European Tech Champions Act Simulation: Role Handout

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

Council: Germany

Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including members of your own institution. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions. Roles are institutional functions, never named living individuals.

The Council in this scenario

Five or six member states sit in the Council: Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Poland, plus the Netherlands if cast (the facilitator will say who is present). Each state has one vote. A text is adopted if **no more than one member state present votes against**. If the budget sheet contains any **EU borrowing for grants** or a **new own resource**, the Council has to decide **unanimously**, and abstention then counts as against. If the Commission opposes the final text, unanimity applies as well. On day 1 you build a Council mandate with the other member states; on day 2 you defend and trade it in the trilogue against the Parliament. Only member states present can declare loans, pledge voluntary national contributions or redirect their cohesion and Recovery money. The rules in full are in the general factsheet.

Your position in October 2025

Germany agrees that Europe has to invest in technology, and it has started at home: in March 2025 it changed its constitution to allow large borrowing for defence and infrastructure. That makes your position in Brussels harder, not easier. Your government's line is that Germany borrows for Germany, and that the EU should not borrow to give out grants again after NextGenerationEU. Joint EU debt for grants is the one thing your finance ministry will not sign.

Your industry has had a bad year. In July 2025, Intel cancelled its planned chip factory in Magdeburg, the largest foreign investment in the country's history. German carmakers depend on chips from Asia and on exports to the United States. You want European technology policy that

is serious about security and supply, open to partners, and built on private money that public money attracts rather than replaces.

Germany also has a coalition partner that cares about climate and about workers. You will be asked at home whether the programme funds climate-friendly technology. You want to be able to say yes.

You are the largest net payer. Every euro of national contributions by GNI key costs you a quarter of it.

Your needs, wants and pain points

Needs (+3 each if fully met)

1. **No EU debt for grants (budget sheet, block B).** Fully met: EU borrowing for grants is zero, and total EU borrowing (grants and loans) is at most EUR 10 billion. No partial score.
2. **Leverage, not just money (budget sheet, block A).** Fully met: the co-investment target is at least twice the public envelope. Partly met: at least 1.5 times (+2), at least equal to the envelope (+1).
3. **Climate-compatible programme (Article 4 or 1, block D).** Fully met: the climate tag is at least 20%, or Article 4 applies the "do no significant harm" principle to all funded actions. Partly met (+1): climate objectives appear only as an objective in Article 1.

Wants (+2 each if fully met)

1. **Excellence (block C).** Open excellence-based calls get at least 70%. Partly met (+1): 60 to 69.5%.
2. **Security of supply (Article 7).** Suppliers from high-risk third countries are excluded from critical components and infrastructure funded by the programme. Partly met (+1): a risk assessment or Commission guidelines specifically on high-risk suppliers.
3. **No blank cheque for 2028 to 2030 (Article 2 or 8).** A review clause says that any funding after 2027 depends on the next long-term budget. Partly met (+1): an interim evaluation with no link to funding.

Pain points (-5 each if they happen)

1. **A new own resource (block B).** Any amount in the line "new own resource", including a digital levy described in other words. No partial.
2. **Germany pays the bill (block B).** National contributions by GNI key above EUR 6 billion (Germany would pay more than 1.5). Partly (-2): by GNI key above 3 up to 6.

Confidential (for you alone)

Your finance ministry minds the word "debt" more than the amount. You are authorised to accept a public envelope of up to EUR 20 billion if none of it is EU borrowing for grants: loans to member states that want them, reprogramming, and voluntary pledges are all acceptable. You may also pledge up to EUR 5 billion of German money voluntarily (Germany gave EUR 1 billion to the European Tech Champions Initiative in 2023), if it buys you something you need. Do not reveal either early. As long as borrowing for grants is on the table, you hold a veto, and that is your strongest card.

Who you need and who is in your way

- **Money:** the Netherlands (if cast) and the ECR share your line on debt. France, Spain and S&D want a large public envelope; Italy, Spain and Poland can be brought to loans because they would use them. The Commission needs your agreement and will look for a mix you can sign.
- **Leverage and excellence:** Renew and the EPP are natural allies in the Parliament; the Commission wants excellence too.
- **Security:** Poland and the Netherlands (if cast) are allies on high-risk vendors; Renew and the EPP will support you.
- **Climate:** Spain and the Greens want a higher climate tag than you need. They are useful allies, but they want more than 20%.
- **In your way:** S&D and the Greens on a digital levy; Italy and Poland on national envelopes; France on state aid that only rich countries can afford (you can afford it too, and you do not have to say so).

What you can give away

A larger envelope financed without grant borrowing; a moderate share of national or regional envelopes (up to 30%); a defence and dual-use earmark; Parliament oversight and reporting; social conditions for large beneficiaries; a widening bonus.

If there is no deal

Your no-deal score is **0**. You lose nothing if the act fails, and the room may know it. But a German veto that sinks the programme will be remembered in Paris, Rome and Madrid.

Scorecard: Germany

For the peer scorer. Score the final text, or record the no-deal score if no act is adopted. Each item scores once, at the highest level reached.

Item	Fully met if	Partly met if	Points	Score
Need 1: no debt for grants (block B)	borrowing for grants zero and total EU borrowing at most 10	no partial	+3	
Need 2: leverage (block A)	co-investment target at least twice the envelope	at least 1.5 times (+2); at least equal (+1)	+3	
Need 3: climate (Art. 4 or 1, block D)	climate tag at least 20% or “do no significant harm” in Art. 4	climate only as an objective in Art. 1 (+1)	+3	
Want 1: excellence (block C)	open calls at least 70%	60 to 69.5% (+1)	+2	
Want 2: security of supply (Art. 7)	high-risk suppliers excluded	risk assessment or guidelines specifically on high-risk suppliers (+1)	+2	
Want 3: no blank cheque (Art. 2 or 8)	funding after 2027 depends on the next long-term budget	an interim evaluation with no link to funding (+1)	+2	
Pain 1: new own resource (block B)	any amount	no partial	-5	
Pain 2: Germany pays (block B)	national contributions by GNI key above 6	by GNI key above 3 up to 6 (-2)	-5	
Total				
No-deal score			0	