

Portfolio Parliamentarium Board Game

Section 1: Project Report

Introduction

Parliamentarium is a role-playing game with the aim to demonstrate to the participants how the European Parliament works. The players are divided to be part of different political groups and their task is to debate actual issues and themes. At this moment, the game is located physically in Brussels, Strasbourg, Paris and Tallinn creating a limitation for access to the game. Additionally, it requires a large number of participants in order to play it which eliminates the possibility of playing the game with a small group of friends.

Our project has the goal to make the game accessible for a greater audience that can vary in age. Contrary to Parliamentarium, we want to create a game which can be played by a minimum of two people. The game will consist of a competitive and collaborative multiplayer board game. Players will interact by playing cards, reacting to events, negotiating and voting in the end. One of the challenges of the game is to transfer all the European Parliament characteristics to the game.

Project Goals & Impact

The goal of our project is to complete a working prototype of a board game, which can serve as a proof of concept. The Parliamentarium game had a lot of voice acting, writing and a reliance on technology. Instead of attempting to reimagine the entire experience, we will focus on the core mechanics of the game (which we deemed to be the main deficiency) and express our vision at a smaller scale. The main challenge of the project will come down to being able to take the needs of the Parliamentarium project and existing experience as a reference and design a board game around that. The reason this is a problem is that usually board games start with the design of the core mechanics, the setting and theme being created later.

The game is a political strategy game and it consists of a board game and cards. The board game will show the bill/legislation that the players will be voting for and in which part of the game they are at. In the game, players are going to be randomly divided into political parties

with specific ideologies or ideas. Their main objective is to vote for new laws and ensure it aligns with the manifesto's of their own political groups. Initially, players will be drawing info cards that will influence their game play choices. The info cards represent the player getting phone calls from random people, interest groups, other MPs, party calls and so on. Every time a player draws an info card the interest may change which may conflict with the party interest. After drawing all info cards, the players will start to draw action cards which will allow them to share info, look at other player cards, negotiate, trade cards, etc. In the last part of the game, the players are going to vote in accordance with their card.

Basis of Research

The whole class was invited to play the game in the Tallinn branch. Moreover we used documents related to the Parliamentarium game: "*A brief guide to the role play game*"; "*How to become a near-perfect politician*"²; and "*The European Parliament multimodal role-play game - Facilitator Manual*" to learn more about the game and to develop our game. Playing the actual game and reading research articles about it gave a full perspective of what are the advantages and disadvantages of it. This helped our team to prioritize the core mechanics that will make the game enjoyable to play. Furthermore, we researched a variety of board games to understand what are our potential competitors, what kind of features, mechanics and practices do they have and are there any similar elements that all of them use. Researching competitors helped us to understand what the audience of such board games are expecting from us. Moreover, it encourages us to find out mechanisms and designs that would only benefit our board game concept.

Stakeholders

European Parliament Administration, Parliamentarium Life Project Coordinator.

Institutions

European Parliament, Tallinn University

¹<https://visiting.europarl.europa.eu/files/live/sites/visiting/files/Leaflets/Role%20Play%20Game%20Brussels%20Leaflet/EP-brochure-role-play-game-EN.pdf>

²<https://visiting.europarl.europa.eu/files/live/sites/visiting/files/Leaflets/Role%20Play%20Game%20Brussels%20Leaflet/Annexes/parlamentarium-role-play-game-how-to-become-an-effective-politician-EN.pdf>

Feedback and Communication

At the end of November, we sent our project to the stakeholders. Overall they were impressed by the amount of effort that was placed in the game. For them, the mechanics were well thought out and the situations described were quite imaginative and realistic most of the time. They had some recommendations in regards to the wording, game rules, and the use of some expressions. Firstly, they suggested, for instance, to change the action card name “steal vote” to “influence vote” because it implies that democracy does not work. Secondly, they mentioned some game rules which needed to be clarified, such as, how is the point system per player and how the points are counted in the end of the game. Last, they advised us, for example, to change the lobby card saying "lobbyist from another party" because party members are not lobbyists but politicians. Our group made the required changes and also when communicating with the stakeholder we made clear that more changes could be made if necessary.

