Report on the quality of the project - QAP Final Report

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The Game On project started on the 15th January 2021. It involved defining the public objective, establishing a scalable training system, conducting training tests, and system evaluation. The project spanned three years and targeted five countries.

This is the fifth and final report for the project. The first report was conducted from January 15 to July 15, 2021. The second report covered the period from July 21 to May 22. The 3rd QAP spanned from June 22 to September 23. Lastly, the 4th QAP encompassed the timeframe from October 23 to January 24. There is also the final research report (Exploring the impact of game design on the promotion of inclusion). This final report will attempt an overall assessment of the project's performance.

1. Project evolution

1.1 Finding models and significant practices

The WP1 (Mapping of Game Design Models) focused on exploring and categorizing game design models, using the partners' experiences of game design.

This work package started on 11th February and the leading partner was Idealúdica, with four contributing partners: BalkanIdea Novi Sad, Nectarus, NUR and Nexes.

This WP achieved the two outputs highlighted: (1) creating different podcasts about the 10 most significant practices; (2) developing 5 to 10 written visual descriptions about the different models of Game Design. The process of searching for experiences and the interviews' collection (involving 23 experiences) were used to reach a common agreement on what meant a significant practice. The visual descriptions were very useful during the project development, especially with the trainings and contents creation. The findings showed 7 different models: (1) Participative; (2) Transformative; (3) Mixing; (4) Curricular; (5) Consultative; (6) Formative and (7) Collaborative.

1.2 Creation and testing of training modules

In this phase, the WP2 (Educational Game Design Training Modules) and the WP3 (Game on training) started the core actions of the project. The need to create content and start testing it needed more time. The WP2 started in September 2021 and the WP3 on June 2022. The contents were developed from the WP1 "Game Design unfolded" results, and directed towards initial targets as: Youth workers, Teachers and Adult Educators.

During this time, some key issued also emerged. Namely, the difficulties to reach common meanings to complex and key concepts such as the meaning of inclusion, and to reach and

involve the planned targets. The project developed some work and adaptations to solve those issues. First starting an open discussion and documents creation that led to a common agreement and interpretation of inclusion. Secondly, with a small reduction in sample sizes, and increasing the timed schedules for WP2 to reach enough target participants.

The trainings took place in each partners' local settings:

- Cagliari (16-19 march and 1st April), with 13 participants and 5 facilitators, mostly teachers.
- Barcelona (9, 15, 16, 22 and 23rd of October), with 13 participants (basically teachers) and 5 facilitators.
- Novi Sad and Sremski Karlovci (October 21 st-26th and 30th-November 5th), with 28 participants (basically youth workers, educators, and teachers.
- Vilnius (September 29th, October 13-14, and November 3-4), with 24 participants and 3 facilitators, basically from the education sector and 7 from NGO's.
- Game On Training of Multipliers in Daugirdiskes, from June 10-16th. It was a specific joint training to 25 participants on pilot training modules from Spain, Italy, Serbia and Lithuania.

Those numbers were big enough to test, contrast and learn from the uses of the created materials. It led to some changes and adaptations.

1.3 Developing materials for scaling and dissemination

With the learnings of the testing, the project also started developing some interesting ways to scaling those contents, via the "Educational Game Design Manual" and the 10 digital playlists for the training modules (from the WP4 "Learning Playlists to scale good practices of educational game design" which finished in July 2023.

All of this was put together in a platform (at https://gameonproject.info), offering external access to materials on 8 outcomes: Game design podcasts; Methodological models, Training modules, Game design manual, Multiplier activities, Learning playlists, Gamified impact tool; and Inclusions paper.

The ongoing project development has shown also a very interesting effect on building a second layer of experts and collaborators interested on the topic.

When upscaling the project outputs, partners decided to go further than planned to ensure its impact. Even if there were no resources allocated for it, many innovative activities and actions were developed to ensure reaching target groups and stakeholders during WP4: workshops, a game design contests, webinars, extra trainings,... The lack of resources for this on the initial plan, plus the delays on the production of some outputs, created some tensions among partners, which were constructively solved. At the same time, the innovative approach to ensure its upscaling proved the commitment of the partnership with the project and its goals. Due to these proactive actions, the project achieved a significant impact, and reached new participants, particularly educators, youth workers, and teachers.

1.4 Assessment and impact measuring

The WP5, from May 2022 to January 2024, focused on developing two tools for assessing. The Gammified tool and the research report. The gamified tool, named "Incluship" is a gamified tool (almost a board game, but one that requires a facilitator and that has specific learning goals) created for assessing the competences related to inclusion that young people can develop by participating in a game design process (see: GameOn: Assessing competences with Incluship). It is designed to assess the development of the 12 featured

competences; six personal competences (creativity, resilience, problem solving, adaptability, critical thinking and communication) and six social competences (collaboration, involvement, respect, empathy, democratic decision-making and active citizenship practices). The [print version of the tool can be downloaded here](#)and the [guidelines here](#). The tool was tested in a International Training in Reggio Calabria about game design and Transformative economies, and also in the Cool Play Seminar about youth work and interculturality in Barcelona, among other spaces.

The [research report: Exploring the impact of game design on the promotion of inclusion](#) was finished with the project, in January 2023, and it ecompasses information from the begining, mid and final part of the project. It is a preliminary research with the primary objective set to explore the uses of game design to improve inclusive skills and competences in the context of the Game on project. The secondary objectives were:

- To explore the profiles of the interested users and their settings.
- To analyse the meanings of inclusion as the target for intervention.
- To review the advantages and shortcomings of game design to improve inclusion.

The conclusions show evidences that the game design encourages collaboration, creativity, empathy, and engagement among the users. This offers the view that game design is an interesting option to improve skills and competences for inclusion on a group level. It offers an opportunity to address problems and situations in a creative way while in a low stakes environment for people to explore different roles.

2. Conclusion

The "Game On" project has shown a coherent sequenced structure from the start to finish. It exemplifies the potential of interdisciplinary approaches in addressing complex social challenges. It offers some interesting legacy knowledge in terms of the methodologies, tools, and training materials disseminated.

This project shows a very promising beginning, an openend new road that needs to be further improved. On future projects, and to harness the transformative power of game design for educational and inclusive ends some future developments would be needed on several dimensions:

- Expansion of training modules: diversifying and tailoring the training modules to cater to a broader range of educators and contexts can amplify the project's impact.
- Enhanced integration of theoretical frameworks: incorporating established game design and educational theories into the project's methodology could enrich the analysis and development of game design models.
- More focused strategies for participant engagement: developing targeted strategies to engage diverse participants, including leveraging social media and other digital platforms, could enhance the breadth of perspectives and feedback.
- Clear communication of benefits: articulating the specific benefits and intended users of the project's outputs could help in effectively reaching and engaging the target audience.
- Opening the game design for using digital game creations: as they are already getting more introduced in educational settings.
- Continued research using quasi-experimental design: after the initial exploratory research, the next step would be testing some groups with and without game design on similar contexts.