

MMUN INC.

Understanding your Member State



**UNDERSTANDING
YOUR**

**MEMBER
STATE**

A guide on
where to
begin your
Model UN
research

MMUN INC.

Understanding your Member State

4 Areas to Examine

- 1 Background Facts
- 2 Identifying Priorities
- 3 Finding Connections
- 4 Past International Engagement

MMMUN INC.

Understanding your Member State

Background Facts

There are so many places to start, but consider these resources as you begin learning about your Member State

These two sites are going to give you basic backgrounds and links to further dive into the basics of your country. Before moving forward from these two areas you should be able to describe the government structure, have a brief history, know the geography, and somewhat have an understanding of the economy.

- CIA World Factbook
 - <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/>
- Member States of the UN
 - <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states>

Background Facts Cont.

How can you break it down?

So now you're overwhelmed with the data you collected – how can you break it up?

Take a note from the breakdown of the CIA world Factbook! Consider developing a country profile by geography, people, economy etc. – but **apply it to a way that is going to be useful for you**. Copying and Pasting all the information from your resources isn't research, you need to read and understand it.

For example -->

You learned that your Member State is an island, what do you know about islands? Maybe in your geography section you should note that your Member State will have views on sea-levels rising and global warming, which will point you in the direction of new research.

You learned that your Member State gained independence within the last 70 years, what is their relationship with their former colonizers? Are they part of a group still associated with their former colonizers – if so how does it impact their decision making?

You find that only 60% of your population have access to electricity. What does this mean for access to hospitals, how does it impact the labor market?

MMUN INC.

Understanding your Member State

Identifying Priorities

Before you can understand what your Member State's priorities are, you have to be able to separate **National Politics** from **Foreign Policy**.

1

In Model UN, you are a diplomat and should know to act as such. Language from Heads of State is often VERY different from that of the Member State's diplomat.

2

How should you learn to separate these items? Don't rely on news agencies for your research. Often times, you can find speeches from your Member State that have been given on a variety of topics. Look for ones made by representatives of your Member State at agencies as opposed to heads of state.

3

Check out the Speeches in the United Nations Digital Library!
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&cc=Speeches>
& <https://ask.un.org/>

Priorities Cont.

So we know that foreign policy is different from National Politics, but how ?

Foreign policy typically represents a viewpoint that is longstanding of a Member State and help supports long-term goals that support the individual Member State, possible regional partners, that aim to achieve or set up domestic prosperity.

- *Foreign Policy can be defined as the sum of all official external relations conducted by a Member State including, humanitarian assistance, military actions, participation in international treaties and organizations.*
 - *Note: Actions by an individual or individual organization that exists within a Member State do not contribute to Foreign Policy*

As an example, although the US domestically may consider climate change to be controversial, the US tends to support climate action on the international stage.

National Programs

Allies' interests

Precedent of Past International Agreements

Geographic Needs

Foreign Policy

Economic Interests

Cultural Norms and Expectations

Once you've broken all the different aspects of foreign policy down, you will be left with the priorities of your Member State on the international stage

Finding Connections

Who do you work with?

Regional Agencies are almost **ENDLESS**

- Did you know that if you can't find your countries specific perspective on a topic, you can look to regional agencies they are part of to point you in the right direction?
 - Make sure you know what regional agencies **and** groups your Member State interacts the most with
 - Know what **other Member States** are in those agencies - a great way to make working partners at conference in committee is reminding them of your shared interests
 - For example: *"As a member of ASEAN, Malaysia invites Philippines, Singapore, and Myanmar to discuss with them how these proposals will impact our unique Member States and ask that it's fellow ASEAN members work together to solve this problem."*



Starting point Regional Agencies

Not every Member State in these regions are members of these groups, but these are a good place to start!

South & Central America

- Central American Bank for Economic Integration
- Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
- Inter-American Development Bank
- Latin American Integration Association
- Mercosur
- Union Latina

Sub-Saharan Africa

- African Union
- African Development Bank
- Southern African Development Community
- Development Bank of the Central African States

Middle East

- Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
- Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development
- Council of Arab Economic Unity
- OAPEC

Europe

- CERN
- European Association for Palliative Care
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- European Space Agency
- Council of the Baltic Sea State

East ASIA

- Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
- ASEAN
- Pacific Alliance
- Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia
- East Asia Summit

- G7
- G 20
- International Labour Organization
- FAO
- BRICS
- Financial Action Task Force
- OPEC
- African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
- International Council on Clean Transportation

Connections are more than Location!

One of the first things you may have already learned is that Member States have different uniting groups beyond their location. They can be connected by basis of religion, political beliefs, treaties, socio-economic status, and much more. Don't forget to examine those countries you align with beyond your borders!!

- Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
- Interpol
- G 77
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent
- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
- NAM

Consider the Following

Past

International

Engagement

While your Member State & the International Community are striving to make the world a better place, understanding how your Member State will approach any topic means you must know how they have addressed it in the past.

Past treaties and your Member State's status with them. Signed? Ratified? Enacted? This can say a lot for your position

Does your country have a national action plan regarding the topic? Have they shared their practices?

How has your Member State voted on this item in the past?

Did your country support efforts on this topic monetarily or in other ways?

Consider how your regional bodies have acted on the topic?

Look for the most recent speech(es) on this topic by your country's representative, what did they say were priorities?

MMUN INC.

Understanding your Member State



Thank

you!

for more
guidance
visit
MMUN.org

MIDWEST MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Gateway to Diplomacy