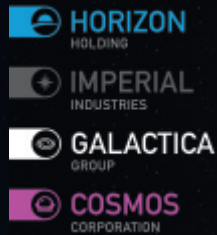# PLUTOCRACY

SPACE IS TIME IS MONEY IS POWER

A GAME BY CLAUDIO BIERIG – DEVELOPED BY DOPPELDENKSPIELE

WELCOME TO PLUTOCRACY

Humankind has finally laid most of Earth to waste. Only the exodus to the other planets in the Solar System ensured its survival. Major corporations - not the failing states - organized the colonization and took control of interplanetary trade. After two centuries of fierce competition and war the four surviving corporations established the Solar System's ultimate authority - the Plutocratic Council.

SPACE IS TIME

The Plutocratic Council immediately started regulating interplanetary trade and coincidentally issued trade licenses to the four big corporations only. Since they all had access to the same technology, it was a question of finding the optimal trading routes in order to deliver resources to the planets as quickly as possible with the largest margin.

TIME IS MONEY

The hunger for resources of the recently populated planets was such that the local parliaments decided to illuminate their planets in the color of the specific resource they demanded. And the planets paid in a real, hard currency: Space Euros.

MONEY IS POWER

Money was the true key to power, as seats in the planets' parliaments could easily be bought. By means of recurring elections, influence of the trading corporations in the planets' parliaments translated into influence in the Plutocratic Council. And influence in the Plutocratic Council meant power over the Solar System, which again translated into more profits... the eternal circle of a plutocracy.

Almost as important as control over the planets' parliaments was the goodwill of the four Societies on Earth. How they managed to create habitable space on Earth and gain so much control in the Plutocratic Council remained a mystery to those who don't have what is needed to join these elite circles.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

How these rules are organized:

Game mechanics are explained in white boxes.

Important: are very important rules.

Remarks: are rule clarifications.

Examples are in white font and next to nice pictures.

Background story is smaller white italic font.

"It is forbidden to call Pluto a 'dwarf' planet. Pluto shall be referred to as the 'ultimate celestial body'." [Law passed by the Plutocratic Council in 2 a.P.C.]

OVERVIEW

In Plutocracy, 2 to 4 players each lead one of the big trading corporations and will travel from planet to planet to buy and sell resources. By selling at a higher price than buying, players will earn money (Space Euros S€).

They need S€ to buy seats in the planetary parliaments.

In each of the 3 elections during the game, players that have a majority in a planetary parliament will send Councilors to the Plutocratic Council.

Equally important as the elections are the Societies on Earth: players that meet the conditions to join them while on Earth may also send Councilors to the Plutocratic Council.

The ultimate objective of each player is to have the most Councilors in the Plutocratic Council at the end of the game.

BOX CONTENTS

This rulebook and a German rulebook

1 Main Board, 1 Earth Board, 5 Planet Boards

1 Earth disk & 5 Planet disks

10 Price tokens (2x each: Oxygen, Carbon, Uranium, Plants, Water)

4 Event tokens: ROTATE, PRICES, ELECT, THE END

1 Asteroid token, 4 Alien tokens, 1 Die

Cubes, representing 10, 5 or 1 unit(s) of resources or Space Euros (S€):

10x10   15x5   40x1

4 Auction tokens for the variant INITIAL AUCTION, p.10.

1st   2nd   3rd   4th

For each player in their color:
- 1 Player Board (see below)
- 1 Spaceship, 1 Time disk, 1 Retired disk and 3 stickers
  Put the stickers on the Spaceship, the Time disk and the Retired disk.
  For the Spaceship, choose the symbol depicted on the Player Board of the same color!
- 4 Society disks
- 18 Octagons representing 1 Councilor each resp. 1 Member of a planetary parliament each
- 5 Octagons representing 5 Councilors each
- 1 personal THE END token for the variants (see VARIANTS, p.10)

PLAYER BOARD

The Player Board shows the name, color and symbol of the respective corporation ①, the actions a player may execute in their turn ②, 5 storage areas for the different resources ③ and 1 storage area for Space Euros (S€) ④.

In order to keep track of their S€ and of their resources, players place cubes worth 1, 5 or 10 units on the corresponding area, e.g. a silver cube can either represent 5 units of a resource or 5 S€, depending on its placement.