Game Analysis

Pros:

- Professional quality materials.
- Gives an overview of how the parliament works.
- Encourages negotiations, discussions and debates.
- Includes a plot twist.
- Includes different political parties.

Cons:

- No clear instructions on how to find common ground in committees.
- Fast pace activities in the beginning of the game (running between different sections)
- Limited options (Given a choice but you have to select predefined choices)
- Not measuring the efficacy of ideas and arguments.
- Most of the experience didn't relate to the actual game play.

Our Proposed Solution

- The game is a multiplayer political strategy.
- Players are divided into various political groups.

- The game is to be played by 2 to 8 players.
- The game consists of a competitive and cooperative multiplayer board game.
- Players will be able to select random scenarios to work on.
- Players will interact by playing cards, reacting to events, negotiating and voting in the end.

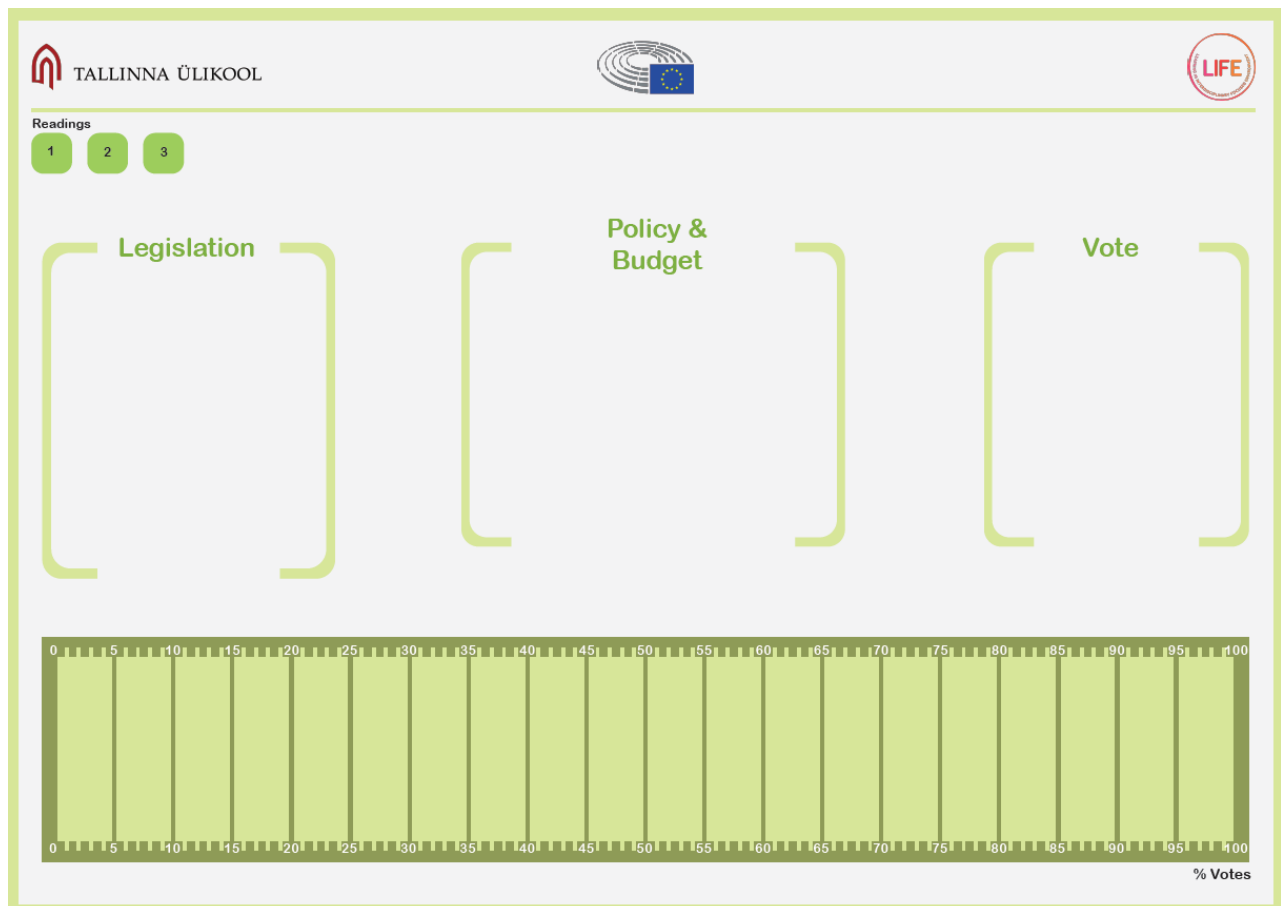
Results (Links to external documents)

