



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



INGAME
Gaming for Social Inclusion and Civic Participation

INGAME

INGAME – Gaming for Social Inclusion and Civic Participation – A holistic approach for a cultural shift in education and policy

Project Number: 612166-EPP-1-2019-1-ES-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN

Cyprus National Report

Document Information

Criteria	Details
WP number and title:	WP2/2.2. National INGAME Ecosystem of Needs, Practices Target Groups, Stakeholders and Mode of Work Report
Document author:	Elisavet Kiourti
Version:	First draft
Date:	29.05.2020

Document Version Control

Version	Date	Which Partner	Description
1.0	29.05.2020	CSI CYPRUS	First draft
2.0			Final draft

1. Introduction	4
1.1. Aim/Objectives of Report	4
2. Key findings from Desk Research.....	4
2.1. Literature Review/National Context.....	4
2.2. Social inclusion in Cyprus.....	5
2.3. Gender Equality in Cyprus	7
2.4. Civic participation in Cyprus	10
2.5. Good Practices.....	11
2.6. Issues/Problems	11
3. Research results: questionnaires.....	11
4. Conclusions and Recommendations	21
4.1. Key results of research	21
4.2. Recommendations for future action (always in relation to INGAME’s aims).....	21
5. References.....	22
6. Annexes	23

1. Introduction

1.1. Aim/Objectives of Report

Social inclusion, gender equality and civic participation can be understood collectively to be processes through which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities and participation for all in society. While social inclusion and gender equality aim to empower poor and marginalized people to take advantage of burgeoning global opportunities, it also ensures that people have a voice in decisions which affect their lives and that they enjoy equal access to markets, services and political, social and physical spaces. (Information Resources Management Association, 2018). Processes of social inclusion, gender equality and participation are becoming more evident in our daily practice and in relevant youth policies that are being put forward. In the case of Cyprus, however, these processes have not been extensively explored, especially in regard to the exploration and use of these notions within video games. Within this context, the aim of this transnational report is the following. First, to address a comprehensive report including a literature review on the national context of Cyprus on social inclusion, gender equality and civic participation with the use or not use of games. Second, to present the results of the online mixed method research, to describe good practices. Third, to discuss any issues and/or problems that may arise in the areas of gaming and social inclusion. Finally, the report will describe the conclusions of the overall research and will propose recommendations for future action in relation to the INGAME project aims.

2. Key findings from Desk Research

2.1. Literature Review/National Context

Video games have long been understood as an entertaining and popular medium, while a large body of recent research studies have suggested that video games are literacy environments (Gee, 2003; Kiourti, 2018; Steinkuehler, 2007) with complex layers of meaning, allowing players to react with more freedom, playing with their social identities (Kiourti, 2018) and foster feelings of sociability and belonging with others. In addition, from the perspective of Gaming Literacy, video games are simulations of experience preparing players to tackle problems in real life situations (Kiourti, 2018). Strategic problem-solving (Gee, 2003), creative thinking, overlapping goal development, involvement with digital literacy practices (Steinkuehler, 2007), learning of new skills, and many other cognitive skills become the fruits of such game activities (Clark, 1997; Shaffer, 2004). However, while generally there has been a considerable exploration of gaming as a social and literacy practice, in the particular context of Cyprus it remains a new field of study and practice. Accordingly, in Cyprus, the emergence of new technologies and their beneficiary use for other purposes than just entertaining is in its cradle.

The official governmental sectors have not yet approved video games, supporting instead the notion that video games promote violence and are harmful especially to youths (e.g., Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus). For this reason, the educational games that have been developed so far nationally mostly take the form of digital gamified activities. In addition, Cyprus has not yet developed any video games that are thematically related to social inclusion, gender equality and social participation; this gap underlines the need for a project such as INGAME. To give a clearer view of the current situation in Cyprus, the following section presents a brief description of recent statistics, and current practices of fostering awareness on issues related to social inclusion, gender equality, and civic participation for youth developing intercultural skills and positive attitudes; these issues will be examined mostly in relation to gamified activities or similar practices.

2.2. Social inclusion in Cyprus

Most sectors or EU programs in Cyprus have developed digital or physical gamified activities.¹ Thus, in order to offer an analysis to describe the context in Cyprus, the first part of the literature review will examine examples of related stakeholders' practices, programs, and activities, all of which bear relevance to social inclusion, participation for students and youths .

For instance, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth in Cyprus runs "Actions for social and school inclusion (DR.A.S.E.)" (EASEA, 2019). This project's main objective is the support of Cypriot population living below the poverty line or being at risk of poverty and social exclusion; the improvement of learning outcomes; reducing school failure and delinquency; and strengthening social cohesion by reducing the risk of social marginalization and exclusion. Within the DRASE program, innovative preventive actions are taking place such as the creation of a space for the development of creative and entertaining activities, the creation of student clubs (dance, theater, journalism, music, painting, amateur radio, football, etc.) and the development of a program which includes educational, cultural and other activities on health education.

Furthermore, the UNHCR Representative in Cyprus, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth (2018) organized a series of workshops in secondary and technical schools (25 in total) with the gamified storyboard game "Against All Odds" (<http://www.taxidifygis.org.cy/>). "Against All Odds" is described as a free access online game that takes the player on an escape journey with a series of short challenges; its aim is to be an online game that illustrates the complexity and danger of the refugee experience. In "Against All Odds", the player

¹ These gamified activities are entitled either as electronic games, digital games or games.

takes the role of a refugee, and plays through twelve stages - depicting his persecution and flight from his |her native country, through to eventual integration into a foreign country as an asylum seeker. Complementing the game is a repository of facts detailing the history of asylum, and refugee testimonies. A teacher's guide section provides discussion points and lesson ideas for the classroom. In the workshops, which lasted two school periods of each class from each selected school, students were asked to play specific parts of the game and expressed their thoughts and perceptions on refugee issues.

The Youth Board of Cyprus (<https://onek.org.cy/>) is funding youth groups and youth centers for educational, entertainment and sports activities and for acquiring equipment for youth centers which aim at improving social inclusion and participation of young adults in Cyprus. Following the same state of mind, Cyprus Youth Clubs Organizations (www.ecyc.org), an active member of the European Confederation of Youth Clubs, aims to support opportunities for young people to develop their physical, social, cultural, emotional and cognitive abilities through seminars and workshops with physical non-formal gamified activities and events.

In the same context, Erasmus in Cyprus is actively engaging youths with a variety of initiatives and activities such as board games and traditional games and gamified activities with the use of Kahoot enriching society by connecting international exchange students with their local host communities. ESN volunteers are focusing on the areas of education & youth, social inclusion, culture, health & wellbeing (ESN, 2019).

Other projects aiming for social inclusion are “The Stage for Social Inclusion” which focuses on the subject of social inclusion with providing support through theatre techniques (Mejzlik, 2019). “IEUME” Project (www.ieume.com) aims to support, via innovative educational tools, the integration process of people with a migrant background. The project includes an interactive and user-friendly digital toolkit, available also as a mobile, which will also feature gamified modules covering European socio-cultural, political and economic issues. “SOCI@LL” is a project that aims to generate a paradigmatic change in the way schools and communities operate and cooperate to create innovative approaches for social inclusion. Emphasis is placed on promoting participatory and empowering tools for creative and sustainable solutions codesigned by key stakeholders within a whole school framework and through local social labs, organized into a European network supported by a virtual platform.

