European Pirate Academy

Handbook 4

EUROPEAN PIRATE ACADEMY

The Pirate Academy Handbook

Volume 4:
EU Enlargement 2022 - How to run

Facilitator guide for the Tier 3 scenario: the 2022 enlargement debate, played as an extraordinary conference chaired by the Czech EU Presidency in Prague. Internal document, never shared with participants.

The Pirate Academy was made possible by the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament. The Pirate Academy was created by Paul Diegel and David František Wagner for MEP Markéta Gregorová. This handbook and the revised versions of all scenarios were prepared by David František Wagner.

Disclaimer: Positions in this scenario are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions. Roles are institutional functions, never named living individuals. Real persons may appear in background context, but nobody plays them. Appendix C separates the record from the numbers invented for playability.

The Volume 4 document set.
This volume is split into practical pieces:

1. **How to run** (this document): design, history, rules, casting, injects, debrief, templates. *Internal.*

2. **Run-sheet** - a one-page timeline to keep open while running the session. *Internal.*

3. **General factsheet** - the participant-facing briefing, with the scoreboard and the scoring rubric annexed. *Sent to all participants about a week ahead.*

4. **Player aid** (one page): how the Final Act, the funds and the voting rules work. *Sent with every role handout.*

5. **Role handouts** (folder, one document per role, 26 roles) - *each sent individually; a participant sees only their own. Members of the same delegation share the delegation section of their handouts and nothing else.*

Confidentiality follows from the split: everything except the factsheet, the player aid and a participant's own role handout facilitates exploration and uncertainty through moments of surprise *(more about this design element in Volume 1, Chapter 2)*. Publishing the internal documents where future participants can find them would break the scenario. This scenario hides less inside delegations than Volume 3 (most delegations here are one or two people) and more across the table: nobody knows how much reform any candidate can actually deliver.

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Chapter 1
Running this scenario

What this is

A single-session negotiation simulation of the European Union's enlargement decisions in the autumn of 2022. Participants play up to twenty-six roles in four groups: the Czech Council Presidency in the chair, the European Commission, three or four political groups of the European Parliament, nine member states in the Council, and eight candidate or aspiring countries. The output is a set of decisions, one per candidate: does its accession process advance, on what reform conditions, and with what money.

This is the **Tier 3 scenario** of the Pirate Academy sequence (Volume 1, Chapter 2). Compared with Volume 3 it adds three things: a process that runs through three institutions with three different decision rules, actors of radically unequal power at the same table, and a tracking mechanic (the reform scoreboard) that turns promises into numbers. It removes one thing: there is no single negotiated text. Volume 3 taught participants to draft under pressure. Volume 4 teaches them to choose what to spend their attention on when eight files run in parallel and they cannot be everywhere.

The scenario's one big idea, which you should hold in your head throughout: the distance between idea and realisation. There is a vague agreement in the room that enlargement should happen, and the process still produces very little. No player is a spoiler by design. Each one has a defensible reason for the condition, the delay or the price it attaches. The different approaches to different candidates are also clearly not equal.

What you need

- **Facilitation:** one facilitator minimum; two are strongly recommended (one runs the clock, the scoreboard and the broadcasts; one watches the negotiation rooms and answers rules questions). The facilitator never participates as a player. The chair is a participant role, which keeps you free to run the world.

- **Participants:** 14-26, with **20 as the designed cast** and 26 as the full set. The casting guide (Chapter 5) gives the cut order. The scenario is not playable under 14 participants.

- **Time: 120 minutes of play:** in three blocks (20′ + 70′ + 30′) with one 10-minute break. Add the 10-minute welcome, a 5-minute technical break in which the facilitators work out the outcomes, and the 20-minute first-step debrief, and the session runs about **165 minutes end to end.** This fits inside a standard 180-minute course session. The full debrief continues at the start of the next course session and through the written reflection.

- **Before the session:** the general factsheet and player aid posted about one week ahead, role-assignment emails, delegation channels open for preparation. This scenario rewards preparation: a candidate that has not read its own numbers will lose the review, and a Commission that has not thought about the scoreboard will spend Block 2 doing arithmetic instead of politics.

- **Platform:** designed for and run **online**. A platform with breakout capability plus a shared document (the Academy used Discord with Google Docs) is needed. It runs well **in person**; Chapter 7.6 gives the variant.

Materials checklist

Before the session you should have prepared:

1. The **scoreboard** in the shared document: eight candidate rows, four score columns, a status column and a funds column, filled with the starting values from Chapter 4. Your own master copy adds each candidate's reform capacity and special condition, which are not public.

2. The **review sheet** template: the empty table the Commission fills in Block 3, one row per candidate, four recommendation columns and a funds column.

3. The **Council record** template: one row per candidate, a status column, a column for objections and a column for the one-sentence note.

4. The **inject pack** in a document you can copy from, all three texts ready to paste.

5. **Role handouts** sent individually, the factsheet and player aid sent to everyone.

6. A **funds tracker**: tonight's number of units (Chapter 4, table in "The funds"), who proposed what, what the Council and Parliament approved.

7. An **outcomes sheet** for the facilitators only: one row per candidate with its capacity, reform support bought, cost of the recommendations it accepted, points over capacity, the roll and the result (Chapter 7.5).

8. A **twenty-sided die**, or any random number generator from 1 to 20, for the over-reform rolls.

Tech checklist

- A **plenary room** for all chaired sessions.
- **Delegation channels**: one per delegation. With eight candidates and nine member states this is a lot of channels; create them in advance and name them by function, not by player.
- An **EU channel** for the Council, the Commission and the Parliament together, with the candidates excluded. This one channel does more work than any other single piece of the setup: it is where the member states discover what they can agree among themselves, and the candidates' exclusion from it is the point.
- A **Candidates channel** for the eight candidates together, with the EU side excluded. Whether they ever use it is completely up to them and one of the more interesting dynamics to watch.
- **Three to five negotiation rooms**, numbered rather than named (negotiation room 1, 2, 3…), so that participants have to work out their own logic for who meets where.
- The **shared document** with the scoreboard, the review sheet and the Council record. Everyone can read it; the Commission edits the scoreboard and review sheet; the chair edits the Council record. Participants may copy it freely.
- Participants rename their profiles to their **function** ("Council - Netherlands", "Commission - Funds Lead", "Candidate - Albania") with their country's flag or institution's logo. This is not cosmetic: with twenty-six roles it is how anyone knows who is speaking.

Timeline around the scenario

When	What
About 7 days ahead	Factsheet, player aid and role handouts sent; delegation channels opened
About 5 days ahead	Confirm receipt; answer rules questions privately, never in a shared channel
About 2 days ahead	Remind participants to read their own numbers and to rename their profiles
Session day, 15 minutes ahead	Rooms open; check the scoreboard is visible and correct; brief the chair
Next course session	Full debrief; written reflection due before it

Chapter 2
What this scenario teaches

Learning objectives

After this scenario participants should be able to:

1. **Describe how an EU enlargement decision is actually made**: a Commission recommendation, a Parliament opinion that carries political rather than legal weight at this stage, and a Council decision by unanimity, with money moving on a different rule from politics.

2. **Explain why unanimity produces both vetoes and purchases**: that a member state's blocking power is a negotiating asset, that it has a price, and that the price is usually paid in a different file from the one being blocked.

3. **Negotiate as an actor with no vote**: the candidates hold no procedural power and considerable substantive leverage, because the only thing the EU can actually obtain from them is their commitment to reform.

