

ORIGINAL POSITION

Rulebook

Game overview

Original Position is a collaborative civic board game on the topic of distributive justice. The game intends for the players to reflect on the different systems of wealth (re)distribution and their underlying values, and ponder on their ethical merits.

The game is based on the thought experiment of the Original Position, proposed by John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* (1971). In the Original Position, Rawls introduces a scenario in which members of a society participate in the drafting of a social contract. All participants are invited to decide upon the principles that should govern their society and upon the political and economic structure of that society. However, the debate must be conducted from behind a “veil of ignorance”, meaning that, while deciding, the participants are oblivious to their own identity and social standing (gender, ethnicity, wealth, skills, education, religion, etc.).

The core concept for the game is to simulate the drafting of a social contract, by inviting players to collaboratively decide on the structures of wealth distribution of the game’s society, through reflecting on the underlying values and ethical merits of different models of wealth distribution. Gameplay has the players reflect on the balance between freedom to accumulate wealth and mitigation of the adverse effects of chance, as well as on what services and goods should be deemed essential and available to all.

The goal of the game

Winning conditions

The game proposes two alternative winning conditions: one allows one player to win individually, the other allows the players to win as a team.

Individual winning condition

The winner is the player that is able to earn the most points. Points are earned through the fulfilment of the Life Project items, total accumulated wealth. Additional points are earned for each other player that couldn't fulfil all their Life Project items.

Collective winning condition

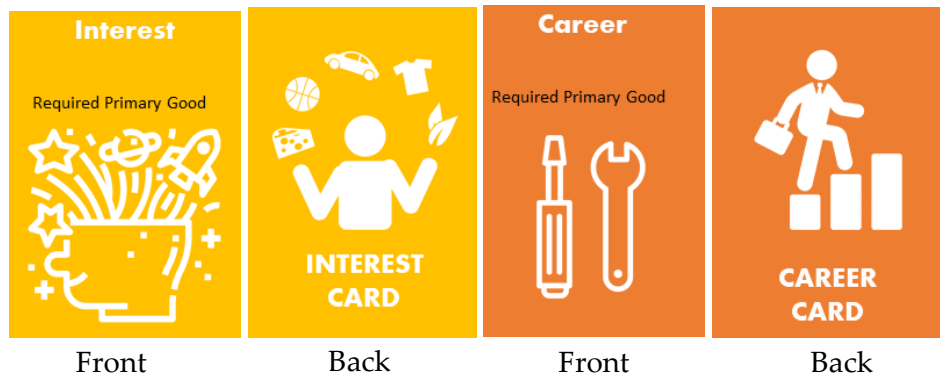
The players win as a group if all are able to satisfy the totality of their characters' Life Project items.