In terms of planning for future actions, several conferences like the TCP Forum were organized to discuss future pathways for social innovation and social inclusion, delving at the same time into topics such as digital technology and entrepreneurship for inclusion and participation,

female entrepreneurship, migrants' integration and multiculturalism for young adults. International conferences (including workshops) such as the "Social inclusion and integration in the Mediterranean region: Challenges and Opportunities"² have also taken place recently. This particular conference focused on the areas of social inclusion and integration of Third Country Nationals in Cyprus as well as in the Mediterranean region, with particular emphasis on the challenges faced by stakeholders, as well as opportunities and exchange of ideas and practices from Cyprus and the EU. In the Cyprus EU Youth and DG's Conference entitled "Youth Participation and Social Inclusion"³ representatives from various youth organizations and government officials from EU member states, candidate countries and others discussed how youth participation leads to the social inclusion of young people, with emphasis on young people with a migrant background. The importance of the participation of young people and youth organizations especially in decision making, as an important factor for the creation of inclusive, democratic and prosperous societies was highlighted. A set of Joint Recommendations on the subject were adopted at the end of the conference by the youth delegates and the DG representatives of EU Member States (Salto Youth, 2012).

These initiatives, projects and activities show that there have been attempts to address social inclusion issues, sometimes within the lens of gamified approaches. However, despite these attempts, the examples above also show the lack of a complete video game, implemented wholesale for general purposes or for more specific aims such as social inclusion of young people in Cyprus. Taking all the above into consideration, Cyprus has limited or no paradigms of development or/and use of video games either for general purposes or for more specific aims such as social inclusion of young people.

2.3. Gender Equality in Cyprus

A specific area of intervention in terms of video games and social inclusion is to address existing issues and gaps in relation to gender equality in Cyprus. Since Cyprus's EU accession and associated harmonization with the EU *acquis*, as well as its compliance with international instruments throughout the last 15 years, an increasing number of new gender equality legislative measures have been passed, together with amendments to existing measures. Based on the Gender Equality Index

² Social inclusion and integration in the Mediterranean region: Challenges and Opportunities event: <https://www.unic.ac.cy/event/social-inclusion-and-integration-in-the-mediterranean-region-migration-conference/>

³ Youth Participation and Social Inclusion event: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toy/reference/cyprus-eu-youth-and-dg-s-conference.2560/>

2019 (EIGE, 2019), Cyprus ranks 20th in the EU on the Gender Equality Index with a final result of 56.3 out of 100 points. Cyprus' score is 11.1 points lower than the EU's score. Since 2015, Cyprus's score increased by 10.4 points (+ 1.2 points) improving its position by eight places (table 1).

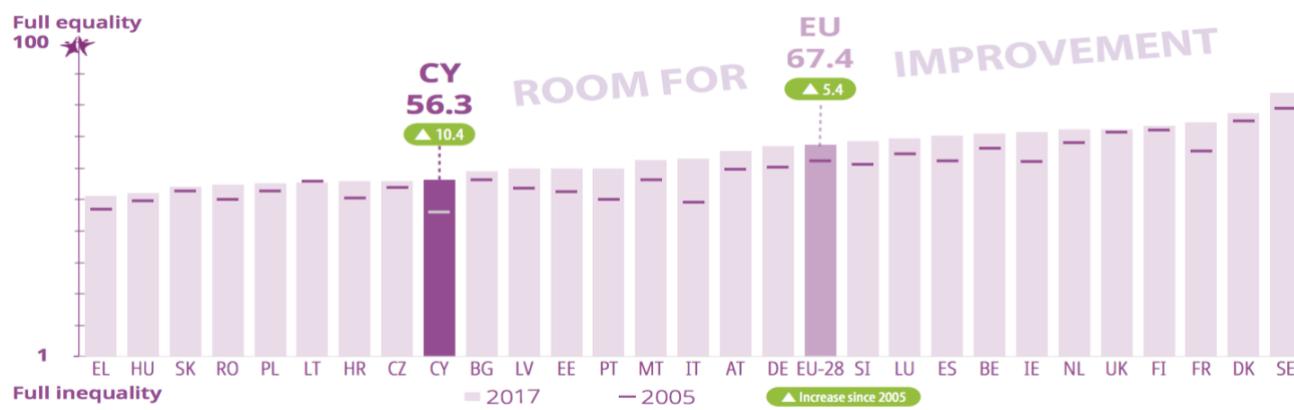


Table 1: Gender Equality Index score for EU Member States, 2005-2017

In previous years, however, the Equality Authority (2010), from May 2004 until the end of 2010, received a total of 211 complaints regarding possible violations of the equality principle in relation to sex. These complaints concerned discriminations due to pregnancy, delivery of a baby, motherhood or family situation as well as discriminations on hiring promotion, sexual harassment, payments and professional training. The Department of Labor Despite legislative framework for gender mainstreaming has being included in the government strategy and in the NAP on Gender Equality for 2014-2017, it is presented as a non-binding strategy. The NAP for Gender Equality 2018-2021 is in the process of public consultation but, again, includes gender mainstreaming as a non-binding strategy.

One of the most fundamental developments in Cyprus is gender mainstreaming in peace and security. Currently, the Technical Committee on Gender Equality operates separately from other technical committees (including the two communities discussing Cyprus's reunification) rather than integrating gender into the technical committees concerned with security, territory, property and constitutional arrangements. The Committee's operation was suspended in August 2017, following the collapse of the UN-supported International Conference on Cyprus at Crans-Montana. Its future and effectiveness continue to be tied to political developments. Gender mainstreaming in peace negotiations can have a transformative effect on the future of a country. However, a new NAP on Women, Peace and Security 2018-2021 is being developed, headed by the Gender Equality Commissioner (GEC), in cooperation with civil society. This new NAP focuses on implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted in 2000.

In recent years, practical interventions for gender equality have emerged with the form of organizations such as the Cyprus Gender Research Center (www.ucy.ac.cy/genderstudies/el/) (CGRC). CGRC aims to establish co-operation and linkages on a national, regional and international basis targeting a more balanced representation of both sexes in all walks of life. The actions that have been made so far is participation and promotion of gender equality in conferences, art exhibitions of women's art or poems dedicated to women, workshops for gender equality and annual marches such as the "One Billion Rising: Drum! Dance! Rise". An innovative and recent action developed in the context of this intervention was a dynamic Facebook group of 8,241 active members, including both women and men, named "Network against women violence" (2019). By the time of the inauguration of the group the members have already participated in a variety of demonstrations with a positive impact on state regulations and approaches.

Training often forms part of the implementation of specific actions such as the NAP for Gender Equality or various programmers co-funded by the European Social Funds (ESF), for example the Gender Pay Gap project, which funded training to tackle gender stereotypes in the education system. The Department of Labor issued the information leaflets and Guides about sexual harassment in workplace, protection of maternity law, pregnancy and equal treatment in employment and vocational training. The Department of Labor was also actively involved in the seminars and/or awareness raising programs such as the training seminar targeting the Equality Inspectors and enhancing their knowledge of the legislation, along with relevant decisions of the ECJ. There are also projects aiming gender equality such as "FENCE" which offers training tools as a process to make different key-actors 'gender empowered' and 'gender sensitive'. "E-mploy-Me!" (<http://e-mploy-me.eu/>) is an innovative Erasmus+ project whose main objective is to promote the socio-labour integration of unemployed immigrant women through empowerment and digital skills. As a starting point it takes the absence of specific transnational initiatives in Europe that promote the integration of unemployed immigrant women through such innovative methodologies. A third similar project for younger ages is the "Educating girls and boys for Gender Equality" a project that aims to enhance the education and awareness of girls and boys through the implementation of an educational methodology based on creative art/cultural practices so they can challenge social norms, gender stereotypes and roles that encourage or condone violence and promote gender equality and respect for others.

As was described in this sub-section, even though there is a significant progress in gender equality in Cyprus during the past few years, we do not have any projects responding to this issue through the dedicated use of video games.