4. **Weigh ambition against risk**: a promise beyond a government's capacity can win a vote tonight and bring the government down next year.

5. **Manage a scarce resource under uncertainty**: reform capacity for the candidates, a limited number of fund units for the Commission and Council, and attention for everybody.

6. **Compare their outcome with the real 2022 decisions** and account for the differences.

Why EU Enlargement

The 2022 enlargement year is well documented and structurally clean. Within nine months the Union granted candidate status to two countries at war or under direct pressure, opened negotiations with two countries that had waited more than a decade, recommended candidate status for a third, and left a fourth with an application and no answer. Every one of those outcomes was the product of the same process, and the differences between them are explainable by politics rather than by merit. That is a rare teaching opportunity: the same rules, applied in the same year, producing visibly unequal results.

It also puts the Union's internal politics and its external policy in the same room. The conditionality procedure against Hungary was running at the same time as the Council was asking candidates to meet rule-of-law conditions.

The moment of surprise

Three things are consistently new to at least part of the participants:

- **The candidates are not supplicants**. Serbia can walk. Ukraine can decline conditions it cannot meet. A candidate that exits the process costs the EU more than it costs itself, at least in the short term, and most rooms do not see this until somebody does it.

- **The money is the politics**. The funds package moves on qualified majority while the status decisions move on unanimity. Member states work out, usually late, that the file where they can be outvoted is the one they can trade against the file where they cannot.

- **Reform capacity is small**. Participants arrive expecting to negotiate about whether a country wants to reform. They discover the question is how much it can carry, and that the answer for the country everyone most wants to help is: almost nothing.

The scenario also carries a lot of uncertainty about what other delegations actually want, which is created by the participants rather than by the design.

What this scenario does not do

- It does not model the accession process accurately. Real accession runs through thirty-five chapters in six clusters, opening and closing benchmarks, intergovernmental conferences and interim reports. The scenario compresses all of that into one number per policy area per country.

- It does not model the Union's money. The fund units stand in for pre-accession assistance, macro-financial assistance and cohesion policy at once. The real instruments have different legal bases, different decision rules and different timetables.

- It gives the European Parliament a role at this stage that it does not have. In reality Parliament's consent is required to admit a new member state, not to advance a candidate. The signal vote here is a game device that makes Parliament's real political weight visible inside a single session. At the same time, despite these changes, Parliament's influence in the scenario is still much lower than the Council influence, which reflects the current reality.

- It compresses about ten weeks (the first European Political Community summit in October to the European Council in December) into two hours, and puts actors in one room who in reality dealt with each other through capitals, working parties and the press.

- Scores are not a measurement of any country. They are a simplification built for play, and the debrief should say so.

Chapter 3
The history: facilitator background

This is your short outline of the main motives and problems of the time, however, it is only a very surface level knowledge. Still it should be enough to run the scenario.

The road to 2022

Enlargement had been stalled since Croatia joined in 2013. The Western Balkans held a "European perspective" promised at Thessaloniki in 2003 and delivered to nobody. Montenegro had been negotiating since 2012 and had opened every chapter without closing many. Serbia had been negotiating since 2014, with progress slowing as its rule-of-law record and its relations with Russia diverged from the Union's. North Macedonia had changed its name in 2019 to resolve the dispute with Greece, and was then blocked by Bulgaria over language and history. Albania's process had been tied to North Macedonia's by the Council, so it waited too. Bosnia and Herzegovina had applied in 2016 and received a list of fourteen priorities it had not met. Kosovo had a Stabilisation and Association Agreement and five member states that did not recognise it.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 changed the politics within days. Ukraine applied on 28 February, Moldova and Georgia on 3 March. The Commission delivered its opinions on 17 June, and the European Council granted candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova on 23 June, recognising a European perspective for Georgia. What had taken the Western Balkans between six and nineteen years took Ukraine four months.

The Western Balkan reaction was not gratitude. It was the observation that the Union could move fast when it wanted to, which meant that every previous delay had been a choice.

The year in real history

Date (2022)	What happened
24 February	Russia invades Ukraine
28 February	Ukraine applies for EU membership; Moldova and Georgia follow on 3 March
17 June	Commission recommends candidate status for Ukraine and Moldova, with conditions attached
23-24 June	European Council grants candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova; the Bulgarian parliament votes to lift its objection to North Macedonia under a French compromise
Early July	Large protests in Skopje against the French proposal; parliament accepts it on 16 July
19 July	First intergovernmental conferences with Albania and North Macedonia: accession negotiations formally open
18 September	Commission proposes suspending about EUR 7.5 billion of Hungary's cohesion funding under the conditionality regulation

Date (2022)	What happened
1 October	Gazprom reduces gas deliveries to Moldova by about 30 per cent
6 October	First European Political Community summit, Prague, hosted by the Czech Presidency
12 October	Commission publishes its enlargement package and recommends candidate status for Bosnia and Herzegovina
November	Russian strikes on Ukraine's grid leave Moldova with repeated nationwide blackouts; the licence-plate dispute between Serbia and Kosovo is defused on 23 November
12 December	Council suspends EUR 6.3 billion of Hungary's cohesion funding, less than the Commission proposed
15 December	European Council grants candidate status to Bosnia and Herzegovina; Kosovo submits its membership application

The scenario plays out on 6 October, at Prague Castle, on the margins of the European Political Community summit, six days before the enlargement package is due. In game terms the conference is where the package and the Council's December conclusions are pre-cooked at once. This is the scenario's deliberate compression.

What the real decisions said

- **Ukraine and Moldova** kept candidate status and received a list of conditions: for Ukraine, seven steps covering the Constitutional Court, judicial governance, anti-corruption institutions, anti-money-laundering, the influence of oligarchs, media law and national minorities. The European Council decided to open accession negotiations in December 2023; the first intergovernmental conferences took place in June 2024.

- **Albania and North Macedonia** opened negotiations in July 2022 after Bulgaria's objection was lifted by a compromise that required North Macedonia to amend its constitution to recognise a Bulgarian minority. The constitutional amendment had not passed by the end of 2022 and had still not passed by mid-2026.

- **Bosnia and Herzegovina** received candidate status in December 2022, explicitly as a political gesture, with the fourteen priorities still outstanding.

- **Kosovo** applied in December 2022 and received no answer. Visa liberalisation, agreed separately, took effect in January 2024.

- **Serbia and Montenegro** continued their negotiations with little movement. Serbia did not align with sanctions on Russia.

- **Hungary** had EUR 6.3 billion suspended in December, a smaller figure than the Commission proposed, agreed as part of a package in which Hungary lifted its objections to Ukraine's macro-financial assistance and the global minimum tax.

That last item is the single most useful fact in this chapter. It is a veto, purchased, in a different file, in public, within the period the scenario covers. If a room does something similar, tell them in the debrief that they reinvented December 2022.

The contested questions

These are the fault lines the design pushes participants onto. Each has a real answer and no correct one.

1. **Speed against standards**. If geopolitics can accelerate a process, the process was never purely technical. If it cannot, the Union has no instrument for an emergency.

2. **The East against the Balkans**. Any effort spent on Ukraine and Moldova is read in Skopje and Tirana as evidence that waiting was pointless. Any effort spent on rebalancing is read in Kyiv as indifference to a war.

3. **Enlargement against the Union's own capacity**. Internal reform before widening is both a real constraint and the most convenient available delay.