Important: Storage is limited to 5 units per resource. S€ do not count as a resource and S€ storage is not limited.

Horizon has stored 5 units of Uranium and 2 units of Carbon. It has 17 S€.

"Commander", began Carl, "why can't we load more Uranium and put it into the Water storage?"
The commander was worried. She looked at Carl, the new cadet. Did they not teach cadets the importance of separate, limited storage of resources and the risks of contamination and overload anymore?

SETUP

1) Lay out the **Main Board**. It shows a hex map of the Solar System with the orbits of planets and Earth ①, the trajectory of the Asteroid ②, the Plutocratic Council ③ and the time track ④.

Remark: In this game the term planet does not include Earth.

2) Place the **Event tokens** on the following fields of the time track:

# Players	👥👥	👥👥👥	👥👥👥👥
ROTATE ⑤	10	10	10
PRICES ⑥	20	15	12
ELECT ⑦	25	25	20
THE END ⑧	75	75	60

Remark: The initial positions of the Event tokens can also be found on their reverse side.

3) Place the **Asteroid** on the outermost hex of its trajectory (it features a bright star) and place 1 **Alien token** for each player on the Asteroid ⑨.

4) Place the **Planet disks** and the **Earth disk** on the hexes of their respective orbits that feature a bright star ⑩.

5) Place the **Planet** and **Earth Boards** next to the Main Board <u>in the order as depicted</u> ⑪. Leave a small gap between Saturn and Neptune.

4

If this is your first time playing this game, continue with A) BASIC SETUP. In later games, choose between A) BASIC SETUP and B) RANDOM SETUP.

A) BASIC SETUP

6) Place the **Price tokens** on fields 5 and 3 of the DEMAND and SUPPLY columns of the planets ⑫ <u>as depicted</u>.

7) Each player chooses an available color. With 2 players, black and white are available. With 3 players, black, white and pink are available. With 4 players all colors are available.
Each player places the respective **Player Board** ⑬ in front of them and places the **octagons and disks in their color** ⑭ within reach.

8) Each player receives **12 S€** and places the corresponding number of cubes on the S€ area of their Player Board ⑮. Place the remaining cubes in good reach.

⑪

EARTH

9) Stack the **Time disks** <u>in the depicted order</u> on field 0 of the time track ⑯ and place the players' **Spaceships** on the planets ⑰ <u>as depicted</u>.
Now you are all set to start with the game. Continue with SEQUENCE OF PLAY, p. 6.

GALACTICA

⑬   ⑭

⑮

B) RANDOM SETUP

6) On each planet, place a **Price token** of the same color as the planet on field 5 of the DEMAND column (i.e., Oxygen on Mars, Uranium on Saturn, Carbon on Jupiter, Plants on Uranus and Water on Neptune) ⑫.

7) Distribute the remaining 5 **Price tokens** randomly on the planets and place them on field 3 of the SUPPLY column. If, as a result, the Price tokens on the DEMAND and SUPPLY columns are the same, exchange the Price token of the SUPPLY column randomly with one from another planet so that this is not the case anymore.

8) For a better overview, sort the **Planet Boards** on the table by demand. E.g., in the basic setup, Mars and Saturn demand each others' resources, Uranus demands resources from Neptune, Jupiter from Uranus and Neptune from Jupiter (see ⑪).

9) To determine a) the starting positions of the planets and b) the starting prices roll the **die** once for each planet, beginning with the outermost (Neptune).
  a) Move the **Planet disk** in clockwise direction on its orbit a number of positions (i.e., hex in planet's color) equaling the die roll.
  b) If the die shows 1-3, move this planet's **Price tokens** to field 4 on the DEMAND column and to field 2 on the SUPPLY column. If the die shows 4-9, leave the tokens on fields 5 and 3 respectively, and if the die shows 10-12, move them to fields 6 and 4 respectively.

10) Each player chooses a color, places the respective **Player Board** ⑬ in front of them and places the **octagons and disks in their color** ⑭ within reach.

11) Each player receives **12 S€** and places the corresponding number of cubes on the S€ area of their Player Board ⑮. Place the remaining cubes in good reach.