2.4. Civic participation in Cyprus

Cyprus holds the 23th place among EU countries on formal and informal volunteering, active citizenship of people aged 16 and over (Eurostat, 2015)

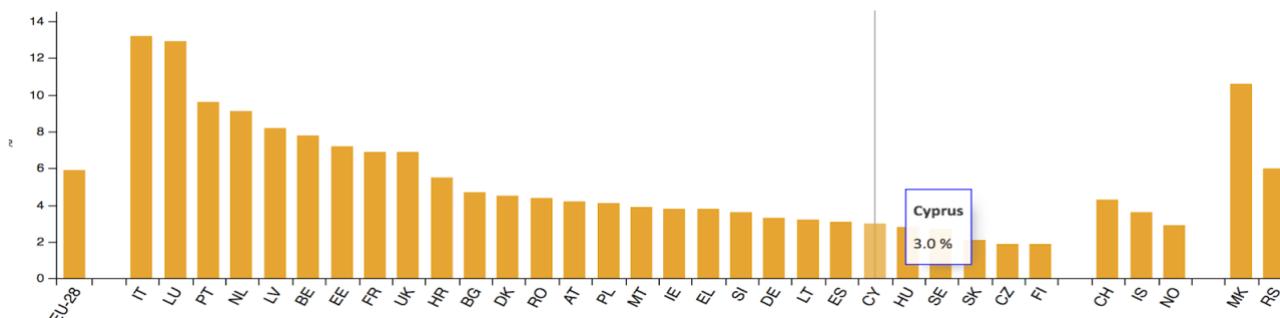


Table 2: Statistics on active citizenship of young people 16+

Several initiatives though have been implemented the past few years. For example, in 2020, Cyprus participated for the first time in the Global Game Jam, an international forum for anyone interested in game development. The Global Game Jam (GGJ) focuses on bringing communities together through collaboration, innovation and experimentation with regulations on non-sexism, racism, discrimination or any kind of exclusion will be tolerated in association. We encourage inclusive and welcoming environments in all our locations. During the event, participants from several countries divided into teams and designed video games in 48hours with a special social theme provided by the organization.

Another event that was held in Cyprus was the “Games and politics” a series of event by the Goethe Institut Cyprus (2019) which dealt with the role and relevance of board games and gaming in society. Further projects aiming in empowering civic participation is the “EmpoweringYou” project tackling the social and political alienation and withdrawal faced by many young Europeans. This has been reflected in the low rates of participation in political, civic and social life which can lead to marginalization and social exclusion. The project targets young adults aged 13-30 who are at risk of social exclusion, those not engaged in electoral processes, and those that as a result of social exclusion may have become involved in criminal activities. Finally, the “Civic Participation” project aimed to lay the groundwork for the creation of an established academic program in Cyprus on the theme of Civic Participation, with the aim of providing students and CSO practitioners from Cyprus and the Euro-Mediterranean region with the theoretical understanding and practical knowledge in the field. The project included face to face course, entitled, ‘State, Civil Society and Democracy’ Moreover, as part of the project, a workshop was held in Cyprus, with the participation of academics

and CSO practitioners from the countries of the region. What is important was that it was organized by a team of Greek Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot and international academics and attracted participants from Cyprus and overseas.

2.5. Good Practices

Many studies have already showed that the use of video games can enhance the levels of engagement, maintain the motivation and are digital problem solving environments embedded with “constellations of literacy practices”. Video games can have an explicit role in the empowerment and social inclusion of groups at risks of social exclusion (Stewart et al., 2013; Panzavolta & Lotti, 2013) and gender equality. What could be a good practice is to transfer the gaming technology to the realm of console and mobile learning and closing the inclusion loop. This transfer moved from the use of full-blown games for learning purposes to the use of gaming elements in learning applications, in what is known as gamification. What should be considered is the notion of educational games from the standpoint that learners are game players the design and development of the INGAME, with a specific network package surrounding it, investing in innovative gaming ideas based on the mainstream gaming industry, develop labs or communities enhancing the use of video games for empowering social engagement, gender equality and social participation, establishing the appropriate framework, digitally empowering youths in Cyprus,

2.6. Issues/Problems

As was mentioned in previous sections, Cyprus has not yet developed any video games dedicated to promoting social inclusion, gender equality and social participation. This points towards the need for implementing a project such as INGAME. Furthermore, in official governmental websites⁴ or media in Cyprus, videogames are often associated with the increased aggression and delinquent behavior of players; this kind of representation effectively claims a consistent relation between violent video game use and increases in aggressive behavior, aggressive cognitions and aggressive affect, and decreases in prosocial behavior, empathy and sensitivity to aggression. However, this narrative is not based on any solid research studies and it is important to enlighten the public with scientific evidence, information, promotions to the Cypriot society about the positive effects of video gaming.

3. Research results: questionnaires

3.1 Findings from field-based research

⁴ <https://internetsafety.pi.ac.cy/teenagers-violent-games>

This section presents the findings of the field work conducted during the research and data collection for the report. The presentation of the findings will be structured according to the research actions taken with participants in the field research (i.e., young persons aged 18-35, the relevant stakeholders, and the questionnaire to the target group).

3.1.2 Young Persons Aged 18-35

Based on the collective answers of the research question 5, 54.5% of the participants define civic engagement as the procedure of being informed on the development of actions in local, European and Global level and having the state right of free expression of views and active participation of the citizens in the democratic decision-making and problem solving in society in the political social and economic developments of the country they live for the common good: More specifically civic engagement is the participation in (a) cultural organizations; (b) associations; (c) general voting; (d) parades; (e) charities; (f) the state elections of their state (g) protesting; (h) general events), (i) demonstrations, (j) local municipality-community (k) public opinion polls. 24.4% of the participants answered that civic engagement is the participation of citizens for a single purpose either general one “common good” “for one purpose” “decisions for the country” “community growth” or a more specific one “participation in elections” and involvement in politics. The third category of answers represents the 21.2% of the participants answering other such as: (a) Civics playing games; (b) no explanation, repeating “Many times” and (c) active citizenship without further explanation.

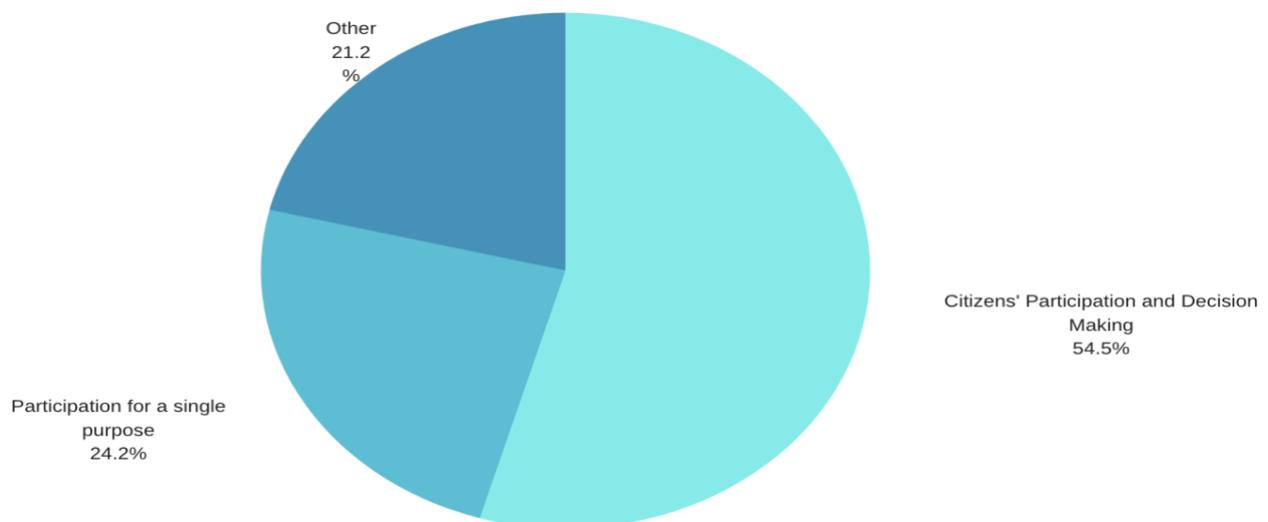


Figure 1: The definition of civic engagement

The most usual initiative the responders have participated is “Online Petitions” like change.org with a percentage of 36,4%. The next category that presents the 30,3% is that participants have not any engagements in any initiatives. The third category is square demonstrations, marches, sit-in involvement with a percentage of 24,2%. The last category is awareness campaigns on social networks with a percentage of 9.1%. None of the participants has participated in institutional pressure campaigns or Flashmob. Within these results there is a need for more in getting informed or either empowering them for being active citizens.