4. **Conditionality applied to candidates and to members**. The Union asks candidates for judicial independence while negotiating with a member state about the same thing, through a procedure attached to money rather than to membership.

5. **What a candidate owes and what it is owed**. Candidates want irreversibility; member states want reversibility. Both positions are reasonable and they are incompatible.

Where the scenario bends history

1. **One conference**. There was no such meeting. The Prague summit on 6 October was the European Political Community, a different format with more than forty participants and no decisions.

2. **Candidates in the room**. In reality candidates are not present when the Council decides about them. Putting them at the table is the scenario's biggest departure and its main teaching device.

3. **Parliament votes on candidates**. It does not, at this stage.
4. **One number per policy area**. The scoreboard, the reform capacities and the fund units are invented. Appendix C lists them.
5. **The Commission proposes money and the Council approves it in the same session**. The real budgetary procedure is slower and involves Parliament differently.
6. **Kosovo's application arrives in October rather than December,** so that the recognition question can be played rather than mentioned.

The model also has limits worth naming after the session: it makes the EU frame look more decisive than it was, and it makes reform look more like a budget and less like a decade of administrative work. These limitations should be reflected on after the scenario rather than corrected during it.

Chapter 4
Rules and mechanics

The cast

Delegation	Roles at full cast	Internal decision rule
Czech Presidency	1 (chair)	Chairs, does not vote
European Commission	3	Consensus: all members must agree on what the Commission tables
European Parliament	4 groups (EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA)	Each group votes; simple majority of groups present
Council	9 member states	One vote each, cast by the national representative
Candidates	9 roles in 8 delegations (Ukraine has two)	Ukraine decides by agreement of its two representatives; all others are solo

The Parliament groups are separate delegations, not one team. They may coordinate and often should, but they have no obligation to.

The reform scoreboard

Each candidate is scored 1 to 5 in four areas: **Rule of Law, Corruption and Governance, Democracy and Institutions, and Economic Readiness**. A 5 means alignment with EU requirements comparable to the Union's own average; a 1 means very little alignment. The scoring rubric in the factsheet gives one line per area per level so that the numbers mean something specific rather than whatever the facilitator says they mean.

Scores are public from the start. They sit in the shared document and in the factsheet, and every participant can see every candidate's line. This mirrors the fact that the Commission's country reports are published.

Reform capacity is not public. Each candidate knows how many capacity points it can spend this round and nobody else does. Capacity stands for everything that limits how much reform a government can actually deliver: a parliamentary majority, an administration, money, and public patience. A candidate may tell the room its capacity, may lie about it, or may say nothing.

Special conditions are not public either. Each candidate carries one scripted circumstance, printed in its own handout, which resolves in the debrief.

The Commission may call for a **detailed review of two candidates**, at any point during Block 2, by asking the facilitator. It then learns those two candidates' capacity and special condition. Two, not more: choosing which two is a real decision and it is usually made badly, which is a good debrief item.

Starting values. Your master copy only; the right-hand columns are not public.

Candidate	Rule of Law	Corruption	Democracy	Economy	Capacity	Special condition
Ukraine	3	2	3	2	1	War: funds hungry
Moldova	3	2	2	1	5	Election: needs 3 points total from stabilisation units and campaign spending, or the pro-European government falls
Serbia	2	1	2	3	5	Russian support: may cut it for 3 capacity, declared at the end of Block 2; may exit the process
North Macedonia	4	4	4	3	2	Exhaustion: one score of its choice drops by 1 in the outcomes unless it receives 2 fund units

Candidate	Rule of Law	Corruption	Democracy	Economy	Capacity	Special condition
Albania	3	2	3	3	4	Coupled to North Macedonia: both advance or neither, unless the Council decouples them by unanimity
Montenegro	4	3	3	3	3	Fragile coalition: the government falls unless the record names a target date or it receives 1 unit
Kosovo	2	1	3	1	5	Not a candidate: the Council decision for Kosovo is whether to accept its application at all
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	2	1	2	2	Not a candidate: the Council decision is candidate status; institutional freeze unless status or 2 units

The Final Act

This is the spine of the scenario. Everything in Block 2 is preparation for it. Steps 1 to 5 run in plenary in Block 3; step 6 opens the debrief.

1. **The Commission tables its recommendations and its funds package**. For each candidate, in each of the four areas, one of: no change needed (0), changes needed, meaning new laws (+1), radical changes, meaning new institutions (+2), or fundamental changes, meaning a rebuilt system (+3). The number is what the reform costs the candidate in capacity. The funds package is published at the same time. The Commission's three members must agree on both before they are tabled.

2. **The funds package is voted: qualified majority** in the Council (6 of 9 states at full cast; two thirds rounded up at smaller casts, see the table in "The funds") and simple majority in the Parliament. The package is voted as a whole and is not amendable from the floor. If either institution rejects it, no money moves at all. The vote comes before the candidates respond on purpose: every candidate decides on its reforms knowing exactly what support it has.

3. **Candidates respond**. Each candidate accepts or declines each recommendation. Anything up to its capacity, including capacity bought with reform support, is safe. Anything above is allowed and risky (see "Over-reform"). A candidate may also **exit the process**: it stays in the room, its line is frozen, and it explains itself in one sentence.

4. **Parliament signals**. Each group votes to approve or not approve the package for each candidate; simple majority of groups. The vote does not block anything.

5. **The Council decides, candidate by candidate**: advance, or under review. **Unanimity**. Any state that blocks says so on the record in one sentence. “Advance” means different things for different candidates and the chair should say which: opening negotiations for Ukraine and Moldova, opening the first cluster for Albania and North Macedonia, a target date or closing chapters for Montenegro and Serbia, candidate status for Bosnia and Herzegovina, accepting the application for Kosovo. Each decision can also carry a note: one sentence, proposed by any member state and entered unless another member state objects. Conditions, reassurances and face-saving formulas live there (Bulgaria’s line on North Macedonia, a status-neutral wording on Kosovo, reversibility for the Netherlands). The chair takes proposals for the note before the vote on that candidate, so that the vote does not turn into drafting.

6. **Outcomes**. In a short technical break after Block 3, the facilitators work out what the following year brings (Chapter 7.5) and open the debrief by announcing it. A candidate whose government holds delivers what it accepted: **each accepted recommendation raises that score by its cost**, up to a maximum of 5. A government that falls delivers none of its accepted reforms. Special conditions resolve at the same time, and other stakeholders may receive short endings of their own.

The scores do not move during play. Nobody plays a second round. What the room sees at the end is what it bought, and what it risked.

Over-reform

A candidate may accept more reform than its capacity allows. Governments that promise more than they can carry sometimes deliver and sometimes collapse, and the scenario lets candidates make that bet. For every point accepted over capacity, the chance that the government falls before the reforms are delivered grows

Points over capacity	Chance the government falls	Roll of a twenty-sided die that means collapse
1	25%	1-5
2	50%	1-10
3	75%	1-15
4 or more	90%	1-18

Capacity bought with reform support counts as capacity, so points covered by funds are never over capacity. Capacity a candidate has spent on a special action (Serbia's break with Russia, Moldova's campaign) is gone, so accepting reforms on top of it counts as over-reform.

Roll once per over-reformed candidate, during the technical break. Rolling on camera, or in front of the room in person, makes the result feel earned rather than decided by the facilitator; announcing it without the roll is also fine.