During the semester we have compiled the following list of documents and resources towards achieving our final project end goal

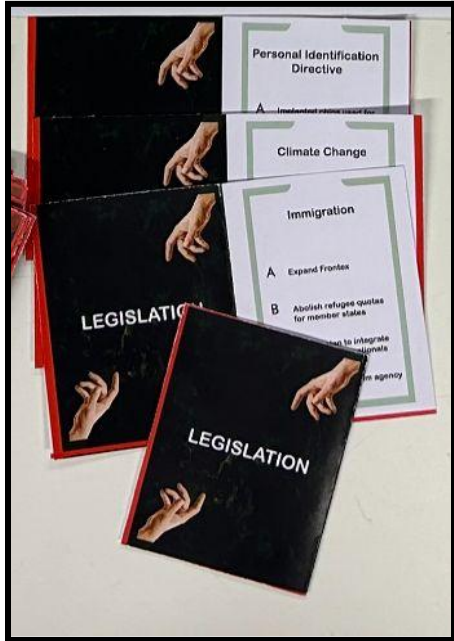
[Game Rules & Mechanics Document](#)

Visual Game Assets

[Legislation Board](#)



Legislation Cards



Player Party Cards



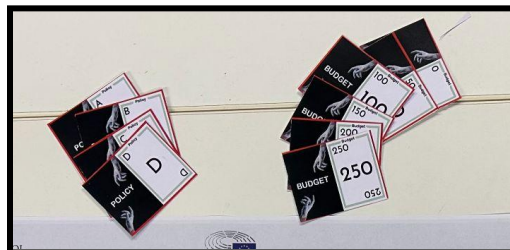
Action Cards



Info Cards



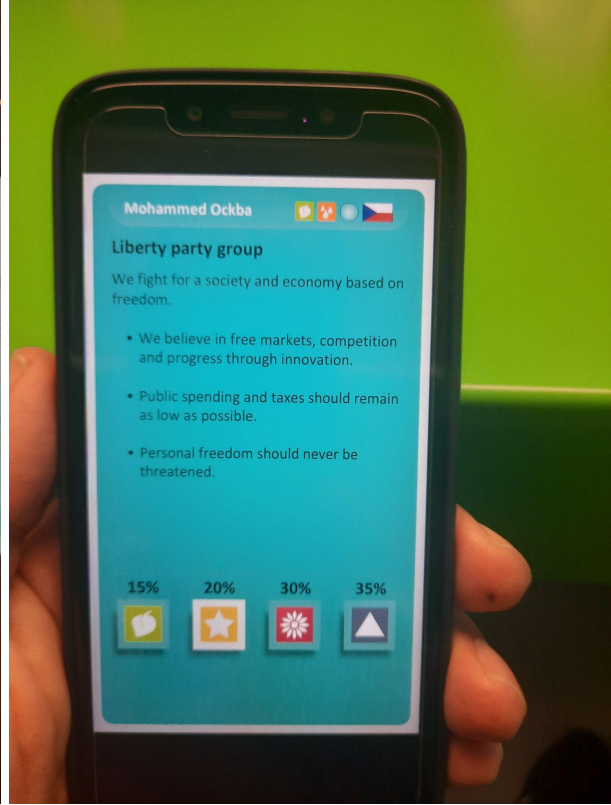
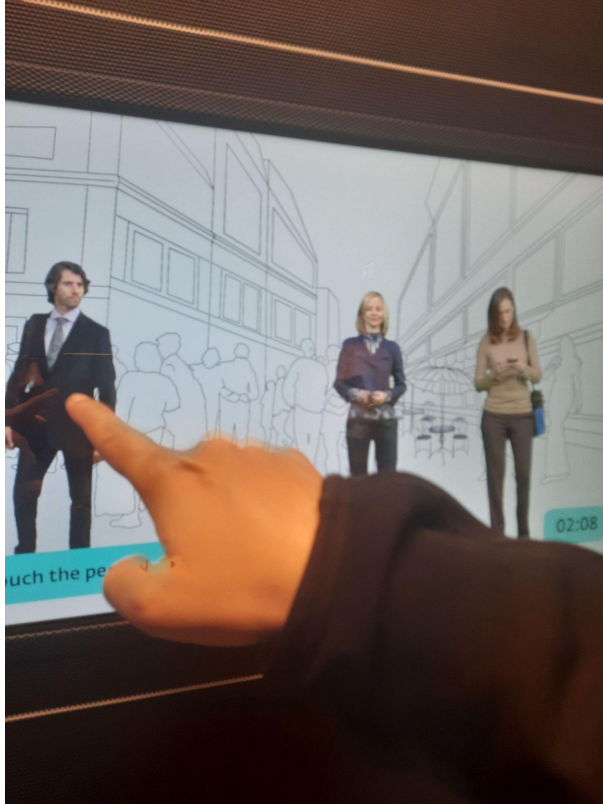
Policy & Budget Choice Cards & Voting Cards



