GAME ON

inclusive game design practices

A powerful tool to empower people to unlock their creative and innovative potential through a playful process, regardless of their previous experiences or competences.

1.1 What is Game On?

Game design is a powerful tool to empower people to unlock their creative and innovative potential through a seemingly playful process.

GameOn project promotes and scales inclusive game design practices that benefit young people, educators and youth workers in our communities. The aim is to support youth in being more independent and critical toward the information.

The EU partners shown below mapped good practices of inclusive game design, organized international and local training workshops, created educational resources and made them accessible on the Cities of Learning platforms. Qualitative research on the learning outcomes accompanied all the activities of the project.

Game On
Origins and purpose

For further information we created a GAME DESIGN MANUAL where you can read more into the topic. In addition, we created several websites, so called platforms, for each participating city to map their game design experiences. The city websites can be accessed through the MAIN WEBSITE, where the project and its goals are extensively explained.

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BARCELONA

1.2 What are the goals of this project?
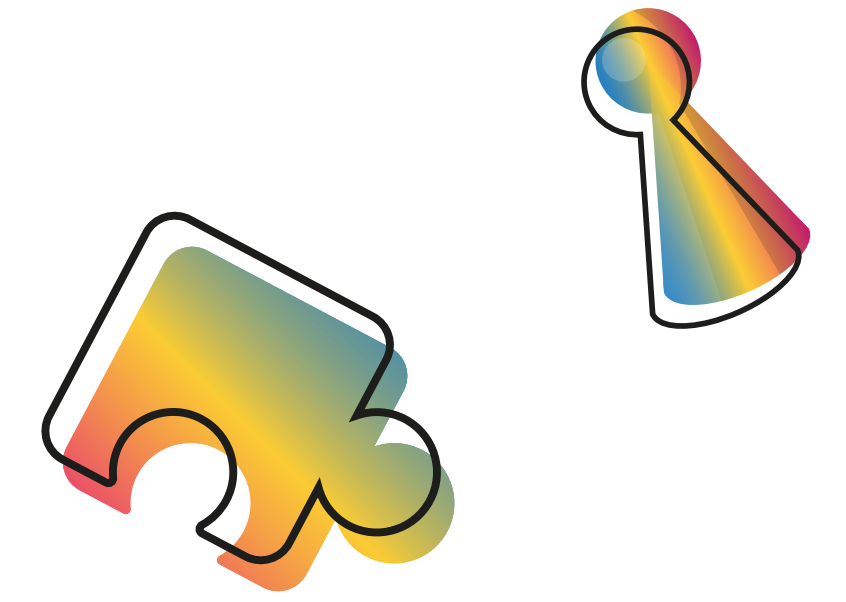
The complexity and the lack of social cohesion in the society call for an inclusive educational and training methodology that could support youth in being more independent and critical toward the information.

Game On wants to address the current needs to develop inclusive educational tools able to engage diverse target groups at local level and promote critical thinking. Game On was built upon the idea of providing tools for educators and youth workers to better face nowadays challenges.
This is done throughout the project by gaining and upscaling competences with regard to inclusive educational approaches adapted toattract and involve vulnerable youth and promote inclusiveness.

As a matter of fact, the project focuses on developing INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL TOOLS that would be used and spread in wider learning communities and reach target groups and beneficiaries outside this partnership.
The process of game design for inclusion is a method of designing with communities to find and invent new ways for wider and more
ACCURATE PARTICIPATION.
Regardless of their previous experiences, competences, or level of confidence, EVERYONE CAN GET INVOLVED in the creative processes.

1.3 How do we reach these goals?

IN ORDER TO REACH THE DEFINED OBJECTIVES, THE PROJECT PARTNERS WORKED ON THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS:

Mapping of

01

Game design models

-Enable the project partners to gather more information on game design experiences used at each local level (by the partners, by role models and by the local networks of other partners and experienced game designers).
-Create 10 common game design models called Methodology models.

Educational Game Design

-Operationalise different educational game design concepts and steps into training modules for different target groups (youth workers, trainers/facilitators, teachers).