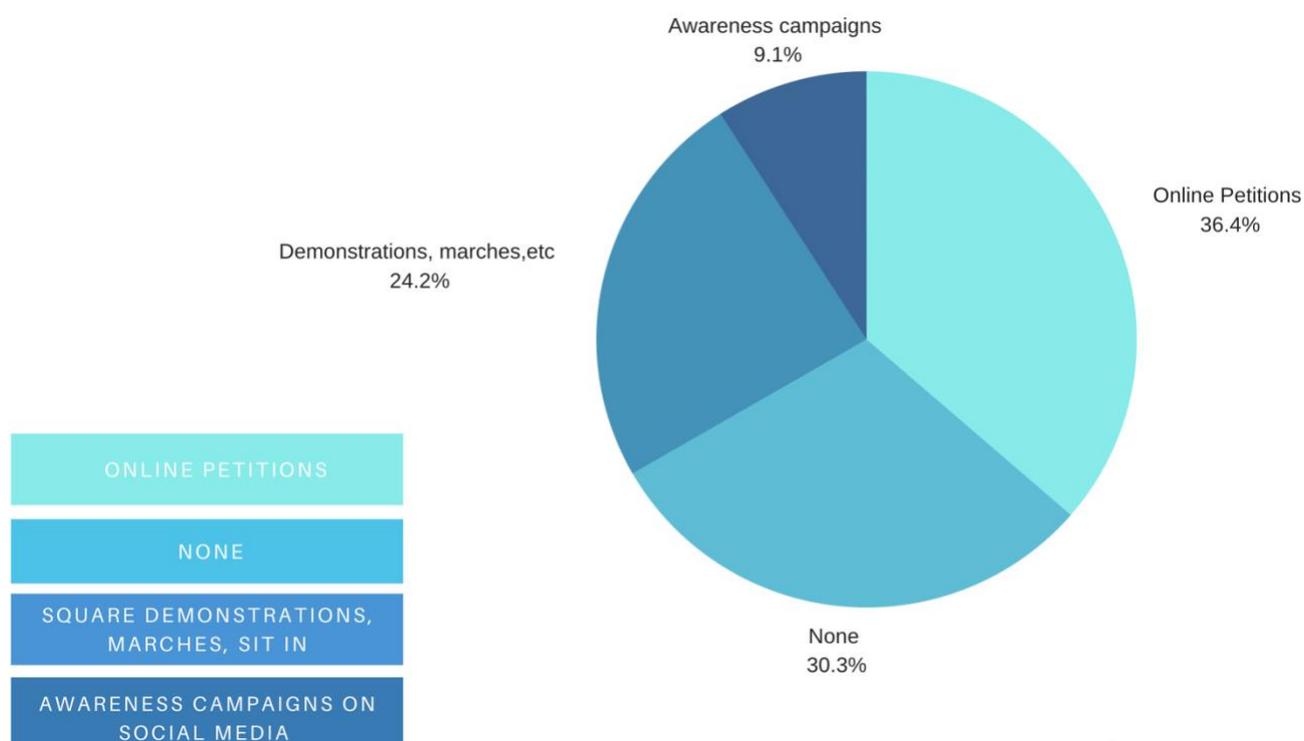


Figure 2: Participation in initiatives

A variety of answers has arisen as to the reasons for participating in initiatives. Firstly, some of the participants mentioned that they participated in initiatives for a variety of social issues without specifying and the reason is to be active for a better future in the national aspect. Many participants answered that they participated in active citizenship for environmental issues such as climate change, saving the earth and for decreasing the amount of garbage that ends up in landfills. Another important field was participation in initiatives demanding changes for better educational system, and for better working environments for teachers, educators and professors. In addition, demands for better public health system and demonstrations against racism against refugees, xenophobia and racial discrimination from the perspective of protecting and promoting human rights were held in

place. From the perspective of political and ethnic demands, the participants mentioned their participation in initiatives for promoting withdrawal of Greek Cypriot and Turkish military in the country and for the withdrawal of Minister of Justice. For the latter, five foreign women and two children were reported missing over the last two years in Cyprus while the state did not provide the minimum level of protection to the most vulnerable in society, the authorities must make effective reforms, starting with a new police detective division to investigate crimes against women. Fundraising was employed for birthdays and the need to improve the quality of the personal life since they live in a society with other people.

The majority of the participants (97%) answered positively that technology could play a role in promoting social inclusion and equal participation. As was mentioned in the answers, Technology (social media, ICT literacy, technological tools such as gaming and online classes) today and in the near future will probably play the most vital role in promoting in general any institution, standards, perceptions. Due to easy access to websites and social media one can read, be informed, users via technology have greater comfort and easier to be anonymous, share something with the public, offers the advantage of disseminating information quickly and efficiently, it is easier to present any difficulties faced by isolated groups, to have their voices heard, but at the same time it is a very effective medium of manipulation and misinformation of the citizens. In other words, technology is a robust tool to raise awareness to a community on a local as well as international level. Nowadays there are existing paradigms of active citizenship via technology. Social groups have already formed protest groups, either against violence against women, against inequality and racism, or against the fight against social inequality, where citizens sometimes protest, sometimes organize protest marches, express their fears and concerns, and all together able, not only to participate in the commons but also to determine, many times, the political and social developments of their state.

With appropriate social media campaigns, especially since most young people and teenagers surf on the internet, technology can help strengthen citizen participation in the public, by promoting the right measures, education campaigns, information. Through applications, websites, text, actions, online lectures teleconferences (Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams), online voting etc. could be done through technology to make it easier for the citizen to make this process more interesting and less time consuming. Almost half (42,4) of the participants answered that are not aware of any game-based learning initiatives. 57,6% of the participants' answered in a rather general mode while some of them mentioned as game-based learning initiatives the following: (a) "Assassins Creed" an action-adventure stealth video game with an interactive journey in Ancient Greece and references to ancient

greek mythology (b) lumosity, elevate (c) EU funded projects e.g., CSI’s Children First and (d) the Augmented Reality game “Pokemon Go”. 3% answered negatively, arguing that technology would reinforce social inequalities, since the lower socioeconomic classes do not have easy access to it.

An overall of 42,4% of the participants mentioned that they are not aware of any initiatives on young people’s civic engagement that they consider best practices, while 57,6% in total answered the following: The involvement of young people with the public to this day is based on outdated practices, which essentially do not encourage active participation, because it is considered as an “adult sport”. On the contrary, if the use of new technology is promoted, it will encourage youths to participate more actively. Some cases of initiatives on young people’s civic engagement in the Cyprus are: (a) The organization Cyprus Youth Diplomacy, wherein any young person interested in international relations, politics and diplomacy can organize and participate in events and conferences on diplomacy where well-known diplomats and politicians are invited; (b) Cyprus ComiCon; (c) Cyprus Youth Council; (d) European Youth Parliament; (e) Sports; (f) Seminars; (g) Makerspaces (h) Facebook groups and (i) Educational activities.

