



## 1<sup>st</sup> Newsletter

May 2016

[www.entrinno.org](http://www.entrinno.org)

# Online Game for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

This newsletter provides information about the EntrInNO project, as well as updates on partners' work and activities and upcoming tasks.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

EntrInNO is an EU funded project for addressing the need for optimizing the development of entrepreneurship and innovation in Europe. It will enhance the skills of young EU citizens, which are a crucial population of a progressive, entrepreneurial and market-based economy and society. For that, an interactive online game is being developed, which is accessible online and offline, as well as adaptable in various contexts. The project aims to achieve the following goals:

- develop an online game designed to equip young adult learners with skills such as entrepreneurship and innovation, and basic skills such as digital literacy, communication, problem-solving and decision-making
- provide an innovative ICT-based educational practice that will motivate young adults to commit in active learning
- validate gaming as a novel form of non-formal learning practice
- strengthen cooperation and exchange of information and good practices between different areas of Europe
- support the development of the EU as a knowledge-based society



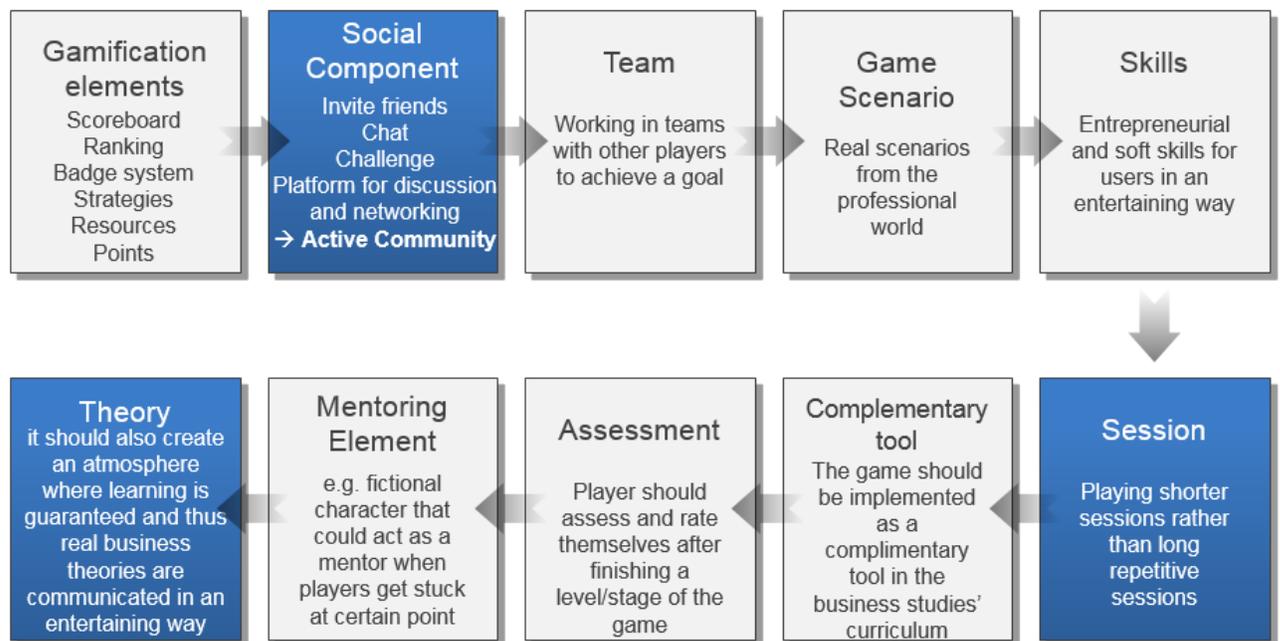
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## NEEDS ANALYSIS REPORT

Each partner of the consortium carried out a national needs analysis report in order to enable the partnership to develop a game that meets the requirements of its target group. The overall report consisted of 7 national reports including a state of the art report, analysis of the focus group and questionnaire and 1 European state of the art report. As the consequence of the high quality research from each partner, the partnership was able to gain valuable information about the needs of the young adults that is essential for the development of the EntrInno game.

One of the major findings of the report was the identification of the crucial entrepreneurial soft skills of the target group so that the game will be able to put particular emphasize on them. Skills such as creativity, communication, leadership, risk-taking, time management, problem solving, taking initiative and flexibility are among the most important skills for the EntrInno's target group.

Below, the major findings of the groups are shown. The focus groups indicated that they would like to see various gamification elements in the game such as scoreboard or badge system. Building an active community while working in teams was also an important aspects of the participants of the focus groups. Participants find joy in playing shorter session with the game rather than longer repetitive session. Giving the opportunity for players to assess themselves will be also an important component of the game. Additionally, participants stated that they would like to see a mentoring element in the game as well as an atmosphere where theory based learning is guaranteed.



The EntrInno partnership aims at taking all the findings of the questionnaire as well as the focus groups into consideration in order to ensure the development of a relevant game for young adults where entrepreneurship learning is guaranteed in an entertaining way.

## UPDATES FROM PARTNERS

All partners have conducted focus groups in their national contexts in order to identify the needs around entrepreneurship, innovation and games.

### CARDET and INNOVADE:

The participants in the focus group meeting in Cyprus have defined the state of the art regarding innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and highlighted the skills that are important to be included in the game. During the focus group in Cyprus, elements of a potential good game were also discussed and participants have pointed out particular features that would benefit the enhancement of skills through the online game.



Participants from both target groups had initially pointed out their knowledge about entrepreneurship, as shown from the picture. It is clear that they mark themselves in the range between 50% and 75-80% on the range.

The discussion began with the participants indicating what the necessary things are for someone to become an entrepreneur. One of the stakeholders mentioned that vision and a clear concept are two very important things. He also mentioned that the concept needs to be either innovative, or an improved version of something. It is important not to be imitating something else. The example of start-up companies was described; in Cyprus, there are a lot of start-up companies. However, many of them usually stop a while after they are started. This is because, as the stakeholders argued, people do not have the necessary grounds to develop effectively.

**Important skills for entrepreneurship:** A person needs to be thinking strategically and plan accordingly. Another participant mentioned flexibility, also pointing out that it is important to be open, and not work in an individualistic manner. “An entrepreneur is someone who is smart enough to find ways to effectively spend his funds, and to learn from mistakes. In Cyprus, many fear the possibility of failure and persistency; when you fail, to keep going.” One response to this comment was

*“I think network and how you behave are important... When they once asked Cypriots what the best is thing in order to be successful, the response was 87% political protection. I don't think it is fear. I am more positive. Success is a subjective term because someone might be coming from a rich family, and have all the necessary connections (networking, for his/her business)”*

The stakeholders agreed that online games can be a great medium for teaching and enhancing entrepreneurial skills. They are attractive and they give incentives such as rewards and advancements through point systems. These were agreed by the stakeholders that are basic to be included in a good

game for a general audience. One of the stakeholders, who is also a professor at a private university had mentioned that online games are also great for creating communities, for examples within university students, through competitions.

### **DANMAR Computers:**

In the process of recruiting the members of the focus group (experts), current informal contacts of Danmar Computers employees were used, and the process covered phone calls, meetings, etc. Students (young adults, potential entrepreneurs) were invited by university staff from Rzeszów and Tarnów. Lecturers from these two universities invited their students, who admitted planning their own business. They were invited during informal conversation.



Focus groups meeting started on time at Danmar Computers' premises, on 2nd February 2016. At the beginning, all the participants and moderators, introduced themselves briefly. The project was presented according to the projects' template. Next, all the participants were divided into two groups: experts and young potential entrepreneurs. Both groups were given previously prepared set of questions, and worked in two separate rooms. After they completed their tasks, they were divided into subgroups and each subgroup's representative presented the outcomes. The meeting ended with a summary of the discussion.

The meeting started at 2 pm., all the participants were on time (5 experts and 6 students). They were given name tabs and all the working tools required. After greetings and brief introduction, the coach, chairing the meeting, gave an overview of the project, the rules and the expected outcomes of the meeting. Below are some of the major findings of the common discussion.

Young people face many obstacles on the way to start their own business. Research shows, that many young people, though willing to become entrepreneurs, do not start their own business. Instead they choose safety, which means that they prefer a full time job. Those led by passion, start their businesses, no matter how difficult it is, as they are determined to make it their source of income. However, there are divergences in research, because most of the respondents would prefer a job in big corporations (which is a synonym of success). Only a small percent of the respondents, declared a willingness to become self-employed.

The entrepreneurial skills are dependent on the level of education. In Poland, people with higher education more often feel a need to secure their living, and they more often require counsellors

or mentors' support. People lead with passion tend to learn more independently. In the case of people, who are willing to start a business, there is a need for mentor's support that would teach young people practical aspects of doing business, they could get advice from someone who succeeded.

Young people should develop soft skills as they do not recognise the importance of this kind of skills. They don't feel the need to learn assertiveness or empathy ("what for?" attitude). They are not interested in these skills. People can't learn social skills on their own, and nothing will substitute for face-to-face contact. Young people seem to be afraid of interpersonal relations and that is clearly the area, which needs improvement. Entrepreneurship requires interaction, even if it's a one-man business. Young people are also not too persistent, as they can be characterised by their attitude "I have to do something and become successful".

30 online questionnaires have been carried out within the group of 16 women and 14 men, aged from 19 to 45. Within the group only 2 persons did not know the definition of entrepreneurship. For the question concerning the experience with starting their own business, 24 persons out of 30 replied that they have never run their own business. Majority of the respondents (17) play video or online games. For the question "do you consider playing a video game with the aim of teaching the player basic entrepreneurial skills" only 4 persons replied "no", however as many as 26 persons say they may consider this option.

### **CDA:**

The **focus group** brought together participants with ICT skills and those who wish to start up a business. The participants were the followings:

- from TARGET GROUP: young students from Arad National Economic College, which had experience with so called "Exercise Firms", a well-known national study program; young students from Arad State University "Aurel Vlaicu" –Business specialization and former students already involved in a business activity
- from STAKEHOLDERS were: Ministry for Education and Scientific Research – Regional representatives (Public), Regional Consortia for Training and Occupation Association (NGO) – CRIO VEST, Arad County Department for Schools –ISJ ARAD, Arad County Research for HR in Education, Arad National Economic College and Students League from Arad State University "Aurel Vlaicu"



Participants were asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards the project idea, following the guidelines agreed.

It was concluded that most of the participants have a medium knowledge about business mechanism and environment. Very important that both groups have express their intention to go on with the support of testing such on line games. A general conclusion was that the schools are preparing them to become good employees and cutting them almost any initiative of entrepreneurship. They concluded that the on line games will give them the possibilities to express themselves, with free initiative, no obstacles (artificially one) and interact with different entrepreneurial cultures.

### **CSV MARCHE:**

People recruited for the focus group (held in Ancona on February 4<sup>th</sup> 2016) had been called by phone one by one, and selected amongst the wide local network of young people active in the associations, PMIs, schools already networked with CSV MARCHE and contacting a list of relevant stakeholders already working on digital devices development (for schools for example), young start-ups, cooperatives and other social entrepreneurs.

10 persons participated in the focus group, held in Ancona on February 4<sup>th</sup> from 4PM to 7 PM. Participants were 4 young persons and 6 stakeholders. Below are some of the major findings of the common discussion: All participants agree that the situation regarding entrepreneurship in Italy is really far from being at the same level of development, self-consciousness and law support than in the north of Europe. And this had been underlined during the whole discussion as the main constraint and limit of national situation. No one of participants can mention an Italian serious game developed with goals similar to EntrInnO project and it is "IceCreamEmpire" developed for adult learners by University Bocconi.

The idea of project is very interesting for all participants because all recognize video game players as a portion of population really committed with their passion and working on this very receptive to learn through gaming. The more the games has different kind of contents (also video, documents etc.) the more it is attractive for young people.

Basically all participants agree on the fact that a good business, a good entrepreneur is a person who develop something around his passions and desire. No good enterprise can come from a not-passionate attitude. And a good business starts as well from an idea which must be the base of any further plan. The idea is not something static, it needs to "homeotic", to grow and change according to the context and opportunities.

To be social entrepreneurs something more is needed, basically the availability to be open to the community needs, not only the ones that make your business run, and to be able to develop the business acting as part of something wider. Formal system in Italy is good but it is focused only on the technical

part of the competences needed to become a good entrepreneur. Other training courses promoted by different actors are very heterogeneous and all the participants agree on the fact that some skills cannot be taught and rely more in the field of personal attitudes (leadership, empathy). In general the so called transversal skills are to be considered the most important, since are the most difficult to develop and most determinant in the development of a business, especially if it is a social business.

The game should start from the recognition of own passions and preferences, and develop the business starting from that. Another skill considered fundamental is the attitude to make connections, to work with an inter-disciplinary approach and the game should foster this element through the using of “unforeseen”, the possibility to go back to scenes and levels, to change decisions and find multiple solutions. This could be done also through the “conditioning interaction” among players.

Our country is in a deep economic crisis, and it shows elements of cultural and legislative immobilism that it is, for participants, the most relevant problem for beginners. Our society is getting old, welfare system, educational structure, law and credit priorities seem to be tailored to older generation and not the youngest ones. Starting a business always, and in economic crisis period especially, requires flexibility, short term liquidity, low bureaucracy and support from institutions. All these elements in Italy are far to be ready and proactive for new entrepreneurs, in spite of political declarations and European Commission’s recommendations.

This awareness is hard to reach for Italian youth, used to live in families very protective and with an history of assured jobs and careers in the ‘80s and ‘90s. That’s why one of the most important skills to be learnt is, in participants’ opinion, the RESILIENCE

### **INOVA:**

Inova delivered a successful focus group that generated valuable information for the project and led to fruitful discussion between stakeholders and participants. Facilitators and participants established a collaborative relationship that resulted in a very productive and flourishing session. Facilitators were able to create and sustain an environment of trust and openness so that everyone felt safe to speak up honestly and where different opinions were respected. They ensured that everyone made them feel included in all activities and freely joined the discussions. The structure of learning was provided and they paid attention on the opening and closing sessions as well as keeping it to the agenda.



## **KMOP:**

For the purposes of the field work, KMOP organised two focus groups, one consisted of young people aged from 18-35 and a second one consisted of stakeholders, who are relevant to the project topic and at the same come from various sectors and expertise.



Being in the 6th year of the economic crisis, with a very high unemployment rate especially for young people which is almost 65% and at the same time the continuous increase of taxes imposed to enterprises, it would not be feasible to say that the current state of youth entrepreneurship in Greece is under the best conditions. Indeed, the economic crisis in Greece has destroyed many sectors and entrepreneurial attempts. However, despite this negative climate, there are some good examples of entrepreneurial activity among young people which could be considered very encouraging for the future. A key feature that characterizes the youth entrepreneurship in Greece is that it is rather an opportunity entrepreneurship, not a necessity entrepreneurship.

One of the biggest problems in Greece is that young people do not have entrepreneurial skills needed to be successful in the business world. This is related to the fact that entrepreneurship was not “cultivated” in Greek Universities until recently and the higher education is not linked to the labour market. Even though the Greek young people have lower levels of entrepreneurial skills in comparison to the young people of other countries, they have enough qualifications which could help them to succeed in the business world.

The training methods currently used are mainly the traditional teaching methods, which include face to face classes, with exercises, case studies, role playing games. There is a modernization as regards the content of the training but not as regards the media used for training. The skills that most lacking these days concern mainly risk taking and adaptability. These are the skills that have to be put special emphasis on, taking into account that Greek young entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs have to work in a very unstable environment, under difficult economic, social and political conditions.

All young participants responded that they are very familiar with the term of “entrepreneurship”, most of them due to their studies. They also stated that creativity and risk taking are important skill, however, all of them agreed that entrepreneurial skills are mainly cultivated and developed during the business practice. It should be highlighted that they all answered that they would use a game that aims at developing entrepreneurial skills, as they think that games could help them develop their skills in a very efficient way.

### **KOPIN:**

Seven participants, including two facilitators, took part in the focus group. Two of the members were members of the academic staff of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, the Director for Innovation & Entrepreneurship and the Director for the Institute of Information & Communication Technology; another participant was a Youth Worker from the National Youth Agency; a founding member of a social cooperative; and the CEO of the Malta Cooperative Federation (MCF). The two facilitators were from Kopin.



Thirteen young adults participated in this focus group. The group was facilitated by the same facilitators of the previous group. The methodology used in this group was different. The major conclusions from the two focus groups are as follows:

1. Entrepreneurship does not happen automatically. It needs a stimulating environment for young people to take the initiative and create work, and wealth, for themselves and others.
2. Lack of knowledge is a major stumbling block - possibly educational initiatives can solve this situation.
3. Willingness to work hard as a psychological strength is a pre-requisite for successful ventures.
4. A person does not have to be successful on his/ her own but can share the success with others.

### **Social Innovation Fund:**

Social Innovation Fund used contact list to invite participants via emails to focus group, but most of those, who came were invited at Kaunas University of Technology School of Economics and Business. Social Innovation Fund had opportunity to present project for 11 participants there – mainly lecturers, professors. Everyone was interested in project idea and was eager to use final product of the project – game in their teaching activities. They were asked to invite students to participate in focus group.



All 10 participants of focus group were personally motivated to engage in discussions because they were either interested in gaming as teaching possibility or they were interested in such project; students were interested in getting new knowledge how to start business. Participants

gave positive feedback about learning by playing games and were interested getting informed about further project development.

## PROJECT VISIBILITY ACTIVITIES

Some partners have already started organizing different activities, in order to disseminate the project and attract audiences.

### CARDET and INNOVADE

EntrInnO featured at the first Cyprus Games Exhibition that took place on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2016 at the Microsoft Innovation Center. The exhibition was a full-day event, with game demonstrations, a gaming competition, as well as a session with presentations. In total, there were about 500 visitors throughout the whole event, mainly general audience, people interested in gaming, policy makers, students, stakeholders, even families.



EntrInnO was presented at the particular session; the aim and objectives were described, along with the game's concept, designs and impact. Discussion about the value of the game for developing entrepreneurial skills followed, with multiple stakeholders and policy-makers acknowledging the potential of the EntrInnO project.



Throughout the event participants could get information for the game, at the EntrInnO station. Flyers were distributed and the game's concept was described and discussed with people with various interests and expertise, such as game developers, gamers, business people, and students.

Overall, we have received very positive comments about the game and the overall work. People have also expressed interest in testing the game, once it is ready, and before it is officially released to the public. CARDET, as the lead partner of the project, is proud of the progress so far. We are looking forward to sharing the game within the next months.

## INOVA

### YES Conference

YES Conference featured young entrepreneurs and founders of successful startups to share their entrepreneurship journey. The event was organised by the Entrepreneurial Society of the University of Sheffield that managed to gather about 50 aspiring young entrepreneurs. Inova had the opportunity to present the EntrInnO project to the participant who showed great interest in the game.



### ETHIT National Dissemination workshop

On the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016, Sheffield College delivered a national workshop in the College's premises at the Sparks Restaurant located at Granville Road Campus in Sheffield. Inova's team participated in a World Café that proved to be quite beneficial for the students. Inova had the opportunity to introduce the EntrInnO project to the students which was well-received. Many students expressed their interest in participating future activities of the project.



## Danmar Computers

Danmar Computers conducted the following dissemination events:

- Presentation of the project to the staff of the organisation – special Internal Information Card about the project was prepared and distributed
- Organisation of Focus Groups during which detailed information about the project was provided to the participants
- Presentation of the project to the international students (from Turkey and Portugal but also Poland) during their classes in Małopolska School of Economics in Tarnow

## UPCOMING WORK

Partners are currently working on setting up the designs and the content development. Missions and in-game activities are planned to be drafted by next Fall. Particular thematic areas were identified, and have been combined with the different skills in the project. Seminars and events will be organized in each partner country, in July and August 2016, with the goal to disseminate

the project and multiply the attendance and interest in the project. We are excited and looking forward to present our collective work through the game within the next months!

## CONTACT US

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