



Newsletter

Play4Guidance - A European Business Game to train and guide students and young unemployed on entrepreneurial, transversal and mathematical skills

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Introducing Play4Guidance

One of the greatest challenges that Europe faces is upgrading, adapting and widening the skills portfolio of individuals to create and fill the jobs of tomorrow. Currently, the challenge in education and training is to find new ways of engaging people in learning processes.

Play4Guidance (P4G) is funded within the framework of the European Union Erasmus+ programme. The project introduces an innovative Business Game with the aim to train and guide students and young unemployed on entrepreneurial, transversal and mathematical skills.

Why Business Games?

Business Games are an innovative learning method that reinforces managerial, entrepreneurial, digital and collaborative competences, and promotes critical thinking, problem solving and leadership. Business Games encourage

people to learn and update their skills, beyond simply using ICT.

The participants assume the role of decision makers by operating within a model that simulates an economic reality, micro-economic (enterprise) or macro-economic (market).

Business simulation games are used by numerous schools, universities and companies worldwide and are a valuable companion tool for business classes, social studies, and financial literacy programs. They supplement the core curriculum, reinforce key concepts, and provide an interactive educational approach to business, economics, and entrepreneurship.

Focus group meetings and online surveys

After compiling a syllabus to establish common use of terminology among partners and stakeholders, the Play4Guidance consortium designed material for focus group meetings and online surveys.

The material originated from a pan-European literature review on entrepreneurial training focusing on games' use for educational purposes.

The aim of both focus groups and online surveys is to collect information from the project's target groups and future

users of the Play4Guidance Business Game. This information will be analysed in order to build a clear framework, the "Greatest Common Denominator Skills Matrix", that will define the final shape of the business game.

The matrix will set skills' standards among target groups and countries. It will allow project partners to reshape entrepreneurial training in order to produce an educational package to be used in all European Countries by all of the project's target groups.



The project's main objectives

- To bring the world of education and training in close contact with the job market, in order to match school and university curricula to the market's real needs.
- To boost entrepreneurial culture in young Europeans and help young Europeans acquire the skills needed to create new businesses. This will potentially contribute to a reduction in EU unemployment.
- To identify essential business skills among target groups and target countries and collect them in the Great Common Denominator Skills Matrix.
- To produce an effective European tool able to:
 - > support students and unemployed in developing basic math, economic, digital and entrepreneurial transversal skills with a strong focus on problem solving and leadership,
 - > allow students and unemployed to self-evaluate their skills, understand what being an entrepreneur means and realise what skills they need to improve on,
 - > support various institutions such as guidance centres, job centres, SMEs, companies and universities in evaluating participant skills and guiding them through training and skill-building.

Why is PG4 innovative?

- The project will offer a complete set of tools able to support students and young unemployed via gaming sessions which will aid users understand what being an entrepreneur means and what skills one needs to improve.
- The P4G Business Game aims to be a single multifunctional tool for carrying out training, evaluation and guidance activities.
- Traditional Serious Games are often based on qualitative analysis of scenarios in order for the player to make decisions. The P4G Business Game will also focus on quantitative analysis of data.
- The P4G Business Game offers players the opportunity to have a practical experience of managing a business and to measure the impact of this experience at European level, as at the end of each session the game will offer feedback about what was done well and what skills players need to improve.
- Play4Guidance will be complementary to other projects and web-based business games.

The Play4Guidance educational platform

The project's educational platform will be the main area for collecting the learning resources and P4G online Business Game (with all its options according to the user) that will be developed during the project's period.

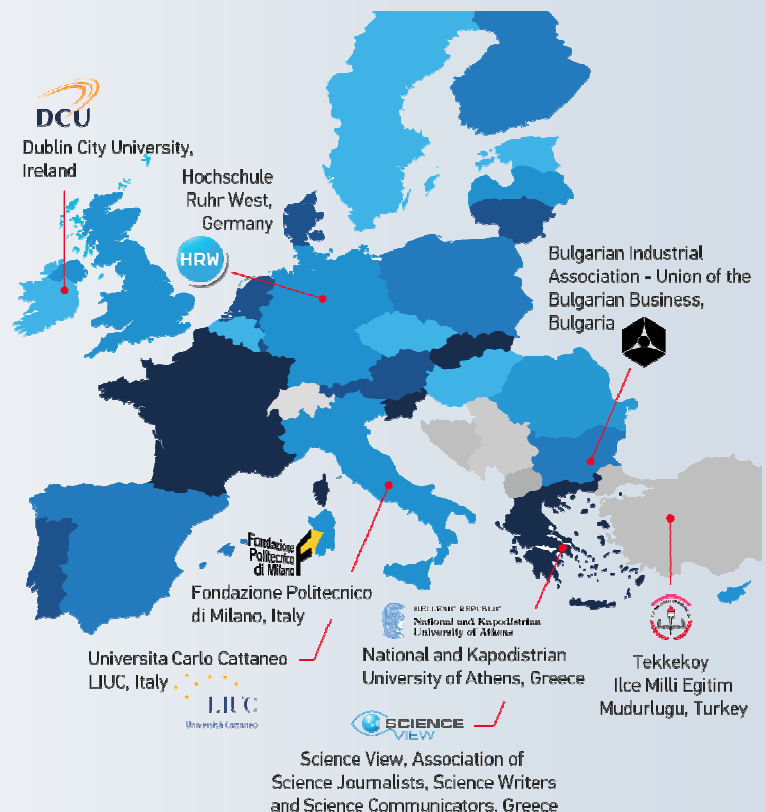
The platform users will be able to access their colleagues' resources/tools, share their own, exchange best practices and communicate between themselves through several blogs- with the stakeholders as well as with general public. The platform will be the main point where all the users of the business games will meet and exchange their experiences after their involvement. So, users will be able to:

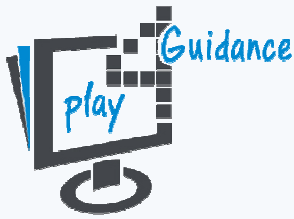
- Play the Game! The platform will accommodate the business game itself and will also provide technical guides

and tutorials for the game.

- Find and share Resources! The users will be able to access their colleagues' resources and lesson plans, share their own, exchange best practices and communicate through forums and blogs.
- Join communities or create their own! The platform will be the main point where all users of the business game will meet, discuss and exchange experiences.
- Find out about P4G events and activities! At the same time it will act as the main hub of information about the project's planned events and activities.

The P4G partners





Newsletter #02

Play4Guidance - A European Business Game to train and guide students and young unemployed on entrepreneurial, transversal and mathematical skills

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The P4G first Interim Meeting in Dublin, Ireland

The P4G first interim meeting was held at Dublin City University from 12-13 May. It was attended by all members of the Consortium, as well as the P4G external evaluator, Anne-Christin Tannhauser. A welcome reception took place on the evening of May 11th. Prior to arriving in Dublin, partners were provided with an agenda of the meeting, logistical support package and a detailed map with directions to accommodation on Harcourt Street.

On the first day of the meeting, after a warm welcome from Professor Joe O'Hara from DCU, Stefano Menon welcomed everyone to the meeting and enthused about the productive meeting that lay ahead. The external auditor was introduced, Anne-Christine Tannhauser. Discussions were focused on the Greatest Common Denominator Matrix, the Business Game and the development and understanding of Scenarios.



Welcome by Professor Joe O'Hara, DCU

An official dinner was held in The Quays Restaurant in Templebar and was attended by all members. This venue gave members a glimpse into traditional food, drink and music in Ireland.

Day two kicked off with presentations on Project Management and the production of outputs. To enhance the flow of communication amongst the partners it was decided to hold monthly

Skype meetings. Presentations that followed included that of the Quality Plan, which is important in terms of project quality and also that of artefact quality; the External Evaluator, whose role as 'critical friend' is to assist the partnership in producing quality outputs and improve organisational collaboration; the Business Game Toolkit, which will include user guides for platform users as well as all the necessary information so that users can play the Business Game; the Syllabus, which includes a glossary of essential terms of the project activities; and finally the P4G model.

The first interim meeting in Dublin was very productive and successful and provided participants with a clear idea of the project's progress during the first reporting period, as well as definitive courses of action for moving the project



The Business Game: An innovative teaching tool for skills development and evaluation

National Conference in LIUC University, Italy, 13 March 2015

A national conference was organized in Italy by LIUC in collaboration with FPM on 13 March 2015. The main goal of the event was to actively brainstorm with a group of teachers of secondary education in order to reflect and share ideas on 2 main topics:

- Topic A: how to use the BG for learning purposes in secondary schools.
- Topic B: possible ways to promote the BG as an evaluation tool for school programs.

During the final competition of the annual Business Game, that involved 255 students, hosted by LIUC, the University decided to propose to their teachers an event based on activities related to the P4G project.

The program of the conference:

1. Presentation of Play4Guidance – objectives, activities and expected results
2. Division in 2 sub-groups
3. Work in sub-groups. Each group was divided in smaller groups of 3-4 people. They carried out the following activities:
 - a. Competences selection: Each group was asked to analyze the list of competences used for the survey (Output 2 – Initial Assessment) and to select 5 main competences essential to a young entrepreneur
 - b. Group 1 – brainstorming on how to use the BG for teaching the selected 5 competences
 - c. Group 2 – brainstorming on how to use the BG for assessing the selected 5 competences
 - d. Reporting session internal to the sub-groups. Conclusion and reporting session altogether

Conclusions and resolution

During the national conference, in which 34 high school teachers participated, LIUC presented P4G and the assessment activities planned throughout the Business Game.

After the initial presentation, LIUC invited teachers to work in subgroups participating on sharing ideas and designing “The Pedagogical Framework and The Evaluation Tool” (Output 3.1).

Here are some interesting excerpts from



working groups:

What skills could be assessed through the Business Game and which way they were chosen?

- Analytical thinking because it is im-

portant to know how to read reality to identify pathways and solutions;

- Knowing how to communicate with skill and passion (emotional engagement);
- Initiative intended as a curiosity to know each other with new and complex solutions;
- The flexibility of being able to compete in any context;
- Self-control: to target emotions to understand the problem.
- Thought conceptual ability to find solutions outside the classical schemes;
- Experience to understand the path to take;
- Search information to understand the starting point of the route;
- Innovation to improve performance: continuous correction and improvements;
- Evaluating the result compared to the expected value.
- Learning to understand the competitiveness and the desire to get involved;
- Flexibility to handle news, and the sensibility to change;
- Ability to select the many right infor-



Photos from the National Conference in LIUC University, Italy, 13 March 2015 © LIUC



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mation to solve a specific problem;

- Scheduling a task to achieve a specific result;
- Leadership of the group as teamwork, to divide properly roles according to the capabilities of each student.

How to train or evaluate students through the Business Game?

- It 'a game for only a few people in the classroom, not for all;
- The business game should also be used on other occasions and not only to evaluate students;
- In a heterogeneous classroom the business games could be useful as a practical situation to choose university faculty. However, it was verified that in other situations,

those who participated were more motivated;

- It should become systematic and not only a moment of the school year.
- It is useful but lacks an important step: we should offer it to the whole classroom;
- The business games reveals more abilities than skills. The traditional methods do not make them emerge for example. Students show themselves by intelligent choices not based on knowledge.

Final discussion

- Students need to understand that being a manager implies a continuous decision-making that involves a degree of risk and an inevitable incompleteness of data. The business game helps students to choose

for the future and not for the immediate.

- The game should be improved bringing out the fact that there is a process of socialization and consensus that is not visible from the game (could be done by one person and not by the team).
- It is required multidisciplinary: more teachers should be involved to develop a specialized business game.
- The business game has allowed some students to own skills they were not aware.
- The business game teaches students not to give up at the first difficulty (some groups get going, but after the second match, they give up). They have to understand that, to be an entrepreneur, you have to make continuous effort.

By Zacharoula Smyrniou*
and Evangelia Petropoulou**

It is important to avoid the “chocolate-covered broccoli” design approach (Bruckman, 1999) where the game is used as a reward, separate to the learning task, since it separates joy from learning. Recent research on intrinsic integration between the game and its learning content (Habgood & Ainsworth, 2011; Kafai, 1996) proposes ways to motivate learners understand the learning task through play. Additionally other games allow learners to apply knowledge in “hypothetical worlds that are increasingly a part of how we work and play” (Squire, 2006:19). Survey studies also suggest that game experiences are changing a generation’s attitudes toward work and learning, even though they are largely overlooked by educators (Squire, 2006; Beck & Wade, 2004). Therefore this business game will exploit game-based learning as means to engage young people with learning about business, maths, science, etc.

The P4G Business Game “Manage your own company” is a simulation game between teams, where each team has the task of managing from a strategic point of view their own business competing with the other in a market. The business game simulates a market of manufacturing companies, which operate by transforming raw materials into finished products, and are in indirect competition for acquisition of scarce resources upstream, in the process of acquisition of raw materials from suppliers, and downstream, trying to sell finished products to customers. The rationale of the game lies on the users’ training and guidance in the use of skills both quantitative and qualitative. The P4G business game is an online learning environment which acts as a replication and extension of the physical market world. However, the sophisticated interactive technology underpinning the game accommodates social and technical dimensions (player exposure to varying levels of social interaction and cognition, removal of time and space constraints, etc.) not always available in the physical world. It allows for user intervention and decision taking processes while it offers a specific and structured space where critical analysis of intertwined and complex information is necessary.

Following the business game objectives for entrepreneurial training, skill relevant acquisition and efficient communication and collaboration among the participant members, the following five variables are exam-

The P4G Business Game and underpinning approaches

Gaming experiences in virtual multi-user gaming environments as well as online mass games provide opportunities to study users “experience with technologies from innovative points of view” (Smyrniou & Kynigos, 2012). Providing close links between the game-play and the learning objectives and outcomes is a key challenge for using games effectively (Facer et al., 2004; Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2007).

ined: (1) computer mediated communication (CMC), (2) feedback, (3) decision support, (4) collaboration and (5) debriefing. Computer-mediated communication has been proven to generate more alternatives with more equal participation among group members and the greater the interaction and exchange of information and ideas among team members, the greater the learning from the simulated environment (Adobor & Daneshfar, 2006). In addition, feedback is a very important element in a technological environment designed for learning purposes and in the business game context is perceived both as a decision support and motivational contributor. The decision support variable addresses both the embedded script that aims to guide the users and the mechanisms and tool functions that facilitate the interconnection among the provided or registered information and data. Collaboration addresses the group work facilities provided by the technological environment and their efficacy in enhancing interaction among the group members perceived either as competitors or team members (Thomas, 2006). Finally, following a meta-cognitive approach it is essential for tools to provide users with debriefing techniques and comparative (in terms of group performance) outcomes in order for users to develop self-improvement skills (Summers, 2004).

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The P4G Business game assessment system - The Conceptual Assessment Framework (CAF)

In our effort to design and implement an educational assessment approach that would be based on evidentiary arguments we adopted the Evidence-centered assessment design (ECD) (Mislevy, et al., 2003) as the most relevant and targeted approach to the P4G Business game learning objectives.

By Zacharoula Smyrniou and Evangelia Petropoulou

Evidentiary reasoning (Schum, 1994) and statistical modelling allow us to identify and specify the kinds of observations that are required in order to assess specific knowledge and skills we aim to develop in students (Glaser, Lesgold, & Lajoie, 1987 in Mislevy, et al., 2003) and are mostly efficient in cases of complex performances or when complex data processing is involved. Efficient assessment models should be tightly linked and informed by a set of interconnected factors such as the set inferences, the relevant observations that would ground them and the context for them to evoke.

The Design of the P4G Self-evaluation tool

The P4G self-evaluation tool was designed and informed regarding both literature review on competence classifications and specifications and empirical research data occurring from surveys conducted in all project member countries addressing three targeted groups (Output 2 – Initial Assessment): unemployed, students, teachers. As a result a) the inclusion of learning goals supported by the literature was validated, b) the adoption of a generic competence

scheme was enhanced to include differences between countries and target groups and c) dimensions such as affective skills that had been neglected in previous research on entrepreneurial skills and corresponding training concepts have sprung up. The P4G Self-evaluation tool supports the design and development of a serious business game morpheme that is based on the simulation-based assessment structure. The distinction between designing simulations for learning and designing simulations for assessment is that the former requires focusing on the features of situations that provoke the targeted knowledge and skills while the latter requires focusing on the knowledge and skills provoked by a specific situation and evaluate how they were provoked, what was the response, what were the results (Mislevy, 2011). This distinction necessitates the identification of principles and development of tools that differ from those required to merely build simulations (Melnick, 1996) although the rationale in designing both simulation approaches in certain design aspects seems to overlap (Mislevy, 2011). Assessment-based simulations have additional processes integrated that provide feedback about performance by evaluating examinees' capabilities, either in terms of overall proficiency or focusing on more specific aspects of knowledge and skill (Mislevy, 2011).

In addition, the creation of valid assessment in simulation environments requires expertise from disparate domains and exploitation of different approaches and strategies that would enable the acquisition and development of skills and competences considering the users' individual needs, expertise and cognitive background. The P4G consortium differentiated expertise is applied in the design of a shared framework that additionally considers the different cultural contexts that each country member brings. This way an-all inclusive and shared framework is adopted and we are enabled to track and examine the way different expertise fits in with others, further develop the P4G skills matrix which merges the different aspects addressed in the project and result with valuable and measurable data on the effectiveness of co-existence and interaction among different methodologies in terms of cognitive and skill development.

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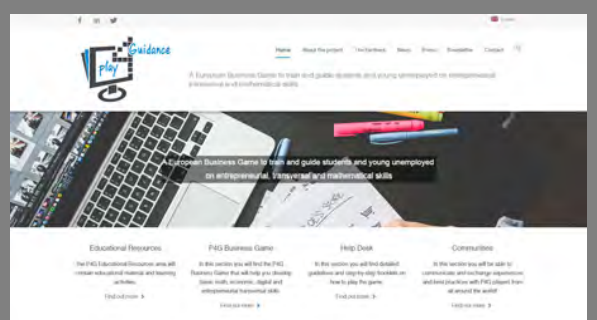
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P4G in the ENTREDU 2015 Conference

Science View's Menelaos Sotiriou presented the Play4Guidance project in the ENTREDU 2015 Conference that took place in Crete, Greece on May 8-9, 2015. The ENTREDU 2015 Conference focused on teachers' preparation for entrepreneurial education; current and future trends in innovation and entrepreneurship were presented; entrepreneurial education concepts, best practices, online resources, and school activities developed within the frameworks of leading European projects in the field. Participants had the opportunity to get a closer look to the world of innovation, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education and get in touch with significant EU funded projects such as Open Discovery Space – ODS, Quantum Spinoff, ENTERPRISE+, Inspiring Science Education-ISE and, of course P4G!

Open laboratories “Starting own business” by BIA

Within a transnational initiative for guidance of graduated and entrepreneurship, BIA carried out two workshops in two Bulgarian towns (25.03.2015, Smolyan, and 20.04.2015, Kardjali) predominantly for people involved in a project training promoting the entrepreneurship in the region BIA is implementing this project activity together with partners from Bulgaria and Greece, including Ministries of economy. The scope of these meetings overlapped with the P4G project objective to stimulate development of entrepreneurial skills and BIA availed of the opportunity to introduce the P4G project to more than 55 participants (young university graduates).

The P4G Focus Groups and Surveys

The P4G partnership had decided on applying a series of activities in order to identify and assess user needs in terms of entrepreneurial skills in the different countries of the partnership. This involved data collection by using both qualitative and quantitative research tools:

- a) A survey of students, unemployed, employers, and agencies such as careers services and
- b) Focus groups (drawn from the above) .

The focus groups were carried out with an aim to explore which competences are relevant / important for different target groups in each country. For each country three focus groups were run for unemployed, students and teachers representing key target groups. The focus groups' schedules had a homogenous structure. However, due to the explorative nature of the workshop and the different individuals and organizations represented, the partners allowed the flexibility to focus on certain issues of relevance for the participants.

FPM in collaboration with **LIUC** has carried out 3 focus groups:

- 1 FG with stakeholders was carried out on the 25th of February 2015
- 1 FG with high school and university students was carried out on the 9th of March 2015
- 1 FG with unemployed people was carried out on the 31st of March

NKUA in collaboration with **Science View** has carried out 3 focus groups:

- 1 FG with unemployed was carried out on the 4th of February 2015
- 1 FG with university students was carried out on the 11th of March 2015
- 1 FG with teachers was carried out on the 25th of March

DCU carried out 3 Focus groups:

- FG 1 was carried out on 3rd March, 1-3pm, with industry professionals from SAP group (multinational) in Galway.
- FG 2 was carried out on 4th March,

10am-12pm, at Inishowen Partnership (unemployed centre) in Buncrana.

- FG 3 was carried out on 6th March, 11am-1pm, at a post-primary school (transition year) in Athlone.

BIA carried out three focus groups as follows:

- «Unemployed persons» focus group (7 participants) - 19.02.2015,
- «School and university students» focus group (12 participants) - 12.02.2015,
- Focus group for «Teachers, employees and labour exchange (job centre) specialists, company staff » (15 participants) - 12 and 25 Feb 2015

MEM has carried out 3 focus groups:

- 1 FG with unemployed was carried out on the 6th of March 2015
- 1 FG with students was carried out on the 6th of March 2015
- 1 FG with teachers was carried out on the 5th of March

Surveys were the assessment methodology following the focus groups and literature review respectively. Accordingly, the aims were to:

- 1) validate and enable to prioritize the competences for each target group to identify priorities for the business game and
- 2) identify missing competences and
- 3) provide suggestions towards the games development and implementation.

Surveys were realized in all partner countries and thus translated based on a common questionnaire.



Newsletter #03

Play4Guidance - A European Business Game to train and guide students and young unemployed on entrepreneurial, transversal and mathematical skills

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Be an entrepreneur for a day!

How to learn basics of entrepreneurship playing the role of a Business Manager

The mechanisms of competition and gaming applied in work contexts favor the learning of complex skills. For example, in the case of the Business Game, the game participants manage a simulated company in which they make decisions, take action and review their effect. As in real life, the skills needed to "win" are related to the analysis of situations and quick decision-making. Moreover the ability to collaborate with a group plays an important role in managing complex business situations.



An example of this kind of application of "serious game to learn" is the LIUC University Business Game called: "Manage Your Own Company".

The Business Game "Manage your own company" is a simulation game between teams, where each team has the task of managing their own business

competing with the other in a market. The Business Game simulates a market of manufacturing companies, which operate by transforming raw materials into finished products, and are in indirect competition for acquisition of scarce resources upstream, in the process of acquisition of raw materials

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Be an entrepreneur for a day!

How to learn basics of entrepreneurship playing the role of a Business Manager

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into finished products, and are in indirect competition for acquisition of scarce resources upstream, in the process of acquisition of raw materials from suppliers, and downstream, trying to sell the finished products to customers.

When you play you learn, even as adults

The aim of the game is to maximize the value of the company, assessed in terms of operating margin, recruitment policies, and the growth rate of investment and the financial results of

the company itself.

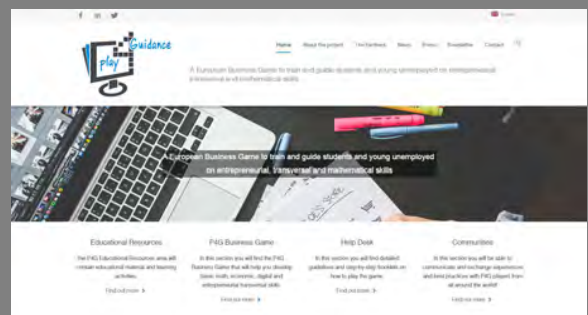
The game is divided into rounds, each round simulates a month of the company's activities and the market. Players make decisions during each round/month and analyze results / effects in the next one. Each year more than 1,000 participating students from secondary schools all over Italy are organized into teams of 4/5 members each. In the final, which is held on campus at LIUC University, the top 50 ranked teams are involved.

How many competences can you develop with the P4G business game? Take a look and get ready!

Preparations for the Play4Guidance national conferences

DCU have been preparing for the national conferences to take place towards the end of 2015. The conferences will be held on the DCU campus and will seek to raise awareness of the Play4Guidance project and the uses and benefits of the Business Game. We have planned to invite researchers and industry experts to discuss the potential of game-based learning, entrepreneurship education and digital soft skills during the conference. We anticipate that the conferences will provide opportunities for project dissemination and potential recruits for the pilot phase of the project in 2016. Included among the invitees are the national voluntary organisation for employment Communities Creating Jobs, ACCESS school representatives, career advisors, industry experts, business and transition year teachers, and college lecturers and researchers. At the same time, Greek partners NKUA and Science View are also being prepared for the national conferences to be held in Greece towards the end of 2015.

Don't forget to visit the updated P4G website, where you'll soon be able to experience to P4G Business Game , communicate and exchange experiences and best practices with P4G players from all around the world! gain access to rich educational material ,find detailed guidelines and step-by-step booklets on how to play the game.



From Game to Guidance

Converting the Business Game in an evaluation system

The LIUC BG "Manage your own company" is a simulation game, where each team has the task of managing, from a strategic point of view, a company (your own company!) that is competing with other teams in a market. In order to win the game you (the team) have to reach the highest value of the company. After much experience with this game we can say that when a team wins each participant develops several skills during the game such as Learning by Doing, Team work, System Thinking, Critical analysis skills, Collaborative skills, Basic managerial, entrepreneurial and mathematical skills.

This is our starting point: a Business Game that helps to develop some particular skills. P4G is the chance to take a step forward: we will use the BG to assess and evaluate business competences!

The pedagogical approach of the P4G project, in fact, is achieved by taking a multi-disciplinary approach to examine a set of principles which are considered from social-cultural approaches, psychological principles, gaming experiences and the technological point of view. After taking part in P4G, we expect participants to be aware of the complexity of business reality. They will understand what managing (or running) a business means and what kind of skills are needed. The P4G Business Game is an opportunity, for players, to have practical experience of managing a business and to measure the impact of this experience at European level.

To go on it is important, at this point, to accurately understand what the essential entrepreneurial competences and skills are. For this reason the partnership carried out a real competences assessment at European level using 3 principal tools: Literature review, Focus groups and Survey. Summarizing this process, we can say that the P4G partnership combined these three methods to be able to

- 1) capture the state of the art,
- 2) explore (emerging) competences in the domain,
- 3) prioritize competences and 4) create



recommendations for the business game development.

At this point we had all the elements we needed but, designing simulation for learning and designing simulation for assessment are very different and the move from simulation to simulation-based assessment is particularly challenging! Principles and tools needed to create valid assessment in simulation environments are not the same as those required to build simulations (or even to use them for learning). Designing simulations for *learning* requires focusing on the features of situations that provoke/ elicit the targeted knowledge and skills. Designing simulations for *assessment* requires focusing on the knowledge and skills provoked by a specific situation and evaluating how they were provoked/ elicited, what was the response, what were the results. So the partnership de-

ecided to use the Evidence Centered Design (ECD) to have a conceptual design framework. In fact, ECD provides a conceptual design framework for the elements of a coherent assessment; the design framework is based on the principles of evidentiary reasoning and the exigencies of assessment production and delivery. So we designed the assessment part of the P4G- BG in this framework in order to ensure that the way in which evidence is gathered and interpreted is consistent with the underlying knowledge and purposes that the assessment is intended to address.

So now we have something completely new! The P4G-BG is not only a Business Game but also a powerful guidance tool and we will finalize it shortly during the pilot phase.

People who are curious about the economic and managerial world, but do not know anything about it, can directly go through a simulated experience first hand with the P4G-BG. They will be able to measure themselves with typical actions and thoughts of the everyday life of an entrepreneur. At the end of the pathway, furthermore, they will be able to understand, if they like this kind of job, and if they have the essential entrepreneurial skills.

So the P4G-BG is about to become a tool to support guidance centres and job centres for skills evaluation, guidance and training thanks to its assessment features.

Companies, SMEs, employment centres, etc. will have the chance to use it very soon.

In 2016 several Pilot sessions (one in every country) will take place. All the participants of the pilot project will understand in detail how to use the PLAY4GUIDANCE Business Game for evaluation and guidance purposes; and they will all have a lot of fun! (it's a game don't forget!!).

News in brief



■ From 18 to 20 of September 2015 Play4guidance was at the jamtoday.eu gamejam in Milan, hosted by Museo della Scienza e della Tecnologia. An 48 hours event with non-stop gaming and creation of new games. The topic of the from 18 to 20 of September 2015 was Food for Health! On Friday 18 September P4G participated some interesting seminars in italian language. (Picture below by [jamtodaymilano/ The Game Machine](http://jamtodaymilano.com))
More info: jamtodaymilano.wordpress.com/



■ P4G visited Barcelona between 9-12 June 2015 to participate in the EDEN 2015 Annual Conference. P4G's Stefano Menon of FPM shared ideas and opportunities about the possible synergies among European projects. The European Distance and E-Learning Network - EDEN, shares knowledge and improves understanding amongst professionals in distance and e-learning and to promote policy and practice across the whole of Europe and beyond. The P4G presentation: <http://www.slideshare.net/stefanomenon/eden2015-barcelona-synergyp4g>

NetWBL invited Play4Guidance as a good practice

NetWBL, the European thematic network on Work Based Learning invited Play4Guidance at both the national conference in Italy (05 June 2015) as a good practice and the "2nd European Monitoring Conference NetWBL Work Based Learning TOOLKIT goes live!" (1-2 October 2015, Vilnius - Lithuania).

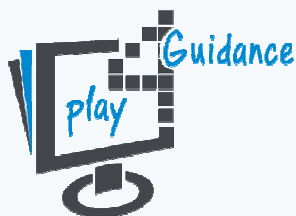


It was a pleasure for us to have the opportunity to present and discuss the project in such an important context. We have talked with teachers, managers, business associations, educational agencies... and at the end the most important outcome for us is the awareness that P4G Business

Game has the potential to be widely used in many scenarios. We are working to make it real.

More information about NetWBL: <http://smpf.lt/en/netwbl-conference>

Stefano Menon
FPM [Digital Learning & Collaboration](http://www.fpm.it)



Newsletter #04

Play4Guidance - A European Business Game to train and guide students and young unemployed on entrepreneurial, transversal and mathematical skills

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P4G international team is ready for the PILOTs. Are you?

In the last few months the Play4guidance team has been involved in several activities to develop the game, the platform and all the necessary resources to make the whole package as effective as possible for training, assessment and guidance aims.



The work is not concluded, but we can expect to be ready to start the pilots in March. In the meantime, the platform and most of the supporting resources are already available, and the game too, in a beta version. Interested? Take a look at play4guidance.eu/p4g-business-game/. In the next weeks you will notice many improvements and we would also be happy to receive your feedback.

But now, back to the pilots. What are they and which opportunities can they create for you?

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



P4G international team is ready for the PILOTs. Are you?

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Pilots represent the core of the project: they will last more than 1 year and will give the people involved a chance to get trained on entrepreneurial skills guided by experts; and will also give the P4G team a chance to collect the amount of data necessary to publish the final version of the game.

This long and intensive experience will be finally resumed in the "P4G model", which will collect the different uses done with the game and with the other tools / educational resources.

The countries where we are officially going to deliver the pilots are: Italy, Ireland, Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey.

In each country we'll have 2 pilots:

- The first one is dedicated to the stakeholders, because we want

stakeholders to be more aware of what the PLAY4GUIDANCE Game is about and of how effective it is for the assessment of entrepreneurial skills, as well as being a useful tool to help in the guidance towards learning pathways/jobs in entrepreneurial matters. We want stakeholders to undoubtedly choose the P4G BG as one of their work tool!

- The second one will be with high school students, university students and the unemployed: participants will be able to understand (guidance goal):

- if they like this kind of job;
- if essential entrepreneurial skills are aligned with their own skills and/or in what measure they are; what was done well and/or what skills the player needs to improve.

All pilots will be anticipated by dedicated online communities to maximize the effectiveness of the experience.

The pilots in figures:

- Number of pilots to carry out: 10
- Stakeholders involved: at least 20 per country (100)
- High school students: at least 120
- University students: at least 120
- Unemployed: at least 120
- Duration of each pilot: 2 months, comprehensive of 1 day in presence to play the business game in small groups.

As we have already met the interest of other external subjects to take part in the pilots, also from foreign countries such as Spain and Poland, we'll also try to organize some dedicated full online activities. If you are interested in joining us, send an email to: info@play4guidance.eu indicating your interest and your contact information.

Text by FPM

The P4G Greek Conference, Athens 12 December 2015

Science View and the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) successfully organized the P4G Greek Conference on Saturday 12 December 2015, at the premises of NKUA. During the Conference NKUA and Science View, both P4G partners, introduced the game, its principals and pedagogical framework, its educational framework and the P4G assessment tool. Attendants also had the opportunity to test the game for the first time and attempt to create their own businesses!

Participants also had the opportunity to be informed about relevant initiatives and projects, such as the Digiskills project, presented by Dr. Sofoklis Sotiriou from Ellinogermaniki Agogi, the Enterprise+ project, presented by Dr. Artemis Saitakis from Science and Technology Park of Crete (STEP-C), innovation and entrepreneurship issues, presented by Dr. George Neofotistos from the University of Crete.

More information about the Conference (in Greek): <http://p4gconference.weebly.com/>



The Play4Guidance Irish National conference on 7.11.2015

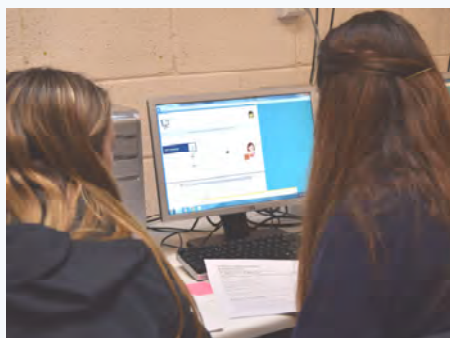
The DCU P4G team held their [first national conference](#) on the 7th November 2015 on campus in the innovative DCU Business School. The aim of the conference was to make participants aware of the P4G project, its aims and objectives, the project potential, and entrepreneurial competences, which the simulation addresses. Furthermore, it was an opportunity for industry experts to share their experiences and insights of social entrepreneurship and team entrepreneurship, as well as providing participants with an opportunity to engage in and become familiar with entrepreneurial thinking in education through a series of workshops. Participants came from all levels of the education sector, including primary, post-primary, training agencies, state agencies, unemployment centres, further education, and youth workers. Overall, it was a successful event with a good level of entrepreneurial knowledge exchange, industry insights, and interest ignited in the P4G project.



DCU - The P4G Business Game Pilot



The first pilot was successfully carried out on 22nd January with the help of Transition Year Business Teacher Meabh, and her students from Portmarnock Community School in Dublin. In total there were 30 participating students. To prepare students for immersion in the simulation, Meabh used a scenario that she developed for the game. The stu-



dents were provided with an explanatory business simulation handbook, as well as a business simulation reflection worksheet and a decision log sheet. By participating in the pilot activity students not only got a taste of the simulation, but it also got them thinking about strategy, the marketplace and analyzing decisions in order to improve their future actions.

Our findings back from Online Educa Berlin 2015

In this frame we were invited to present the paper "PLAY4GUIDANCE: a new way to evaluation and guidance through Business Games". We were included in the agenda of the session with the catchy title "STUDENT + GAMIFICATION = ENGAGEMENT?".

Here's how it went.

Let's start with our session, which was very successful in terms of audience: about 100 people filled the hall. It is a sign that the theme of games in the learning processes is more alive than ever.

And even among the exhibitors we noticed the presence of a large representation of serious/educational games companies, gamification processes experts and providers of business games.

The concept of the business game has expanded greatly over the years and most of the examples that we saw at the conference focused on the simulation of a business problem in which the player must give the best possible solution through a decision-making process based on content and interaction patterns. The typical structure of these business games awards a corporate role to the player that is placed in front of a complex problem. He/she will have to interact with other simulated colleagues choosing from several options what is the message he wants to pass. Based on the various decisions taken, the system will create a profile that will assess different soft skills acted during the game.

If we come back to the "classic" versions of business games, these solutions sustain a different approach, but are certainly very interesting and appreciated

Last December we were in Berlin at the international conference "Online Educa Berlin" (<http://www.online-educa.com/>). It is a well known event for all those involved in educational innovation. For many years the conference has provided the opportunity to keep updated on the state of the digital learning news: exchanging opinions and experiences, exploring what the main directions taken in European countries are, amongst others. About 2,000 professionals from over 90 countries are the numbers and wealth of this conference.



Photo by online-educa.com

by many companies, indeed. Is there any similarity between these business games and P4G? Yes of course!

First, they are both simulations. Moreover, the upgrade that we are operating on P4G focuses precisely on the capability to evaluate some of the key soft skills necessary to conduct a business profitably.

The most important difference lies in how the result is achieved: in the above case the player must choose between a few options what the best answer is: the focus is especially on communication

patterns. In P4G the player must instead simulate the management of a company, making both strategic and operational choices, from early stage investments to sales: this model increases the degrees of freedom, therefore increasing the level of complexity and- we believe so - the level of learning and involvement.

And finally, another important detail, with P4G the players are in a game with a final score: he/she can win or lose. Because the numbers in our case are not an opinion.

Text by FPM

The P4G second interim meeting

In Athens, Greece on 19-20 January 2016

The P4G second interim meeting was attended by all members of the Consortium, as well as the P4G external evaluator, Anne-Christin Tannhauser (via Skype). The meeting provided an opportunity to the partners of the consortium to summarize what has been done in the first 16 months of the project and to reflect on the connection and relation between the outputs. All partners worked together in order to set up and organize what we are expected to do in the second part of the project.

Prior to arriving in Athens, partners were provided with an agenda of the meeting, and information with directions to the University, accommodation and the restaurant for the welcome dinner which took place on Tuesday 19 January at Plaka.

On the first day of the meeting, after a warm welcome from Professor Chronis Kynigos from NKUA, Stefano Menon welcomed everyone to the meeting. First day discussions were focused on what was done in the first 16 months of the project and what it's expected to be done in the second part of the project. In addition partners shared previous experiences on realized national conferences and defined in detail the coming conferences for each country.

Furthermore, the P4G Business Game was thoroughly analyzed, while players, post graduate students of NKUA described their finding after playing the game numerous times. Partners also discussed about the BG assessment, the Pilots and the Scenarios, the Toolkit and the P4G Educational Platform.

Day two kicked off with presentations on Project Management and the production of outputs. Presentations that followed included that of the internal review of the quality of the project in terms of processes and outputs/outcomes; the External Evalu-

The P4G second interim meeting was held at Athens, Greece on 19-20 January 2016, at the premises of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA)/ Educational Technology Lab. The meeting was organized by the Greek P4G partners, NKUA and Science View.



ator, whose role as 'critical friend' is to assist the partnership in producing quality outputs and improve organisational collaboration; Administration and finance of Play4Guidance; Exploitation and dissemination and final conclusions.

The second interim meeting in Athens was very productive and successful and provided participants with a clear idea of the project's progress during the second reporting period, as well as definitive courses of action for moving the project forward into the next phase.

News in brief



Tekkeköy İlçe Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü (MEM) is holding its first national conference to the stakeholders on 4th February 2016 in Samsun. 100 invitations are sent to the NGOs, industrial organizations, job centers, public bodies (directorates) and the university. During the national conference stakeholders will be informed not only about P4G project but also the Erasmus+ program in general, besides all the attendees will experience the business game.

1,669 students participate in the annual competition of the LIUC BusinessGame

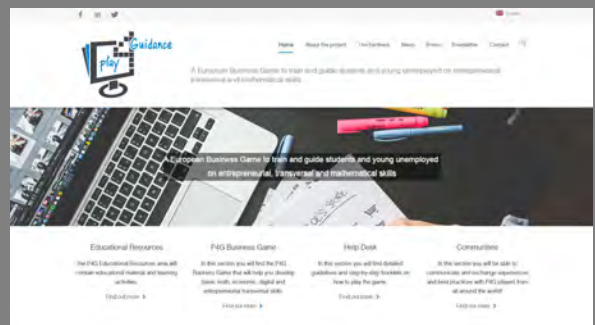


LIUC started the annual competition of the LIUC Business Game in late January. The LIUC BG has been the base for the development of the P4G Business Game. The LIUC annual competition is for Italian high school teams from all over the country; the teams play a multi-player BG from their schools. The best 50 teams are invited to LIUC university to play a final game and the first 3

teams win prizes. The first part of the game was played on the 20th of January. Next games are on the 3rd and the 17th of february. The finals will be held on the 17th of March. This competition is under the auspices of the Italian ministry of Education and of the regional authority (Ufficio scolastico per la Lombardia). This year the participants are 1,669 students from 90 schools, divided in 313 teams.

Don't forget to visit the updated P4G website, where you'll soon be able to experience to P4G Business Game , communicate and exchange experiences and best practices with P4G players from all around the world! gain access to rich educational material ,find detailed guidelines and step-by-step booklets on how to play the game.

www.play4guidance.eu






Newsletter #5

Play4Guidance - A European Business Game to train and guide students and young unemployed on entrepreneurial, transversal and mathematical skills


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The P4G pilots

P4G Pilots play key role in end game design



The pilots are crucial for evaluating the impact of the simulation on the end user, and like all pilot studies they can test if there are any gaps, pedagogical or technical, in the project design. It is beneficial to carry them out with members of the relevant population, as it provides authentic insights into the end user experience and principally assesses feasibility in order to take the necessary measures to make the proposed project viable (Arain et al. 2010; Thabane et al., 2014).

(indirect stakeholders) are made aware of the P4G project and their own role in making the simulation the best that it can be, so that it will potentially be their number one choice of business tool in their respective classrooms. Redefining the aims of the project at the start of the day helps to put the day's focus in perspective i.e. that participants are part of a European initiative that seeks to contribute to the development of entrepreneurial competences in young people and unemployed people.

At the start of the pilot day participants [CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE](#)



The P4G pilots

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In order to understand how the simulation proposes to contribute to the development of entrepreneurial competences **participants are presented with the game assessment – the Matrix, which sets skills' standards**

among target groups and countries. The Matrix, along with other educational resources that support the simulation, is available on the P4G website. Participants should also have an opportunity to **navigate the website and resources** so that they become familiar with the interface. An important part of the day is **introducing participants to a scenario** that can be used with their learners. The partnership has developed a number of scenarios that can be used with different learner groups in different contexts: each grounding the simulation in sound pedagogical practice.

As there is a competitive element to the online simulation, **participants can be put into teams with 3-4 players per team** to play a match. The competitive intensity of a simulation is advocated by Cadotte (2014) who sees this as an opportunity to **awaken the “entrepreneurial spirit of the players” as players are continuously pushed to do better by their competitors.**

Whilst the competitive edge is motivating, it must also be noted that the levels of collaboration, teamwork, dialogue, inquiry and reflection also contribute to the overall pilot experience.



Gee (2007) highlights relationship building and participation in a social group as important features in game-based learning. By working in groups of 3-4 participants not only engage with one another, but also understand and make sense of their experience in the online simulation, as results are shared on a leaderboard.

By partaking in the pilots participants are also experiencing learning through their students' eyes; they can see that **by using the simulation they are gaining practice in being an entrepreneur, thus bridging the gap between knowledge and skills needed in the workplace** (Jakab, 2014). By contributing feedback throughout the day they are also providing authentic data from the end user, which will ultimately help to improve upon the P4G simulation design to make it more feasible for guiding students in entrepreneurial, transversal and mathematical skills.

International Centre for Innovation and Workplace Learning, ICIWL at DCU

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The #p4Gpilot @DublinCityUni



After implementing the activities set out in the communication plan for the FB online community, DCU carried out its first pilot of the P4G online simulation with its indirect stakeholders. There was live tweeting during the day with #p4Gpilot used to disseminate the day's activities. The pilot took place on 28th May 2016 in the Executive Suite of the DCU Business School and was attended by 20 participants representing post primary, further, higher and third level education, unemployment centres, youth workers, SMEs and industry. The event was facilitated by business subject expert Meadhbh Cleary, Portmarnock Community School, who had successfully used the simulation with her post primary school students in January of this year. The p4G platform, educational resources, and evaluation tools were showcased to the group, who were then divided into 5 teams consisting of 4 members per team.

Participants were encouraged to construct their own understanding, ask questions, explore the business activities and reflect on decisions made through group discussions; all key aspects to experiential and social constructivist learning.



A valuable strategic management resource was also showcased to participants: the Business Model Canvas, which can be integrated into business studies' classes to help students develop understanding, discussion, creativity and analysis of a company's strategic management. Rich data was collected from the participants (written and video feedback) focusing on user experience and how to improve the simulation moving forward. Overall, the day's success stemmed from the invaluable collaboration, participation and dialogue amongst all present on the day; a community of practice that is committed to creating value for their learners i.e. the end user.

Play4Guidance Entrepreneurial Education Weekend



As a prelude to the face-to-face pilot session, stakeholders were invited to participate in the Play4Guidance (P4G) Entrepreneurial Education weekend (27-28 May) in the prestigious Helix at Dublin City University (DCU) and the Executive Suite of the DCU Business School. This event was sponsored by the [International Centre for Innovation and Workplace Learning \(ICIWL\)](#) - at DCU in collaboration with the European P4G project, which along with ICIWL is committed to working with professionals from a range of work contexts and supporting them to develop entrepreneurial mindsets to enhance their personal and professional lives. The theme of the weekend was educational entrepreneurship and

a variety of entrepreneurial approaches to research and learning technologies were showcased over the weekend ranging from online authoring tools to enhance primary and post primary school learning to video artefacts demonstrating the value of collaboration in industry and healthcare.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Yvonne Crotty, ICIWL at DCU, who expounded on the need for more entrepreneurial approaches to research and also reminded participants to partake in the P4G pilot run the following day; Seán Donnelly, eConsultancy UK, who discussed Digital Trends and the Modern Professional; and Paul Kelly, homeschool.ie and former contestant on the popular TV series Dragon's Den, who highlighted key entrepreneurial competences needed for running a modern day online business.

International Centre for Innovation and Workplace Learning, ICIWL at DCU

P4G 1st Pilot Phase in Greece addressing stakeholders

The 1st P4G Pilot Phase in Greece was successfully organised by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) and Science View, on the 14th of June 2016, at the Technology Lab of the NKUA.

This pilot phase addressed stakeholders with a main aim to give them the opportunity to test the P4G Business Game, the Matrix and the Self-evaluation tool to verify PLAY4GUIDANCE Model effectiveness and reliability. In addition, stakeholders were invited to evaluate the P4G toolkits and educational materials in terms of usability, relevance and effectiveness as supporting tools for the P4G Business Game and its training and guidance aspect in supporting users to develop entrepreneurial, transversal and mathematical skills.



In the pilot there were 21 participants of different educational and professional background; education consultants, in-service teachers, post-graduate students and professionals. During the pilot, the participants were informed about the project and its main objectives and the innovative key features of the P4G BG in encompassing the P4G Matrix as a state-of-the-art reference to essential entrepreneurial skills and the P4G Self-evaluation tool as a powerful tool in supporting users to track their development and evaluate their competences.

The participants were challenged and highly engaged by the scenario 'Making ends meet' that negotiates critical issues and barriers in business operations in crisis times. Stakeholders considered the scenario very effective as a supporting tool to introduce users to the basic business activities that the game negotiates (management of supply, production management, management of marketing and sales) and guide them while playing the game, by highlighting key business activities and processes (strategic and operational factors and corresponding variables) in order to effectively run their business. The participants had the opportunity to experience two rounds of the P4G BG; one played against the com-

puter and a second one against each other, in teams. While playing the game, there was strong interaction among the members of the teams, who were highly engaged in the competitive features that underlie the game. Finally, the stakeholders filled in an ex-ante and post survey as well as the scenario worksheets and the evaluation tool, providing us with valuable data to verify PLAY4GUIDANCE Model effectiveness and reliability. The focus group phase at the end of the pilot enabled the participants to express their overall aspects regarding the P4G BG and supporting tools and their perspective for their exploitation.

Overall, the 1st P4G Pilot Phase was a successful event that gave us the opportunity to have stakeholders directly involved in the Model phase of the project by engaging them in hands-on activities regarding the P4G BG and relevant educational resources and evaluation tools and identify their perception of the P4G Model. At the end of the pilot, the participating Education Consultants expressed their willingness to apply and promote the P4G BG in a school setting, during the following school year, as a best practice for the development of entrepreneurial skills.

P4G 1st Pilot Phase in Italy

It was a very useful afternoon last 15th June in Castellanza. About a dozen of stakeholders with different roles (teachers, managers, people from career services) spoke about the possible uses of P4G BG as evaluation tool.

There was first a short introduction about the project in general and a little discussion about how the partnership chose the competences to evaluate. Then all the attendants were divided in teams and the game began!

After the game there was a very interesting discussion in which every players spoke about the experience of being a BG player and in general about the possible different uses of the P4G-BG.

At the end of the day we can say that it was a success because all the stakeholder agreed about the fact that the P4G-BG can be a tool for competence assessment. Everyone can use it in a different his own scenario with some minor change.

We collected many comments and suggestion that will be very useful to improve the game and the support material.



News in brief

2 upcoming pilots are scheduled until the early fall: 1 from BIA in Bulgaria and 1 from MEM in Turkey.

■ Following the first project national conference held in February 2016 that provoked the interest of various stakeholders, the Bulgarian Industrial Association has already started the organisation of different pilot meetings to test the P4G business game with high school professors, representatives of employment centres and human resources. The first pilot meetings to demonstrate and play the game in teams will take place on 22nd and 23 June in Sofia and in another neighbouring town.

■ Tekkeköy İlçe Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü ,MEM, will realize its first pilot with the teachers and administrators of the secondary and high schools in the district. We will use the ICT classes of our two schools ;Tekkeköy Secondary School and Necati Akçağlılar High School to implement the pilots. The pilot will be held during the dates 6,7,8 September 2016 . On 6th and 7th of September teachers will be in the pilot, on 8th September the administrators and other participants from the university and job centers will be invited. We are planning to complete our first pilot with the participation of 80 secondary school teachers in Tekkeköy Secondary School and 60 high school teachers in Necati Akçağlılar High School. We expect the participation of 30 administrators and other experts .

3rd European Monitoring Conference NetWBL “Work-based Learning

The 3rd international conference on Work Based Learning is planned in 28 and 29 June 2016, in Berlin: http://www.net-wbl.eu/?page_id=245. It's organized by NetWBL, a network of 29 European national agencies, coordinated by the German National Agency at BIBB. It is funded by the European Commission, Directorate General Education and Culture (DG EAC).



Last year we had the pleasure and honor of being invited to present the P4G project as a good practice. At that time the P4G Business game and related resources were under construction. Now the

game is available and the partnership is running several pilots around Europe. Among the first findings from stakeholders interviews, we can say that the P4G Business Game can play a role in this field. A lot of interest has been shown for the introduction of the game in schools to support different forms of work approach, like apprenticeship. It has been considered, in fact, as a hyphen between classroom lessons and practical experiences in work environments.

The P4G is free and ready to use from our platform www.play4guidance.eu.

If you want to use it you are more than welcome, either if you are teacher, student, employee, unemployed, entrepreneur, manager, consultant, HR, etc.. your feedback will help us to improve this FREE, DIDACTIC and FOR GUIDANCE resource.

SIGN IN AND BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR WITH OUR BUSINESS GAME!

Don't forget to visit the updated P4G website, where you'll be able to experience to P4G Business Game , communicate and exchange experiences and best practices with P4G players from all around the world! gain access to rich educational material ,find detailed guidelines and step-by-step booklets on how to play the game.