Parlamentarium visit

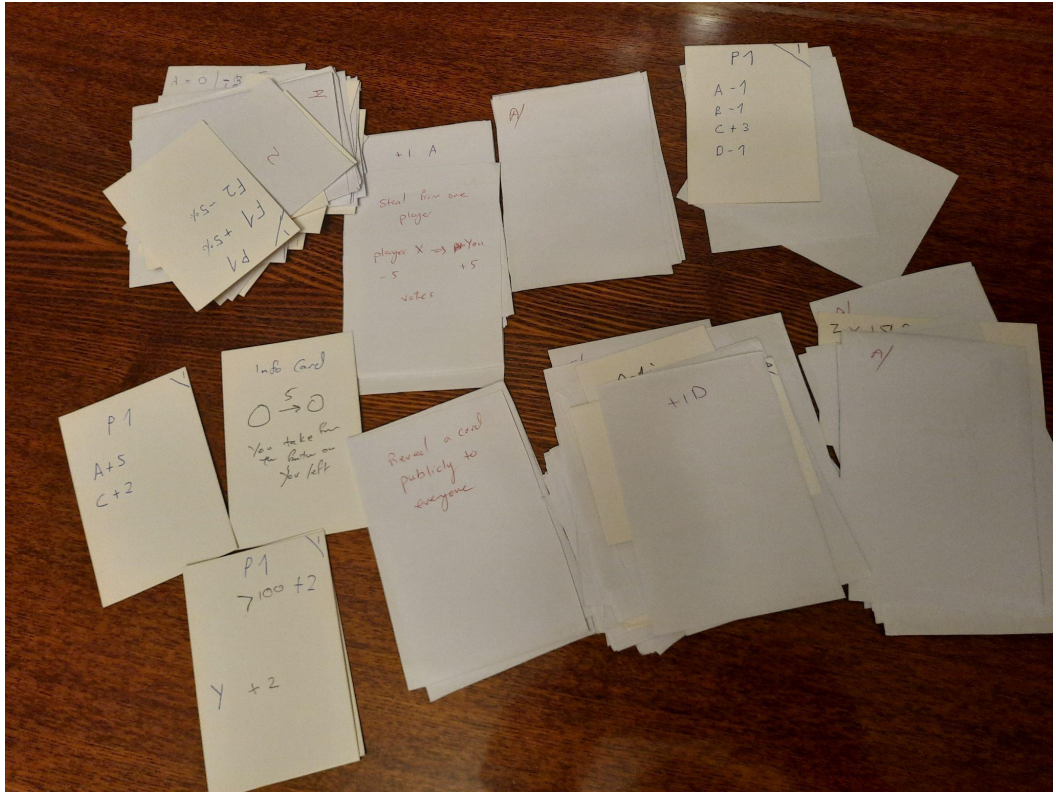
Tallinn Rävala pst 4 (Europa Experience Centre) on Sept 22 at 12.15.