Within the responses, 16,2% of the participants agree with all activities and practices mentioned in the question. Moreover, 18,9% suggests that open (online) discussions with diplomats, scientists and academics may be successful practices for fostering civic participation, social inclusion and gender equality among young people. 13,5% agree with workshops, 16,2 suggests theatre and cinema, 5,4% exhibitions, 5,4% events and festivals, 2,7% simulation activities and the majority suggests various competitions 18.9%.

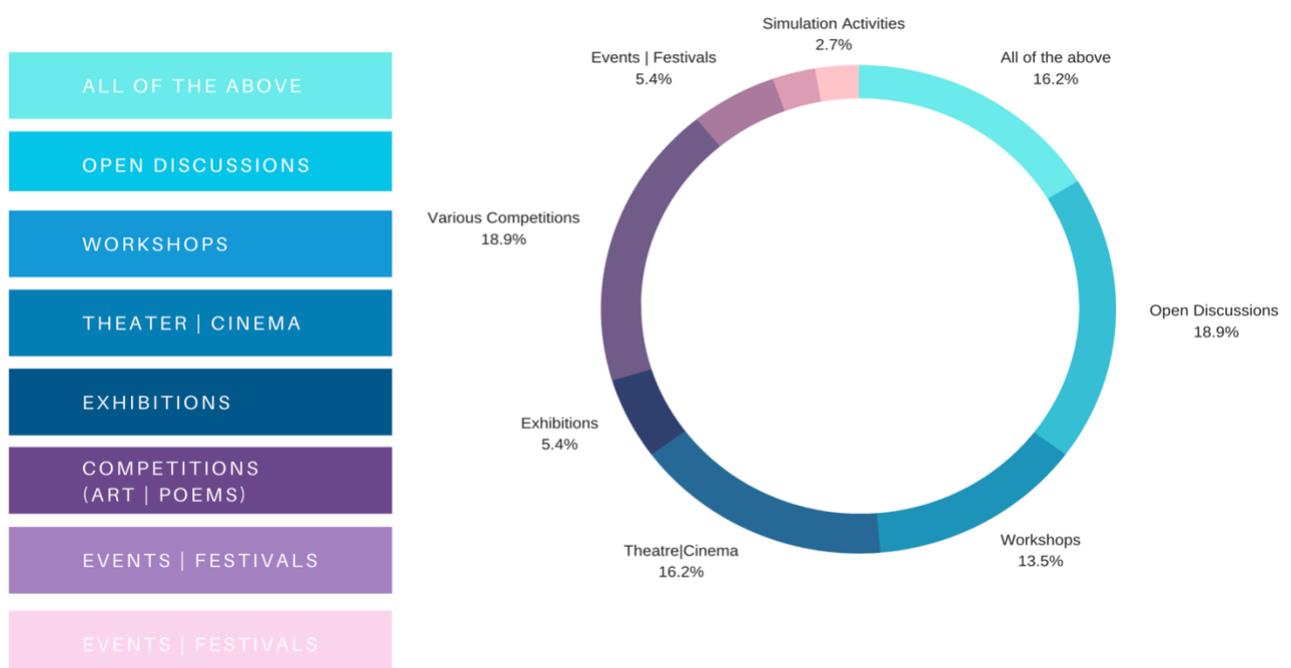


Figure 3: Best practices for youth social engagement

To date, gaming has been a key tool of entertainment without having the opportunity to show the aspects of success such as socialization, youth engagement, and the need for professionalism and survival. If games taught to dealing with the public issues and pass on social messages to the users, then surely many of the modern scourges such as the rise of neo-Nazism would have been avoided. Therefore, while it can be used as a tool to reinforce critical thinking, video games have not been used successfully until now. Through video games, many will have the opportunity to come in contact with views they have never shared before. Video games could be based on realistic social and political issues e.g., a game combating racism, social inequality, empowering critical thinking, learning through experience, socializing and meet other people, decision making with teammates. A video game should be also competitive. Such games could also be included as a subject in schools in the form of a short report on the thoughts and feelings caused by this game to young people. Maybe through an application that would be spread through Facebook and YouTube, which they would download and learn things through questions and finally in a quiz depending on their score they would go to the next level to learn more. They could also share their progress on Facebook. By using some fun tools and collaborating with people from isolated groups who are considered "bad" (e.g., immigrants) through the game, it could show that we are all the same people. For example, in a video game, when a user walks through a "poor" city, it appears to be full of homeless people, with police violence and rubbish on the street. It would be beneficial to raise social and political issues more often through games. For example, there are video games that address issues such as mental health and racism, creating scenes, scenarios and situations that express or even involve the player in this issue. These games can help develop critical thinking and decision making on such issues. On the other hand, correlation of a game with a social problem might not reinforce critical thinking on social and political issues, as its use for these issues might lack the entertaining character that attracts young people.

The final additional comments of the participants are summarized as follows: The INGAME project is an interesting initiative. It is suggested to promote the video game with politicians playing it and take photos for social media. Additional suggestions on the design of the game are suggested including the following c) A game should have a number of variables in order to actually succeed in its purpose. Some of the fundamentals are: (a) progress in the game; (b) clear UI; (c) a character to create some emotional bond (eg., GLaDOS in the Portal series); (d) variance for example the Dungeons in "Links' Awakening" where the user can create their own dungeons using the tools in the game. This creates a situation where the player feels smarter than the developer itself; (e) sparks creativity and a feeling similar to Minecraft; (f) alpha testing before release.

3.1.3 Group 2: Stakeholders

The factors influencing the civic engagement of young adults based on the frequency of answers of the participants are as follow: (a) personal interests; (b) family; (c) school; (d) technology; (e) labor; (f) motives; (g) availability of free time; (h) social environments; (i) motivations given; (j) political identification with an idea (e.g., reunification, environment, antifa); (k) involvement of friends in activities. On the other hand, the disinterest and the general depoliticization of young adults in Cyprus, based on the answer of one of the participants, is rather a global phenomenon. Accordingly, the factors that disengage young adults from civic participation are: (a) the issues being discussed in the public sphere are considered by young people as issues that do not concern or interest them; (b) many young people believe that politics and politicians are responsible for all modern problems, such as inequality, unemployment, lack of rule of law, environmental pollution, and the lack of opportunities; (c) young people have not been given incentives or opportunities to participate in public life, nor opportunities to claim their social development rights; (d) older generations have not realized that young people have vital skills and abilities for negotiation and management, with greater efficiency, that could be useful in solving civic problems. The structure of the Cypriot society and, above all, (e) the protective role of the family, causes complacency among young men and women, who believe that the various problems of society, of their country and the world are responsibility of the older ones. Finally, young people avoid the most direct form of public participation, (f) which is participation in elections. They usually claim that they are not going to vote, because they believe that nothing will change.

Based on the participants' responses, education is considered to be an important factor that could help in the increasing of civic participation of young people in public life. It is suggested that (a) the education system in Cyprus should focus more on empowering the social identities of students and critical thinking. Furthermore, (b) the use of technologies, social media and (c) giving better opportunities in employment would encourage young adults to take action, with modern forms of public participation, such as participating in political debates and events, voluntary organizations, protests, social or political organizations. It is also important (d) to give motivations to young people to participate in their community addressing issues related to them, such as education, employment and health care. Other activities that may strengthen youth participation in public life are (e) organizing events that change the views of young people, and raising awareness against a problem / injustice, actions that may be conjunctural; (f) give young people voice and roles for action on a personal level and in broaden local and global issues (e.g., environment); (g) interactive activities

based on informal and informal learning; and (h) providing seminars that will inspire young people by giving them tangible examples of good practices of participating in the public at local, national and international level.