Over-reform changes the politics of the Final Act in useful ways. A candidate can now buy a Council vote with a promise it may not survive, and a member state can demand more than a candidate can carry without the demand being impossible. Both are real. The debrief question is who pushed the candidate over its capacity, and whether they knew.

The decision rules in one place

Say these aloud at the welcome and put them in the chair's hands:

- **Commission**: consensus among its members for anything it tables.
- **Parliament**: simple majority of groups present, a tie means no; binding on the funds package, a signal per candidate.
- **Council, status decisions: unanimity; any member state may propose a one-sentence note to a decision, entered unless another member state objects.**
- **Council, funds package**: qualified majority, 6 of 9 (two thirds rounded up at smaller casts: 8 states 6, 7 states 5, 6 states 4, 5 states 4).
- **Candidates**: no vote, and the only actor who can accept a reform commitment. Accepting beyond capacity is allowed, at a risk.

For a younger or less experienced cohort you may soften the Council's unanimity to "all but one". This makes the room less realistic and considerably less frustrating; it is a legitimate teaching choice and you should tell them you made it.

The funds

Twelve units at full cast, allocated by the Commission and approved or rejected as a package by the Council and the Parliament. Each unit is earmarked for one of three uses:

- **Reform support**: the Commission gives units to a candidate, and the candidate turns them into reform capacity. The cost rises with each point given to the same country: the first extra point costs 1 unit, the second 2, the third 3, the fourth 4. It is the only way a candidate can reform beyond its own capacity without risking a collapse, and the rising cost makes it hard to pour the budget into one country.

- **Stabilisation**: cancels a scripted risk at the price printed in the candidate's own handout.
- **Reward**: no mechanical effect. A public signal, and sometimes the cheapest thing in the room.

Extra capacity for one candidate	+1	+2	+3	+4
Total units needed	1	3	6	10

Units given as reform support that do not complete the next step are wasted: 2 units buy one point, not one and a half. The Commission may not know this matters, because it does not know the candidate's capacity; the candidate does.

Units may also be allocated to a **member state**, or left unallocated. Hungary's handout asks for two, and the conditionality procedure running in the background is why. Whether the Commission or the Council is willing to write that down is one of the sharper moments the scenario produces.

The Commission may show draft allocations at any point in the negotiation, to test reactions. Only the package approved in the Final Act applies.

Twelve units do not cover the board. At full cast the stabilisation prices alone are Moldova 3, North Macedonia 2, Bosnia 2, Montenegro 1 and Ukraine 3, and Hungary asks for 2. That is 13 before a single unit of reform support or reward. The shortage is the design: every unit that goes to Hungary, or to stabilising one country, is a unit that does not make somebody else's reform safe.

Units at smaller casts. Tonight's units are fixed by cast size, as in the table below, and are deliberately smaller than the sum of the printed prices: at full cast the stabilisation prices and Hungary's request come to 13 units against a budget of 12. Announce the number at the welcome together with the qualified majority.

Cast	Parliament groups	Council states	Qualified majority	Fund units
26-25	4	9	6	12
24	4	8	6	12
23	4	8	6	11
22	3	8	6	11
21	4	7	5	11
20	3	7	5	11
19-17	3	7	5	9
16	3	6	4	9
15	3	5	4	9
14	3	5	4	6

The working documents

- **The scoreboard**. Public, in the shared document, edited by the Commission.
- **The review sheet**. The Commission's output, published at the start of Block 3: recommendations per candidate and the funds package.
- **The Council record**. The chair's, filled during Block 3: funds result, status per candidate, objections quoted, and the one-sentence note attached to each decision.
- **The outcomes sheet**. The facilitators' own, never shared during play: capacity, reform support, accepted cost, points over capacity, roll and result per candidate.
- **Side agreements**. Bilateral or multilateral understandings outside the Final Act: a Bulgaria and North Macedonia declaration, a Hungary and Commission arrangement on funds, a regional commitment among candidates. They should be written down and have the clear support of the parties involved, and they are published only after the scenario. It is fully possible that somebody will go for a backroom deal, and they should.

There is no negotiated conclusions text; the one-sentence notes are the only prose the Council adds. The review sheet and the Council record together are the output artefact: the outcome of the game, written down. The outcomes announced at the start of the debrief are its epilogue.

The phase structure

- **Block 1, Positions**. Everyone states where they stand, in public, on the record, briefly. No decisions.
- **Block 2, Negotiation**. Multi-track and deliberately unstructured. The Commission builds its recommendations and its funds package; member states discover what they can agree on; candidates work out what they can promise and what they will refuse. Special actions are handed in at the end.
- **Block 3, The Final Act**. Steps 1 to 5, in order, in plenary.
- **Technical break and outcomes**. Step 6, run by the facilitators, opens the debrief.

There is one random element in this scenario: the over-reform roll, and only candidates who choose to over-reform are exposed to it. Everything else comes from what the delegations do with incomplete information about each other, where we cannot predict the results either.

What counts as an outcome

All of these are legitimate and none of them is a failure of the room:

- **A full package**: every candidate advances with reforms attached and the funds package passes. Rare, and usually purchased by asking very little of anybody.
- **A split decision**: the East advances and the Balkans do not, or the reverse. The most common result, and the most instructive.
- **A blocked candidate**: one state holds out and says why. Ask afterwards what it was offered and by whom.

- **A candidate that exits**: Serbia is the likeliest, Kosovo the most wounding. Different bilateral arrangements can also be pointed out here.

- **Funds rejected**: the Council or Parliament votes the package down and nothing moves. The candidates then respond with no support at all, and those that accept ambitious sheets anyway are betting their governments.

- **A government that falls**: a candidate over-reformed and lost the roll. Ask who pushed it over its capacity: the Council's demands, the Commission's sheet, the missing money, or its own ambition.

- **No decision on anybody**: the conference ends with a chair's statement and nothing else. Historically plausible and worth playing straight.

Chapter 5
Casting guide

Three roles carry the session: the **chair**, the **Commission's Enlargement Lead** and **Hungary**. The chair runs a room of up to twenty-six people through the five steps of the Final Act in thirty minutes. The Enlargement Lead has to hold three colleagues to one position and then defend it in public. Hungary has to block in a way that stays diplomatic and leaves a door open, which is harder than it sounds and much harder than playing a spoiler.

Two roles are exposed in a different way: **Serbia** and **Kosovo** hold positions that are uncomfortable to voice, and participants sometimes need a word beforehand confirming that arguing a position is not endorsing it.

The casting notes are recommendations. It is sometimes useful to give a speaking-heavy role to a participant who is more reserved, provided you give them support and do not assign every demanding role that way. Cast friction consciously (see Volume 1, Chapter 5).

Role ratings

Role	Speaking	Preparation	Casting notes
Czech Presidency: Presidency Representative (chair)	Very high	High	Your most organised participant. Runs the clock, the speaking order and the Final Act. Brief on process, never on outcomes.
Commission: Enlargement Lead	High	High	Speaks for the Commission and holds its line. Needs someone who can be told no and keep negotiating.
Commission: Reform Assessment Lead	Medium	Very high	Builds the review sheet. Ideal for a participant who likes detail and does not want the floor.
Commission: Funds Lead	Medium	High	Builds the funds package and defends the arithmetic. Pairs well with a participant who enjoys being the only one who knows the numbers.
Parliament: EPP	Medium	Medium	The group the funds package most needs.
Parliament: S&D	Medium	Medium	The moral voice on solidarity and on the social content of reform.

