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Game Description

Despite the predictions of the national gurus, the economic downturn has hit the sunny lands of Meridia! And it has hit hard, so hard that the Republic's bigwigs have fled the country for the greener pastures of diverse fiscal paradises, taking their ill-gotten fortunes with them. The country is in disarray, in dire need of new leaders...

And that's where you come in. Will you rekindle the fire of Meridia's economy, while assuring the quality of life of its citizens? Or will you use your privileged position to amass a personal fortune? Up to you to decide.

Lord of the P.I.G.S. is a fast-paced multiplayer economy simulation game set in our very real Republic of Meridia, in southern Europe. You and your friends will take the role of Meridia's leaders and will vie for economic supremacy through presentation meetings, voting sessions, public opinion polls, unexpected events and widespread backstabbing.

The game revolves around simple and flavorful mechanics that mimic how the powerful wheel and deal to mold the economy to fit their interests, while occasionally catering to the needs and wants of the majority of the population. You'll take up the role of one of the Meridian bigwigs, and the objective is simple:

Further your own interests and decide the fate of the masses!

You'll be wanting to advance your interests by proposing initiatives that will influence the economy, and thus affect the other player's interests and those of the general populace. But those initiatives will only be implemented if they get enough votes, so to navigate the treacherous jungle that is Meridia's economy you'll need finesse, flattery and ferocity, as the occasion demands.

The first player to get to 10 points wins! Up to you if you want to improve the quality of life of the Meridian masses or not...But beware, for if the populace is pushed hard enough there will be a revolution, and you will lose everything you earned through your "*hard work*"...and the player with less score will be considered by the raging masses as "*the least bad*" of the bigwigs and thus will win the game!

Game contents: 4 Action decks of 29 cards each, 1 Event deck of 20 cards, 1 playing mat, 5 Pawns

Rules of the Game

Overview and Game Goal

This a fun and educational game that shows how the economy works

This is a game for 4 players, where each one takes up the role of one of the economy's pillars: President of the Republic, Chief Banker, Corporate Director and Energy Tycoon. Each pillar, or Actor, has an associated variable, that represents its interests. There's a 5th Actor, non playable, that represents the interests of the People.

The following table contains the different Actors and their associated variables:

Actor	Variable
President of the Republic	Public Opinion
Chief Banker	Economic Growth
Corporate Director	Consumer Sales
Energy Tycoon	Energy prices
The People	Social Stability

The value for the first 4 Variables (or Rating) start at 0. The goal of each player is **to be the 1st to raise his/her Rating to 10, winning the game**. To reach this goal, they will have to submit and vote Actions that will influence the economy, and thus their Ratings.

The Social Stability Rating starts at 5. If it gets to 0, there will **be a Social Uprising and thus the player with the lesser Rating wins the game**.

The Ratings can't be higher than 10 or lower than 0. If a Rating would be higher than 10, it stays at 10; if it would go below 0, it stays at 0.

The game is based around 3 mechanics:

1. **SUBMIT ACTIONS:** The players submit Actions to alter the economy and mold it to their interests. Each Action has a support threshold to be activated.
2. **VOTE ACTIONS:** The players choose to which submitted Actions they will give their support through Voting. Once a submitted Action reaches its Votes threshold, it is activated and influences the 5 Ratings.
3. **REACT TO EVENTS:** Those are unpredictable occurrences that change the gameplay, forcing the players to adapt (see *More on Events*, below).

Game Components/Areas

The game has 4 areas:

- Game Area: Where Actions are submitted, voted and activated
- Action Decks: There are 4, one for each player. Each deck has 29 cards and an associated discard pile
- Event Deck: There is one, containing 20 cards. It has an associated discard pile
- Hand: One for each player. It contains the Actions available to that player

Set up and Turn sequence

To start, shuffle all the decks and assign an Actor to each Player. Then each player draws an initial hand of 3 Action cards and place themselves following the Actor order:

President → Banker → Corporate Director → Energy Tycoon

This is the cycle which will determine the order in which the players will resolve the different activities. The players should also agree whether they want to play with Alternate Modes of Actions and Events. It is recommended to play the 1st couple of game without them, and then introduce these extra elements as players master the core mechanics.

