

OUT OF THE BOX

ONLINE GAME Design Doc

A detailed Game Design Document intended to introduce you to the Social RPG Out of the box.

This document will introduce the game's story, goals/objectives and provide detailed information needed to better understand, prepare and implement Out of the box Online.

OUT OF THE BOX

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 connects on-line with off-line

 game mechanics

 important information

1 Game overview

Out of the Box is a team-based negotiation board game with elements of roleplaying experience, that aims to facilitate social change in participants. This document contains all the information necessary to set up, play and evaluate the game. The material was designed for all interested in social games and is suitable even for those with no previous experience. The main goal of this game is to draw the participants' attention to a phenomenon of polarisation of groups.

The game focuses on the problem of polarisation occurring in communities, which is one of the most prevalent steps on the way to societies' radicalization. *Out of the Box* also gives space to learn about needs of different ethnic groups and hold a discussion about them. Its foremost pronounced element is perceived privilege which (knowingly or not) shapes social interactions and drives conflict.

The game is set in the present-day real world, and players, being divided into four groups, have to decide on facilities that a newly constructed cultural centre in their neighbourhood is going to have.

The game lasts for six rounds in which parts of in-team planning and inter-team discussions intertwine. With the help of an online game board and a voice communicator, teams will negotiate to achieve the most satisfying outcome.

2 Goals

The abovementioned idea translates into the following goals:

PRIMARY GOAL

Intellectual capabilities > Knowledge > Humanistic (Noticing privilege in the real-life setting)

SPECIFIC GOAL

Participants build awareness of privileged and non-privileged groups in real-life. Having experienced the power of privilege in the game, they understand inequalities stemming from it.

SECONDARY GOALS

Work with skills and abilities > Autoanalysis > Constructive assessment of one's behaviour

DEFINITION

Thinking in a more utilitarian way defined as the ability to see the bigger picture and think outside of one's own interest group, seeing it as a member of a bigger group.

SPECIFIC GOAL

Participants learn to notice polarisation and take responsibility for their actions to prevent it from occurring in the real-life setting.

Work with skills and abilities > Communication > Building support

SPECIFIC GOAL

Players practice communicating effectively inside their own, and with other teams in the situation of conflict of interests.

Work with skills and abilities > Communication > Tolerance and comprehension

SPECIFIC GOAL

Noticing and taking care of people of different ethnic backgrounds in a real-life setting.

3 Implementation requirements

LOCATION

As *Out of the Box* is an online game it can be played anywhere, where internet connection is stable enough and data transfer is sufficient for sharing screen (in Facilitator's case) and supporting voice connection (for Facilitator and participants alike).

STAFF

Facilitator

Preferably this position should be appointed to an adult who not only has highly developed social skills, knowledge, and pedagogical training, but also understands new technologies and is quick to learn using Discord online communicator. The psychological background of working with late adolescence and young adults is advised, as the Facilitator is to make sure that the emotions of participants, who may be put under some emotional strain, are properly debriefed.

TARGET GROUP

The game is designed for participants that are from the age of **late adolescence** (14-17) to **early adulthood** (19-25), but it can also be played by older participants.

It requires no previous gaming experience. It can work well for early adolescence (11-13), provided that participants are tech-savvy enough to get a grip on the online tools used in the game.

It strongly depends on the ability of the participants to coordinate and work in teams. If possible, it is preferable to spend some time before the game on integration and team-building of the participants.

PLAYERS COMPOSITION

All the participants need to know how to use a personal computer on a very basic, everyday-use level, and at least the basics of using Google Chrome internet browser, Discord online communicator, and a pdf reader application like Adobe Acrobat Reader or Foxit Reader.

The game is designed for 12 to 36 players, with 24 players being the optimal number.

Participants are divided into four, possibly equal teams, that represent four stereotypical groups of students. The stereotyping is by no means used to stigmatise any of the groups or to draw conclusions like 'sports players cannot have great grades at school', which the game's Facilitator should make clear at the beginning of the gameplay. The groups' design serves the purpose of making participants intuitively understand their team's position and needs in the game, and makes it easy for them to immerse in the gameplay.