The main difficulties stakeholders face in involving young people in civic engagement activities are as follow: (a) Lack of knowledge about problems or challenges; (b) party entanglements; (c) the boredom of youths of not feeling important citizens by the adults and generally by society when it comes to public life and societal issues; (d) lack of personal motivation, belief that their role cannot change situations that may bother them; and (e) limitation of time due to workload, studies, etc.

Based on participants' answers, digital and online technologies are considered a very important factor in attracting and engaging young people to issues of active citizenship and discussing issues of international interest (e.g., climate change, gender equality, poor health care). The contribution of digital social media and other innovative approaches such as online gaming, serious games, game-based Learning can also very useful for younger ages. These technologies have already been used in younger ages e.g. in teaching practice (public school) to make classes more attractive and involve students in the learning process, in order to achieve goals that would be difficult or impossible to do without them.

Based on the responses of the participants the video game of INGAME project should educate young adult players by (a) problematizing very important political topics such as gentrification, militarization of society, social injustice, urban citizenship, police state, feminism, solidarity, social abandonment, impoverishment, housing crisis, garbage, neocolonialism, extraction via various forms of colonialism, political liberty, precarity, posthuman, animality, queer, multiple kinds of humanity (not humanism), neoliberalism, misogyny/patriarchy. Furthermore, (b) the game should include information about historical and temporary social movements. The game should collaborate with diverse actors such as legal advice, government espionage, media, older political solidarities, animal and environment activists. (c) Character modification should be included in the game in order for the players to feel more active the game. (d) Interaction with other game characters or real people, game system reward should be included. In addition, (e) an online video game, should be a simulated experience for users in order to give young people a critical perspective on social and political issues, develop skills and enhance their interest in collective action. (f) The game should also promote opportunities for participants to think, judge, deconstruct, challenge, explore, and position themselves on questions that directly concern them, for a variety of social manifestations. (g) The content of the game needs to contribute to the formation of a new society in which young people will participate, which needs key skills such as innovation, collaboration, creativity, transformation

and communication. (i) The structure of the game needs to be "open and flexible" and of course to be based on exploration, solving real problems and concerns, managing real situations and scenarios. (j) Also, in terms of their structure, it is important that this game is interactive and multiplayer game in order to promote collaboration between players and their interactivity.

3.1.4 Group 3: Target Group

Based on the collection of the overall answers of the focus group of young people (5 participants), the term of civic engagement is defined as: Any individual (regardless of age) who develops and improves skills on a personal, political and social level, who has critical thinking and is actively participating either physically (e.g., attending to protests) or digitally (e.g., online petitions) with an aim of (a) addressing issues and (b) taking actions in order to solve existing problems or making changes that affect him|her personally and in the domains of the local community, broader society, for the common good.

Regarding activities that should be delivered to increase the participation of young adult in public life in general and, more specifically, their civic engagement, the participants suggested that young people and especially millennials, need motivation for anything in their life or innovative pioneering that will attract their interest in order to be active. Such initiatives can be events like festivals accompanied with various physical and digital activities. Video games are suggested as digital social environments, wherein people could empower their interest and passion in specific societal domains via gaming in order to invest on better future for the societies. An example of such activities is the Global Game Jam. Another activity that is suggested is the need to provide opportunities to people in expressing themselves via digital social media. Finally, a variety of events and collaborative sports activities are proposed with not only sport themes, but also enhanced with more subjects. Voluntary activities could also be created, such as garbage collection on beaches, tree planting, in which youth would again have to enter a more collective environment and a sense of teamwork would prevail. Finally, municipalities could organize activities that are in the interests of young people, relevant to their interests in order to motivate them to active participate for the common good.

Taking into consideration the collective answers of the responders, practices that have been used until now promoting engagement, social inclusion and gender equality in Cyprus have several limitations. For example, political parties follow outdated policies in supporting equality and at the same time they distinguish citizens into separate groups resulting into "fanaticism" for specific groups

in the society. It is suggested that the role of political parties is either neutral or not functional “either exist or not, the world will remain the same and could be better without them”. With this in mind, it is noted that societies can evolve only if there is interest and energy from the citizens and if the practices are flexible and focused on real problems. Thus, organizing events is proposed as the most common and effective practice for promoting young civic engagement, social inclusion and gender equality. Other practices proposed are (a) podcasts; (b) educational videos; (c) competitions; (d) active youth organizations; (e) parades and (f) gaming. A specific suggestion has been made in terms of enhancing gender equality via gaming. More specifically, taking into consideration that gaming industry targets mostly men, a good example of combating gender inequality is a similar practice such as the existing organization of “Fighting Game Community”. Fighting game community consists of gamers who play fighting games and the community is connected based on the passion for fighting games (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMEH8udcVk>).

Regarding the knowledge and use of new technologies, most of the participants have mentioned the use of new technologies mainly for two reasons: (a) entertainment (e.g., gps, virtual reality, online gaming) and (b) relaxation. The answers, however, pointed out that while participants are using technologies just for fun it seems that they are indirectly involved also in digital literacy practices. For example, one of the participants declared that gaming empowered him to become an “explorer of information” by investigating and learn more about the story of the game “Nier Automata”. This particular video game has a philosophical storyline with references to philosophers, something that motivates the player getting into a “more philosophical way of thinking”. Another example that was mentioned is the video game “Bioshock” with a “twisting philosophical thinking” using historical events of the real world. The third video game that was mentioned by the participant is “The Last of Us” an action-adventure survival horror game, whereas players are trying to survive in a chaotic situation, through collaboration, with a common aim to solve the problem. Finally, the participant mentioned that the common successful element of the above mentioned video games presented is the content: an extraordinary story which makes the player to wander, to feel, to problematize and engages him|her to answer the game challenges.

Several suggestions have been proposed by the participants for the INGAME video game content and structural design: (a) An extraordinary back story with choices guiding player to other topics|themes (e.g., Life is Strange); (b) first person game with different characters so as for the player to have the opportunity to see and feel through the eyes of many people; (c) puzzle, adventure or narrative game (d) multiplayer game in order to communicate with other players and learn new things and cultures through players from all over the world; (e) realistic|simulated game in order for

the player to have the opportunity to experience a real-life kind of interaction during gameplay; (f) game reward system in order to maintain the interest of the player for the game; (g) a video game that can be used in schools for teaching; (h) a game with no restrictions for experimentation purposes. More generally is suggested that prior the release of the video game an advertisement should be made to promote the game as content and as product before the release of the game and finally the game should be designed for people from any socioeconomic background.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Key results of research

Taking all the above into consideration, the processes of social inclusion, gender equality and participation are becoming more evident in daily practices and in relevant youth policies that are being put forward in Cyprus. These processes, however, have not been sufficiently explored in the Cypriot socio-political context especially when it comes to the exploration and use of these notions through the use of video games. While a high percentage of the participants might know the notions at a theoretical level, the majority of them either have a limited civic engagement or not at all. Furthermore, the use of technology in Cyprus as it is presented by the answers of the participants is rather for entertainment or relaxation. The gaps, needs and issues that exist show that the INGAME project is a very important initiative for binding together and reinforcing both the domain of gaming and social inclusion processes in Cyprus.

4.2. Recommendations for future action (always in relation to INGAME's aims)

A further expansion of the INGAME project could be the creation of a digital platform like Steam that will include a variety of video games for social inclusion, gender equality and civic participation with an online forum for all European young citizens in which they could communicate, collaborate and exchange ideas. Moreover, other future actions that could be added in the future contributions of INGAME project are: organizing events promoting young civic engagement, social inclusion and gender equality, podcasts about gaming and social inclusion, educational videos, competitions, collaboration with stakeholders in promoting the INGAME's vision and collaboration with role models professionals that could empower the interest of youth for civic participation.