12) Determine a player randomly. This player chooses one of the 5 planets as starting position and places their **Spaceship** on the respective Planet disk. The player places their **Time disk** on field 0 of the time track. The other players follow in clockwise order and place their disk on top of any other disks on field 0 of the time track.

**Remark:** More than one player may start on the same planet.

Remark: The player choosing their starting position last, is the first to act, because their Time disk is on top.

Now you are all set to start with the game. Continue with SEQUENCE OF PLAY, p. 6.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

It is always the turn of the player who has spent the least time. This is indicated by their Time disk on the time track. In case of a tie (e.g., after setup), the player whose disk is further up is considered to have spent less time.

In regards to sequence of play, the Event tokens ROTATE, PRICES, ELECT and THE END are handled just like players' Time disks. If it is the "turn" of such an Event token, perform the corresponding event (see EVENTS, p. 8).
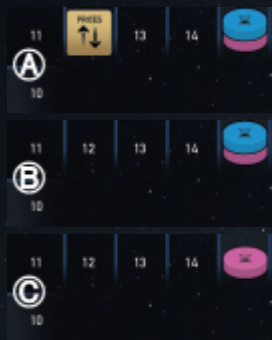
It is the turn of the Event token PRICES.
After the event it will be Horizon's (blue) and then Cosmos' (pink) turn.

"I understand that price adjustments and elections are singular events. But shouldn't planets rotate continuously and not only every 10 time units?"
"The only reason for time, young Carl, is so that everything doesn't happen at once" philosophized the Commander.

PLAYER'S TURN & ACTIONS

"Enough with your questions. It's your turn to act now, Carl!"

When it is their turn, a player may execute – depending on their location – the following actions in the given order:

(1) Sell resources on a planet
(2) Buy resources on a planet
(3) Buy seats in planetary parliament
(4) Save an alien off Asteroid
(5) Join Societies on Earth
(6) (a) Travel or (b) Retire

Important: Actions (1) to (5) are optional but a player must always (6a) Travel or (6b) Retire at the end of their turn.

Remark: After a player travels or retires it is the turn of the player / Event token with the least time spent (see SEQUENCE OF PLAY, p. 6).

Remark: It is possible that a player has multiple turns in a row.

(1) SELL RESOURCES ON A PLANET

This action is only possible if the player's Spaceship is on a planet.
The player may sell resources of the type indicated by the Price token in the DEMAND column. The player discards a chosen amount of this resource from their Player Board. The player then gains S€ for each discarded resource unit according to the current price on the DEMAND column of this planet.
After completing the sell action, the demand price decreases by 1, if possible.

Horizon sells 2 Water on Neptune for 5 S€ each and receives 10 S€ in total. Then the demand price decreases to 4.

(2) BUY RESOURCES ON A PLANET

"Space is infinite, but your storage is not!" [from a fortune cookie in a Martian space trucker restaurant]

This action is only possible if the player's Spaceship is on a planet.
The player may buy resources of the type indicated by the Price token in the SUPPLY column. For each resource unit they buy (and place on their Player Board), the player pays S€ according to the current price on the SUPPLY column of this planet.
After completing the buy action, the supply price increases by 1, if possible.

Important: The personal storage of a player is always limited to 5 units per resource. A player may not buy resources that would exceed the limit. Storage of S€ is not limited.

Horizon buys 2 Plants for 3 S€ each. Because it had already 3 plants stored, it is not able to buy more. Then the supply price increases to 4.

(3) BUY SEATS IN PLANETARY PARLIAMENT

This action is only possible if the player's Spaceship is on a planet.
The player may buy 1 or more seats in this planetary parliament. For each seat, the player pays the price indicated on the seat in the parliament and places a Member of their color on that seat.

Important: Players must always buy the cheapest seats available.

"Announcement 329: And the next two seats in the Parliament go to... Horizon Holding! The people of Neptune thank you for your generous contribution!"


Horizon buys 2 seats in Neptune's Parliament for a total of 10 S€.

(4) SAVE AN ALIEN OFF ASTEROID

This action is only possible if the player's Spaceship is on the Asteroid and the player has not yet saved an alien.
A player puts 1 Alien token from the Asteroid onto their Player Board.