1. **Gifted Students** . Traditionally understood 'good students'. This group enjoys studying and excels at school, which makes their grades average the highest

in the game and gives them the greatest privilege in the game, which can be used relatively often.

2. **Artists.** A group that enjoys expressing themselves through visual arts, dancing, theatre etc. Their school marks average is the third from the top, which doesn't give them any privilege.
3. **E-Sports Players.** A group of students who play online computer games and dream of becoming professionals in that field. Their school grades average is the second-best, which gives them a limited privilege that can be used in a very specific situation.
4. **Sports Players.** A group of students who mainly enjoy physical activities. Their school marks average is the lowest out of all groups, which doesn't give them any privilege.

BUDGET

The minimum budget for playing this game in Poland is 0 PLN (0 EURO), excluding staff wages.

Equipment like Facilitator's and participants' personal computers, headphones, microphones and routers are also not included.

The time expenditure of the staff game organizer (Facilitator) revolves around 3 work-hours for preparations and 4 work-hours for the game with debriefing.

The time necessary to recruit participants is not included.

4 Social inclusion method

This game serves as a safe space, a kind of a simulator, where participants can learn about their biases and mechanisms of radicalisation in a setting of competition between groups that only seemingly are in the situation of conflict of interests. These are typical in relations between immigrants and the native community of a given territory. The most crucial factor is the capability to uncover how every human is prone to the radicalisation process. By this first-hand experience, participants will be able to develop ways of overcoming this attitude and learn to think in a more utilitarian way.

5 Story



SETTING

Modern

The setting assumes that the game takes place in our contemporary pre-pandemic world with all its cultural framework left recognizably without a change.

NARRATIVE

The local community received a fair amount of EU funds, that are meant to be used for building a cultural centre in the neighbourhood, where players' characters live. After creating a primary version of the architecture design for the facility, the local government decided on launching a public consultation on what the purpose of vacant rooms should be.

The participants take the role of the local school students who live in the neighbourhood and were asked to consult on the project.

The school head person decided that in the case of students not being able to come to an agreement on rooms' purpose, student groups with the highest grade average are to decide on their functions.

6 Gameplay (actions)

OVERVIEW

Out of the Box is an online negotiation board game which aims to simulate a situation of interest conflict in which polarisation and radical behaviour occur.

Players take roles of representatives of four student groups and negotiate with each other to achieve the game's goal: Make sure you create the best cultural centre.

The game consists of six phases, which are team meetings intertwining with committee meetings. Each of the phases is timed by the Facilitator to ensure the best game flow.

RULES

Below there are base rules for the game that are applicable over the entire endeavour and shape the experience.

Experience flow

Out of the Box consists of three crucial parts: **Briefing**, **Playing the game** and **Debriefing**, none of which can be skipped to achieve the best educational results.



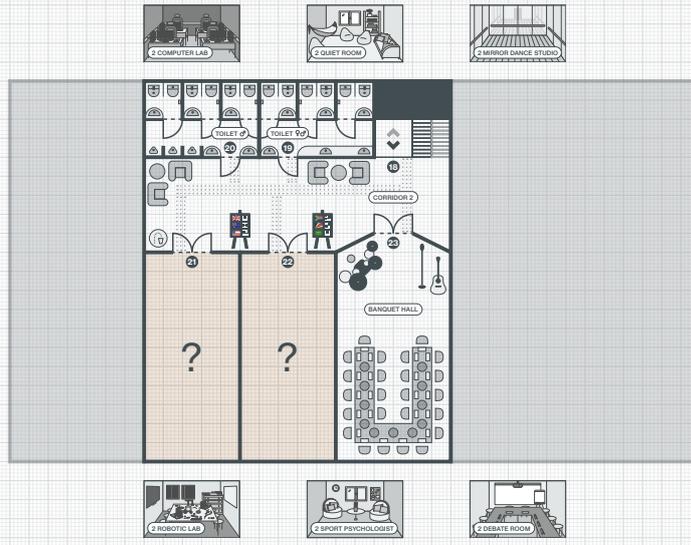
Game board

The game board resembles an architectural design of a three-story building.