5. References

- Clark, A. (1997). *Being There: Putting Brain, Body and World Together Again*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- EASEA. (2019). Inclusive programs for young people. Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/44-inclusive-programmes-young-people-cyprus>
- ELGE. (2019). Gender equality index. Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019>
- Equality Authority (2010), Report on the implementation of European Directives 76/207/EEC, 2002/73/EC and 2006/54/E. Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: [http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/439C12D90ACA3137C22580AB002BF9B7/\\$file/Report%20on%20the%20Implementation%20of%20the%20EU%20Directive%202006-54-EC.pdf](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/439C12D90ACA3137C22580AB002BF9B7/$file/Report%20on%20the%20Implementation%20of%20the%20EU%20Directive%202006-54-EC.pdf)
- ESN. (2019). Social inclusion games night. Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: <https://activities.esn.org/activity/social-inclusion-games-night-741>
- Eurostat. (2017). Social participation and integration statistics. Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/Social_participation_and_integration_statistics
- Gee, J. P. (2003). *What video games have to teach us about learning and literacy*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Goethe Institut. (2019). Games and politics. Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: <https://www.goethe.de/ins/cy/en/kul/sup/gap.html>
- Information Resources Management Association. (2018). *Socio-Economic Development: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications*. IGI Global.
- Kiourti, E. (2018). *(Dis)connecting literacies: From online video game Counter Strike Global Offensive into classroom, (Απο)συνδέοντας γραμματισμούς: Από το διαδικτυακό βιντεοπαιχνίδι Counter Strike Global Offensive στη σχολική τάξη*, Thesis. Nicosia: University of Cyprus.
- Mejzlik, A. (2019). Get on the stage for social inclusion. Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: <https://eycb.eu/en/get-on-the-stage-for-social-inclusion-cyprus/>
- Ministry of education and Culture. (2008). Guidelines for teachers and students about the digital game "Against all Odds". Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: <http://www.schools.ac.cy/dme/dmecircular/data/Doc3463.pdf>
- Panzavolta, S., Lotti, P. (2013). *Serious Games and Inclusion. Special Educational Need Network Annual Report on Innovation 2*.
- Salto Youth. (2012). Cyprus EU Youth and DG's Conference. Retrieved on June 20, 2020 from: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toy/reference/cyprus-eu-youth-and-dg-s-conference.2560>
- Shaffer, D. W. (2004c). When computer-supported collaboration means computer-supported competition: Professional mediation as a model for collaborative learning. *Journal of Interactive Learning Research*, 15(2).
- Steinkuehler, C. (2007). Massively Multiplayer Online Gaming as a Constellation of Literacy Practices. *E-Learning and Digital Media*. [online] 4 (3): 297-318.

6. Annexes

Evaluation grid: questionnaire 1 (target group)		
Partner	CSI Cyprus	
Age profile of the participants	___ 18-20	__1__ 21-25
	__4__ 26-30	___ 31-35
Number of participants and their gender split	Females: 2	Males: 3
In minimum 2 pages and maximum 4 pages:		
Q.n°	Common theme	Contrasting findings
5.	Based on the collection of the overall answers of five (5) participants, the term of civic engagement is defined as: Any individual (regardless of age) who develops and improves skills on a personal, political and social level, who has critical thinking and is actively participating either physically (e.g., attending to protests) or digitally (e.g., online petitions) with an aim of (a) addressing issues and (b) taking actions in order to solve existing problems or making changes that affect him her personally and in the domains of the local community, broader society, for the common good.	

6.	<p>Based on the answers of the participants, young people and especially millennials, need motivation for anything in their life or innovative pioneering that will attract their interest in order to be active. Such initiatives can be events like festivals accompanied with various physical and digital activities. Video games are suggested as digital social environments, wherein people could empower their interest and passion in specific societal domains via gaming in order to invest on better future for the societies. An example of such activities is the Global Game Jam. Another activity that is suggested is the need to provide opportunities to people in expressing themselves via digital social media. Finally, a variety of events and collaborative sports activities are proposed with not only sport themes, but also enhanced with more subjects. Voluntary activities could also be created, such as garbage collection on beaches, tree planting, in which youth would again have to enter a more collective environment and a sense of teamwork would prevail. Finally, municipalities could organize activities that are in the interests of young people, relevant to their interests in order to motivate them to active participate for the common good.</p>	
7.	<p>Taking into consideration the collective answers of the responders, practices that have been used until now promoting engagement, social inclusion and gender equality in Cyprus have several limitations. For example, political parties follow outdated policies in supporting equality and at the same time they distinguish citizens into separate groups resulting into “fanaticism” for specific groups in the society. It is suggested that the role of political parties is either neutral or not functional “either exist or not, the world will remain the same and could be better without them”. With this in mind, it is noted that societies can evolve only if there is interest and energy from the citizens and if the practices are flexible and focused on real problems. Thus, organizing events is proposed as the most common and effective practice for promoting young civic engagement, social inclusion and gender equality. Other practices proposed are (a) podcasts; (b) educational videos; (c) competitions; (d) active youth organizations; (e) parades and (f) gaming. A</p>	

	<p>specific suggestion has been made in terms of enhancing gender equality via gaming. More specifically, taking into consideration that gaming industry targets mostly men, a good example of combating gender inequality is a similar practice such as the existing organization of “Fighting Game Community”. Fighting game community consists of gamers who play fighting games and the community is connected based on the passion for fighting games (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMEHa8udcVk).</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Most of the participants have mentioned the use of new technologies mainly for two reasons: (a) entertainment (e.g., gps, virtual reality, online gaming) and (b) relaxation. The answers, however, pointed out that while participants are using technologies just for fun it seems that they are indirectly involved also in digital literacy practices. For example, one of the participants declared that gaming empowered him to become an “explorer of information” by investigating and learn more about the story of the game “Nier Automata”. This particular video game has a philosophical storyline with references to philosophers, something that motivates the player getting into a “more philosophical way of thinking”. Another example that was mentioned is the video game “Bioshock” with a “twisting philosophical thinking” using historical events of the real world. The third video game that was mentioned by the participant is “The Last of Us” an action-adventure survival horror game, whereas players are trying to survive in a chaotic situation, through collaboration, with a common aim to solve the problem. Finally, the participant mentioned that the common successful element of the above mentioned video games presented is the content: an extraordinary story which makes the player to wander, to feel, to problematize and engages him her to answer the game challenges.</p>	

9.	<p>Several suggestions have been proposed by the participants for the INGAME video game content and structural design: (a) An extraordinary back story with choices guiding player to other topics themes (e.g., Life is Strange); (b) first person game with different characters so as for the player to have the opportunity to see and feel through the eyes of many people; (c) puzzle, adventure or narrative game (d) multiplayer game in order to communicate with other players and learn new things and cultures through players from all over the world; (e) realistic simulated game in order for the player to have the opportunity to experience a real-life kind of interaction during gameplay; (f) game reward system in order to maintain the interest of the player for the game; (g) a video game that can be used in schools for teaching; (h) a game with no restrictions for experimentation purposes. More generally is suggested that prior the release of the video game an advertisement should be made to promote the game as content and as product before the release of the game and finally the game should be designed for people from any socioeconomic background.</p>	
10.	-	