Remark: An alien is needed to join the Scientist Society on Earth (see JOIN SOCIETIES ON EARTH, p. 7).
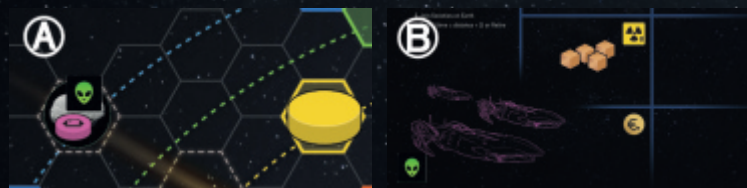
Cosmos is on the Asteroid and puts 1 of the aliens on their Player Board.

"Commander's log. Cosmos Cooperation: N232, TU 28: We are still not able to communicate with the alien life form that we saved 5 TU ago from the Asteroid. Did their ship crash on this giant rock, or were they just part of a religious suicide mission?
Philosophical questions; the Scientists' Society can solve... Let them deal with it. The main thing is that the Society gets us on the Plutocractic Council."

(5) JOIN SOCIETIES ON EARTH

This action is only possible if the player's Spaceship is on Earth.
If the player meets the condition to join a Society (see below), they immediately place 3 (if they are the first player to enter this society) or 2 Councilors (if they are the second) in the Plutocratic Council. To indicate that a player has joined a Society, they place a Society disk onto the corresponding field on the Earth Board.

Important: If all conditions are met, a player may join multiple Societies in one turn, but players may not join any Society more than once per game. No more than 2 players may join each Society.

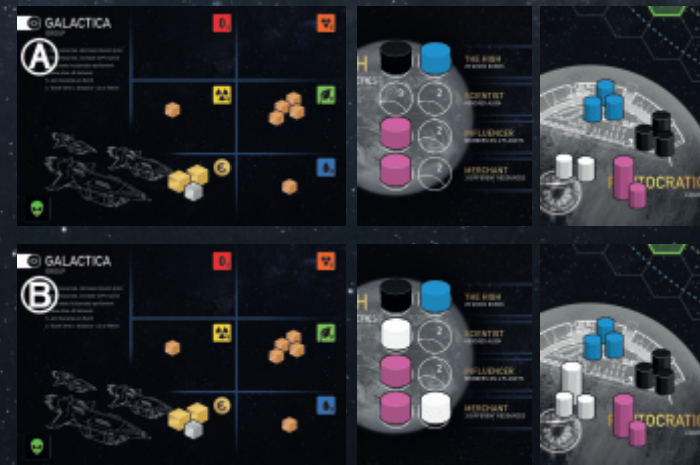**Conditions to join the Societies:**
The High Society: At least 25 S€ on the Player Board.
Scientists' Society: A saved alien on the Player Board.
Influencers' Society: Members on at least 4 different planetary parliaments.
Merchants' Society: At least 3 different resources on the Player Board.

Remark: After joining a Society, players keep the S€ / alien / Members / resources.

Galactica (white) is on Earth and fulfills the conditions to join the High, the Scientists' and the Merchants' Society. Since each Society may only be joined by 2 players, Galactica joins the Scientists' and Merchants' Society but not the High Society. As a result it places 5 Councilors in the Plutocratic Council. The alien and resources stay on the Player Board.

"Some say the founders of the Plutocratic Council themselves invented the Societies to ensure their eternal influence. Others say the Societies already existed long before the colonization of the planets. The only thing we know for sure is that life outside of their oases is Hell on Earth." [from "A History of Money's Power"]

(6a) TRAVEL

„If Space is Time, then why does Time equal Space+2? What's wrong with the Universe?" „The Universe", the commander replied, „is not the problem, humans are. They need extra time to reach perfect speed."

The player chooses a hex, different from their current position, that is either a planet/ the Earth/the Asteroid or one of its possible positions (i.e., a colored or framed hex) and moves their Spaceship to this hex. They may not travel to or through the Sun.

By travelling, the player spends time corresponding to the flight distance, 1 time unit for each hex travelled. 2 additional time units are spent on each flight independent from the travel distance (for "take-off & landing").

The player moves their Time disk therefore travel distance + 2 steps forward on the time track. If there already is a Time disk or Event token on that field, the player puts their disk on top.