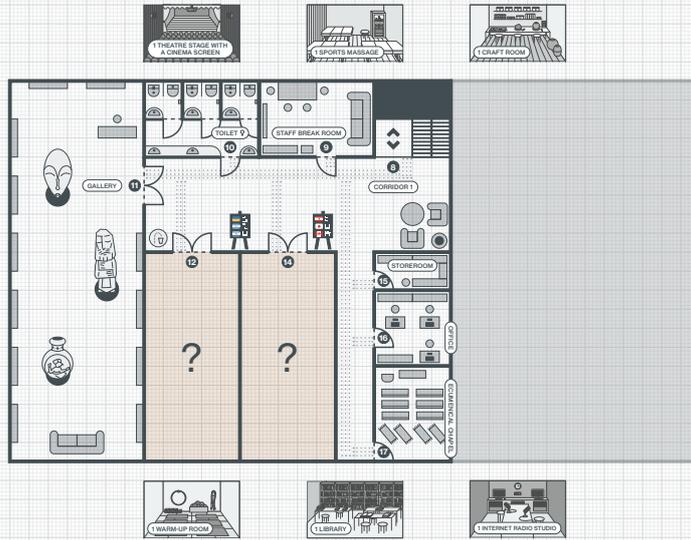
There are 2 empty rooms (6 in total) on each floor which purpose players will have to agree on during their gameplay. The pictures of 6 room choices surround each floor. As the game board is culturally-sensitive, each floor also contains elements that can be used in the debriefing part to talk about the differing needs of people coming from different ethnic backgrounds.

(see the game board on the next page)

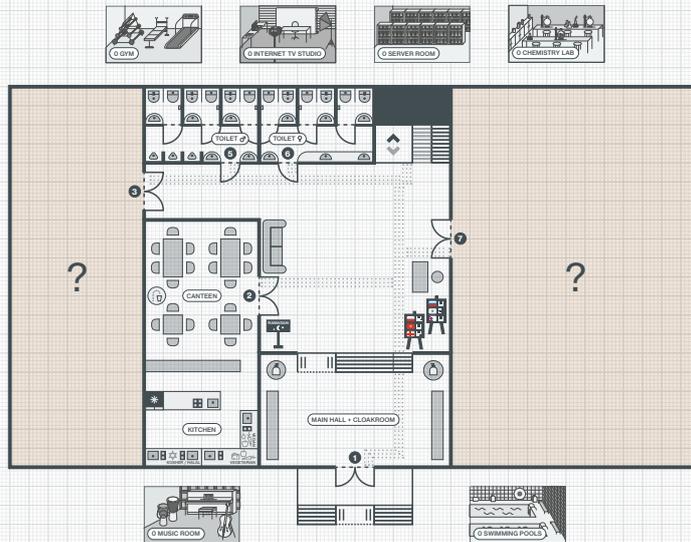
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Teams

Participants will be divided into four teams of a possibly equal number of members. The preferable number of participants is 24, but the game is possible to play from 12 to 36 participants involved.

The division of participants may be done by random, although the Facilitator can allow players to divide by themselves if they know each other and want to play with their friends.

It is recommended that after dividing players into teams, but before randomly assigning them in-game group names (Gifted Students, Artists, E-Sport Players and Sports Players), the Facilitator runs a short team-building activity that serves the purpose of integrating the teams inside.

As the last part of the briefing, the Facilitator randomly labels the teams as Gifted Students, Artists, E-Sport Players and Sports Players.

Committees

Committees are work-groups in which representatives of the Teams work. There are three committees, one for each floor of the cultural centre, that decide on rooms that are going to fill in the empty space on the board. Every member of each Team takes part in all meetings of one, and the same committee throughout the game and each Committee has to include at least one member of each Team.



