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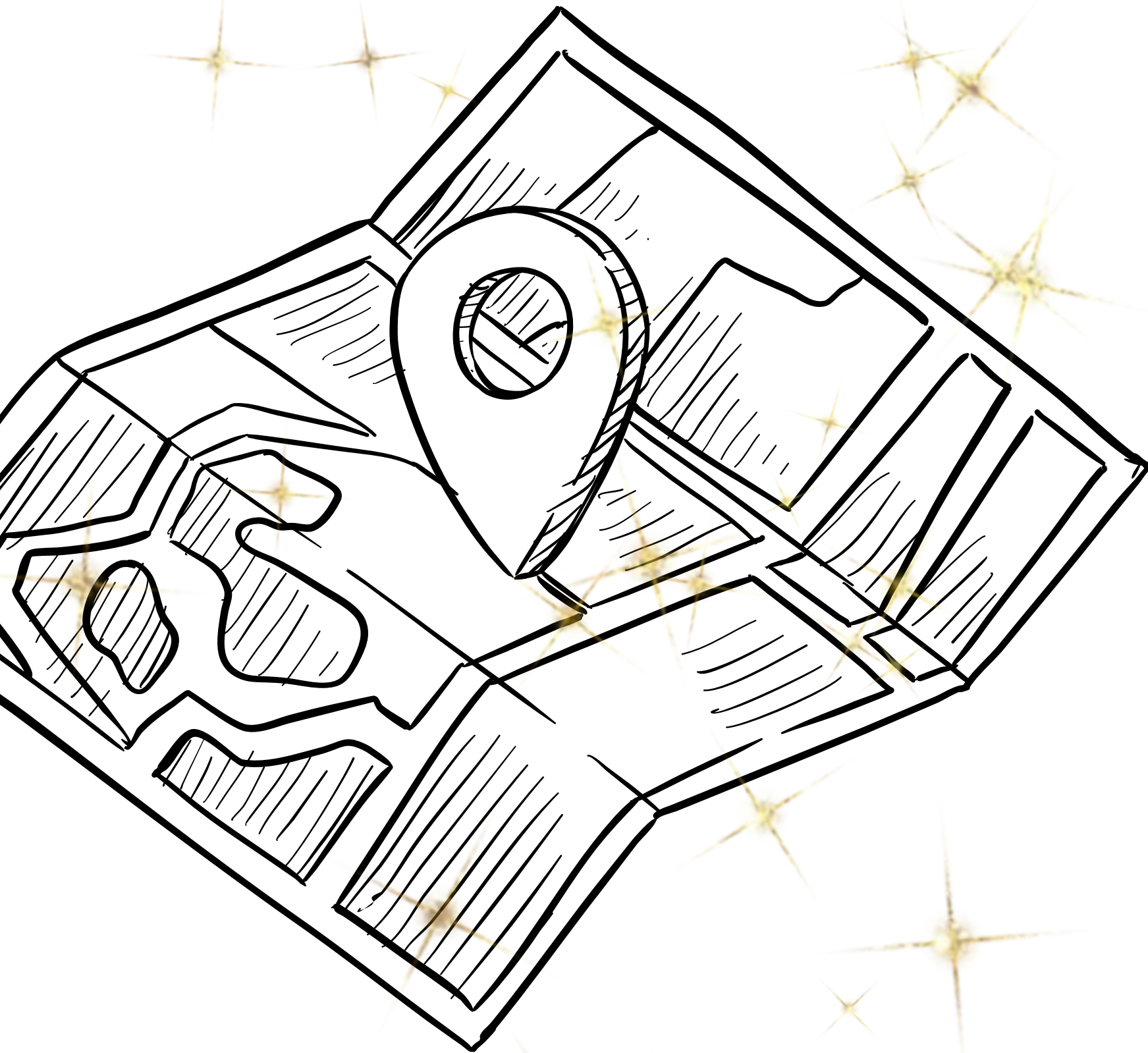
G.A.M.E.

G A M E S F O R A C T I V E
A N D M E A N I N G F U L
E N G A G E M E N T

A Toolkit for Youth workers to enhance participation of young people with fewer opportunities through inclusive board game design

About the project:

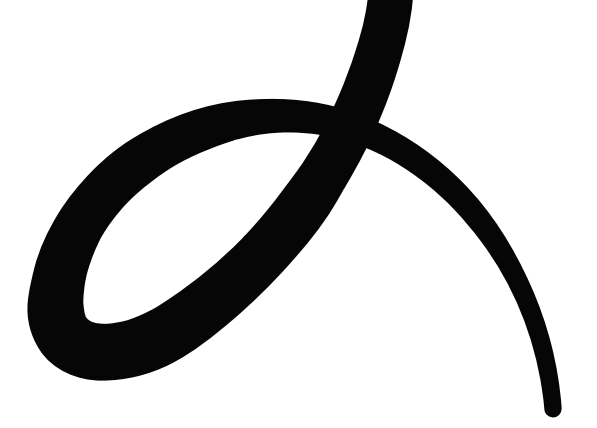
G.A.M.E.: Games for Active and Meaningful Engagement is an Erasmus+ project which has the aim to enhance participation of young people with fewer opportunities through inclusive board game design with partners from Greece, Armenia, Spain, Serbia and Turkey. TC was implemented on Avala, Serbia in February 2026 with 20 participants and 2 trainers.