Role	Speaking	Preparation	Casting notes
Parliament: Renew Europe	Medium	Medium	Fiscal watchdog. Good for a participant who enjoys asking uncomfortable questions about money.
Parliament: Greens/EFA	Medium	Medium	Values and conditionality, including towards member states. Out at 22 and at 20 and below; in at 21.
Council: Germany	High	Medium	The broker everyone goes to. Steady participant who does not need to win.
Council: France	High	Medium	Sequencing, capacity, institutional reform. Enjoyable for a participant who likes careful language.
Council: Poland	High	Medium	The loudest advocate for the East. Good for high energy.
Council: Italy	Medium	Low	Balance between the two tracks; pragmatic.
Council: Hungary	High	Medium	Blocks, and has a price. Needs a participant who can stay in a diplomatic register while being obstructive, and who will not enjoy it too much.
Council: Netherlands	Medium	Medium	Standards and frugality. Suits a participant who is comfortable being unpopular.

Role	Speaking	Preparation	Casting notes
Council: Bulgaria	Medium	Medium	A national issue against an EU decision. Needs someone who can hold a position that most of the room finds unreasonable.
Council: Spain	Medium	Low	Supportive in general, immovable on Kosovo.
Council: Austria	Medium	Low	The Balkans must not be forgotten, and the bill must not grow.
Candidate: Ukraine, Government Representative	High	Medium	Moral authority and urgency. Strong speaker.
Candidate: Ukraine, Reform Representative	Medium	High	The technical half of the delegation: what can actually be delivered during a war.
Candidate: Moldova	Medium	Medium	Quiet, steady, running out of time. Rewards a careful participant.
Candidate: Serbia	High	High	Plays both sides and must be able to justify it. Experienced participant.

Role	Speaking	Preparation	Casting notes
Candidate: North Macedonia	High	Medium	Bitterness held in a diplomatic register. Strong speaker who can convey frustration without losing the room.
Candidate: Albania	Medium	Low	Impatient, pro-EU, tied to a neighbour's problem. A good first substantial role.
Candidate: Montenegro	Medium	Low	The frontrunner nobody notices. Suits a participant who will push to be heard.
Candidate: Kosovo	Medium	Medium	Asking to be allowed to start. Needs a participant who can stay constructive while being refused.
Candidate: Bosnia and Herzegovina	Medium	Medium	Fragile at home, asking for a gesture. Good for a participant who prefers a clear, narrow ask.

Cast sizes 14-26

The ideal cast is 20. Adjust in this order. Each cut hands its material to the named colleague. This is a recommended sequence; your teaching needs might justify other choices.

- **26 (full set)**: everyone.
- **25**: cut **Ukraine's Reform Representative**. Ukraine becomes one person carrying both the moral and the technical argument, which is harder and slightly more realistic.
- **24**: cut **Council: Austria**. Balkan advocacy passes to Italy, which now has to hold both the "Balkans first" line and the pragmatic centre.
- **23**: cut **Candidate: Montenegro**. The frontrunner's argument passes to Albania.
- **22**: cut **Parliament: Greens/EFA**. Parliament is three groups and ties become impossible, which simplifies the signal votes.
- **21**: cut **Council: Spain and Candidate**: Kosovo together and bring **Parliament: Greens/EFA** back. The recognition subplot needs both or neither, so this is the one step where a role returns. Below this, Kosovo appears only in Serbia's brief and the Council has no Kosovo decision to take. With four groups the Parliament can tie, and a tie means "not approved".
- **20 (designed cast)**: cut **Parliament: Greens/EFA** again. Chair, Commission 3, Parliament 3, Council 7 (Germany, France, Poland, Italy, Hungary, Netherlands, Bulgaria), candidates 6 (Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia, North Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina). The qualified majority becomes 5 of 7.

- **19**: cut **Candidate: Bosnia and Herzegovina**. Italy keeps the "do not forget Bosnia" line but there is no longer anyone in the room to be forgotten, which changes what the room learns.
- **18**: cut **Candidate: Albania**. North Macedonia's coupling disappears and its grievance becomes purely bilateral.
- **17**: cut **Commission: Funds Lead**. The Enlargement Lead takes the funds package. Watch for a Commission that runs out of time in Block 2.
- **16**: cut **Council: Bulgaria**. North Macedonia's bilateral problem becomes a line the chair reads out ("one member state maintains a reservation"), which is much weaker. Consider cutting North Macedonia instead if the bilateral dispute is what you wanted to teach.
- **15**: cut **Council: Italy**. The Council is five states and qualified majority becomes 4 of 5, which is nearly unanimity. Say so.
- **14** (floor): cut **Candidate: Moldova**. Chair, Commission 2, Parliament 3, Council 5 (Germany, France, Poland, Hungary, Netherlands), candidates 3 (Ukraine, Serbia, North Macedonia). The East against Balkans tension survives; the regional spread does not.
- **Below 14**, run a different scenario. With more than 26 participants, run two parallel games rather than adding roles: a second Serbia delegate or a fourth Commission official adds bodies without adding decisions.

At every size, the Council keeps at least Germany, France, Poland, Hungary and the Netherlands: the broker, the sequencer, the advocate, the blocker and the standard-setter. Cutting any of those five removes a position that nobody else in the room holds.

Friction, checked-out risks, and comeback moments

The key frictions are Hungary against everybody on conditionality, Bulgaria against North Macedonia, Spain against Kosovo, Poland against France on speed, and the Netherlands against anybody in a hurry. Inside the Commission, the Reform Assessment Lead and the Funds Lead will disagree about whether to demand more reform or send more money, and the Enlargement Lead has to settle it.

Risks of zoning out. The solo candidates with no crisis attached (Albania, Montenegro, and Kosovo if the Council will not discuss it) can spend seventy minutes being politely ignored. So can a Parliament group that decides its vote does not matter. Both have comeback moments in Block 3: every candidate speaks when it responds to its recommendations, and Parliament votes on everything. If a checked-out participant is drifting before then, the chair can call a two-minute round in plenary asking each candidate to name its single priority, which costs little and puts everyone back on the record (Volume 1, Chapter 5).

Chapter 6
The handout set: who gets what

Document	Goes to	When
General factsheet (with scoreboard and rubric)	Everyone	About 7 days ahead
Player aid (one page)	Everyone, with the role handout	About 7 days ahead
Role handout	One participant only	About 7 days ahead, individually
Run-sheet	Facilitators only	Never circulated
How to run	Facilitators only	Never circulated
Post-session message and homework	Everyone	After the session

Each role handout has a delegation section, shared word for word with the other members of that delegation, and an individual brief: motivations and constraints, red lines, style, and a confidential paragraph. The confidential paragraph is not shared with anyone, including the participant's own delegation.

Send role handouts individually. Forwarding one member's handout to another is the most common way this scenario leaks, and with solo delegations the confidential paragraph is the only hidden information that role has.

Chapter 7
Facilitator guide

7.1 Before the session

Fifteen minutes before the start, have the rooms open, the scoreboard visible in the shared document, the review sheet and Council record templates empty and ready, and the inject pack in a document you can copy from.

Brief the chair on process and never on outcomes: the speaking order in Block 1, the state-of-play call in Block 2, the order of the five steps of the Final Act in Block 3, and the fact that they should ask a blocking state for its one sentence rather than letting a block pass in silence, and how notes work: a member state proposes one sentence before the vote on a candidate, and it goes into the record unless another member state objects. Tell them they do not vote.

