MEMBER STATES



One Union. Competing interests.

DEMOCRACTICS

Co-funded by the European Union

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The air in the chamber is electric, and the eyes of an entire continent are fixed on you. You are more than just a player, you are the voice of your nation in the European Parliament, called to make decisions that may shape Europe's future.

Your objective is clear: gain as much Influence as possible and impose your vision. But the road to victory is full of dilemmas. Will you be the uncompromising champion of your home country or will you extend a hand to your colleagues to safeguard the future of the Union?

Fulfill your hidden mission, and remember that revealing too much too soon may cost you dearly. Only one state will emerge victorious, and it will be the one with the most Influence.

OVERVIEW

In Member States, players represent EU countries debating major challenges affecting Europe. Through negotiation, alliances, political deals and strategic voting, they shape the direction of the Union while trying to strengthen their own position and gain Influence Points (IP).

The game has two goals:

- To keep the European Union alive.
- To complete your Hidden Goal and gain more Influence Points than the other players.

If the European Union survives all 6 rounds, the player with the most Influence Points wins.

COMPONENTS

- 40 Agenda Cards with Consequences in the back
- 60 Political Action Cards
- 12 Investment Cards
- 9 Hidden Goal Cards
- Voting Cards A, B, and C*
- Member State Cards*
- Influence Point tokens*
- 1 Presidency Marker*
- 1 Cards Board*
- 1 Indicator Scoreboard*

* These components are not essential to play the game. You can make them yourself or replace them with common household items.

1. PLAYERS, GAME LENGTH AND OBJECTIVES

The game is designed for 3-6 players, lasts 6 rounds, and takes about 60 minutes to play. Additional variants, including a 2-player version, can be found in part 8 „Variants".

Players represent EU member states. Together, they form a shared

Parliament, where, through discussion and voting, they address the major challenges related to the economy, society, environment and international security.

The group shares one goal which is strengthening and preserving the Union. If any of the 4 indicators drops below 0, EU unity collapses, and all players lose. Through negotiation and debate, players must shape how the EU should develop and how it should respond to its challenges.

However, each state has a hidden goal. Some prioritise economic growth, some environmental protection, and others seek dominance over the rest. One of the players may even wish everyone else to fail.

2. KEY CONCEPTS

Indicators

The game tracks 4 indicators, representing the overall condition of the Union:

1. Economy that ensures the financial stability and prosperity of the Union.
2. Society that reflects public trust, social cohesion, and the well-being of citizens.
3. Environment that measures the health of our planet and the success of climate policies.
4. International Security that represents the Union's safety from external threats and its diplomatic influence.

Indicators move on the board between 0 and 8. They can't go higher or lower.

Influence Points (also called IP)

Influence Points, or IP, are the main scoring resource in the game. Players gain, spend, trade and collect IP during play.

Presidency Player

The player holding the Presidency Marker is the Presidency Player, or PP. This player reveals the Agenda, leads the round, manages the voting process and passes the Presidency at the end of the round.

Agenda

Each round begins with an Agenda Card. It presents a topic for debate and three possible choices: A, B, and C. Each choice leads to a different consequence.

Political Action Cards (also called PA)

Political Actions, or PA, are cards with unknown effects, some are positive and some negative. They might change some actions, give you some extra Influence Points or change the course of the game.

3. SETUP

Set up the game in this order:

1. Place the Board or the Indicator Scoreboard in the middle of the table.
2. Set all 4 indicators to level 3.
3. Shuffle the Agenda Cards and prepare a stack of 6 Agenda Cards, with the Agenda side facing up.
4. Shuffle the Political Action deck and place it on the board.
5. Place the Investment deck onto the board.
6. Put the Influence Point tokens near the board.
7. Choose one player to take the Presidency Marker.
8. Give each player:
    - 1 Member State Card.
    - Voting Cards A, B, and C.
    - 3 Influence Points.
    - 1 Hidden Goal Card.

4. GAME FLOW

The game lasts 6 rounds unless it ends earlier because the EU collapses. Each round has 4 phases:

- Reveal the Agenda
- Discussion

- Voting
- Resolution

4.1. Reveal the Agenda

The Presidency Player reveals the top Agenda Card and reads it aloud.
Then, starting with the Presidency Player and continuing clockwise, each player chooses one of the following:

- gain 1 Influence Point
- draw 1 Political Action Card
- take 1 Investment Card

If the Political Action deck is empty, shuffle the discard pile to form a new deck. If there is no discard pile, no card can be drawn from that deck. There is no hand limit for Political Action Cards.

Political Action Cards and Hidden Goal Cards are normally kept secret, but players may show them if they want.

Players can choose the Investment Card they wish to use from the entire deck.

If the IP supply runs out, keep track of points in another way.

4.2. Discussion

This is the negotiation phase of the round.
The Presidency Player is responsible for keeping the discussion moving, but all players may take part freely. Players may debate, negotiate, make deals, exchange support, and try to influence the outcome of the vote.
During the Discussion phase, players may trade or use:

- Political Action Cards
- Investment Cards, whether in progress or completed
- Influence Points

Hidden Goal Cards may be discussed or shown, but they may not be traded.

Promises and truthfulness

Players may make any kind of deal or promise, but there is one important distinction.

- If a promise can be fulfilled immediately, it must be fulfilled immediately (e.g. I give you 1 Political Action Card if you give me 2 IP now). A player may not lie about:
  - the content of a card they are giving away immediately;
  - the effect of a card they are playing immediately.
- Players may lie about future actions (e.g. Vote for A and I will help you next round). Future promises do not have to be kept.