The Power of Play

Board games trigger emotions, drive curiosity, and inspire action. When applied in everyday life, they turn routine into excitement (homo ludens).

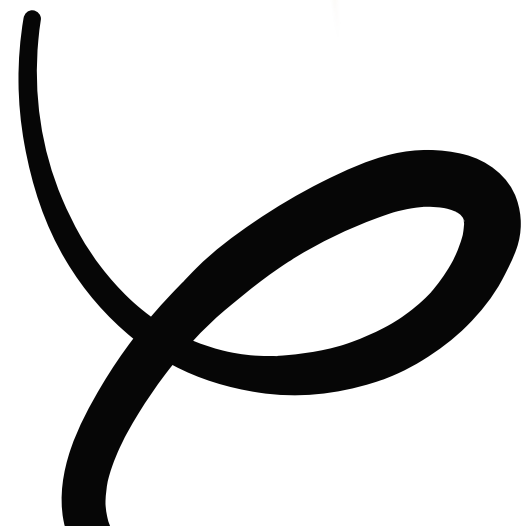
Play vs game: what are differences?



Core Elements of inclusive board game design

Researched needs, main idea, creative name and aim of the game, mechanics, hooks, aesthetics of a game, prototype, testing, final look.

How we can make board games inclusive? Font, colours? Clear language?





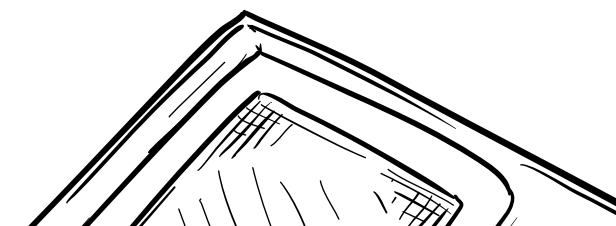
Main inspiration for participative board games

In mechanics: democracy principles, elections in certain countries, Harts ladder of participation etc.

In storytelling: Good vs Evil, Human rights cases etc.

In characters: certain roles- leaders in protests, young activists, human rights protectors, policy makers, youth workers, pollution companies, extreme groups etc. In topics related to: discrimination, environmental challenges etc.

Hint: imaginary characters and stories bring dramatic distance from potential trauma when we work with young people with fewer opportunities.



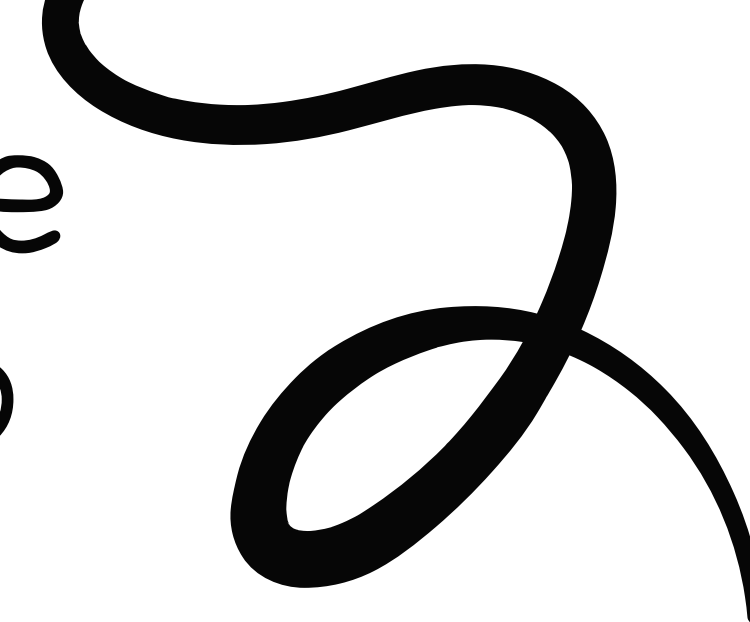
Hart's ladder of participation-inspiration



Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation is a well-known model, adapted from Sherry Arnstein's work, used to evaluate the levels of involvement of children and young people in projects, programs, or decision-making processes. It uses the metaphor of an eight-rung ladder to illustrate a range of participation levels, from non-participation to genuine youth-adult partnerships.



How to motivate young people to play?



Go first from fun factor than go to learning factor ("hidden curriculum").

Referencing: its OK to reference mechanics from a couple of known commercial games (as a starting point). Not to copy!

Psychology of tokens: gathering points, solving puzzles, collecting and/or looting stuff.

Archetypes: metaphoric and strong meaning behind love, dreams and society.

Be careful with using symbols, example- swastika in history.