Important: A player may always voluntarily spend more time than required. (see example below).

Important: A player is not allowed to choose a position that would move their Time disk past the THE END token. If the player cannot choose any new destination under these conditions, the player must retire instead of travelling.

Remark: A player may choose a position occupied by other players' Spaceships.

Horizon (blue) travels to the position that Uranus will rotate to next. The distance is 1 hex. Horizon needs to spend at least 3 time units but decides to spend 3 additional time units (6 in total) to "wait" for the rotation.

(6b) RETIRE

The commander was tired. All this travelling... "I will retire" she thought, "and make a last travel to Pluto and enjoy the taste of power."

If a player cannot travel anymore or if a player decides that they cannot improve their situation anymore, they retire.

The player removes their Spaceship from the Main Board and replaces their Time disk with their Retired disk. The player will not take any further turns in the game; however, the player is considered in remaining elections.

EVENTS
ROTATE

*"But the fool on the hill
Sees the sun going down
And the eyes in his head
See the world spinning round"
[Terrestrial rock band of a long-forgotten age]*

When it is the "turn" of the ROTATE token, move all planet disks and the Earth disk by 1 position (i.e., colored hex) in clockwise direction on their respective orbit. Move the Asteroid token 1 position (i.e., framed hex) towards the Sun.

Spaceships on a planet/the Earth/the Asteroid will be moved together with them. If a planet/the Earth/the Asteroid moves onto a hex that contains Spaceships, the Spaceships are placed on top.

Then move the ROTATE token 10 fields forward on the time track, or if not possible, remove it.

Important: With the 6th rotation, the Asteroid and any aliens left on it, plunge into to the Sun and are removed from the game. Players whose Spaceship is on the Asteroid are also removed from the game.

All planets and Earth move 1 position on their orbit, the Asteroid moves towards the sun. Galactica (white) rotates with Earth and Cosmos (pink) moves with the Asteroid. Horizon (blue) is now on Uranus. The token ROTATE is placed on field 30 on the time track, and is placed on top of Imperial's Time disk (black).

The next rotation will occur before Imperial's turn, meaning Imperial will start its next turn on Jupiter.

ELECT

When it is the "turn" of the ELECT token, majorities in each planetary parliament are determined. Players place Councilors in the Plutocratic Council as follows.

1st and 2nd election: The player with most Members in a planetary parliament places 1 Councilor in the Plutocratic Council.
3rd election: The player with most Members in a planetary parliament places 2, the player with the second most Members places 1 Councilor in the Plutocratic Council.

In case of a tie, the player with the more expensive seat counts as having more Members.

Then move the ELECT token for 2/3/4 players 25/25/20 fields forward on the time track, or, if not possible, remove it.

Remark: The 3rd election is executed even if all players have retired prior to it.
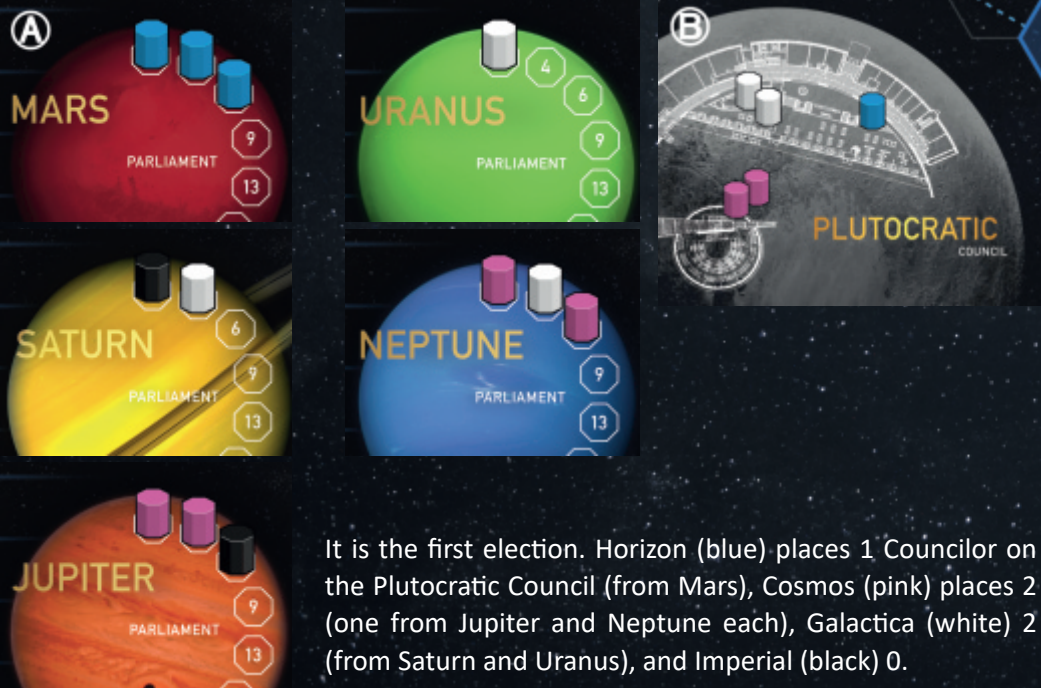
It is the first election. Horizon (blue) places 1 Councilor on the Plutocratic Council (from Mars), Cosmos (pink) places 2 (one from Jupiter and Neptune each), Galactica (white) 2 (from Saturn and Uranus), and Imperial (black) 0.