Ending the discussion

The Presidency Player may end the discussion at any time. Once the Presidency Player does so, all negotiation stops and players move to voting.
Timing of cards

Unless a card says otherwise, Political Action Cards and Investment Cards (and any actions arrising from these cards) can only be used, played and completed during the Discussion phase.

4.3. Voting

Each player secretly chooses one Voting Card: A, B, or C. These letters correspond to the three options shown on the Agenda Card.
When all players are ready, votes are revealed at the same time. The Presidency Player counts the votes and the option with the most votes wins.

Tie

If there is a tie:

1. a short Discussion phase takes place again
2. no player gains cards or IP during that time
3. all players vote again

If the second vote is also tied, the vote fails. The Parliament has not reached agreement.

4.4. Resolution

If no decision was reached the Presidency Player lowers all 4 indicators by 1.
If a decision was reached the Presidency Player flips the Agenda Card to

the Consequences side and reads the result for the winning option, A, B or C. Apply all listed consequences. Some consequences may require additional player actions. Remember that Indicators may rise or fall, but they must stay between 0 and 8.

End of the round

Unless it is the last round, after resolving the Agenda:

1. discard the Agenda Card
2. the Presidency Player chooses one player to receive 1 IP
3. that player becomes the next Presidency Player

Restrictions:

- the Presidency Player may not choose themselves
- the Presidency Player may not choose the player who held the Presidency in the previous round

The choice may be based on the quality of the argument, strategic reasons, or any other reason the Presidency Player decides.
After the new Presidency Player has been chosen, begin the next round.

5. END OF THE GAME

The game ends in one of two ways:

1. EU collapse

If any indicator reaches 0, the game may end immediately.
If this happens during the Discussion phase
If an indicator reaches 0 because of a player action during Discussion, the other players have one chance to save the EU using only cards or effects they already have available. They must do this immediately. They may not draw new cards first. If no one can prevent the collapse, all players lose.
If this happens because of Agenda consequences
If an indicator reaches 0 because of the consequences of the Agenda, all players lose immediately.

2. End of round 6

If the EU survives all 6 rounds, the game ends normally. Each player then:

1. reveals their Hidden Goal;
2. reveals any cards that score IP at the end of the game;
3. adds all final points to their IP total.

The player with the highest number of Influence Points wins. If several players are tied for the highest total, they share the victory unless you choose a tiebreak rule before the game begins.

6. INVESTMENT CARDS

Investment Cards are a special type of card.
A player may play an Investment Card during the Discussion phase and place it horizontally in front of them. This means the card is in progress.
During the Discussion phase, players may pay the cost of that Investment by placing IP on the card. The cost may be paid all at once or in parts throught the game
When the full cost has been paid:

1. rotate the card vertically indicating the payment on that card is completed.
2. return the IP used to pay for it to the bank
3. apply the Investment's effect

A completed Investment remains in play until the end of the game, unless a card effect removes it.

7. EXAMPLE OF A ROUND

Anna is playing Poland and currently holds the Presidency Marker. She reveals the Agenda card:

Agenda: Energy Crisis:

- A Invest heavily in renewable Energy
- B Support fossil fuel subsidies for stability
- C Import emergency energy from outside the EU

At the start of the round, each player chooses one action:

1. Anna takes 1 IP.
2. Marco, playing Italy, draws a Political Action Card.
3. Sofia, playing Germany, takes an Investment Card.

4. Leo, playing Spain, also takes 1 IP.

The discussion begins.
Anna argues that option A is better for the Union in the long term.
Marco says option B will protect national economies more quickly.
Sofia offers Marco 1 IP if he supports A. Leo says he will vote for C unless someone supports one of his future proposals.
During the discussion, Sofia plays an Investment Card and places it in front of her. Marco trades one Political Action Card to Anna in exchange for 2 IP.

When the discussion ends, all players choose their vote in secret.

- Anna votes A
- Marco votes B
- Sofia votes A
- Leo votes C

Option A has the most votes, so it wins.
Anna flips the Agenda card and reads the consequence for A. The Environment indicator goes up by 1, but the Economy indicator goes down by 1.
The Agenda card is discarded. Anna chooses Sofia to receive 1 IP and passes her the Presidency Marker.
The round ends and a new round begins.

8. VARIANTS

8.1. Different difficulty

In the standard game, all indicators begin at 3. If you want to change the difficulty, use one of the following setup options:

- Easy: set all indicators to 5
- Hard: set all indicators to 2.

8.2. Two-player variant

Use the normal rules, with the following changes:

- Extra IP during Reveal

During the Reveal phase, each player also takes 1 additional IP.

- Extra Member State during Voting

Before the game begins, choose one additional Member State and place its Voting Cards next to the board.
During each Voting phase, starting with the Presidency Player, players may bid IP to control that extra state's vote.

- the first bid must be at least 1 IP
- the next player must bid higher or pass
- the highest bidder secretly chooses that state's vote

If neither player bids, the extra state casts a random face-down vote.

When it comes to the Presidency in a two-player game, instead of awarding 1 IP and choosing the next Presidency Player, the Presidency Marker simply passes to the other player. That player does not receive the normal Presidency award IP.

8.3. Simplified cooperative variant

For a more discussion-based and less competitive game, use these changes:

- do not use Hidden Goal Cards,
- do not use Political Action Cards,
- do not use Investment Cards,
- do not use Influence Points,
- skip any step that refers to gaining, spending, or trading those items,
- do not end the game if an indicator reaches 0,
- if a consequence normally requires players to pay IP for a successful outcome, treat that outcome as successful automatically.

When all 6 Agenda Cards have been used, add together the final values of all 4 indicators. That total is the group score. You can compare scores across groups or across different play sessions and reflect on the choices made during the game.