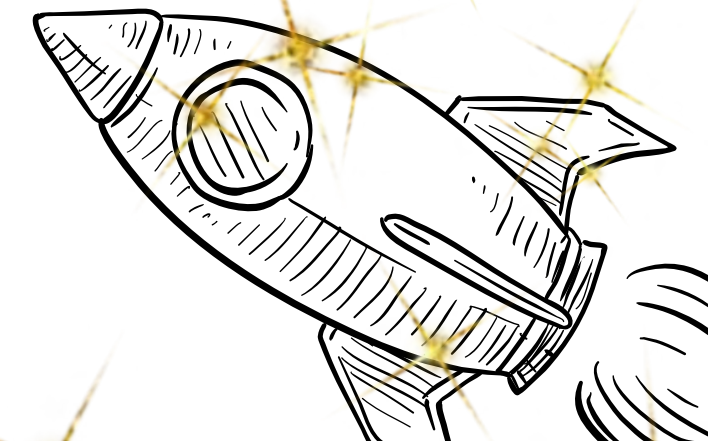


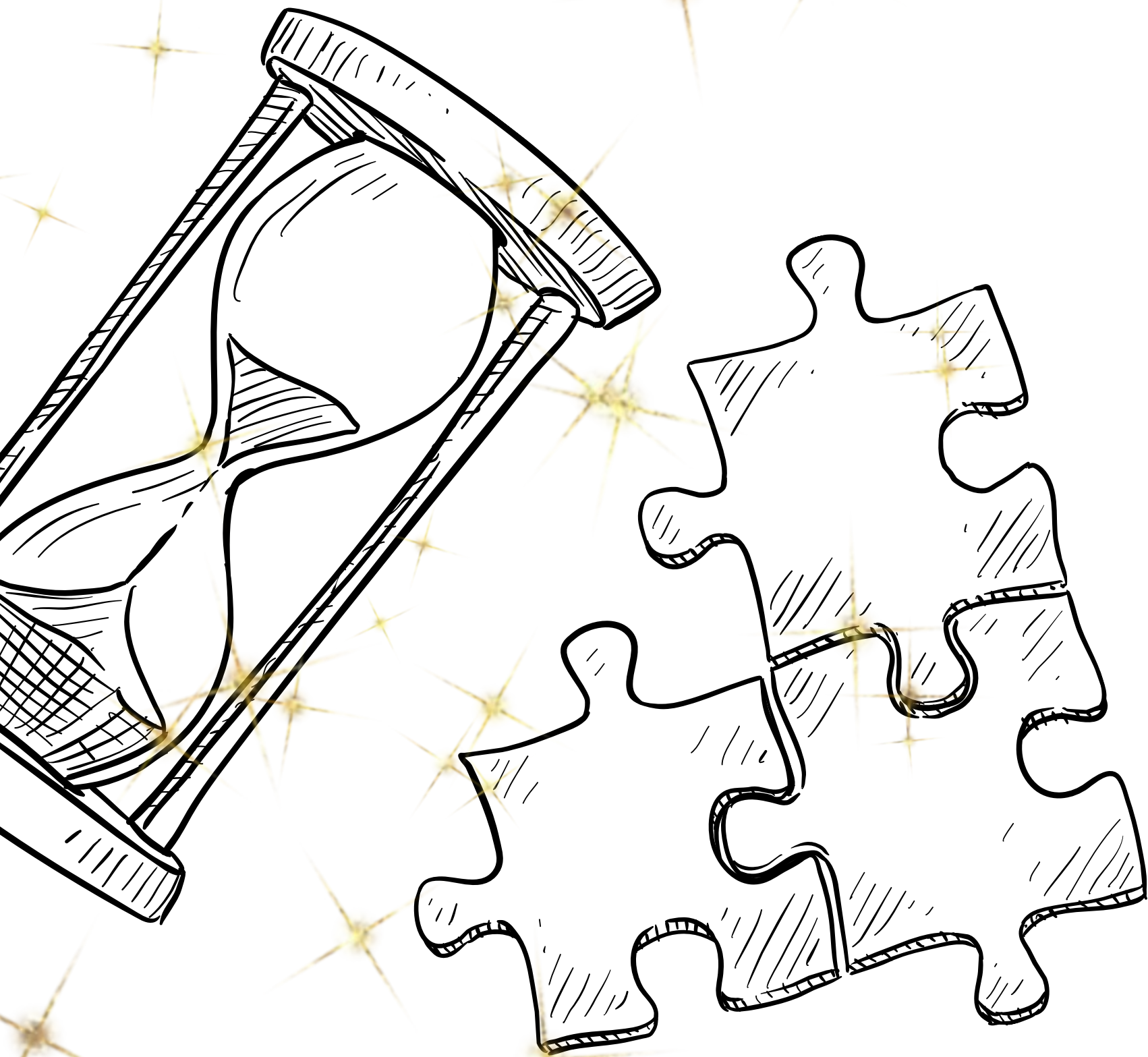
Benefits and Outcomes

If its easier, think about benefits and outcomes of playing your game.

