

MEET EU

an initiative by
UNC-Chapel Hill
University of Pittsburgh
Florida International University

MEET EU: MODEL EUROPEAN UNION ATHENS, GREECE | Nov. 24-28, 2021 Danny Vazquez Tarrau's Testimonial



Danny Vazquez Tarrau in Athens at the Model EU

Model European Union Athens aims to promote knowledge of the decision-making process, representing the way new EU legislation comes to force while fostering mutual understanding and cooperation through debate and dialogue amidst youth within Greece and Europe. Participants aged from 18 to 30 years old had the chance to experience EU works by taking on the role of a European representative—either in the Council of the European Union or in the European Parliament—and thus had the chance to be actively involved in the creation of a legally binding text. As part of the MEET EU program, three students from FIU, who were trained by our JMECE, took part in this international event that took place in Athens from November 24 to 28. Our team included Danny Vazquez Tarrau, Jonathan Milian, and Abel J. Ramos Taype.

Below is Danny Vazquez Tarrau's enriching experience. Danny Vazquez Tarrau has a Bachelor in International Relations and a Certificate in European & Eurasian Studies at Florida International University.

Although MEUs mainly focus on the EU's policy-making process, applicants of MEU simulations are not required to have a legal or Political Science background. The dual purpose of the MEU is to experimentally educate people from all academic fields who are genuinely interested in how the decisions that affect us every day are made, and at the same time to create an embracing environment, where participants feel respected, heard, and valued despite coming from various walks of life and having differing opinions. It's perfectly okay to be different, and in fact, the MEU welcomes and embraces it!

At the end of the MEU Athens, each participant to felt enriched by this 4-day experience, not only because of the content itself but also because we felt united in our hearts and minds. After all, this is the motto of this event: United in Diversity we are, United in Diversity we stand. MEUs are truly the means for today's youth to fulfill this and empower themselves.

MEU was an experience unlike many others. Not only did we get to take part in the complex and complicated reality that is EU politics firsthand, but the best part was also sharing this experience with students from across the Continent. From Russia to Belarus, to almost every EU Member State, and with still a few outside the EU, this was a truly European experience unlike any other.

Battery and Battery Wastage and Data Governance Act were the two pieces of legislation that we tackled during our almost week-long conference. From noting the highly complex nature of EU legislation to the strict rules and procedures that govern how we in Parliament must behave, to the often acrimonious yet exhilarating challenge of working with (or against?) the European Council to pass legislation that affects the entirety of the EU, allows those of us who have the honor to participate, to better appreciate the EU in all its idiosyncratic complexities.

While personally, having the opportunity of traveling to Athens and competing with my fellow FIU MEU team, Abel Ramos and Jonathan Milian was a crowning achievement. Yet what made this such a momentous week for me was the lifelong

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Athens , Greece

friendships and connections that I was able to make with my fellow MEPs and Council Members. From exploring Athens after the conference to waking up early and working hard to better the lives of our fellow Europeans truly and sincerely cemented the bonds of friendship and even family that we made throughout the week.

A truly unforgettable experience. One that I am especially thankful to the entire staff of the Miami-FL Jean Monnet European Center of Excellence for helping to facilitate on our behalf. Helping to make better "Europeans" of us all.

*By Danny Vazquez Tarrau
FIU student in International Relations*



Danny Vazquez Tarrau at the Model



Danny Vazquez Tarrau and Abel Ramos Taype in Athens, Greece