Game components

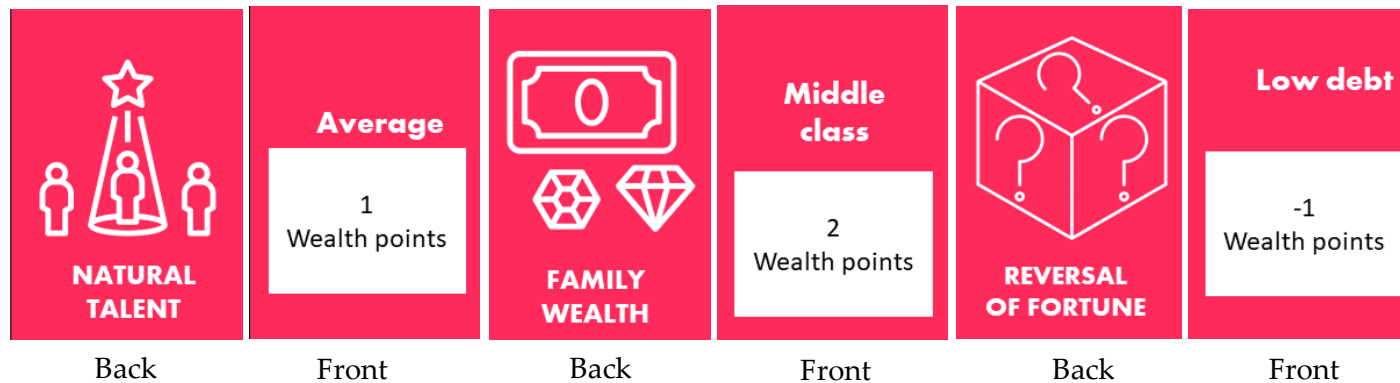
BUILDING THE CHARACTERS

Character cards

Life Project Cards

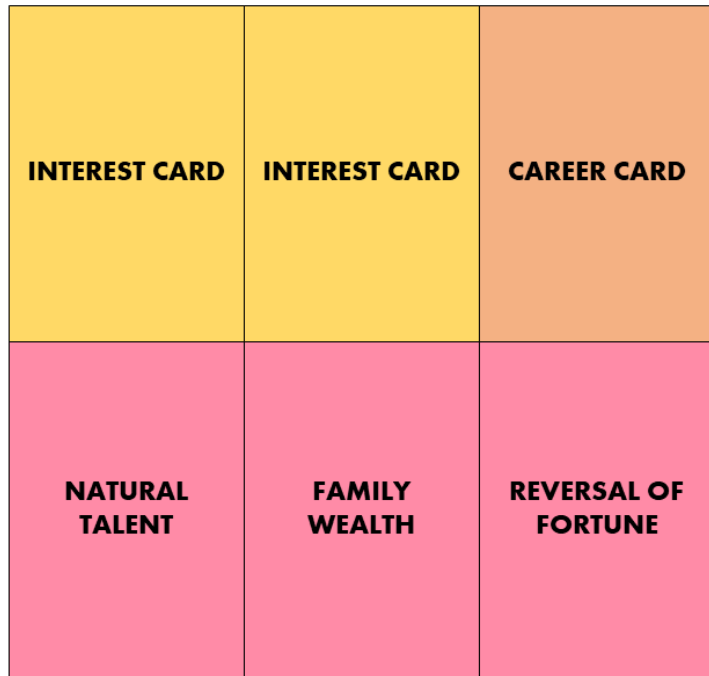


Chance Cards

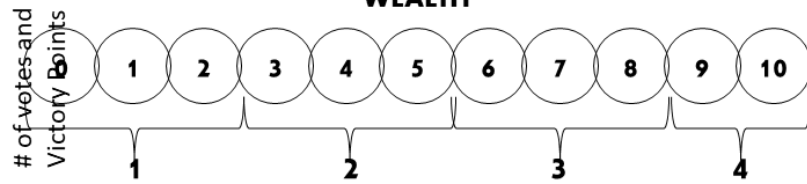


Player Mats

PLAYER 1



WEALTH



PRIMARY GOODS




Publicly-Funded Primary Goods Mat

PRIMARY GOODS MAT

 NATURE	 LEARNING AS A HOBBY	
 SPORTS	 ARTS	
 UNIVERSITY	 PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION	 GRANTS AND INVESTMENT

PRICES: x1 → 3 x2 → 5 x3 → 7

Primary Goods Cards

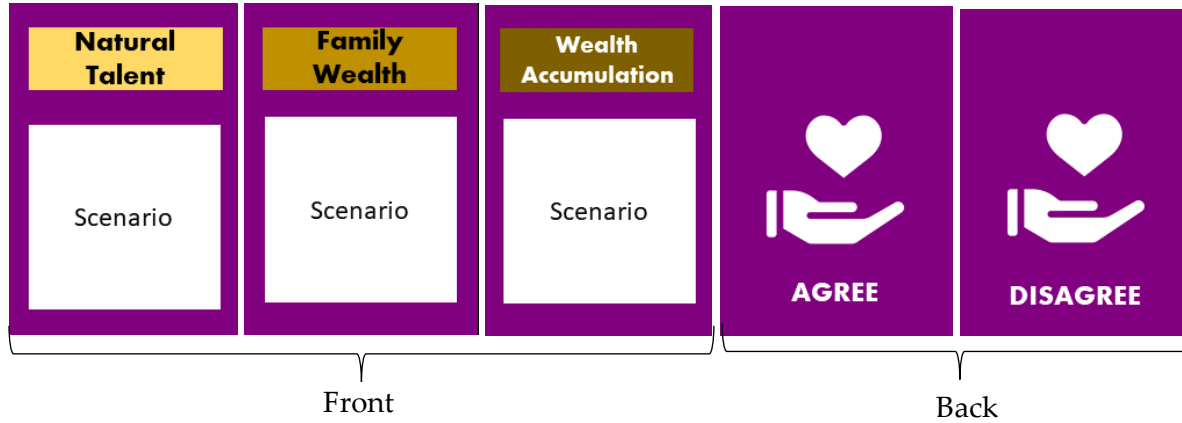
 Scenario 	
---	---

Front

Back

MEASURING VALUES

Scenario cards



Values tracker

VALUES TRACKER



of Mitigation Points earned in the round

Role of natural talent	0	1	2	3
Role of family wealth	0	1	2	3
Freedom to accumulate wealth	0	1	2	3