Group Meetings and Paper Prototyping



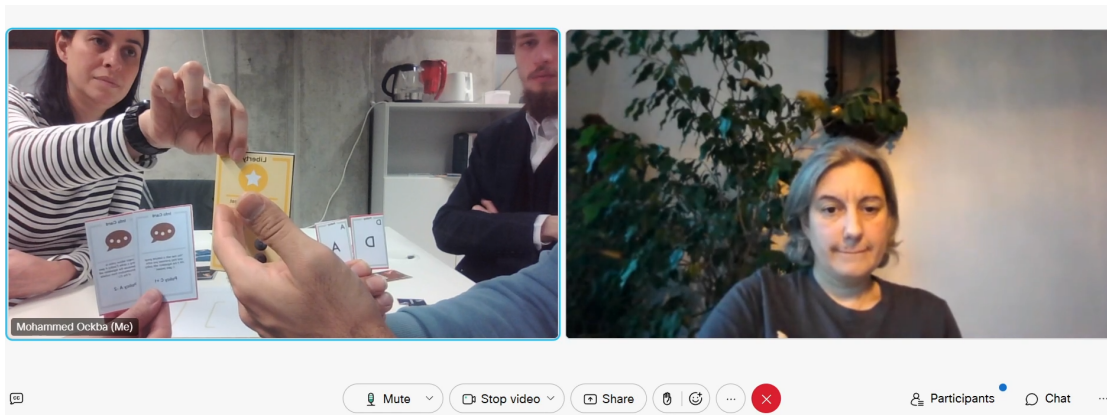
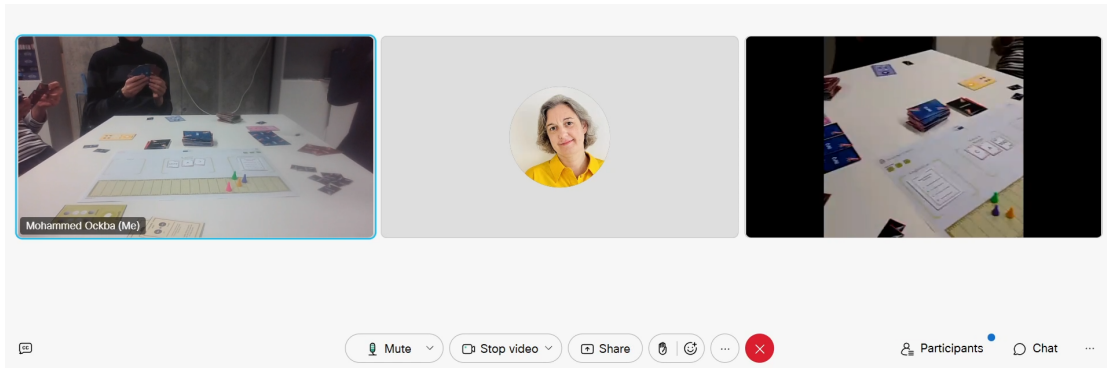


Playtesting Sessions:





Online Demo Session For European Parliament 2022-12-08



Section 2: Project Action Plan

Project scope description:

- The outcome of the project is to convert the existing game “Parlamentarium” into a board game to make it accessible for a greater audience.
- The goal is to make the Parlamentarium game as simple as possible, with the use of a simple terminology to create a fun game. The game is going to encompass topics such as citizen’s opinions, decision-making and voting.
- Contrary to Parlamentarium which needs a minimum of 16 people to play, the board game can be played by a minimum of two players but it is best with 4 players.
- It will consist of a competitive and collaborative multiplayer board game. The game will have different phases. Players will interact by playing cards, reacting to events, negotiating and voting in the end. Hence, the board game will be a more general idea of the original game.

