



Portugal



Portugal's history with chocolate goes back to 1502, when Christopher Columbus was presented with some cocoa beans by an Indian chief. (Columbus, though he sailed for Spain was from Portugal.) Columbus had no idea what the beans were and thus failed to realize the value of this gift. It would be another 80 years before cargoes of cocoa beans were shipped back to Europe.

Portugal is one of the EU's poorest members. Since joining the EU in 1986, the standard of living in Portugal has risen dramatically. Portuguese citizens can now afford to buy treats that were once too expensive. For example, in the 1980s only 5% of the population bought and ate chocolate. By 1999, at least 69% of Portuguese enjoyed chocolate regularly. Still, the average citizen of Portugal doesn't have a lot of extra money to spend on the more expensive pure Belgian style of chocolate. For now, they'd simply be happy to be able to buy the less expensive style made in Portugal.

Because it has relatively few natural resources, Portugal imports more than it exports. Some of the major products it exports include wine, olives and olive oil. In order to improve its economy, Portugal would like to develop new industries so it can sell products to the rest of Europe. While chocolate hasn't been an important part of the Portuguese economy, the new chocolate law you will be creating in the simulation could help chocolate companies in Portugal a great deal. Up until now, Portugal could not sell its chocolate to the rest of the EU because it contains some vegetable fats in place of cocoa butter. Like Cadbury chocolate, chocolate traditionalists think Portuguese chocolate isn't *pure chocolate*.

As a minister for Portugal, the future of your job depends on the economy doing well. It also helps to keep your citizens happy. If they continue to earn more, they can buy more chocolate – who could be unhappy about that?!

Because Portugal is a smaller country with a relatively low population, therefore, you will need to find other countries that are in favor of allowing less-than-pure chocolate to be sold throughout the EU so you can pool your votes. If you work together, you might have enough votes to win an outcome that is good for Portugal.

The following are the major questions you will need to settle at the simulation. Before then, you'll need to try to figure out how different countries feel about these issues. Try to find other countries that agree with you so you can work together. Also try to convince those who disagree to see your point of view. Of the voting bodies, Portugal's vote has a weight of 2.54%. Use the space below each question to take notes as you learn more about where the other countries stand.

1. Consumers will want to know what kind of chocolate they are buying. Traditional Belgian-style chocolate should be called chocolate. But what should the Cadbury's style of chocolate be called?
2. Can anything containing just a bit of cocoa powder be called chocolate? In the U.S., chocolate must have at least 10% cocoa powder. Cadbury's has less than 10%, while much of the chocolate you sampled had 70%. What percentage of cocoa should the new law require?
3. Traditional chocolate is made with cocoa butter. Chocolate made in Denmark, Ireland, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom has vegetable fat added in place of the cocoa butter. Should there be a limit to how much vegetable fat is used? What percent of the total fat can be vegetable?
4. If chocolate contains vegetable fat it should say so on the label. But what should the label say? Is it enough just to list vegetable fat in the ingredients? Or should there be some sort of bold warning on the front?