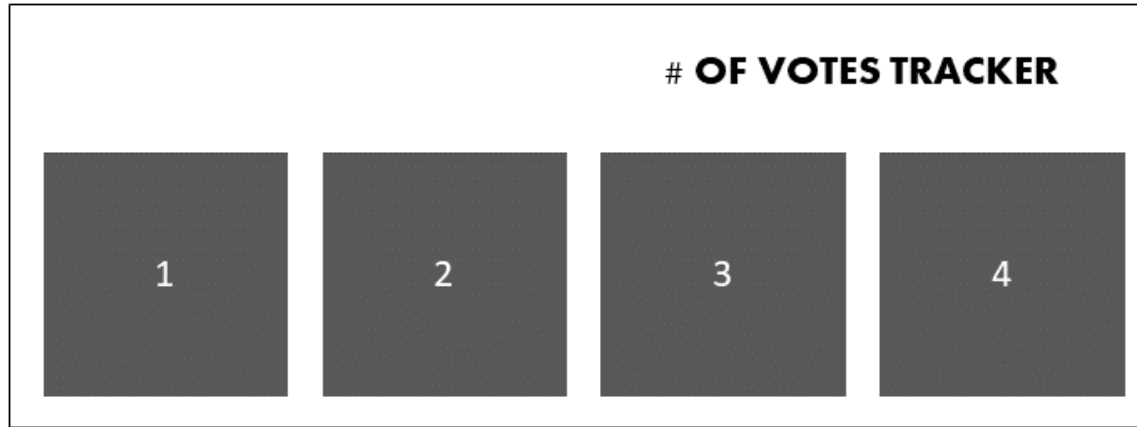
AMOUNT OF TAX MONEY EARNED 0 3 7 10



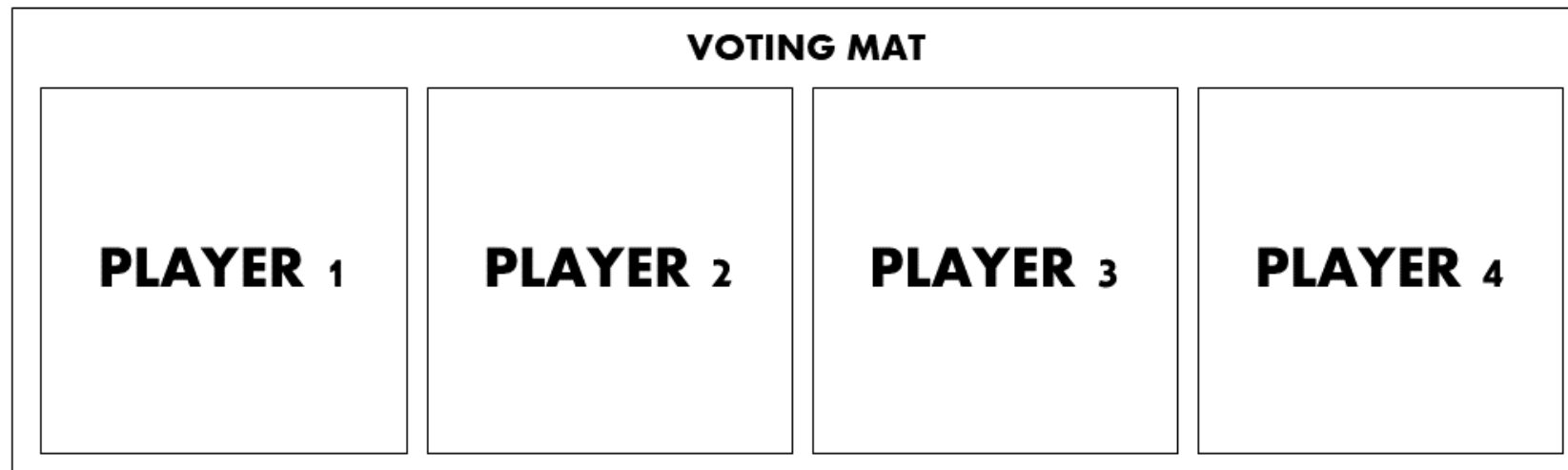
Tax money

VOTING APPARATUS

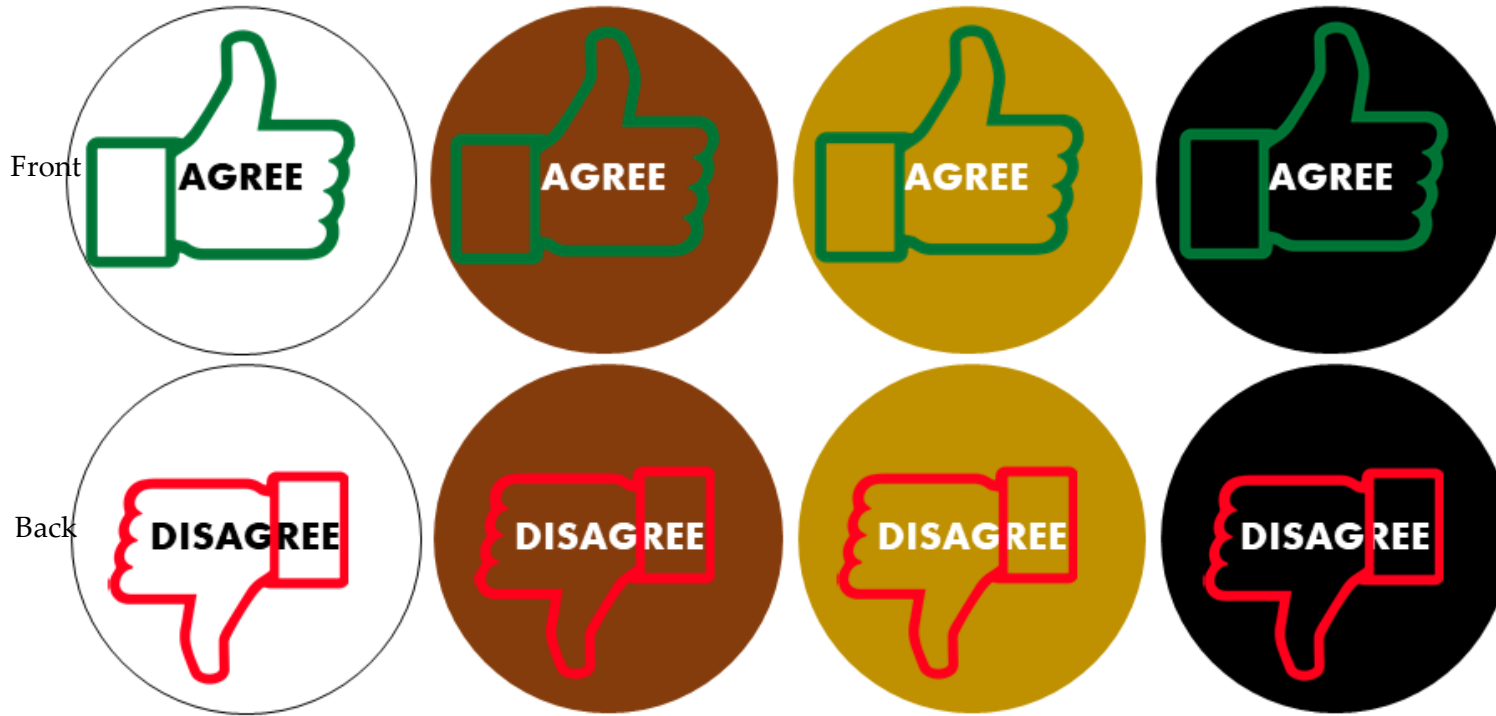
Voting Tacker



Voting Mat



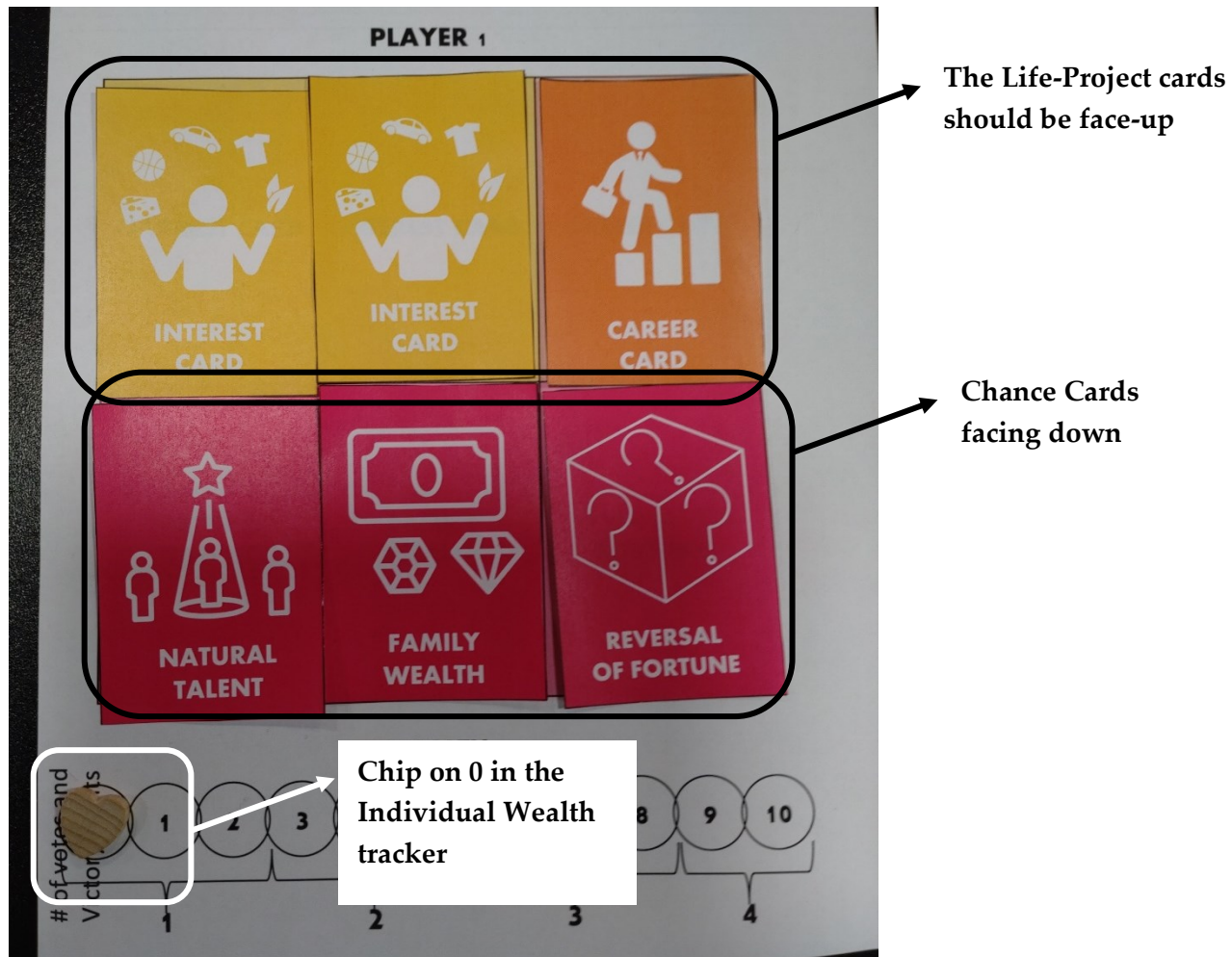
Voting Chips



Game setup

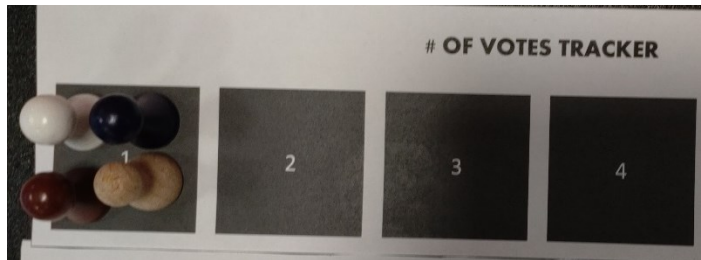


1. Game elements placed on the table as shown in the picture



2. Players place Life Project Cards **face-up** on their Player Mats:
 - 2 *Interest Cards*
 - 1 *Career Card*
3. Plyers place the Chance Cards **face-down** on their Player Mats:

- 1 *Natural Talent Card*
 - 1 *Family Wealth Card*
 - 1 *Reversal of Fortune Card*
4. Players place a chip on 0 in the *Wealth Tracker* in their [Player Mats](#)
 5. Players place their [Pawn](#) on 1 in the [Voting Tracker](#)



6. Players place their [Meeples](#) on the [Primary Goods Mat](#), specifically on the squares of the Primary Goods that satisfy their [Life Project Cards](#)



Playing the game

General structure


The game is played over three rounds, each divided into two phases. The first phase corresponds to the definition of the society's values. The second phase corresponds to the public financing of primary goods.