Project deliverables:

The players will compete/collaborate to pass legislation (The policies and budget will be set randomly).

- Develop the core mechanics of the game.
- Design at least one legislation scenario(s).
- Create board game assets:
 - The game will consist of info, action and voting cards.
 - The player party manifesto (The character card).
 - The legislation board.
- Create the game narrative and card description information (labels).
- Playtest the game (among us, classmates, friends and actual stakeholders).
- Marketing the game using different social media platforms.
- Publishing the game and looking for potential investors.

Time Plan:

Milestones	Starting	Deadline
Played the existing game - Parliamentarium	2022-09-22	2022-09-22
Researched existing board and card games	2022-10-06	2022-10-12
Narrow down the scope of the project (Game Concept)	2022-10-06	2022-10-13
Develop the core mechanics of the game (Major1)	2022-10-15	2022-11-03
(Competitive mode)	2022-10-22	2022-11-03
(Collaborative mode)	2022-10-29	2022-11-03
Work on the Action Cards	2022-10-15	2022-11-03
Work on the Info Cards	2022-10-15	2022-11-03
Voting system	2022-10-15	2022-11-03
Scoring system	2022-10-15	2022-11-03
Design at least one legislation scenario(s) (Major2)	2022-11-03	2022-11-17
Create board game visual assets (Cards, board, other resources)	2022-10-15	2022-11-17
Generate a list of all the narrative labels for the Info and Action Cards	2022-10-29	2022-11-17
Playtest the game (among us)	2022-11-06	2022-11-17
Marketing the game using different social media platforms.	2022-11-15	2023-01-11
Refining the game systems (Major3)	2022-11-17	2022-12-01
Polishing the design of the cards	2022-11-17	2022-12-01
Playtest the game (classmates & friends)	2022-10-17	2022-12-08
Playtest the game (actual stakeholders)	2022-12-01	2022-12-08
Present the game project	2022-12-15	2022-12-15
Publishing the game and looking for potential investors.	2022-12-15	

Multidisciplinary Team

	Name	Role	Skills
1	Mohammed Ockba	Project Manager (PM)	Game Designer & Project Management
2	Ivan Varava	Developer (DEV)	Developer, QA & Game Design
3	Alex Hendrik Noormets	Game designer (DES)	Designer, Research, Writing & QA
4	Vinayak Babu Rao	Artist (ART)	Artist & Game Designer
5	Priscila Carrion Pajos	Researcher (RX)	Research & Writing
6	Shireen Imran	Narrative (AD)	Developer, QA & Sound Design

Resource plan:

Task	PM	DES	DEV	ART	RX	AD
Researched existing board and card games	s	s	s	s	R	s
Narrow down the scope of the project (Game Concept)	s	R	s	s	s	s
Develop the core mechanics of the game	s	R	R	s	s	s
Design at least one legislation scenario(s)	s	R	R	s	s	s
Create board game visual assets (Cards, board, other resources)	s	s	s	R	s	s
Marketing the game using different social media platforms.	s	s	s	s	s	R
Publishing the game and looking for potential investors.	s	s	s	s	s	R
Management	R	s	s	s	s	s

Our goal is to take the basic framework of the existing EU Parliamentarium experience and gamify it as much as possible. We concluded from our research and playtesting that focusing on the core mechanics is the most feasible way for our small team to make an improvement to the game. Because we are not reimagining the game, the core concepts of our game will be relatively easy to scale up for a larger number of players or export to another platform, such as a digital based experience. Thus, our game can serve as a basis and launching board for a new project to rework the entire Parliamentarium experience.

Section 3: Media coverage

Marketing Plan

We need to create a user-friendly website that will explain what the game is about, how you play it, what are the rules and what is the cost of it. The website should be easily accessible and follow the modern UX principles. It is extremely crucial to describe the game in detail and why players should play it. Even so, the website should promote learning about the EU parliament after the game. Moreover, we believe in promoting the fact that this game can be played anywhere in the world. People who purchased our game can play it at any convenient time and with any people.