Check that profiles are renamed. With twenty-six roles this matters more than in any other volume.

Decide in advance whether you are running Council unanimity or the softened “all but one”, and write tonight’s qualified majority and number of fund units down where you can see them. Have the outcomes sheet and the die ready; with two facilitators, decide now who does the arithmetic in the technical break and who prepares the endings.

7.2 The timeline

Welcome, 10 minutes. Read the etiquette aloud including the tap-out. State the decision rules: Commission by consensus, Parliament simple majority (a signal on candidates, binding on money), Council unanimity on status, Council qualified majority on money, candidates have no vote. Say that candidates may accept reforms beyond their capacity, at a risk to their government. Announce tonight's qualified majority and number of fund units. Say aloud that **no decision is a valid outcome**. Announce the timing and hand over to the chair.

Block 1, Positions, 20 minutes. The chair opens with the situation as of 6 October 2022 and what the conference is for (3′). Opening statements, 30 seconds each, candidates first, then member states, then Parliament groups, then the Commission (9-11′ depending on cast). Then first contacts and delegation huddles until the block ends. At twenty-four participants or more, drop statements to 20 seconds or take them from candidates and member states only.

Block 2, Negotiation, 70 minutes. Rooms open, free movement. The Commission may call its two detailed reviews at any time, and may show draft allocations whenever it likes. At 1:05 the chair calls a five-minute state of play in plenary: where the room agrees and where it does not, with no decisions taken. At **1:35** the facilitator collects the special actions in writing (Serbia's decision on Russia, Moldova's campaign spending, any candidate's declared intention to exit). The recommendations and the final funds package are due at the end of the break.

Break, 10 minutes. Not a rest for the Commission, which finalises the review sheet and the funds package. Fire an inject here only if its trigger has been met.

Block 3, The Final Act, 30 minutes. Commission publishes the review sheet and the funds package and explains nothing beyond four sentences (4′). The funds package is voted, Council by qualified majority and Parliament by simple majority (3′). Candidates respond in turn, accepting, declining, or exiting (6′); nobody has to say whether it is within its capacity. Parliament votes per candidate (4′). The Council decides candidate by candidate, unanimity, notes proposed before each vote and entered unless a member state objects, objections quoted in one sentence (9′). The chair announces the end state (2′). One closing sentence per delegation, 30 seconds, in role (2′).

If the Council runs long, the chair may take the uncontested candidates in a single block vote and spend the time on the contested ones.

Technical break, 5 minutes. The facilitators fill in the outcomes sheet and roll for any over-reformed candidate (Chapter 7.5). Participants stay in the plenary or take a short breather; nobody negotiates.

First-step debrief, 20 minutes. Opens with the outcomes. Chapter 7.5.

7.3 The inject pack

All three injects are optional. Post them word for word to the broadcast channel; reading them aloud is allowed but costs negotiation time. Historical grounding is noted in italics; the texts are fictionalised in register 2 (Volume 1, Chapter 2). Expect to fire one or two. Firing none is a legitimate run, and so is firing all three.

I1: "Moldova in the dark." *Grounded in 1 October 2022, when Gazprom reduced deliveries to Moldova by about 30 per cent, and in the November blackouts that followed Russian strikes on Ukraine's grid*. Fire if Moldova is being ignored, or if the room is treating the Eastern track as a matter of symbolism rather than survival.

NEWS FLASH, Chisinau. Gazprom has reduced deliveries to Moldova by roughly a third and has warned that the contract may be terminated entirely. Moldovan authorities report rolling power cuts across the country and say reserves will not cover a cold month. The government has asked the European Union for emergency support and has not specified an amount.

Purpose: puts a price on inattention and gives Moldova, Poland and Ukraine something concrete to point at.

I2: "Skopje." *Grounded in early July 2022, when large protests in North Macedonia opposed the French compromise that unlocked the Bulgarian objection*. Fire if North Macedonia is being sidelined, or if the room is treating a bilateral dispute as a technicality that somebody else will sort out.

NEWS FLASH, Skopje. Several thousand people are demonstrating outside the government building against what organisers call a dictated compromise. Opposition parties say they will not support any constitutional amendment agreed under pressure. Government sources say the parliamentary majority for the European path is now uncertain.

Purpose: reminds the room that a candidate government's signature has to survive at home, and hands North Macedonia a reason to harden rather than fold.

I3: "The conditionality file." *Grounded in 18 September 2022, when the Commission proposed suspending about EUR 7.5 billion of Hungary's cohesion funding, and in the Council's decision of 12 December to suspend a smaller sum as part of a wider package*. Fire if Hungary is blocking without naming a price, or if the room is asking candidates for rule-of-law reforms without noticing the same argument inside the Union.

NEWS FLASH, Brussels. The Commission has confirmed its proposal to suspend about EUR 7.5 billion in cohesion funding to Hungary under the conditionality regulation, citing deficiencies in public procurement and the prosecution of corruption. A Council decision is expected before the end of the year. Officials in Budapest describe the move as political pressure.

Purpose: makes the price of the block explicit and gives the Netherlands, Parliament and the Commission a line they can use without accusing anybody personally.

Ad-hoc flavour, not an inject. If Serbia and Kosovo are both cast and their dispute has vanished from the room, the chair may mention reports of tension at the administrative crossings in northern Kosovo. Do not build a mechanic on it.

7.4 Running notes by block

These are maximalist running notes for a facilitator who wants fuller control of the scenario. It is fully possible to mostly let it run. When in doubt, consider that intervening too much is also a failure.

Block 1. The statements are short on purpose and the room will still run over; the chair should cut politely and visibly, so that being cut is normal by the third speaker. While statements run, note who names a red line in public, because those are the sentences the room will spend Block 2 trying to get around. In the last few minutes check that the Commission has divided its work and that the candidates know which of them are natural allies.

Block 2. This is the scenario's deep water: eight files, twenty-three delegations and no agenda. Resist refereeing it. Watchpoints, in rough order of importance. **The Commission is the bottleneck**: it has to produce a sheet for eight candidates and a funds package in seventy minutes, and if it spends fifty of them in bilateral meetings it will table something incoherent. One private question around 1:00 ("do you have a draft sheet yet?") is usually enough. **The EU channel decides the session**: if the member states never meet without the candidates, the Council arrives at Block 3 without a shared position and the unanimity votes go badly. **The candidates rarely coordinate**: they have a channel and mostly do not use it, which is worth noticing rather than fixing. **Hungary needs an interlocutor**: if nobody is negotiating with it by 1:15, expect a block in Block 3 that surprises the room; that is a legitimate outcome and a good debrief, but you may prefer to fire I3.

At 1:35, collect the special actions in writing, with a time stamp, and do not let anyone revise them afterwards.

The break. The Commission works. Everyone else should actually stop.

Block 3. Hold the order of the five steps. The most common pathology is a member state trying to negotiate during the vote; the chair should record the objection and move on, and the room can reopen a candidate only if it has time at the end. The second is a candidate accepting more reform than its capacity allows. That is a legal choice, not a mistake: note the points over capacity on your outcomes sheet without comment and let the roll decide later. If you suspect a candidate has simply miscounted, you may ask it privately to confirm its arithmetic.

Failure modes. Deadlock in Block 2: do nothing first, then consider an inject, then let the chair narrow the plenary to one question. A Council that agrees on everything too quickly: no intervention, and a harder debrief about what was asked of the candidates. A monolithic Commission that has decided everything by 1:00: send a member state to ask it for something. A comedy collapse: let it run a while, then call a short meta-pause and recalibrate rather than issuing an in-game punishment.