MECHANICS USED

Roles (Representatives)

Communication

During Team Meeting phases, players can only communicate within their own teams and during Committee Meeting phases, they only can communicate within their committees.



MECHANICS USED

Discussion (Consensus)

Rooms point values

At the beginning of the game, each team will be sent a pdf leaflet that describes and marks from 1 to 6 each room available for choosing in the game from their team's perspective. This document will provide the players with the information necessary to

decide on their Teams' strategies.

Participants cannot share their number-values for the rooms, but they can describe rooms as more or less important to their Team.



MECHANICS USED

Economy > Negotiations (Barter)

The players' leaflet is based on the game matrix which contains all Teams' ratings. The matrix can be modified according to Facilitator's needs but it is not advised to do so.

FLOOR	ROOM NAME	GIFTED STUDENTS	ARTISTS	E-SPORTS PLAYERS	SPORTS PLAYERS
0	GYM	2	4	3	5
	INTERNET TV STUDIO	3	5	4	3
	SERVER ROOM	4	3	5	3
	CHEMISTRY LAB	6	4	2	1
	SWIMMING POOLS	1	3	3	5
	MUSIC ROOM	4	6	1	2
1	THEATRE WITH A CINEMA SCREEN	4	5	3	3
	SPORTS MASSAGE	3	3	4	5
	CRAFT ROOM	3	6	1	2
	WARM-UP ROOM	1	3	4	4
	LIBRARY	6	4	4	1
	INTERNET RADIO STUDIO	3	4	2	5
2	COMPUTER LAB	4	3	5	3
	QUIET ROOM	4	3	3	5
	MIRROR DANCE STUDIO	1	5	3	3
	ROBOTIC LAB	6	1	4	3
	SPORTS PSYCHOLOGIST	2	3	4	5
	DEBATE ROOM	4	4	4	4

In the included version of the game matrix, there are only 6 solutions resulting in the highest Teams' collective number of points (91 points). Two of them are utilitarian solutions, which ensure each of the Teams having a close number of points at the end of the game (22 or 23, depending on the Team).

The two utilitarian solutions are:

FLOOR 0		FLOOR 1		FLOOR 2	
internet TV studio	server room	theatre with a cinema screen	sports massage	computer lab	debate room
internet TV studio	server room	theatre with a cinema screen	sports massage	quiet room	debate room

Voting

Voting occurs in the game twice: once at the end of the second Committee Meeting (polling vote) and once at the third Committee Meeting (final vote).

Only one person from each Team in a Committee is allowed to vote on their Team's behalf (players decide between themselves which person it is going to be). Each Team is obligated to cast two votes in each floor Committee.

The Facilitator initiates the voting and players send their votes on the committee chat on the count of three.



MECHANICS USED

Negotiations (Argumentation)

Privilege

Two of the Teams are privileged. Gifted Students and E-Sports Players, in this particular order, will adjudicate any draws.

Example 1: The voting results in Floor 0 Committee are: Swimming pools 2, Music room 1, Server room 3, Library 2, Chemistry lab 0, Internet radio studio 0.

In this case, Server room was elected and Gifted Students choose between Swimming pools and Library because they received an equal amount of votes.

Example 2: The voting results in Floor 1 Committee are: Theatre with a cinema screen 2, Quiet room 0, Discussion club 2, Warm-up room 2, Sports psychologist 0, Gym 2.

In this case, no room was elected and first Gifted Students choose between Theatre with a cinema screen and Discussion club, and then E-Sports Players choose between Warm-up room and Gym.



MECHANICS USED

Squads > Roles (Privilege)

BRIEFING

The Briefing part of the game serves the purpose of making sure the participants are comfortable with using Discord communicator, accustoming them with the game narrative, explaining game rules to them, practicing voting, and integrating them within their Teams.