PRICES

When it is the "turn" of the PRICES token, on each planet, increase the demand price by 1 (if possible), and decrease the supply price by 1 (if possible).

Then move the PRICES token for 2/3/4 players 20/15/12 fields forward on the time track, or, if not possible, remove it.

On Mars, the demand price for Oxygen is increased by 1. The supply price for Uranium cannot be decreased because it is already at 1.

THE END

The game ends when it is the "turn" of the THE END token at 75/75/60 time units for 2/3/4 players.
Players are ranked according to the number of Councilors in the Plutocratic Council. The player with the most Councilors in the Plutocratic Council wins the game. In case of a tie, the player who has spent less time (according to their Retired disks) is ranked higher.

After the 3rd and last election, Horizon (blue) wins the game with 14 Councilors. Second is Cosmos (pink) — it has spent less time than Galactica (white). Imperial (black) is 4th with 9 Councilors.

VARIANTS

TIME PRESSURE

Overview: In the variant "time pressure" the number of time units available to players varies, depending on the actual time players need to plan their actions.

Material: This variant uses the personal THE END tokens of the players. In addition, the group needs some device to measure the time players take to make their turn.

Additional setup: At the end of the setup, players place their personal THE END tokens on the event token THE END in any order.

Changes to the gameplay:
a) Each player has 90 seconds time to execute their turn. If a player has not finished their turn after the 90 seconds run out, move their personal THE END token 1 field backwards on the time track (for example from 75 to 74). This grants the player additional 90 seconds. Repeat until a player has finished their turn, i.e., the player has traveled and moved their Time disk accordingly.
b) Players may not move their Time disk past their personal THE END token. If a player cannot choose any new destination under these conditions, they must retire at the end of their turn instead of traveling.
c) If a player's personal THE END token is moved onto their Time disk, the player is removed from the game.

New tie breaker at game end: If two or more players have the same number of Councilors in the Plutocratic Council, the distance between their Retired disk and their personal THE END token breaks ties (greater distance is better). If there is still a tie, as per usual, less time units spent breaks the tie.

At the end of the game all three players have the same number of Councilors in the Plutocratic Council. Galactica (white) wins the tie, because it spent the least amount of time units among the players with the largest distance between Retired disk and personal THE END token. Cosmos (pink) is ranked second, and Imperial (black) third.
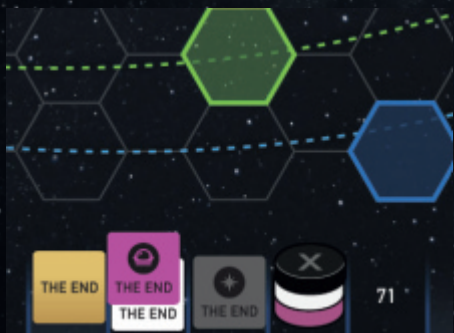
INITIAL AUCTION

Overview: It can occur during RANDOM SETUP that some starting positions seem better than others. In the variant INITIAL AUCTION players bid on the inital player order using time units. This means that after the auction players have differing amounts of time units available depending on their bids. We recommend this variant for experienced groups where the player who complains the most always wins.