7.5 Outcomes and debrief kit

The technical break (5 minutes). For each candidate, in this order:

1. **Actual capacity summary**. Starting capacity, minus capacity spent on special actions, plus reform support converted at the rising cost (1, 3, 6, 10 units for +1 to +4). If the funds package was rejected, the capacity stays on the original basic number.

2. **Accepted cost**. Add up the recommendations it accepted.

3. **Over-reform**. Accepted cost minus capacity. If positive, roll or use random.org: 25% for collapse at 1 point over, 50% at 2, 75% at 3, 90% at 4 or more.

4. **Scores**. If the government holds, raise each accepted area by its cost, up to 5. If it falls, nothing moves.

5. **Special condition**. Resolve it from the handout: Moldova's election, North Macedonia's exhaustion, Bosnia's freeze, Montenegro's coalition, Ukraine's war, Serbia and Russia.

6. **One sentence of epilogue**. What the next year looks like, in the register of a news summary. It is meaningful here to sell the success ("Albania managed to reform its economy") and to clearly address the possible crises ("Candidate country X loses its government, chaos ensues") - but still, one sentence.

With two facilitators, one does the arithmetic and one writes the sentences. Optional endings for other stakeholders, one sentence each, add a good deal for little effort: whether Hungary got its units or its block, whether the Parliament let the money through and which signals it sent, whether Bulgaria has its declaration, how the Presidency will be remembered.

The debrief (20 minutes), and the full debrief continues in the next course session. If your timing forces a different order, always do the outcomes and the decompression immediately. Establishing shared reality is better done straight away but can be handled in the written feedback.

1. **Outcomes**. Read the epilogue candidate by candidate and update the scoreboard in front of the room (about five minutes). Name the rolls: a government that fell because it over-reached is the scenario's most useful single moment, and so is one that over-reached and survived.

2. **Decompression**. The scenario is not especially emotional, but it is frustrating by design, and a lost roll can sting. A prompt like "what happened from where you were sitting" is enough. Frame the round so that participants describe the in-game reality rather than their own performance.

3. **Shared reality**. Name the bends: one conference, candidates in the room, Parliament voting, ten weeks in two hours, reform as a number and collapse as a die roll.

4. **The reveal**. Possible, not needed. Short examples work better than a full disclosure: the capacities nobody knew, one or two special conditions, and any side agreements the parties are willing to publish. It usually takes one revealed capacity for the room to understand why a candidate refused something everybody thought was reasonable.

5. **Institutional questions**. Pick two or three:

   - Where did the decision actually get made: in the plenary, in the EU channel, or in a bilateral?
   - What was the veto worth, and who paid for it?
   - The candidates had no vote. How much did that matter, and what did they have instead?
   - The money moved on qualified majority and the politics on unanimity. Did anyone use that, and when did they notice?
   - Who pushed a candidate beyond its capacity, and did they know they were doing it?
   - You asked candidates for rule-of-law reforms. Was the same standard applied inside the Union in this room?
   - Which candidate did the room quietly decide it could afford to disappoint, and when?

6. **Comparison with 2022**. Appendix B. The most useful single comparison is the December package in which a member state's objections were lifted in exchange for a smaller suspension of its own funds, in public, across unrelated files.

7. **Bridge to the homework**. Chapter 8.3.

7.6 Variant: in person

The scenario works in person and the multi-track design lands harder, because participants can see who is meeting whom. You need a plenary space and three to five breakout spaces, and the shared document should still be shared, on a screen the room can see, so that the scoreboard stays public.

Two adjustments. First, the EU channel and the Candidates channel become rooms, and the fact that the EU side is meeting without the candidates becomes visible: this is more uncomfortable and more instructive than the online version. Second, the special actions handed in at 1:35 need a physical form; print slips.

Timing is the same. Movement between rooms costs more than online, so the chair should call the state of play from a fixed point and give a one-minute warning before plenary returns.

Chapter 8
Communication templates

Placeholders in square brackets are cohort-specific.

8.1 Role-assignment email

Subject: Your role for the EU Enlargement simulation, [DATE]

Dear [NAME],

For our simulation on [DATE] you will play **[ROLE].**

Attached you will find three documents: the general factsheet, which everyone receives; the one-page player aid explaining how the Final Act and the voting rules work; and your role handout, which is yours alone. Please do not share the role handout, including with members of your own delegation: they have their own, and part of what each of you knows is not meant to be common knowledge.

Your delegation channel on Discord is [CHANNEL]. You are welcome to prepare there and to talk to other delegations before the session.

Two things worth doing before we start: read your own numbers carefully, because they decide what you can realistically promise, and rename your Discord profile to your function with your flag or institution's logo.

If anything in the rules is unclear, write to me directly rather than in a shared channel.

[SIGNATURE]

8.2 Pre-session announcement

@everyone: we start on [DATE] at [TIME]. Plan for about 165 minutes: a short welcome, three blocks of play with one break, a short pause while we work out the outcomes, then a first debrief. The full debrief comes in our next session on [DATE].

Before you log in: read the factsheet, especially the etiquette section, and the player aid. Have your role handout open. Rename your profile to your function. Log in five minutes early so we can start on time.

8.3 Post-session message and homework

@everyone: thank you. The outcome of the conference was [SUMMARY IN ONE SENTENCE]. The scoreboard as it stands after the outcomes is in the shared document, along with the side agreements the parties agreed to publish.

We continue the debrief at the start of our next session on [DATE]. Keep your grievances in role and try to bring some of them with you.

Before then, please write **half a page to one page** on the following:

1. Name one decision your delegation took during the negotiation and describe what it cost you. Not what you wanted: what you gave up to get it.

2. Look up what the European Union actually decided about your country or institution between October and December 2022. Where did our room differ, and what explains the difference?

3. One sentence: what would you do differently with the same brief?

Answers written in your own words are more useful than polished ones. If you used an AI assistant, a one-line disclosure is fine.

Appendices

Appendix A - A worked Final Act

An illustration, not a target. It shows what a plausible sheet looks like and where the arithmetic bites.

Albania (scores 3 / 2 / 3 / 3, capacity 4, which the Commission does not know). The Commission tables Rule of Law +1, Corruption +2, Democracy 0, Economy +1: total cost 4. Albania accepts everything, exactly at capacity, with no risk. If its government holds, and it will, its line reads 4 / 4 / 3 / 4 after the session.

Serbia (2 / 1 / 2 / 3, capacity 5). The Commission tables Rule of Law +2, Corruption +3, Democracy +2, Economy 0: total cost 7. Serbia has three choices. It can decline 2 points and be called unwilling. It can accept everything and go 2 points over capacity: a 50 per cent chance that its government falls and nothing is delivered. Or it can ask for reform support: 3 units buy 2 points of capacity and make the whole sheet safe, which is a quarter of the budget spent on the most controversial candidate in the room. If Serbia has also declared its break with Russia (3 capacity) it is left with 2, and accepting the full sheet puts it 5 over: 90 per cent.

Moldova (3 / 2 / 2 / 1, capacity 5, an election that needs 3 points). The Commission tables Rule of Law +1, Corruption +2, Democracy +1, Economy +1: total cost 5. With no stabilisation Moldova must spend 3 capacity on its campaign and has 2 left: accepting everything is 3 over, 75 per cent. With 3 stabilisation units it keeps all 5 and accepts safely. With 2 units it spends 1 on the campaign, has 4 left, and accepting everything is 1 over, 25 per cent.