02

Training Modules

Game on

03

trainings

-Project partners implemented training activities at the international and local level to upgrade competencies in the partnerships about game design models
-Disseminate the MANUAL within wider European partners promoting a seminar to share good practices about game design
-Implement training activities at the local level to foster the involvement of wider groups of diverse stakeholders

-We use the Cities of Learning platform for young people, youth workers, and educators to find learning opportunities to master game design and get their learning validated and recognised with the use of Open Badges. More than 30 cities and regions can benefit from GameOn outcomes and outputs.
-The aim was to disseminate the created resources on educational game design, as well as providing a wide accessibility.

The platform Cities of Learning enabled the process to upscale good practices and promote them to other sectors, target groups, countries and regions.

Learning Playlists

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(Platform Cities of learning)

Impact measurement

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to promote inclusion

University of Barcelona carried out scientific research to quantify the impact of game design for educational purposes related to inclusion (the challenge is to gamify the research without losing or compromising its quality).
Board game that can be used as an impact assessment tool for other purposes and projects.

05

2.Mapping Game Design Experiences

The first phase of the overall project of GameOn was to create an European map about developing games to promote social inclusion and transformation and to know their different methodologies.
The research on mapping game design experiences was divided into various steps:
-finding interesting European experiences about game developing with the participation of young people
-defining the information needed of the experiences found and developing the tools and steps to obtain it
-create ten podcasts collecting some of the spotted game design experiences and create the methodological models
This process was meant to enable the project partners to gather more information on game design used by the partners and by role models, as well as by the local networks of other partners and experienced game designers.

spotted game design knowledge

2.1 PODCAST

We interviewed game designers about their practices and approaches to using the game design process as a way for inclusion, participation and competence development.
We selected ten best practices and created a series of podcasts where experts share their game design experiences and practices. Listen to the podcasts and reflect your learning outcomes, this will help you to earn your personal digital Open Badge on the Cities of Learning platform. Click HERE to find all podcasts.

Keep in mind that our focus here lies within the process, more than the resulting games. Enjoy and learn how to:
-gain knowledge of existing game design experiences, creators and organizations in Europe
-get inspired to try some new educational games
-understand how to build game design experiences on different topics
-reflect on what kind of game design experience you want to make

2.2 METHODOLOGY MODELS (MeMos)

Based on our research, the GameOn partners developed seven methodological models (MeMos). The seven categories are divided into: participative, transformative, collaborative, formative, curricular, mixing and consultative methodologies. We asked 23 facilitators of game design and interviewed extensively 10 of them in the podcast series "Unfolding Game Design" where we got to know more about the different approaches used in the game design journey.

We identified the following game design approaches that vary in the participation level and their application context. You can explore and download them in different languages: ENG, CAT, IT, LIT, SRB, ESP.

3.1 Inclusion papers

To contextualise needs, challenges, and realities of inclusion, Game On partners made a short research. "Inclusion papers" is a background document of orientation on the meaning of inclusion and a summary of the situation in the different project countries.

Three elements were highlighted:

01 *Main inclusion challenges and discrimination issues*

02 *Development of a spirit of critical thinking*

03 *Initiative taken by practitioners to address these challenges and needs*

Find "Inclusion Papers" HERE.

Facilitation of a process of "game design for inclusion"

3.2 "Game Design for Inclusion" training modules

The game design process examples and the Methodology Models served as inspiration for creating educational modules on game design for inclusion.

Partners defined the module flow, the topics and the learning objectives for each topic. After, each partner defined on its own the approach and structure of the module, the methods and the different target groups with whom to test it. There are different ways to train educators in game design for inclusion.

FIND HERE 4 PROPOSALS OF TRAINING MODULES:	*LITHUANIA*	*SERBIA*	*SPAIN*	*ITALY*

3.3 "Game Design for Inclusion" training courses process

After elaborating the training modules, adapted to the specificity of each country, partners tested them in a cycle that included:
-8 local training prototypes
-1 international training course
-4 local training courses
-1 international seminar of good practices

The idea was to apply the training modules involving educators (youth workers, teachers and others) to validate them and introduce the needed improvements. The training courses were aimed at participants to acquire knowledge and skills on facilitating a game design process with their youth groups to promote inclusion and critical thinking. We wanted to go from "just using games" to designing them: the process of designing a game is itself a powerful and valuable learning process!