Each turn consists of the following phases:

- **Upkeep Phase:**
 - Priority: The next player in the Actor order becomes the 1st player
 - Events:
 - If there's an active Event, discard it
 - Reveal the top Event from the Event deck
 - Each player draws an Action card from his/her deck. If he/she can't draw, he/she shuffles his/her discard pile and then draws an Action card
- **Voting Phase:**
 - In Actor order, and starting with the 1st player, each player states if he/she wants to Vote for one (and only one) submitted Action. To do so, they put an Action card from their hand on their chosen submitted Action, face down
- **Activation Phase:**
 - Each Action that reaches or exceeds its Votes threshold becomes activated. However, in Actor order, and starting with the 1st player, each player can use Alternate Modes of Actions in his/her hand. To do so, the player reveals and discards the chosen Action from his/her hand, and applies the result to the Votes on the submitted Actions
 - If two or more Actions are activated, activate them following the Actor order of their respective owners, starting with the 1st player

- When an Action becomes activated change the Ratings according to the Action's Effect, then discard the Action and the Votes to their respective discard piles. The Action's owner reads out loud the description to the other players
- **Submission Phase:**
 - In Actor order, and starting with the 1st player, each player states if he/she wants to Submit an Action. To do so, they put one (and only one) Action card from their hand on the Game Area, face-up
- **End of turn: Verify in this order**
 - If the Social Stability Rating is 0, the player with lower Rating wins the game. In case of a draw, the game continues
 - If the Rating of one player reached 10, that player wins the game. If two or more players have a Rating of 10, the game continues
 - If none of the above, the game continues

More on Actions

The Action cards are the tools that players have at their disposal to win the game. Each Action represents an intervention with consequences for the economy, and thus on the Ratings of the Actors. Each Action is composed of the following parts:

- **Name**
- **Owner:** To which Actor it belongs to
- **Votes Threshold:** How many Votes are required for this Action to be Activated
- **Alternate Mode:** Some Actions have special abilities. Those are divided in 2 groups:
 - *+1 Vote:* Discard this Action to add a Vote from a submitted Action
 - *-1 Vote:* Discard this Action to remove a Vote from a submitted Action
 - *Share Benefits with X:* Discard this Action to add to your Rating the effect of an activated Action upon Actor X's Rating
- **Effect:** Indicates which Ratings are affected, and by how much, when the Action is activated
- **Description:** Explains the reasoning behind the Action's Effect through a small story

Each player has a deck of 29 Action cards, with 3 different Rare cards (1 copy of each), 4 different Uncommon cards (2 copies of each) and 6 Common cards (3 copies of each). To ensure perfect balance, the decks are perfectly symmetrical.

Each deck follows this structure:

TAG	#	Vote Threshold	Effect on Owner	Effect on A	Effect on B	Effect on C	Effect on SS	ALT
C1	3	2	2	1	1	0	1	NO
C2	3	1	1	-1	-1	0	-1	NO
C3	3	2	2	2	0	0	-1	NO
C4	3	2	2	0	2	0	-1	NO
C5	3	1	1	1	-1	0	0	Vote+1
C6	3	1	1	-1	1	0	0	Vote-1
U1	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	NO
U2	2	2	2	-2	-2	-1	-2	NO
U3	2	1	2	0	0	1	-2	Vote+1
U4	2	1	0	-1	-1	-1	+2	Vote-1
R1	1	3	4	-2	+2	1	-3	Share B
R2	1	3	4	+2	-2	1	-3	Share A
R3	1	2	3	1	1	1	+3	NO

Where:

- **TAG:** Each card has a tag for design purposes. C means common, U uncommon and R rare (These are not shown on the actual card)
- **A, B and C:** A is the Actor who is before the current Actor in the Actor order, B is the one that comes after, and C is the Actor opposed. For example, for the President's deck, A is the Energy Tycoon, B is the Banker and C is the Corporate Director
- **SS:** Social Stability Rating
- **ALT:** Shows whether the card has an Alternate Mode

The Names and Description are unique for every single card in the game. On the next page there's a table that shows the Name for each card; the Description of each card hasn't been included for brevity's sake.

