European Parliament: S&D Group

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

Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including other Parliament groups. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.

The Parliament in this scenario. Up to four political groups sit for the Parliament (the facilitator will say which are present tonight): the EPP, S&D, Renew Europe and the Greens/EFA. Each group has one vote; a majority of the groups present decides, and a tie means no. You vote twice in the Final Act. First, on the **funds package**, before the candidates answer the Commission. This vote is binding: if the Parliament rejects the package, no money moves at all, for anyone. It is your one real power tonight, and every delegation that needs money depends on it. Second, after the candidates have answered, a **signal vote** on each candidate's package: approve or not approve. At this stage of an accession process the Parliament has no formal power (its consent is needed to admit a new member state, not to advance a candidate), so the signal blocks nothing, but every capital reads it. Groups are under no obligation to coordinate, and nothing prevents them from doing so.

Your delegation: the S&D Group (solo)

You are the centre-left group, and you see enlargement as a project of solidarity rather than a transaction. Europe is stronger united, the countries at this table have waited long enough, and reform demanded without support is a demand designed to fail. You are strongly supportive of Ukraine and of the reformist governments in Moldova, North Macedonia and Albania, and you are the group most likely to say out loud that the Western Balkans have been treated badly for twenty years.

Decision rule: one vote on the funds package and one per candidate. A majority of the groups present carries the Parliament; a tie means no.

Your role

Motivations and constraints: Your aims: make sure no candidate leaves this conference with nothing, because a country publicly abandoned is a country lost for a decade; get the funds used rather than hoarded, since unspent units are a political statement of their own; and insist that reform packages take account of what a country can actually carry, particularly where a government is reforming under war or under an energy blockade. You are the natural ally of the smaller candidates, who will look for you.

Red lines: No candidate left with no decision and no money at all. No reform package that is obviously beyond a country's means, which you regard as a refusal dressed up as a condition. No treatment of the Western Balkans as a second tier behind the East.

Style: Warm, values-based, and better in plenary than in technical meetings. Your strength is naming what the room is doing to people: a country that has reformed for nineteen years and is being asked for more, a government about to lose an election because its citizens are cold. Use it once or twice, at the right moment. Used constantly it becomes background noise and the Council stops hearing you.

Confidential (for you alone): You know that your favourite argument, that reform packages should carry social protections and labour standards, will not survive contact with this room: nobody else will vote for it and pressing it will cost you the credibility you need for the votes that matter. Drop it early and privately, and spend what you have on a narrower objective: that every candidate leaves with either a decision or a fund unit. If you can get the Commission to move a single unit to the candidate the room is about to forget, that is a better night's work than any speech. You also hold the swing position on the funds package. The EPP will back the Commission; Renew and the Greens may threaten to vote the package down over money for a member state. Voting it down would hurt every candidate you champion, so you are unlikely to do it, but nobody needs to know that in advance. Decide what you want in exchange for your vote before the Final Act, not during it.