Prepare for after-play session: reflect on important questions with young people.
Example: how did you feel during the play?
What did you learn from playing the game itself?

The best outcome of playing certain game: planning activity/action in local community (always keep that on mind while designing a game)!



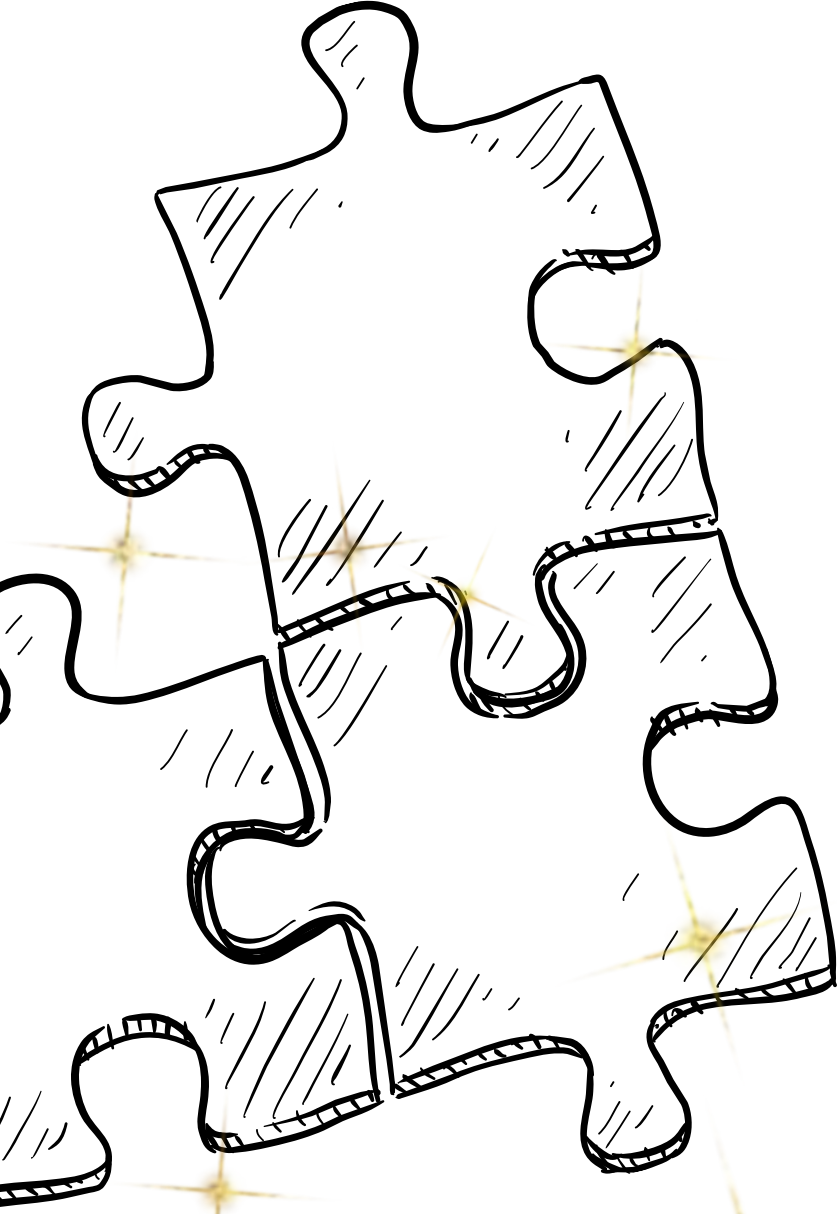


Challenges and Considerations

Game fatigue: overplaying. Tip: make breaks.

Enjoyment is first!

What is conflict potential of a game, especially in competitive games?



Game prototypes from TC

Training was held from 20th until 28th of February 2026 in Student Recreational Centre "Radojka LaKić", Avala Serbia.

Through interactive workshops and inclusive board game design, participants made 8 board game prototypes (3 small and 5 regular sized games from each country) which are here for inspiration and use in youth work.

Some game logos are AI generated.

Prototype number 1: ROAD TO DREAMS!

Inside every person, three forces quietly compete to shape a life: Health, Love and Happiness.

In the control room of the mind, YOU are the one at the console.

Health is the steady guardian that strengthens the body and keeps the heart beating.

Love is the bridge-builder, embraces vulnerability and forms bonds and turns loneliness into belonging.

Happiness is the spark. It brings color to life and lightens it.

But none of them can win alone!!

Beyond the finish line, there is glowing horizon of a Dream life.

To reach it, all three must advance together.

You are the strategist. Every decision moves one forward or leaves another behind. Balance them, guide them.

The aim of the game:

Reach the finish line with all of the players (together).

Number of players: 3

Rules (mechanics):

To finish the game, all of the players should cross the line.

Each turn, each player plays a card from their hand all together.

Players can either choose to move forward according to the number written on the card or use the ability written on it.

After your turn, 1 player rolls the "obstacle dice (d6)" and removes tiles starting from the start point equal to the number rolled.