The general structure of each round is as follows:

Phase A – Deciding on Values

1. [Voting on Values](#)
2. On the [Values Tracker](#), place a chip on the corresponding number of Mitigation Points earned in the round

VALUES TRACKER



of Mitigation Points earned in the round

Role of natural talent	0	1	2	3
Role of family wealth	0	1	2	3
Freedom to accumulate wealth	0	1	2	3

AMOUNT OF TAX MONEY EARNED

0	3	7	10
---	---	---	----

3. Collect the corresponding [tax money](#)

Phase B – Purchasing Primary Goods

1. Each player turns one of their [Chance Character Cards](#):
 - Natural Talent in Round 1
 - Family Wealth in Round 2
 - Reversal of Fortune in Round 3
2. They calculate their individual wealth and votes.
3. [Purchase of Primary Goods](#) with the [Tax Money](#) earned in Phase A



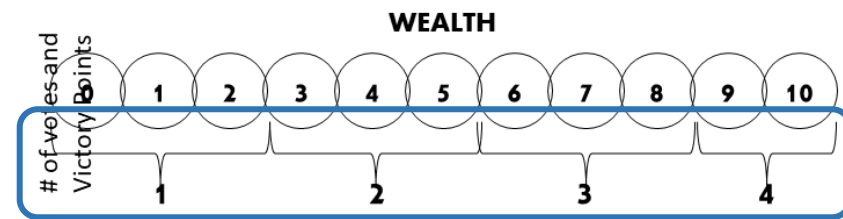
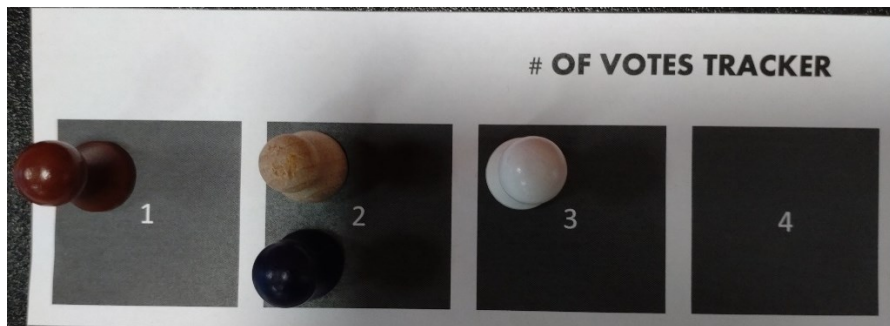
In this example, tax money in the amount of 5 was used to finance the *LEARNING AS A HOBBY* primary good for two of the characters (black and white).

The two meeples are “fallen” to indicate that their Life Project item is now supported

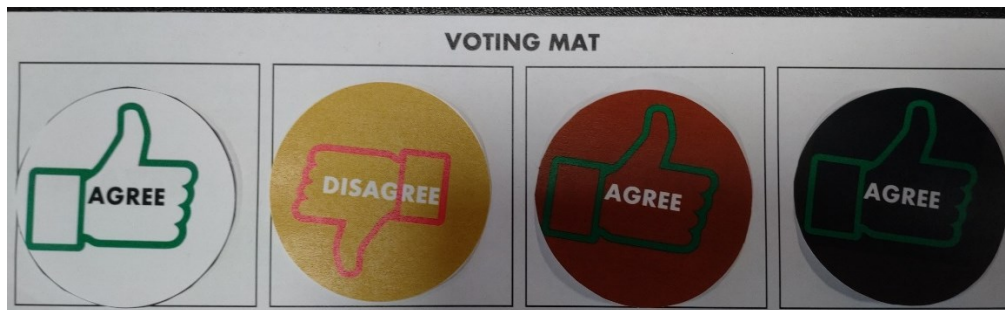
Voting

Voting is done through the [Voting Chips](#) and the [Voting Mat](#). Each player has their own Voting Chip, saying **Agree** on one side and **Disagree** on the other. When it's time to vote, all players simultaneously place their chip on the Voting Mat, with the direction of their vote facing up. So, if the player agrees, their chip should read **Agree**; and if the player disagrees, the chip's **Disagree** side should be up.