TAG	President	Banker	Corporate Director	Energy Tycoon
C1	Organic Law Against Energy Poverty	Lower Lending Rate to Small Companies	Adjust the Prices	Carbon Sequestration Technologies
C2	Structural Measures Package	Up Lending Rate to Small Companies	Adjust the Production	Waste Policies Revision
C3	Remote Administrative Managing Law	New Risk Assessment Study	Strategic Acquisition of Prime Materials	Focus on Traditional Energy Sources
C4	Energy Security Convention	Popularize Consumption Lends	In-Factory Energy Plant	Rate System's Redesign
C5	Savings Promotion Campaign	Prioritize Investment in Public Sector	Break into Stock Market	Energy Consumption's Committee
C6	Streamlining of National Oil Resources Act	Prioritize Investment in Private Sector	Supply Strategic Agreement	Consumption Awareness Campaign
U1	VAT Reduction	International Finance Relations Committee	Hybrid Card Development	Wind Power Farm Inauguration
U2	National Production Protection Act	Loan Risk Minimization Plan	Relocation of Production Sites	Energy Sector Sustainability Committee
U3	"24/7" Law to Invigorate Consumption	Hedge Fund in New Extraction Techniques	Expand Towards the Healthcare Sector	Shale Gas Discovery
U4	Workers' Rights Protection Campaign	Creation of "Bank of Meridia" Foundation	Reforestation Plan	Coal Plant Phase Out Plan
R1	Private Sector Growth's Stimulus Package	Economic Assessment Committee	Committee for the Defense of the National Produce	First Shale Gas Exploitation
R2	Strategic Intervention in the Financial Sector	Strategic Restructuring	Lobby to End Energy Monopoly	Alliance for the Defense of the National Energy
R3	Social Pact	Real Estate Strategy	Integral Production Commitment	Support Off-Grid Production

More on Events

The Event cards represent occurrences that affect the economy in a random way, completely independent of the Actor's will and reach. Each Event is composed of the following parts:

- **Name**
- **Effect:** How the Event affects the gameplay
- **Description:** Explains the Event's Effect through a small story

There is a single Event deck that is used by all players. The deck has 20 Events, of which 10 introduce change in the gameplay and 10 don't ("Business as Usual"). Below there's a table that shows the Name for each Event; the Description of each card hasn't been included for brevity's sake.

Name	Effect
Foreign Investment	When this is revealed: Each Player draws an Action from his/her deck
Flash Floods	When this is revealed: Each Player discards an Action from his/her hand
General Strike	When this is revealed: In Actor order, and starting with the 1st player, each player states if he/she wants to add or subtract 1 from the Social Stability Rating
Terrorist Attack	When this is revealed: If a Rating would change, it changes in 1 more point (<i>e.g: If it would go up 2 points, it goes up 3 points instead; if it would go down 1 point, it goes down 2 points instead</i>)
National Business Fair	While this is the Active Event: Whenever a Submitted Action is Activated, its owner draws 2 Actions
Civilian Watchdogs	When this is revealed: Each Player chooses a Submitted Action he/she owns and discards it. If there were Votes on it, discard them
International Scrutiny	While this is the Active Event: Alternate Modes of Actions can't be used
Championship Final	While this is the Active Event: Social Stability's Rating can't change
Whistle-blower Scandal	When this is revealed: Each Player shows the actions in his/her hand with Alternate Modes
FMI Intervention	When this is revealed: In Actor order, and starting with the 1st player, each Player chooses another Player. Then he/she chooses to add or subtract 1 to both his/her rating and the chosen player's rating.
Business as usual	No Effect

House Rules

We use a couple of extra house rules when we play, depending on the mood we're in...
You're welcome to try them!

Voting: Diplomacy Wars

Instead of being able to vote for **ANY** submitted Action, each player can only vote for **the other players'** submitted Actions. Expect more backstabbing and swindling than usual...

Scoring: The Regular Way

We usually play a set of 3 games. The points carry over, and at the end of the 3rd game the Lord is crowned! The scoring for each game follows this distribution:

- In a game without Social Uprising, the winner gets 3 points and the 2nd (or tied for 2nd) gets 1 point. The rest get 0 points!
- In a game with Social Uprising, the winner gets 2 points and the rest 0.

Scoring: The Competitive Way

As before, we usually play a set of 3 games and the points carry over; at the end of the 3rd game the Lord is crowned! The scoring for each game follows this rules:

- In a game without Social Uprising, each player gets a number of points equal to his/her Rating. The winner gets 3 extra points for being awesome.
- In a game with Social Uprising, the winner gets 5 points and the rest 0.