In order to attract our target audience we will use social media channels to promote and create an interest in our board game. Specifically, we believe that YouTube, Instagram and Tiktok will be the right social media to send a strong message and encourage our target audience in playing the game. For instance, YouTube and Tiktok will be used to share short videos that will answer a question ‘why this game is fun’ and ‘why I should play it’, while Instagram will be used to share photos of actual playing sessions to demonstrate that the game is ‘fun’. This is needed in order to tackle the way the EU RPG game currently advertises itself, which as stated earlier some call it ‘boring’.

Social Networking Strategy

Instagram / TikTok

Our Instagram and Tiktok pages will have to some extent similar but also different content. Instagram will be used to display photos and videos from game sessions, specifically targeting the idea that the game is fun to play. While TikTok will be only used for videos with the same goal. The content between two platforms will be different in order to inspire our potential audience to follow both of our social media pages. Therefore, a video that was published on Instagram will not be published on TikTok and vice versa. Similarly to a website’s blog posts we will be publishing interesting facts about the EU parliament to increase the interest about the topic.

Discord

Since our game is made in a modular style, it is quite easy to add a new scenario or change something within a game to have a relatively different experience. We want to encourage the players who already played our board game and got tired of it to some extent to twist and manipulate it in order to create their own experience. Therefore, we will create a Discord community server where players can share their own ways of modifying our board game with anyone in the world. Additionally, we have plans to introduce a more advanced mode for our game and new scenarios after the release of our board game, therefore, we can have a direct contact with our player base and what is their input on additions to our board game.

YouTube

For our YouTube promotion we want to allocate a specific budget in order to work with popular youtubers that create videos about board games. Therefore, we would like to promote our board to their audiences. The promotion can be as a 30 second message about our game in the video or we can be sending our actual game to the video creator's address to review it.

Promotion online flyer



Associated Advertisement Text:

Parlamentarium Board Game is a multiplayer strategy board game alternative to the actual European Union Parliament experience physical game where players work together in similar/different parties to draft and pass the legislative process. The board game consists of multiple cards to pass the legislative process. Some cards are such as action cards (the purpose of action cards change the decision of through some action), info cards (the purpose of info cards to get information of certain events). The minimum number of players can play the game are two and maximum number of players can be 4.

Sharing Information Online Facebook DLG page

Digital Learning Games
3h · 🌐

Parlamentarium Board Game is a multiplayer strategy board game alternative to the actual European Union Parliament experience physical game where players work together in similar/different parties to draft and pass the legislative process. The board game consists of multiple cards to pass the legislative process. Some cards are such as action cards (the purpose of action cards change the decision through some action), and info cards (the purpose of info cards is to get inform... [See more](#)

BOARD GAME
PARLAMENTARIUM

STRATEGY BOARD GAME ALTERNATIVE TO THE ACTUAL EUROPEAN UNION PARLIAMENT

PLAY ANYWHERE WITH YOUR FRIENDS (UP TO 4 PEOPLE)

STRATEGIC & FUN

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share



Sharing Information online via Discord groups

The screenshot shows a Discord server interface. On the left is a sidebar with a server menu for 'boardgames'. The main area shows a chat log with several messages and images.

Server Menu (Left Sidebar):

- Public
- Your Server (with a boost icon)
- Want this server to feel unique? Unlock custom server banners with 5 more boosts.
- Boost this Server
- GOAL: LVL 2 (2/7 Boosts)
- GENERAL INFORMATION
 - welcome-and-rules
 - related-discord-servers
- BOARD GAMES
 - general
 - boardgames** (selected)
 - bg-recommendations
 - rpgtalk
 - trades-deals
 - boardgame-gallery
 - solo-board-games
 - original-content
 - server-feedback
 - strategy-and-tactics
 - conventions-and-meet...
 - user-settings
- ONLINE GAMES
 - lfg_online
 - async-games-1
 - async-games-2
 - async-games-3
- hi-rollers (3 Active Posts)
- SPECIFIC GAMES (SPOILERS)
 - chip-heads
- CaptainBu... #7210