The number of votes that a player has is decided based on their wealth, and is therefore susceptible to change in each round. Each player's number of votes is calculated each round at the beginning of [Phase B](#). The amount of votes for the players is tracked on the [Voting Tracker](#).



The amount of each player's votes is decided based in their personal wealth



In this example, PLAYER 2 disagreed with the proposed Scenario, while the remaining players agreed.

Voting the society's values

1. The group draws a [Scenario Card](#) and places it face-up on the table. Each round has its own deck of Scenario Cards.
 - Round 1 – Natural Talent
 - Round 2 – Family Wealth and Inheritance
 - Round 3 – Freedom to accumulate wealth
2. All players vote on their answer
3. Optional: players may debate the options and try and convince others to change the direction of their vote. This process should take **maximum 5 minutes**.
4. The back of the card will indicate whether the winning option awards the group any Mitigation Points.

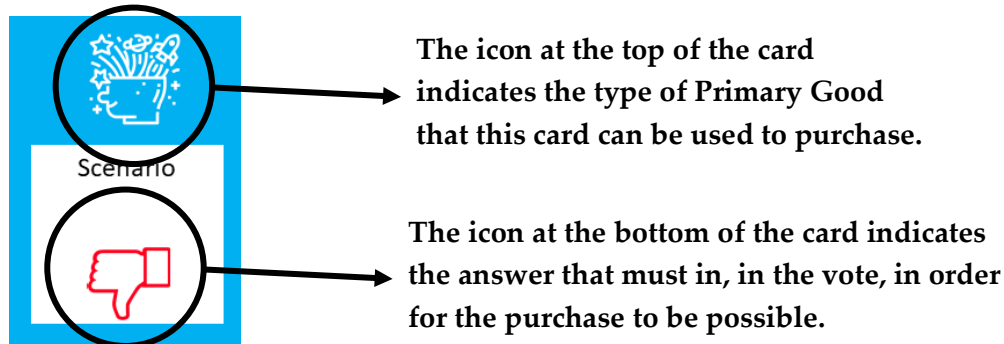
This is repeated two more times, so that, in total, three [Scenario Cards](#) will have been played.



Purchasing Primary Goods

In this process, the order of turns is decided through personal wealth, starting with the player with the lowest amount of personal wealth, all the way up to the payer with the highest amount of personal wealth. In case of a tie, the player with the least amount of fulfilled [Life Project items](#) goes first. If there is still a tie, the one with the lowest wealth in the previous round takes precedence.

1. Each player should have two [Primary Good Cards](#) on their hand. If they have in their hand a Primary Good that is not applicable to the game (already purchased for all players or not necessary for any life project), they may discard the card and draw another one. The players are free to inquire on the other players' cards, and are free to disclose information on their cards, but are not obliged to share that information.
2. In turn, players play a card of their choosing by reading it aloud, without laying it on the table.



3. The remaining players vote whether they agree or disagree, and the winning answer should take into account the different amount of votes that players may have among themselves.
4. If the Primary Good-awarding option wins, the player who played the card can buy that tile, and decides to whom it will apply. The prices of the Primary Goods are:
 - 3 for one person
 - 5 for two people
 - 7 for three people

At this point, players are free to negotiate and establish alliances with each other.

5. Players hide their [Life Project items](#) that have been satisfied



6. The turns should continue for as long as there is Tax Money left enough to purchase any Primary Goods.

End of the game

Purchasing Primary Goods through individual wealth

Players are able to purchase the Primary Goods supporting any remaining Life Project items through their own personal wealth. Each Primary Good will cost 3. However, they lose 1 wealth point for each individually purchased Primary Good.

Counting individual points

Individual points are earned through each fulfilled Life Project item and through wealth (in the same value as the number of votes). To the players that fulfilled all of their Life Project items, one bonus point is awarded for each player who didn't fulfil all of their Life Project.

Deciding the winner

If all the players were able to fulfil their Life Project, the group wins as a whole, with no individual winner. If some of the players didn't fulfil all the items in their Life Project, the player with the most points at the end wins.