During Briefing the Facilitator needs to:

- Make sure that all participants are present and ready for the game.
- Explain how to switch between voice and text channels in Discord.
- Paste and pin the game flowchart and game board to the general Discord chat.
- Explain the Game Goal, Rules and Game Flow to the players.
- Ask the players to prepare something to take notes with during the game.
- Allow players to divide themselves into 4 teams of a similar number of members or divide them arbitrarily
- Assign a separate text and voice channels for each Team.
- Ask the participants to mute text channels of other Teams in their Discord chat settings.
- Engage your players into the team-building activity.
- Randomly name the Teams Gifted Students, E-sports Players, Artists and Sports Players.
- Rename the voice and text channels of each group accordingly to the team's names they were labelled with.

Team-building activity

In the briefing part of the experience, participants will play a short team building game e.g. 1 truth and 1 lie.

Each player, one player at the time, tells two facts about themselves, one of which is true, and the other is false. On the count of three, the rest of their team vote on their team's text chat with the number of the story that was true.



MECHANICS USED

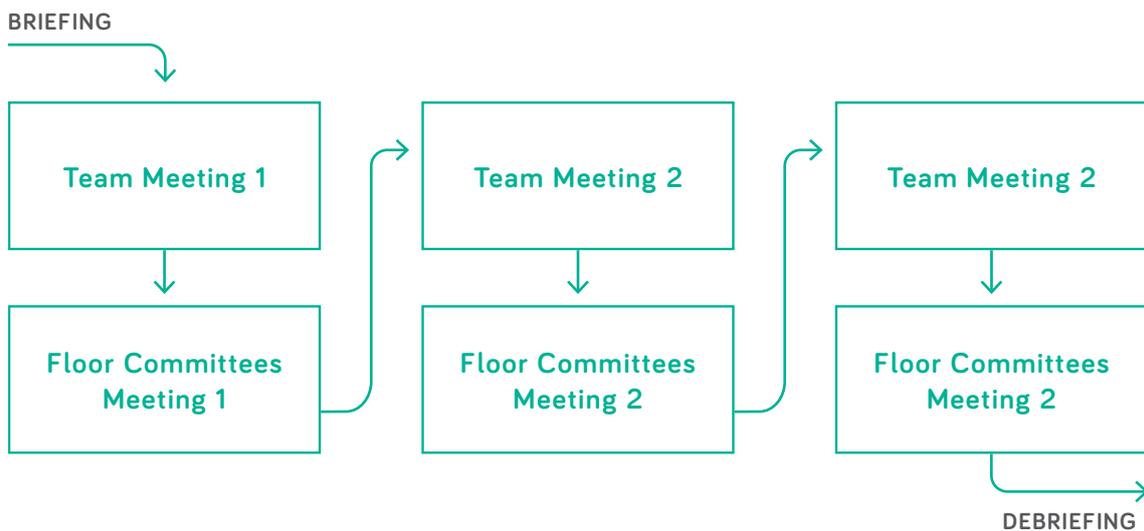
Puzzle (Riddles)

The Briefing may take up to 30 minutes, but it is advised that it is as short as necessary for the participants to understand the rules, tools and to create a connection between members of each Team.

GAME FLOW

The main part of the game consists of 6 consecutive phases:

- Team Meeting phase 1
- Committee Meeting phase 1
- Team Meeting phase 2
- Committee Meeting phase 2
- Team Meeting phase 3
- Committee Meeting phase 3



Team Meeting phase 1

Team Phase 1 starts the game and should last for 5 to 10 minutes.

Participants meet in their Teams (Gifted Students, E-sport Players, Artists, Sports Players) for the first time after Briefing. They assume their group identity and from now on play as their characters, not themselves.

Participants use assigned team voice channels on Discord for that purpose.

The Facilitator gives each Team access to their pdf leaflet, that contains the goals of their group, by sending it on the suitable Team text chat.

Each member of each team decides which Floor Committee they want to join.

The Teams discuss their needs and expectations.



DISCLAIMER

During Team Meeting phase 1 the participants should realise that if they do not act with caution, the Gifted Students group is going to have more power over the cultural centre setup than other groups.