Material: This variant uses the personal THE END tokens of the players as well as the Auction tokens 1st-4th.

Additional setup: After step 11) of RANDOM SETUP, p.5, all players place their personal THE END tokens on the event token THE END in any order.
Instead of step 12) the following steps are performed to determine the order in which players choose their starting planet:
a) Place a number of Auction tokens equal to the number of players (e.g. the markers 1st, 2nd and 3rd for 3 players) next to the main board.
b) Determine a random player to begin the auction.
c) This player bids on their preferred starting position. They place their Time disk next to an Auction token (e.g. on the 2nd token if they want to be the second player to choose their starting planet). They also place a bid of time units next to the Auction token using octagons (a bid of 0 is allowed).
d) Play continues in clockwise order to players that still have their Time disks in front of themselves. When it is their turn they
  i) Place a bid for a starting position that has not been taken (see c)) or
  ii) Raise an existing bid by placing their Time disk and a greater number of octagons next to the token. A player who was outbid takes back their Time disk and octagons and places another bid when player order returns to them.
e) When all players have placed their Time disks on individual Auction tokens, players take the Auction tokens as well as their Time disks. Then their personal THE END tokens are moved back on the time track a number of fields equalling their final bid (e.g. from 60 to 57 when the final bid was 3).
f) The player with the 1st token chooses their starting planet first, places their Spaceship on the chosen planet and their Time disk on space 0 on the time track. Then the player with the 2nd token follows etc..

Changes to the gameplay:

a) Players may not move their Time disk past their personal THE END token. If a player cannot choose any new destination under these conditions, they must retire at the end of their turn instead of traveling.

b) If a player's personal THE END token is moved onto their Time disk, the player is removed from the game.

New tie breaker at game end: If two or more players have the same number of Councilors in the Plutocratic Council, the distance between their Retired disk and their personal THE END token breaks ties (greater distance is better). If there is still a tie, as per usual, less time units spent breaks the tie.

Horizon (blue) bids on the 4th starting position with 1 octagon. In clockwise order Galactica (white) bids 1 on the 1st, Cosmos (pink) bids on the 4th with 3 octagons - this means Horizon takes back their Time disk and octagon. Imperial (black) bids on the 2nd position with 0 octagons.

Now it's the turn of Horizon again, bidding 1 on the 2nd position. Imperial takes back their Time disk. Galactica and Cosmos do not bid, because they don't have their Time disks in front of them. Finally, Imperial bids on the 3rd position with 0 octagons. Since no player has a Time disk in front of themselves, the auction ends.

The players move their personal THE END tokens on the time track as depicted. Galactica can now choose as first player a planet for their Spaceship and places their Time disk on the field 0 of the time track, followed by Horizon, Imperial and finally Cosmos.

RULE CLARIFICATIONS

What happens to a player that is "removed from the game"? – This player removes all their material from the game, does not take part in the final ranking and should serve drinks to the other players during the remainder of the game.

Are these all your questions, Carl? – Yes, commander.

What shall I do if I have more questions? – Check out boardgamegeek!

CREDITS
ARTWORK

A big thank you to Shaahin! Without him and his patience this game would still be functional, but definitely ugly.
The depiction of Plutocratic Council is the "parliament for the sami people" copyright by Stein Halvorsen Arkitekter, Oslo, Norway.
The spaceships on the Player Boards are from Fryewerk.

PLAYTESTING

After Claudio presented the game to us for the first time, we immediately liked it. Thanks to the advices of our playtesters, chances are that other people will like the game as well:
Christoph H., Julian S., Jonathan S., Florian D., Wolfgang K., Sabine L., Oliver K., Miriam K., Sarah H., Philipp T., Ahmad S., Peter B., Eva S., Volker D., Thomas M., Gregor R., Arne K.

RULE EDITING

Without the valuable feedback and corrections of the following people the rules would still be clear if and only if you were one of the game designers:
Christoph H., Florian D., Ahmad S., Peter B., Thomas M., Doris S.-E.