summary speaker which makes effective use of arguments that were introduced in the first half should receive credit for doing so, if those arguments are employed successfully. A summary speaker who ignores or minimises arguments made by the first-half is not effectively capturing the debate that occurred, and as a result is likely less persuasive than one who effectively summarizes the debate.

Can I make new arguments in a summary speech?

Debating is unfair if teams can make new arguments in the last speeches. In the case of the Closing Opposition this is because no one can respond. So they aren't allowed to do that.

While theoretically one speaker is able to respond (the Opposition Whip), Government Whip is also not permitted to make new arguments.

What do we mean by a 'new argument'? We mean new reasons to do things, claims that new things will happen, or claims that new things are true.

We DO NOT mean:

- (1) new defences of arguments already made
- (2) new explanations of previously-made arguments
- (3) rebuttal
- (4) new examples to support existing arguments
- (5) anything the other side can reasonably be expected to understand that team intends from the extension speech

At times, it's difficult to assess the difference between new rebuttal and analysis (which are permitted) and new arguments (which are not). Judges should consider whether or not making a claim raises a new issue, to which the other side has no ability to effectively respond.

How do you assess new material in summary speeches?

If a team makes a new argument in a summary speech, judges should ignore it. That is all judges should do. Don't penalise it, don't make them lose. Just ignore it.

New material in a summary speech is just bringing material in such a way that it can't be credited. Therefore, teams are advised to avoid wasting their time by doing so.

VIII. Points of Information

How do I offer POIs?

Points of information (POIs) can and should be offered by each speaker in the debate when the other teams are speaking. Every debater on the opposing side should offer at least one point of information during each speech from the other side. They should not offer more than one point of information every 15-20 seconds (barracking) as doing so can be very distracting.

When offering a POI, a speaker should rise and say, 'point of information', 'on that point' or something similar. Debaters who are offering numerous points of information should rise silently to avoid distracting either the speaker or the judge. Debaters should not attempt to distract the attention of either the speaker or the judge when another speaker holds the floor, by carrying on audible conversations with their partner, pulling faces, wild gesticulations, laughter, cries of 'shame!', smacking their lips, exaggerated sighing, or other conduct designed to divert attention away from the speaker.

When can I accept a POI?

POIs may be offered and accepted from the end of the first minute of a speech (1:00), until the start of the last minute of the speech (6:00). The latest that the speaker can accept a POI is immediately at the six-minute bang (i.e. the start of protected time). A POI cannot be accepted at a later point.

Every debater should accept at least one point of information from the opposing side. It is generally recommended, although not mandatory, that you allow the team diagonally across from you to ask at least one POI to your team.

How should POIs be judged?

The choice of which team(s) the speaker selects to offer POIs should be integrated into the judge's consideration of whether or not a speaker has engaged well with other teams. When analysing and comparing the arguments that have been made by the teams, the judge must have consideration as to how thoroughly and effectively the teams have engaged with each other. Particularly when making comparisons between second-half and first-half teams on different sides (the 'diagonals'), it is important for judges to consider the opportunities that first-half teams have had to challenge new material appearing in the other side's extension.

What happens if I do not take a POI?

A speaker that fails to take a POI (or a point of clarification) during their speech, should be punished by judges as if they were offered several late in unprotected time (for example, between 5.00-6.00mins). Failure to take a POI generally indicates a reduced level of engagement. While this does NOT mean that a team will take an automatic fourth for failing to take a POI, it can (and should) be an important factor in close calls.

Thus in a close debate, if the judge is deciding between two comparably matched teams, we would generally expect the team that failed to take a POI to place behind the team where each speaker accepted at least one POI. If a team has clearly won a debate, however, the failure to take a POI should NOT change the team's ranking. It may (and probably should) reduce the margin of victory.

N.B. If a speaker does not take a POI but was not given the opportunity to accept a POI, particularly later in their speech, the judge should waive any penalty normally associated with their failure to take a POI.

IX. A Brief Word on Equity and Conduct

Speakers and teams who are obnoxious, use rude language, or are otherwise offensive during the debate are generally less persuasive. However, it is not the role of judges to punish or penalise speakers for offensive behaviour. If a judge feels that certain behaviour should be penalised, the judge should report this to the equity team. This should occur only after judging the debate as if the behaviour in question did not happen.