Even though there was no voting yet, the 'invisible privilege' of Gifted Students and E-Sport Players already starts to work.

Committee Meeting phase 1

Teams' delegates for each Committee meet on assigned committee voice channels on Discord.

This phase should last from 10 to 15 minutes.

At the beginning of this Committee Meeting phase, players should mute other Committees text chats.

Participants get to know other Teams' needs and expectations and try to negotiate primary agreements.



DISCLAIMER

At this point, players should take notes of what they have learned about other groups' agenda.

Team Meeting phase 2

Players meet on their Team voice channels for the second time and discuss it for 10 to 15 minutes.

Participants should talk about the first alliances they made and discuss potential trade-offs on other floors.



DISCLAIMER

During Team Meeting phase 2, Gifted Students will probably try to assess how to achieve exactly one draw on each floor, since that allows them to use their privilege. The other Teams, on the other hand, will probably discuss ways to prevent it from happening. If alliances of Gifted Students and Artists versus E-Sports Players and Sports Players are to form, they will most likely start forming during this and the following phase.

Committee Meeting phase 2

Teams' delegates meet in the same Committees for the second time using for that purpose assigned Committee voice channels on Discord.

Committee Meeting phase 2 lasts from 10 to 20 minutes.

Participants try to push their Teams' agendas, create strong alliances, fight the opposition and suggest arrangements they discussed in Team Meeting phase 2.

The meeting finishes with a poll vote.

The Facilitator needs to initiate the vote and collect results of the poll votes in all three Committees, place tokens on the game board and post it in the general text channel for all the participants to see.

Team Meeting phase 3

Participants meet in their Team voice channels for the last time.

Team Meeting phase 3 lasts for no longer than 10 minutes.

Players discuss poll votes results in their Teams. They decide on the final actions they are going to take in the last Committee Meeting phase.



DISCLAIMER

At this point polarization between teams will probably be very apparent.

Also, radical behaviours and verbal aggression against other Teams, especially the Gifted Students Team is likely to manifest.

Some Teams may think about breaking previously made agreements in the final vote and playing for maximizing their scores.

Committee Meeting phase 3

Teams' delegates meet in the same Committees for the second time using for that purpose assigned Committee voice channels on Discord.

Each participant has a chance to make a short (up to 1.5 minutes) speech to convince other teams to vote in their Team's favour.

At the Facilitator's cue, each Team representatives cast their final votes.

The Facilitator needs to collect results from all Committee chats and present them on the Game Board to all players before moving on to the Debriefing part. Then, they

should ask the Teams to sum up their points and use the 10 rule, if it is applicable. Meanwhile, the Facilitator puts the points in the Google Sheets document and plots a bar graph to present to the players during the Debriefing part.

DEBRIEFING

The Debriefing part of the game allows the reflection on, and the sharing of the game experience to turn it into learning. It gives space to the participants who were in the experience to share and exchange feelings and ideas and to generalize their learnings, from and between all participants.

Some learning often occurs while a game is being played, but deeper lessons are learned during a good debriefing session.

In case of the players having their cameras turned off during the game, the Facilitator should ask them to show their faces, which helps with establishing a human connection between the participants and parting with the roles they played.

For more Debriefing information and advice, please check Discussion Summary in section 7 of this document.

PARTICIPANTS' KNOWLEDGE EXTENT

Game goal

Out of the Box aims for inducing polarisation and radicalisation between the Teams. To achieve that goal it is of utmost importance to keep it secret from participants until the Debriefing. That is why the game goal presented to players needs to be:

Make sure you create the best cultural centre.

Game rules and game flow

Participants should have a clear understanding of previously explained rules of the game and both, experience and game, flow. Players should not be briefed about disclaimers' contents as it may influence their behaviours, the gameplay and the overall score.