If you remove the tile that a player stands on, the game will end and you will lose.

Elements (parts):

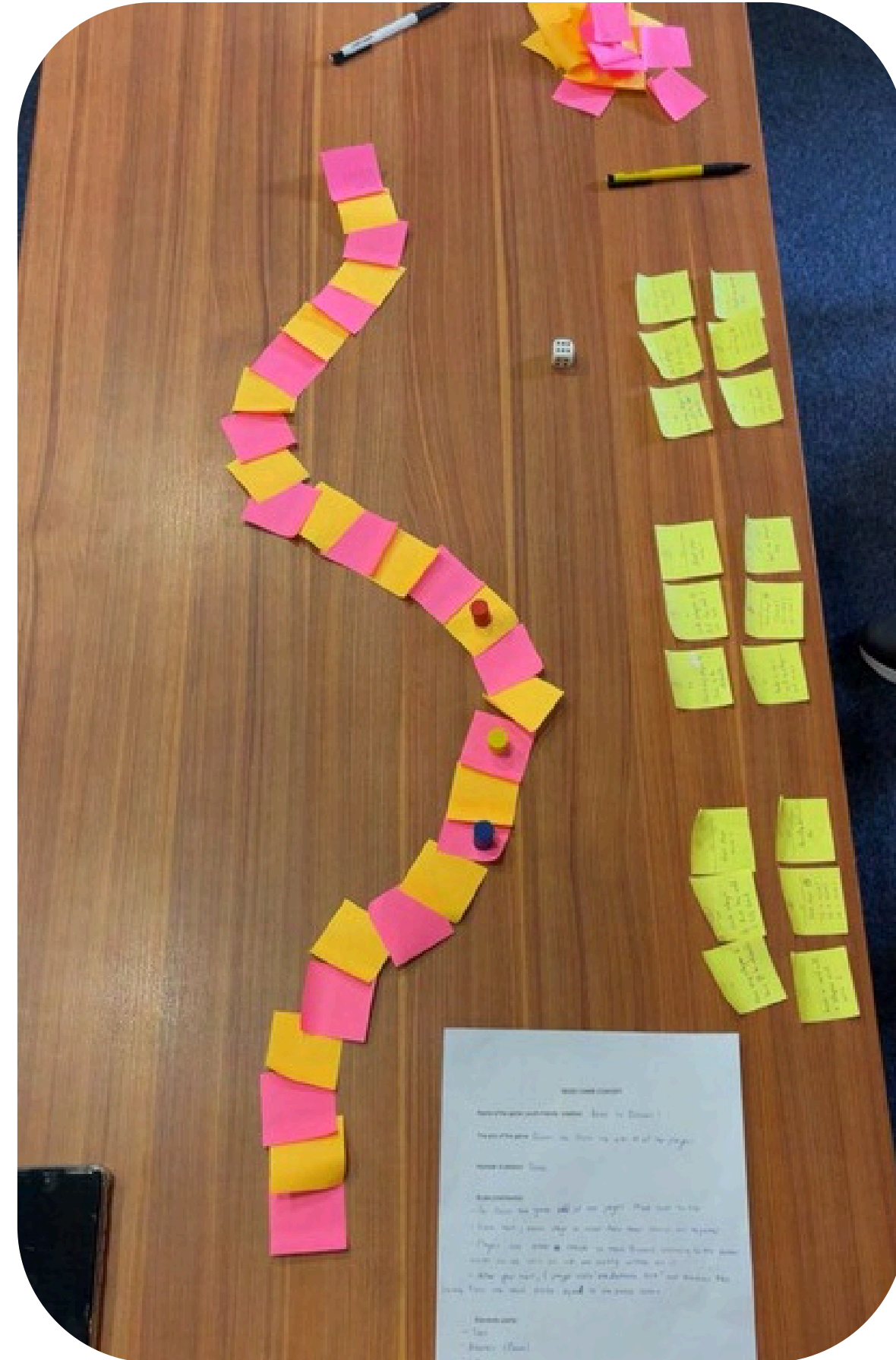
Tiles (made of sticky notes)

Dreamers (Pawn)

1 Dye

6 cards for each player (you can make your actions but numbers needs to be from 1 to 6)

Authors: Yunus Emre, Eroğlu Gianna Guler, Raúl Franco, Ilias Tselios
Silvia Antimachiti, Alara AKgüller



Prototype number 2: FLY FLY BUTTERFLY

Forest is a wonderful place we all like to visit, enjoy the nature, watching colorful butterflies flying around. But sometimes we don't appreciate it enough, sometimes we leave trash all around. Now the forest is in danger. Pollution started to spread around, and we need to react fast! Butterflies - the guardians of the forest - are flying to reach and to warn the other animals, because only united they can save the forest and clean the trash.

Aim: Save all the animals from pollution by landing your butterflies to another animals.