LOCAL TRAINING PROTOTYPES - SPRING 2022
8 prototype training courses on "game design for inclusion" were implemented at local level, 2 per each partner country, with 84 participants.
The implementation was successful and gave ideas for adjustments and new elements.
The main challenge was to connect game design and inclusion, due to the different visions of educators about inclusion.
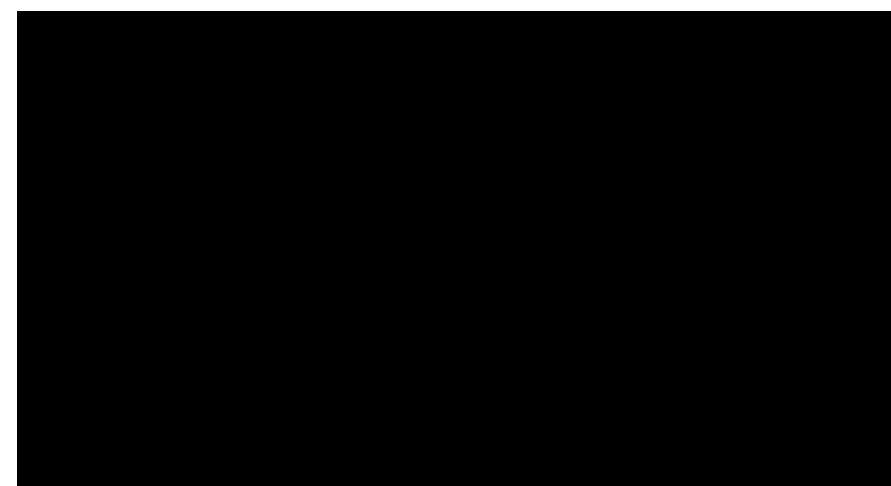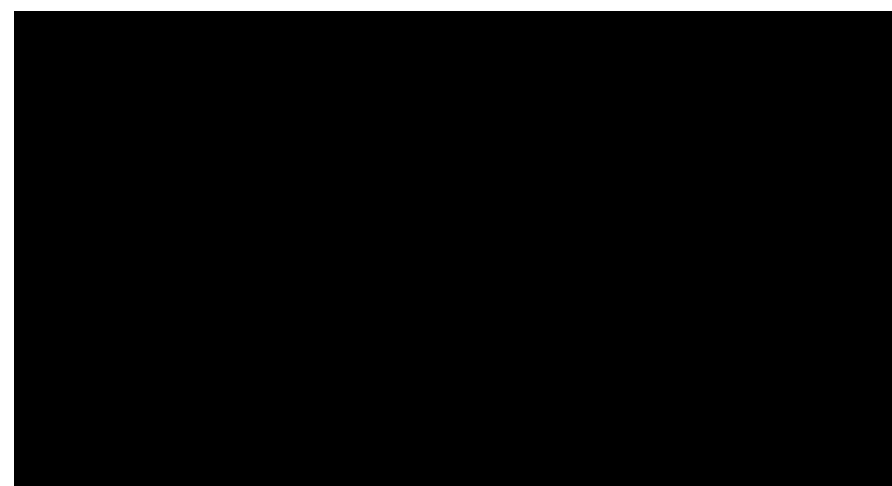
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE - LITHUANIA, SUMMER 2022
The training was attended by 25 participants from four countries. The major result was the improvement on how to develop a game design experience to their own target groups.

Find here the PROGRAMME and the final REPORT.

LOCAL TRAINING COURSES - AUTUMN 2022 AND SPRING 2023

After the experience of the local prototypes and the international training course, it was the moment to take all the feedback from them and prepare a revised edition of the local training courses, one per country. 14(BCN) people participated in them.
These courses saw a step forward in the connection between game design and inclusion.

Find HERE the final reports (link in CoL when they will be ready).

6 learning playlists on educational game design were tested during the training activities, to upscale the gameplay and game design as tools for inclusion, participation and critical thinking. Find them HERE.

