PARTNERS AND STAFF

The R U EU? project is an interdisciplinary collaboration between 5 European Universities with the University of the West of Scotland as the lead partner:

- the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) (lead partner)
- the Open University of the Netherlands (OUNL)
- Tehničko veleučilište u Zagrebu (TVZ)
- the University of Peloponnese (UoP)
- Bremer Institut Fuer Produktion Und Logistik GmbH (BIBA)

Colleagues with relevant content and methodological knowledge, pedagogical expertise and technical skills are working together to design and develop the game and support materials and to evaluate the game.

WELCOME TO THE FIRST NEWSLETTER OF THE R U EU? PROJECT! IN THIS NEWSLETTER WE WILL INTRODUCE THE PROJECT AND DESCRIBE THE PARTNERSHIP, THE ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR AND UPCOMING TASKS AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Aims of the R U EU? project
The “R U EU? a game-based approach to exploring 21st century European Identity and Values” project aims to develop a game-based approach to exploring 21st century European Identity and Values. The project is funded by an Erasmus + Strategic Partnerships for higher education grant and it is overseen by the British Council. The project runs from 2nd October 2017-1st October 2019.
The KickOff meeting for the project took place on 19th and 20th October 2017 at the Paisley Campus of the University of the West of Scotland. The Kick-off meeting went well with partners establishing good working relationships, identifying targets for the early stages of the project and making good progress in discussing initial ideas for the game. The photos below show the partners and colleagues at this event.

KEY STAFF WORKING ON THE PROJECT INCLUDE:

**UWS:** Dr. Elizabeth Boyle, Reader in Psychology and Dr. Murray Leith, Reader in Politics (project coordinators)

**OUNL:** Dr. Hans Hummel, Associate Professor, Jeroen Storm, Digital Product Developer

**TVZ:** Dr. Petar Jandrić, Professor of Digital Learning; Milan Bajić, Head of Multimedia

**UoP:** Athanassios Jimoyiannis, Professor of Science and ICT in Education, Panagiotis Tsiotakis, lecturer

**BIBA:** Jannicke Hauge, Associate Professor in Production Logistics; Nadera Sultana Tany

AIM OF THE R U EU? GAME

The R U EU? project aims to develop an innovative online game, the R U EU? game, that will help students across Europe to develop a better understanding of their own national and European identity and values, as well as those of others, to examine and reflect upon the impact of their own identity and values on their interactions with others, and to challenge them about their attitudes and prejudices in tackling problem solving tasks involving national and European identity. At a time of change across Europe, it is hoped that the game will provide an engaging platform for young Europeans to explore their views about some of the difficult issues relating to National and European identity.

PREPARATION TASKS

In the first six months of the R U EU? project the focus has been on carrying out the initial design activities for the game that will help us to identify issues relating to national and European identity and values that are of most concern to the potential players of the game, to identify and specify features of the game and the main game activities and to contextualise the context of the game development. The early tasks include a literature review, a resource review and a user requirements analysis.
THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review aimed to identify existing academic papers and book chapters addressing National and European identity. It focuses on different strands of research on Europe and European identity, including definitions such as What is Europe, What is European identity, components of European identity and challenges to European identity.

THE RESOURCE REVIEW

Since the R U EU? game is being developed against a background of existing learning resources relating to European identity and values, this design task will review existing materials, both paper and pencil and e-learning resources, relating to these topics that could be helpful in the design of the game. The resource review will help to provide a context for the game development.

THE USER REQUIREMENTS ANALYSIS

In the user requirements analysis we will talk to potential players of the game to help us to find out more about:

1. Potential players’ perceptions of and attitudes to National and European identity
2. The issues relevant to National and European identity that potential players would view as most useful to include in the game
3. The acceptability and usefulness of a game in this area
4. What kind of game and game features potential players would like to see in the game

The User requirements analysis includes staff interviews, staff and student focus groups and a student survey.
STAFF INTERVIEWS:
The aim of the staff interviews is to identify issues relating to national and European identity and values that are of most concern to the stakeholders, to examine participants’ attitudes to Europe, their perceptions of important European issues, to establish participants’ views about the acceptability of a game in this area and their views about how a game might help to extend their understanding of issues relating to national and European identity.

All five partners have interviewed at least 3 people who are members of academic staff, Erasmus coordinators, members of the project reference group or politicians who were interested in national or European identity. Thematic analysis is being carried out to identify issues that could be relevant to the problem solving scenarios for the game.

STAFF AND STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS:
The aim of the focus groups is to follow up on topics that emerged as important in the interviews and to allow individuals with an interest in and knowledge of European identity to discuss these issues in more detail in small groups. Since the topics of Europe and EU identity can be contentious and may lead to opposing views, opinions and attitudes from different sides of the debate will be identified.

Each partner has carried out a focus group with staff and one with students to provide a forum for broader discussion of ideas relating to National and European identity. There are 4 or 5 participants in each group giving about 50 people altogether taking part in the focus groups. Academic staff from schools of social science and business from the partner institutions, as well as Erasmus co-ordinators, took part. Students with international experience, Erasmus students, both ingoing and outgoing, also took part in focus groups.

STUDENT SURVEY:
Responses from the interviews and focus groups help to provide content for a survey that is distributed to ca 200 students across the partners. Graham Scott (UWS) administers the survey and will distribute the online survey via Questionpro. This provides a broader brush approach to identifying issues of interest to potential players of the game.

NEXT STAGES
Once these preliminary tasks have been completed the focus will move onto the game design and development.

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT:
Using results from the early tasks, partners are in the early stages of developing the content for the problem solving scenarios for the game.
The Second Partner Meeting for the R U EU? Project took place on 26 – 27 April 2018, at the University of the Peloponnese in Corinth, Greece. All five partners were represented and discussion focused on progress with the initial intellectual outputs for the project, including the literature review, the resource review and the user requirements analysis. Partners also considered the implications of these with respect to the initial ideas for the R U EU game. Partners also agreed on the main work to be carried out over the next six months, with clarification of the responsibilities of each of the partners.

The pictures below show the partners busy at work and taking a break at the end of the first day, before a delicious dinner at a local seafood restaurant in Corinth.

Conference Presentations: Partners are also preparing for conference presentations over the summer at the TECH-EDU 2018, the International Conference on Technology and Innovation in Learning, Teaching and Education on June 20-22, 2018 at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece and EDULEARN18, the 10th annual International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies at Palma de Mallorca (Spain) on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of July, 2018. We will also present the project at politics conferences later in 2018.

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