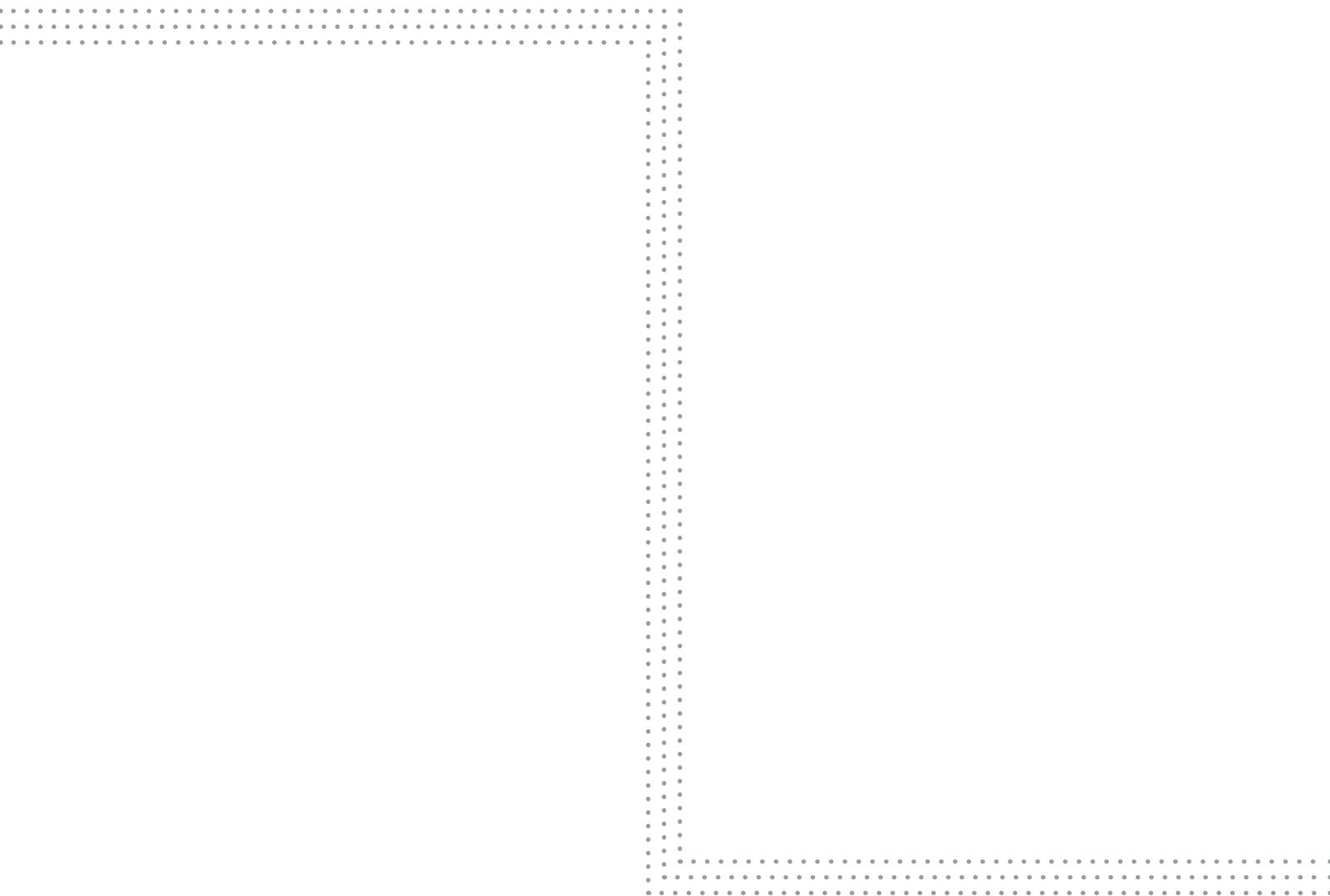
FALICITATOR

This will be a person responsible for running the entirety of the game.

Minimum required amount of staff assigned: 1

Potential for additional staff: 1

Running the game should be considerably easier if two Facilitators are involved. In this case, one should take care of all the technical aspects of running *Out of the Box*, and the other focus on listening to Teams' and Committees' discussions and run the Debriefing part of the experience.