The international seminar in Cagliari (Italy), wanted to:
- allow participants to share practices about game design for inclusion (inclusion in game design processes, designing games which purpose is to promote inclusion, and multiplying game design for inclusion through training and workshops);
- promote new international partnerships;
- scale up Game On outcomes through dissemination and multiplying activities. 31 people participated.

The main achievements were to share knowledge and experiences; to reflect on the applied methodologies; to enable a full understanding of the relationship between games, game-based learning, game design and inclusion while showing different approaches to it on varied targets. Find here the final report.

Find HERE the final report.

3.4 Manual on Game Design for Inclusion

Based on the training modules designed and training courses implemented (and all the work done previously), the Manual collects good practices and provides an overview of how it's possible to facilitate step-by-step a process of game design for inclusion.

You can download the manual HERE.

4. Incluship, a gamified tool to assess inclusion competences

INCLUSHIP is a gamified tool to evaluate the evolution of the social inclusion competencies of the young participants in a game design process. INCLUSHIP allows young people to be the protagonists and aware of this evolution, with the guide of the project facilitator. The facilitator must know the mechanics and contents of the gamified evaluation tool to adapt its use to the specific characteristics of the project and of the group of young people that participates in it.

social inclusion goal of the game design process

4.1 Assessing inclusion competences during the learning process

We identified 12 key social inclusion competences during the development of the methodology models and the mapping of European good practices to promote social inclusion through game design with the participation of young people.

PERSONAL COMPETENCES	*SOCIAL COMPETENCES*
CREATIVITY RESILIENCE PROBLEM SOLVING ADAPTABILITY COMMUNICATION CRITICAL THINKING	COLLABORATION INVOLVEMENT RESPECT EMPATHY DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP PRACTICES

We thought of a way to evaluate and keep track of these competencies at the beginning, during and after the process of Game Design. To do so, we create a gamified tool.

4.2 Incluship, a gamified tool

Incluship propose to the participants of a game design process to become explorers of the competence island of social inclusion. In this exploration, the participants will acquire the necessary elements to construct, in a collaborative mode, a ship to travel new horizons. The ship symbolizes the social inclusion challenge or goal of the game design process chosen by the facilitator or by the group. The islands symbolize the 12 personal and social competences to promote social inclusion. Each island contains elements (Skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors) to construct the ship (achieve the group challenge or goal).

In some moments of the process of game design (chosen by facilitator from 2 up to 5), the participants reflect on their actions done in the process, and will identify which skills they have used, which knowledge they have acquired, or which attitude or behavior they have shown. Each of these elements identified (using explorer cards) will add an exploration value in one or more competence islands of the gamification tool (mandatory to construct the ship and achieve the group challenge or goal).

Game On involves as a partner the University of Barcelona. The UB serves as quality assessors, taking part in the mid-term and final report from the quality assurance perspective. Their side of scientific researchers will provide significant evidence and conclusions whether and to what extent Game Design (and Game Based Learning in the testing phase) increase inclusion and provide meaningful learnings related to it.

5.1 Research of UB on the impact of Game Design for Inclusion

Game Design and research

5.2 Scientific Article of the University of Barcelona

The University of Barcelona carried out a scientific research to quantify the impact of game design for educational purposes related to inclusion and learning about social and civic competences. It benchmarks and provides evidence on whether and to what extent the Game Designing process promotes learning among the game creators, as well as the game players.

6. Conclusion

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Game On: Origins and purpose

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Facilitation of a process of "game design for inclusion"

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Game Design and research

02

mapping game design experiences

04

Incluship, a gamified tool to assess inclusion competences

Games are important tools to support and empower formal and non formal methods to improve the learning experience of young people while also developing further other competences such as following rules, adaptation, problem solving, interaction, critical thinking skills, creativity and teamwork. Games enhance youth to learn new things overcoming standardized barriers while they are developing new skills and building emotional connection to learning.
Game On project adopted the focus on Game Design with the main aim of providing tools for a wide range of actors such as educators and youth workers to better face nowadays challenges.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!