Number: 1-8

Elements: 5 sticks - obstacles, 8 wooden butterflies, 1 wooden butterfly queen, 12 wooden animals, d10 dice

Rules: Spread animals and obstacles around the table randomly and set the dice on "90" side. You have 8 butterfly tokens you will use to throw on another animals. Players are playing one after another in order to reach all the animals with their butterflies. First player is throwing a butterfly, if a butterfly hits another animal you collect that animal and count it saved. But, if you hit an obstacle you lose one life - to track this use d10 dice and turn it from "90" to "80". If the dice turns to "00" that means you lost the game. There is one special butterfly token - the butterfly queen - that's the animal token that should be saved after you save all other animals.

Authors: Emma, Marko, EKain, Zeynep, Roman, Cristina, Nikola



Prototype number 3: Vania and Nania- The Tailor Twins (Buttons Up)

Vania and Nania dreamed of becoming the greatest tailors in the world. They lived in the magnificent Avala Tower and were the children of Jamal/a the Almighty. From a young age, they showed incredible talent. As they grew older, their skills became unmatched, and soon people from all over the globe traveled to Avala to have their clothes tailor-made by the famous twins.

Success brought them wealth, fame, and admiration. But slowly, pride turned into greed. The twins began to care more about winning and collecting riches than about their craft or their customers.

Seeing this change in their hearts, Jamal/a the Almighty decided to teach them an important lesson. With divine power, Jamal/a placed a magical curse on all their buttons. From that day on, every button they touched carried unpredictable magic. Sometimes it helped them, sometimes it turned against them — and only through fairness, strategy, and humility could they hope to master the chaos.

Thus began their rivalry, where every move — and every roll of the dice — could change everything.

The aim of the game:

The two players compete to push the buttons on the enemy side, but with the twist of the dice, everything can change.

Number of players:

2 (1v1)

Rules (mechanics):

There are 5 rounds. Each round a player can take 5 turns.

Each turn a player can push the buttons or roll the dice.

The dice can be rolled up to 2 times per round. The dice has 20 numbers (faces).

The game starts simple: whoever has more buttons at the end of a round wins. But with the roll of the dice things can change. If a roll is less or equal to 10, things stay the same. But if it's more, then whoever has more buttons loses.

Elements (parts): Big buttons, Medium buttons, Small buttons, Dice. Patterns per round: R1 • R2 • R3 • R4 • R5, o – Medium buttons, • – Small buttons.

Authors:

Jelena, Karmen, Aleksa, Yaroslava, Shushanik, Vassia
Daniil



Prototype number 4: SPACE ROBB-ITS!



In a distant galaxy, within the Lunara Nebula, the Space Rabbit tribe is far from ordinary.

They feed on stellar energy, perform hyper-jumps across the void, and travel between galaxies as a secret guild of thieves.

In this galaxy, stars are not merely light.

Inside every star lies pure Carrot Energy — the Carrot Core.

This energy is the very source of the rabbits' survival.

But there is a problem...

The stars are slowly disappearing.

And the Space Rabbits can no longer gather them openly.

The Galactic Council is watching.

So while stealing stars, they must rely on one another — yet no one is willing to reveal their true power.

Because in this galaxy, the rabbit who holds the most carrots becomes the Guardian of the Great Constellation.

Intro for the game: Stars do not disappear on their own. Someone tears them apart.

Extracts their cores. Steals their energy.

That someone... is you.

You are Space Rabbits. Silent in the void, weightless in the dark and never fully honest with one another.

Truth...

or a carefully crafted lie?

If doubt rises, a Challenge begins.

If you lose, the Black Hole decides your fate.

But remember, if greed drains the galaxy dry there will be no winners.

The stars are fading.

And the darkness is patient.

The heist begins.

The aim of the game: players try to collect stars and convince others without exposing their real amount. By doing that, players can learn how to share.

Number of players: 2-4

Rules: You, as a player, are a Space Rabbit. Each round you are stealing 1 Star from the Lunara Nebula. But, there is also other Space Rabbits who are trying to steal Stars. You can lie about how many Stars you take. Your goal is being the Space Rabbit with the most Stars.

Each round you have 2 actions:

1. Stealing a star from the Galaxy
2. Challenging another player who you think is lying.

If you challenge a player, the player who loses the challenge, takes a Challenge Card and does whatever the card says.

There is no turn system. The player who is ready to steal Stars can play and anyone can challenge him/her.

At the end of the each round you should draw a Galaxy Card and do whatever the card says.

The game ends when all the stars finishes in the Galaxy Pouch.

Elements: 1 challenging deck and 1 universe cards, 4 rabbit pouches, 1 galaxy pouch and 60 stars.

Authors: Gamze Güleç, Alara AKgüller, Yunus Emre Eroğlu, Zeynep Sezer



Prototype number 5: Louder!



The aim of the game:

The main goal of the game is to explore different forms of discrimination and encourage players to identify possible solutions for real-life situations. Through discussion, reflection, and peer evaluation, participants develop critical thinking skills and contribute to building a more inclusive and non-discriminatory society.

Number of players: 4 players (expandable up to 6 players)

Rules (mechanics):

All players start the game from the same point. The youngest player rolls the dice and moves forward; the game continues clockwise. There are two types of fields on the map: situational and secret cards.