Chat Log (Main Area):

- # boardgames** It's easier to turn board gamers into friends than friends into board gamers
- No Raptors Here** Yesterday at 21:48: Gonna kill myself lifting this thing over my head to get it on top of my Kallax.
- Zher0** Yesterday at 21:49: It'll get lighter after you punch stuff I think. Frosthaven shed 5 lbs
- ohgeetee** Yesterday at 21:57: only feels lighter cause your muscles are stronger
- @Zher0** It'll get lighter after you punch stuff I think
- No Raptors Here** Yesterday at 22:01: There's a good number of tokens, but it's still a damn big box. The luxury tiles box was also surprisingly heavy.
- Blu** Today at 04:01: I just saw this and I'm super hyped!

- cheesewhiz** Today at 04:14: I watched the play sample from PAX and I'm not sold on it yet
- CaptainBulba** Today at 13:40: Parliament game is multiplayer strategy board game alternative to the actual European Union Parliament experience physical game where players work together in similar/different parties to draft and pass legislative process. The board game consist multiples cards to pass legislative process. some cards type are such as action cards (the purpose of action cards change the decision of through some action), info cards (the purpose of info cards to get information of certain event). The minimum of players can play the game are two and maximum number of players can be 4.


Message Input: + Message #boardgames

Section 4: Self-reflection (Individually about learning experience of each team member)

Alex Hendrik Noormets - Political Science

This ELU project turned out to be much more exciting than anticipated. I initially expected to just be relegated to tasks related to my field, but my team gave me an opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and contribute to anything, mostly design. The project managed to stay ahead of schedule most of the time and the overall result is satisfactory. The only thing I regret is being too concerned with the expectations of different interest groups, thus making compromises in the game's design that could have possibly been avoided.

Ivan Varava - European Studies/ Digital Learning Games

If someone would ask me how I would describe my experience in three words during the project it would be fun, challenging and smooth. It was a great experience working together with different nationalities and various fields of study and work. Together we managed to create a playable concept that can be shown to friends, family members and anyone else. I believe that we managed to incorporate the main idea behind the original game into a smaller, more compact, affordable and accessible version. I am proud of being part of this project and have zero regrets in joining the Parliamentarium LIFE project.

Mohammed Ockba - Computer Science / Digital Learning Games

I feel proud of the game that we have created, I believe that we have designed a strong core mechanic, modular design and flexible narrative system that can be extended and applied to different scenarios. In the end, I am looking forward to continuing working on this game to get it published. In addition, gaining an insight into the publishing industry and their own requirements and tight deadlines is a lesson that one will definitely utilize in the future. As for this course, I liked the way it brings in different students from various backgrounds and disciplines to work on one project together.

Priscila Carrion Pajos - Law / Human Rights in the Digital Society

I believe we created a simpler and fun game. It is not as detailed as the original game because our focus was to make a game which didn't take too long to play. However, it carries the concept of the original game which is to show how the European Parliament works. It was a rich experience to be able to work with people from different backgrounds. It was interesting to see different perspectives about the same topic and how the ideas combined together created a solution. Overall, the experience was gratifying and I feel proud of the game which we all created.

Shireen Imran - Front-end Development / Digital Learning Games

The board game experience was fun. From start where we were not sure what would be final project but weekly meeting made this process easier therefore it was amazing experience with Team and everyone gave his/her best to deliver something extraordinary, by the end of project we had great developed such board game how European Parliament works. Thanks all team members

Vinayak Babu Rao - Multimedia / Digital Learning Games

By the end of the project I had a great feeling of accomplishment. All the team members had worked diligently for this project, and seeing the final outcome was a really great experience. The knowledge and experience that I had gained through this project is the main thing that I take with me. But I would also like to say I gained from this, new friendships as well. The only recommendation that I could say is please keep up the good work, because going into this course I had no knowledge and did not know what to expect, but what I experienced was extremely knowledgeable and insightful. And I am truly grateful for that.