The Funds Lead's question is visible here in one line: the same 3 units make either Moldova's election or Serbia's whole sheet safe, not both.

The lesson for the Commission, which usually arrives too late: a sheet that is technically correct for all eight candidates is either impossible or dangerous for at least three of them, and the two detailed reviews were the only way to know which three.

Appendix B - The historical outcome: debrief sheet

Question	What happened by December 2022
Ukraine, Moldova	Kept candidate status with conditions attached; the decision to open accession negotiations came only in December 2023, the first intergovernmental conferences in June 2024
Albania, North Macedonia	Negotiations opened in July 2022; North Macedonia's constitutional amendment on the Bulgarian minority was not passed
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Granted candidate status in December 2022, with its fourteen priorities still outstanding
Kosovo	Applied on 15 December 2022 and received no decision
Serbia, Montenegro	Negotiations continued with little movement; Serbia did not align with sanctions on Russia

Question	What happened by December 2022
Hungary	EUR 6.3 billion suspended in December, less than the Commission proposed, in a package in which Hungary lifted objections in unrelated files
Money	Pre-accession assistance continued under existing programmes; Ukraine received a separate EUR 18 billion macro-financial assistance package for 2023

Two comparisons are worth making explicitly. First, that the fastest decisions of 2022 went to the countries with the weakest scores, which tells participants something about what the process actually measures. Second, that the only veto resolved in the period was resolved by paying for it in a different file.

Appendix C - Facts versus game design

Historically grounded (register 1): the dates and decisions in Chapter 3 and Appendix B; the Bulgarian objection and the French compromise; the fourteen priorities for Bosnia; the seven steps for Ukraine; the five member states that do not recognise Kosovo; the conditionality procedure against Hungary and its December outcome; the Gazprom reduction to Moldova; the Prague European Political Community summit of 6 October 2022.

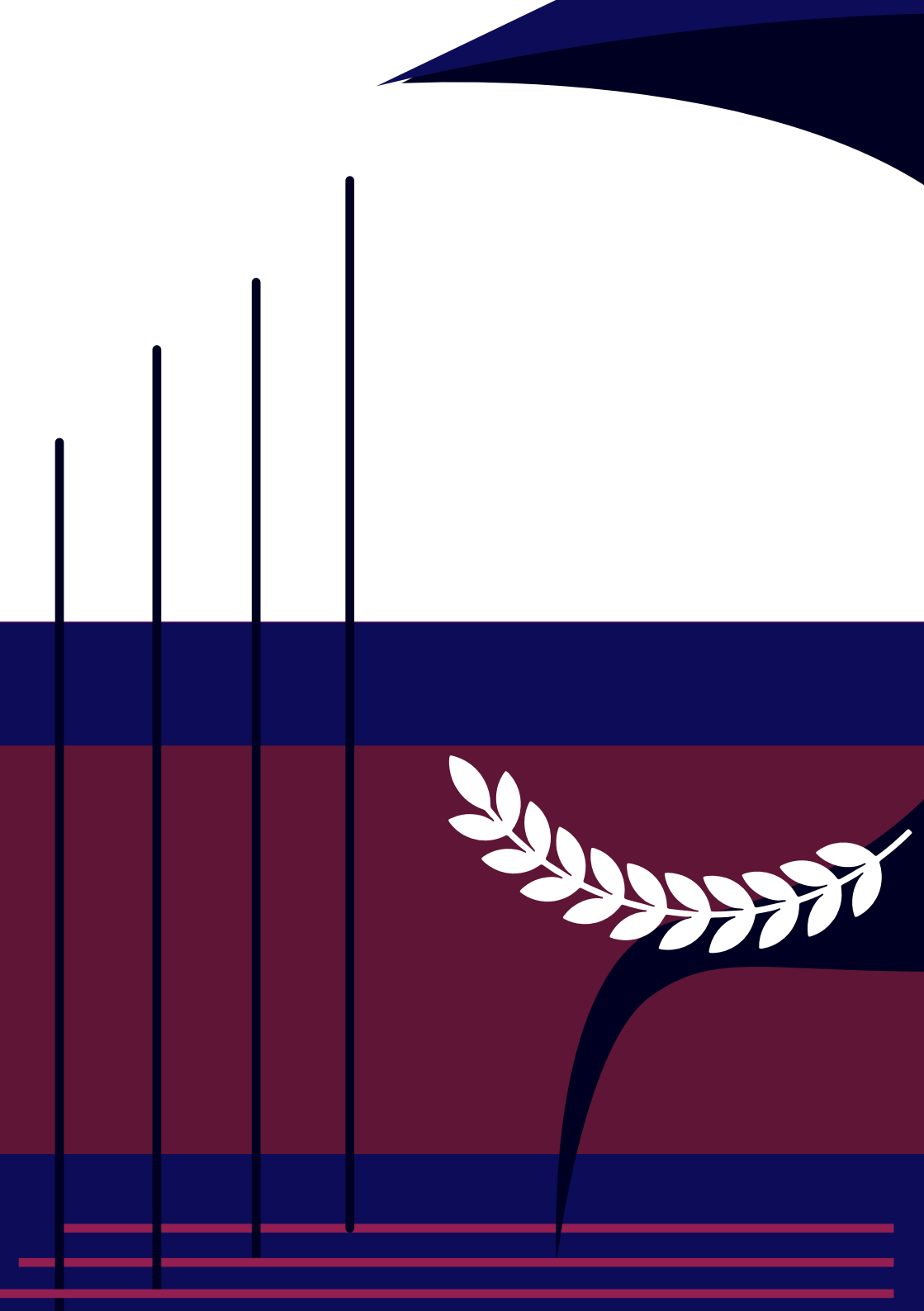
Invented for playability (register 3): the conference itself and the presence of candidates at it; all scoreboard values; all reform capacities; the four-area scoring model and its rubric; the fund units, their number, their three uses and the rising cost of reform support; the over-reform rule and its collapse chances; the Parliament's signal vote; the coupling rule between Albania and North Macedonia as a mechanic; the specific prices attached to each special condition; the requirement that the funds package pass as a whole.

Positions of countries and institutions are fictionalised in register 2: inspired by publicly reported positions, simplified into one or two motivations each, and attributed to institutional functions rather than to any named person.

Appendix D - Sources and further reading

- European Commission, 2022 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy and the accompanying country reports, 12 October 2022. The source for what the Union actually said about each candidate that autumn.
- European Commission, Opinions on the membership applications of Ukraine and Moldova, 17 June 2022. Where Ukraine's seven steps come from.
- European Council conclusions, 23-24 June 2022 and 15 December 2022. The two decisions the scenario compresses into one.
- Council of the European Union, decision on budget conditionality regarding Hugary, 12 December 2022. The purchased veto.
- Commission proposal on measures for the protection of the Union budget, 18 September 2022. What I3 is grounded in.
- European Parliament resolutions on the Commission's 2022 reports on the candidate countries. Useful for how Parliament's political weight is exercised without a formal power at this stage.
- Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III). What the fund units stand in for.
- The revised enlargement methodology, Commission communication of 5 February 2020, which introduced clusters and reversibility. The reason conditionality in this period is phrased as something that can be undone.

EUROPEAN PIRATE
ACADEMY

THE**GREENS/EFA**
in the **European Parliament**

The Pirate Academy was made possible by the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament.