

EUROPEAN ACADEMY ON YOUTH WORK - WORKSHOP REPORT

Gamification to Combat Discrimination and Radicalisation

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TOPIC DISCUSSED & COUNTRIES OF THE PROJECT

The topic of the workshop was youth radicalisation and gamification as a specific tool to combat and raise awareness of the existence of radical/neo-Nazi groups across Europe and their pseudo-patriotic narrative inciting hatred and exclusion. It has been piloted within an Erasmus+ KA2 project including Hungary, the Czech Republic, Cyprus and Bulgaria.

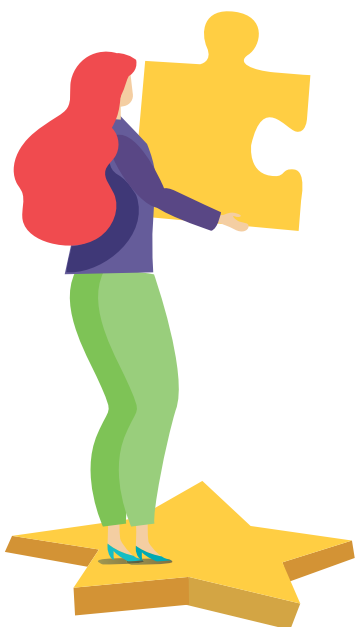
METHODOLOGY

The workshop started with a name game and the invitation to participants to share their most favourite game, be it a board game, electronic game or an outdoor activity / sports. Participants were then invited to write down two true facts about themselves including a digit, e.g. I have **3** sisters or I have been studying French for **8** months. One of these was to be changed to turn into a lie (participants had the freedom to choose whether it be the digit or the concrete detail), and subsequently, they had to play the game “a lie and a truth” in pairs, trying to identify which was the modified fact.

Upon finishing this activity, participants were invited to pick an avatar and split into three groups: the Pikachus, the Super Marios and the Pac Men, and help the facilitator solve a mystery. The plot was: *Help us find Alexander! His mother Sarah and his younger brother Georg have been looking for him for a couple of days now, and all we know is that Alexander Boronnat has gone to a 10th anniversary Erasmus commemorative trip with his peers and has been missing since then.* Each avatar group received a clue with Alexander’s favourite songs to help find him and had to follow the clues to the very end to find out **where** he went, **who** he went **with**, and **what** he was doing there.

The groups underwent a series of challenges, including a mathematical problem, rebus, coding a letter, matching images to countries, opening a box, tangram and a QR code, to eventually find out that Alexander had joined neo-Nazis who had met in Sofia a month ago and had created an umbrella entity during the conference “Together for a Europe of the Fatherlands” held in April 2019.

The process continued with a debrief of why that topic was chosen, what its significance was and how it impacted on young people across Europe. Participants were invited to share their impressions and ask questions regarding the game. The facilitator presented an outline of how a mystery / detective game could be created following the example presented.



KEY ISSUES RAISED SUCH AS CHALLENGES

1. Knowledge transfer in post-game phase and skilful debriefing
2. Managing participants' behaviour and reactions during the game
3. Efficiency of detective games to introduce HRE and radicalisation in a reality where no young person without an activist background would sign up for these topics
4. Young people's feedback having played the game

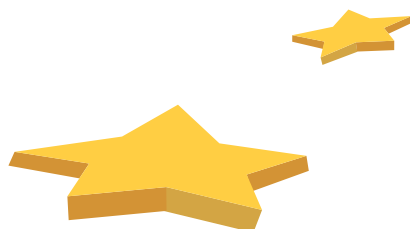
INNOVATIVE RESPONSES TO THOSE CHALLENGES

The innovation lies in the concept of detection, which stimulates participants' active involvement and entertainment while solving different types of puzzles and challenges. It leads into the topic of radicalisation imperceptibly and builds up on the final WOW effect after having resolved the mystery.

In addition, the innovation goes into the reality check, i.e. the whole story is true; the main characters are actual persons with a violent/radical history and criminal track record. They live among us and can easily be like someone we know.

KEY TRENDS IDENTIFIED (COMMONALITIES BETWEEN COMMENTS/ PARTICIPANTS)

The approach can be transferred to prejudice and discrimination of Roma (Slovakia), anti-Muslim/refugee rhetoric (Belgium, Finland) and dealing with gender stereotypes (Iceland).



FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The feedback from the participants was genuinely intriguing, most were entertained but also under the influence of the scalability of the far right movement. They saw the applicability of the tool in local realities and its potential to send messages to young people across Europe.

Some of the opinions shared through the event app:

- *"Very, very useful"*
- *"I think the tool was inspirational, the effect on us phenomenal and the goal noble."*



LINKS TO FURTHER RESOURCES OR INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PROJECT AVAILABLE ONLINE



The project process and outcomes are shared online via the FB page of IOA:

<https://www.facebook.com/InfiniteOpportunitiesAssociation/>

<https://www.facebook.com/autonomiaalapitvany/>



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