7 Evaluation methods

GOAL	SUCCESS INDICATOR	SUCCESS CONDITION	EVALUATION TOOL
Participants take responsibility for radical and toxic behaviours against other groups	Share of participants that state their responsibility for polarisation and/or radical behaviours occurring in the game	> 50%	Discussion summary
Create an activity that would allow game organizers to involve outsiders in their social campaign	Share of participants declaring the will to take part in future activities	> 50%	Questionnaire
Increase the general and behavioural awareness of the participants of privilege in society	Willingness to discuss the outcome of the game, reactions to other Teams' behaviours and the power privilege guarantees	Active participation in discussion of at least 25% of participants	Discussion summary
Participants understand how focusing on own's group goals with disregard of 'greater good' leads to polarisation and radicalisation	Share of participants able to correctly indicate the effects of focusing on maximizing own Team's score	>50%	Questionnaire
Participants understand that people coming from different ethnic backgrounds have different needs	Share of participants able to correctly point to elements of the cultural centre designed with consideration for needs of people of different cultural backgrounds	>50%	Discussion summary

QUESTIONNAIRE

The following survey is a tool for measuring the efficiency of the game, but also it will allow upgrading it and the experience it provides.

1. On the scale from 1 to 7 gage your experience with this game
2. On the scale from 1 to 7 gage your understanding of the rules of this game

3. On the scale from 1 to 7 gage the difficulty of the game.
4. On the scale from 1 to 7 gage your contingency to the outcome of this game
5. Would you take part in another activity like this game?
6. Do you have any personal comments that would help us improve?
7. Describe with your own words the social effect that polarisation and radicalisation might have on society.
8. Describe with your own words the most devastating effects of polarisation and radicalisation.
9. Describe with your own words the social effect that privilege might have on society.
10. Describe with your own words the emotions you felt during the game.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

1. Subjects that are crucial to discuss:

- Participants emotions during the game.
- How dangerous polarisation is.
- How dangerous radicalisation is.
- Dangers of short-sightedness typical to humankind.
- Our mutual responsibility for the shape of society.

2. Expectations towards the facilitator:

- Charisma necessary to engage participants in the discussion.
- Knowledge of their performance during the game and being able to point out crucial moments during the gameplay.
- Knowledge about biological and psychological foundation of short-sightedness.
- Utilisation of accumulated hype of participants towards achieving a sense of awe and comradery.

3. Effects we are trying to achieve:

- Sense of dread and apprehension concerning polarisation and radical behaviours deriving from a lack of will to understand other groups.
- Realisation of the value of coordinated efforts for achieving utilitarian solutions.
- The hype about being able to work together towards the greater good.
- Encouraging need to know better different world views and cultures.

8 Game database and advice

CHECKLIST

Necessary equipment

Necessary equipment to run the game:

- personal computer,
- microphone (can be integrated with the computer),
- internet camera (can be integrated with the computer).

Necessary software

Necessary software to run the game:

- Discord,
- Google Chrome,
- graphic editing tool (eg. for Windows Paint 3D or for Mac SketchUp),
- pdf file reader (eg. Foxit Reader).

9 Downloadable materials

LIST OF MATERIALS

Comprehensive list of materials that are necessary for running the game and can be downloaded from

<https://gamechangereu.org/games>

- game board and game tokens graphics set,
- game flowchart,
- rules list,
- pdf leaflet for each Team with rooms scoring,
- copyable google sheets file for plotting graphs with voting results and team points,
- copyable google sheets file with game matrix and points for different game solutions,
- using Discord video-guide,
- *Out of the Box* webinar recording,
- tentative game schedule.

Game Changer project utilizes innovative technology and cutting-edge research to help promote tolerance and understanding among youth across Europe. We hope through the Game Changer Project, we can encourage young people to be the change in helping to build a more inclusive, open-minded, diverse, and peaceful Europe.



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EXPLOREIT

ΑΡΧΗ ΤΡΑΓΗΝΙΩΝ