When a player appears on a situational field, he draws a card from the deck, on which is written a description of the situation for which the player must propose a solution. If the participants like the proposed solution, each participant gives the solution proposer 1 point. If the participants do not like the proposed solution, they can give 0 points. There is no facilitator in the first round and the other participants in the game evaluate the proposed solution on a 0 or 1 rating scale. After the end of the first round, the points are summed up, and the participant with the highest score becomes the facilitator for the next round and has the opportunity to evaluate during that round on a 0-2 rating system. If two participants earn equal points, then the selection of the facilitator is carried out through discussion. After the end of each round, the facilitator can be changed.

There are also secret cards on the map. When a participant appears on that field, he randomly draws a secret card, which can be of two types: positive (green) and negative (red). Both cards are discriminatory, but the green card means that something good is happening to you, which is also unfair, and if you have it, you get +3 energy, in the case of a red card it is the opposite: you are subjected to unfair, discriminatory treatment, which has a bad consequence, and you get an injury or a scar, respectively -3 points.

At the end of the game, the points are summed up, and the one with the most points wins.

Elements (parts):

Dice

Game map

Participant role cards

Player figures

Situational cards

Secret cards (green & red)

Stars (energy points)

Scars

Score sheet

Pen

Authors:

Armenian Team - Shushanik, Karmen, Emma, Roman



Prototype number 6: Floomers- The Fuzzy Labyrinth Game



Objective: players work together to find the exit of the labyrinth before they lose all their lives.

Number of players: 1-4 players

Setup:

1. Randomly place 6 tiles on the blue-marked spots of the board.
2. Deal the remaining tiles randomly to the players.
3. Each player receives: 1 Orange Creature Token and 1 Blue Creature Token.
4. Place 3 Heart Tokens next to the board (starting life pool).
5. All players simultaneously place their tiles face down until all 36 spaces are filled.
6. Place the pawn on the starting space.

Turn Order:

Players take turns clockwise. 1. Move - Move the pawn to an adjacent tile (up, down, left, or right). 2. Reveal - Flip the tile face up and resolve its effect. 3. Reset Previous Tile - Turn the tile you moved from face down again. 4. Place Creature - Place one of your creature tokens (optional). 5. Roll the Die - The rolled number determines which row or column will move. Players alternate between shifting rows and columns each turn. The selected row/column shifts one space (wrapping around to the opposite side).

Tile Types:

Turquoise Tiles (Safe): No effect. Safe to step on. Flip face down after leaving. Orange Tiles (Dangerous): Pawn returns to previous tile and team loses 1 Heart Token. Flip face down after leaving. Purple Tiles (Helpful Effects): Resolve the effect written on the tile. Do not cause damage. Flip face down after leaving.

Creature Tokens:

Blue Creature Tokens are helpful markers. Orange Creature Tokens mark dangerous tiles.

Losing the Game:

If the team loses all Heart Tokens before reaching the exit, all players lose.

Winning the Game:

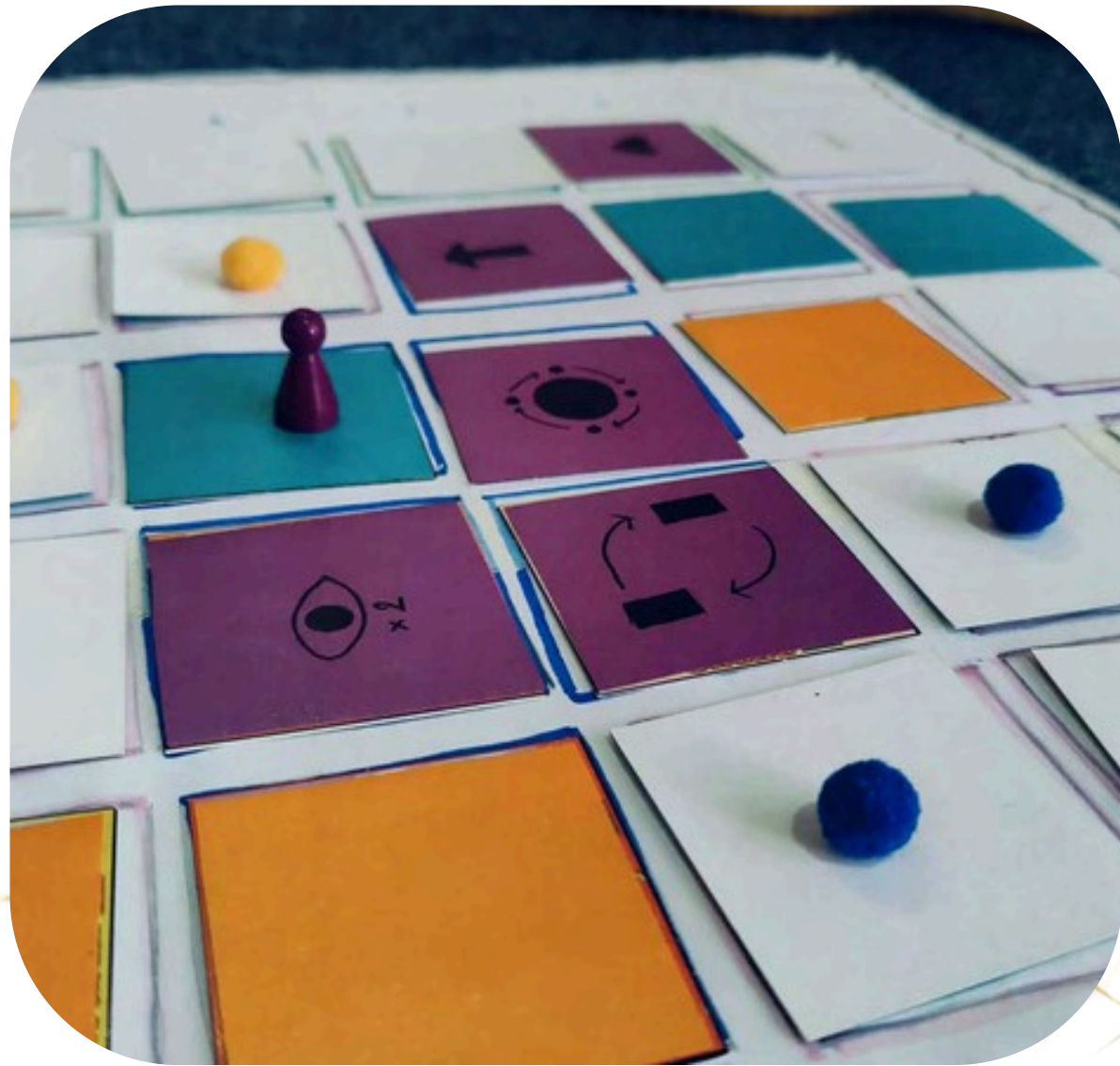
If the players reach the exit tile before losing all their lives, everyone wins.

Important Rule! All tiles flip face down after leaving (unless stated otherwise), making memory and teamwork extremely important.

Components:

- 1 Game Board (6×6 grid)
- 36 Tiles (Turquoise - safe, Orange - dangerous, Purple - helpful effects)
- 1 Pawn (shared by all players)
- 8 Creature Tokens (Blue - helpful marker, Orange - dangerous marker)
- 5 Heart Tokens (lives)
- 1 Die

Authors: Silia, Daniel, Ilias and Vassia



Prototype number 7: Starcrash



The aim of the game: To repair the starship all together before the time goes down

Number of players: 1-4

Rules (mechanics):

The 4 characters are dealt.

The 25 room cards are placed face down in a 5x5 square.

Each player starts in a corner.

It is decided randomly who starts.

Each player, in a clockwise direction, will perform one of the following actions, the 4 problems which must be solved in less than 20 minutes.

All characters and cards modify these rules.

Engine Problem—> Teletransport room

ITEM 6-7 fixed wrench +3 to roll

-Energy Off—> Cards are not flipping back again

ITEM Energy cell +3 to roll

-Shield down—> 1 use 2 actions

ITEM Blue quart +3 to roll

-Hull breach 2 more minutes

ITEM Phase Welder +3 to roll

Elements (parts): Cards, Tokens and a dye, meeples.

Authors: EKain Sancho, Raul Franco, Yaroslava Romaniuk, Cristina Alcaraz



Prototype number 8: Back to the Roots



The aim of the game: players came back to the Earth after 500 years in space, wanting to build a civilization from scratch. They have 20 years (20 rounds) to survive and build a sustainable community.

Number of players: 2-8

Rules (mechanics):

Setup: put the village board in the middle of a table; put event cards, resource tokens, and spears next to the board; deal resource tokens to each player (2 players - 8 tokens, 3-4 players - 7 tokens, 5-6 players - 5 tokens, 7-8 players - 4 tokens).

Elements (parts): village board, event cards, resource tokens, spears, marker tokens

The game lasts 20 rounds, each round consists of these 5 steps:

1. Open the event card before each round (except the 1st round)
2. Take resources from the village
3. Contribute (each player decides how many tokens they want to keep, and how many they want to put in common supplies)
4. Decide how to spend community resources (players decide together how they will vote and spend resources)
5. Spend your personal resources

Spending community resources:

Players can spend resources to build new objects in their village. When objects are built, you put a marker token on the corresponding spot next to the object, after that you can use abilities from that building.

Authors: Aleksa Petrović, Jelena Jašović, Nikola Veljković





Conclusions

When done right, board game design is more than just fun. It's a strategic tool that inspires learning, strengthens participation, boosts creativity and transforms experiences.

Use recyclable materials-
potentially from some old board
games.

Everybody can make a game.
Make board games with your
young people, ask for feedback.

BIG THANKS TO Erasmus+
programme of EU



For any potential source and sharing this toolkit,
contact OKO on: oocg.organization@gmail.com

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February, 2026

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