Evaluation grid: questionnaire 2 (stakeholders)		
Partner	CSI Cyprus	
Age profile of the participants	19-25 years <input type="checkbox"/>	26-35 years 1
	36-45 years 3	46-55 years 2
	Above 55 years <input type="checkbox"/>	
Number of participants and their gender split	Females: 4	Males: 2
In minimum 2 pages and maximum 4 pages:		
Q. n°	Common theme	Contrasting findings
4.	<p>The factors influencing the civic engagement of young adults based on the frequency of answers of the participants are as follow: (a) personal interests; (b) family; (c) school; (d) technology; (e) labor; (f) motives; (g) availability of free time; (h) social environments; (i) motivations given; (j) political identification with an idea (e.g., reunification, environment, antifa); (k) involvement of friends in activities.</p> <p>On the other hand, the disinterest and the general depoliticization of young adults in Cyprus, based on the answer of one of the participants, is rather a global phenomenon. Accordingly, the factors that disengage young adults from civic participation are: (a) the issues being discussed in the public sphere are considered by young people as issues that do not concern or interest them; (b) many young people believe that politics and politicians are responsible for all modern problems, such as inequality, unemployment, lack of rule of law, environmental pollution, and the lack of opportunities; (c) young people have</p>	

	<p>not been given incentives or opportunities to participate in public life, nor opportunities to claim their social development rights; (d) older generations have not realized that young people have vital skills and abilities for negotiation and management, with greater efficiency, that could be useful in solving civic problems. The structure of the Cypriot society and, above all, (e) the protective role of the family, causes complacency among young men and women, who believe that the various problems of society, of their country and the world are responsibility of the older ones. Finally, young people avoid the most direct form of public participation, (f) which is participation in elections. They usually claim that they are not going to vote, because they believe that nothing will change.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Based on the participants' responses, education is considered to be an important factor that could help in the increasing of civic participation of young people in public life. It is suggested that (a) the education system in Cyprus should focus more on empowering the social identities of students and critical thinking. Furthermore, (b) the use of technologies, social media and (c) giving better opportunities in employment would encourage young adults to take action, with modern forms of public participation, such as participating in political debates and events, voluntary organizations, protests, social or political organizations. It is also important (d) to give motivations to young people to participate in their community addressing issues related to them, such as education, employment and health care. Other activities that may strengthen youth participation in public life are (e) organising events that change the views of young people, and raising awareness against a problem / injustice, actions that may be conjunctural; (f) give young people voice and roles for action on a personal level and in broaden local and global issues (e.g., environment); (g) interactive activities based on informal and informal learning; and (h) providing seminars that will inspire young people by giving them tangible examples of good practices of participating in the public at local, national and international level.</p>	

6.	The main difficulties are as follow: (a) Lack of knowledge about problems or challenges; (b) party entanglements; (c) the boredom of youths of not feeling important citizens by the adults and generally by society when it comes to public life and societal issues; (d) lack of personal motivation, belief that their role cannot change situations that may bother them; and (e) limitation of time due to workload, studies, etc.	
7.	(a) Events; (b) collaborations; (c) seminars; (d) workshops and (e) use of digital technologies.	
8.	Based on participants' answers, digital and online technologies are considered a very important factor in attracting and engaging young people to issues of active citizenship and discussing issues of international interest (e.g., climate change, gender equality, poor health care). The contribution of digital social media and other innovative approaches such as online gaming, serious games, game-based Learning can also very useful for younger ages. These technologies have already been used in younger ages e.g. in teaching practice (public school) to make classes more attractive and involve students in the learning process, in order to achieve goals that would be difficult or impossible to do without them.	
9.	Based on the responses of the participants the video game of INGAME project should educate young adult players by (a) problematizing very important political topics such as gentrification, militarization of society, social injustice, urban citizenship, police state, feminism, solidarity, social abandonment, impoverishment, housing crisis, garbage, neocolonialism, extraction via various forms of colonialism, political liberty, precarity, posthuman, animality, queer, multiple kinds of humanity (not humanism), neoliberalism, misogyny/patriarchy. Furthermore, (b) the game should include information about historical and temporary social movements. The game should collaborate with diverse actors such as legal advice, government espionage, media, older political solidarities, animal and environment activists. (c) Character modification should be included in the game in order for the players to feel more active the game. (d) Interaction with other game characters or real	

people, game system reward should be included. In addition, (e) an online video game, should be a simulated experience for users in order to give young people a critical perspective on social and political issues, develop skills and enhance their interest in collective action. (f) The game should also promote opportunities for participants to think, judge, deconstruct, challenge, explore, and position themselves on questions that directly concern them, for a variety of social manifestations. (g) The content of the game needs to contribute to the formation of a new society in which young people will participate, which needs key skills such as innovation, collaboration, creativity, transformation and communication. (i) The structure of the game needs to be "open and flexible" and of course to be based on exploration, solving real problems and concerns, managing real situations and scenarios. (j) Also, in terms of their structure, it is important that this game is interactive and multiplayer game in order to promote collaboration between players and their interactivity.

Evaluation grid: questionnaire 3 (target group)

Partner	CSI Cyprus		
Age profile of the participants <i>(please insert the number of people belonging to each age / age group)</i>	_7_ 18-20	_7_ 21-25	
	10 26-30	_9_ 31-35	
Number of participants in and their gender split	Females: 20	Males: 13	
In minimum 2 pages and maximum 4 pages:			
Question n°	Common theme		Contrasting findings
5.	<p>Based on the collective answers of the research question 5, 54.5% of the participants define civic engagement as the procedure of being informed on the development of actions in local, European and Global level and having the state right of free expression of views and active participation of the citizens in the democratic decision-making and problem solving in society in the political social and economic developments of the country they live for the common good: More specifically civic engagement is the participation in (a) cultural organizations; (b) associations; (c) general voting; (d) parades; (e) charities; (f) the state elections of their state (g) protesting; (h) general events), (i) demonstrations, (j) local municipality-community (k) public opinion polls.</p> <p>24.4% of the participants answered that civic engagement is the participation of citizens for a single purpose either general one “common good” “for one purpose” “decisions for the country” “community growth” or a more specific one “participation in elections” and involvement in politics.</p>		

	<p>The third category of answers represents the 21.2% of the participants answering other such as: (a) Civics playing games; (b) no explanation, repeating “Many times” and (c) active citizenship without further explanation.</p>	
6.	<p>The most usual initiative the responders have participated is “Online Petitions” like change.org with a percentage of 33,3%. The next category that presents the 30,3% is that participants have not any engagements in any initiatives. The third category is square demonstrations, marches, sit-in involvement with a percentage of 24,2%. The last two categories are awareness campaigns on social networks with a percentage of 9.1% and the last category is an engagement to petitions 3%. What arises from the results is that an accountable percentage of Cypriot citizens are not choosing to get involved in civic participation and the majority while, 55,5% prefer to either to participate in online petitions or physical demonstrations.</p>	<p>None of the participants has participated in institutional pressure campaigns or Flashmob. Within these results there is a need for more in getting informed or either empowering them for being active citizens.</p>

7.	<p>A variety of answers has been arisen for the reasons of participating in initiatives. Firstly, some of the participants mentioned that they participated in initiatives for a variety of social issues without specifying and the reason is to be active for a better future in the national aspect. Many participants answered that they participated in active citizenship for environmental issues such as climate change, saving the earth and for decreasing the amount of garbage that ends up in landfills. Another important field was participation in initiatives demanding changes for better educational system, and for better working environments for teachers, educators and professors. In addition, demands for better public health system and demonstrations against racism against refugees, xenophobia and racial discrimination from the perspective of protecting and promoting human rights were held in place. From the perspective of political and ethnic demands the participants mentioned their participation in initiatives for promoting withdrawal of Greek Cypriot and Turkish military in the country and for the withdrawal of Minister of Justice. For the latter, five foreign women and two children were reported missing over the last two years in Cyprus while the state did not provide the minimum level of protection to the most vulnerable in society, the authorities must make effective reforms, starting with a new police detective division to investigate crimes against women. Fundraising was employed for birthdays and the need to improve the quality of the personal life since they live in a society with other people [See Annex]</p>	
8.	<p>The majority of the participants (97%) answered positively that technology could play a role in promoting social inclusion and equal participation. As was mentioned in the answers, Technology (social media, ICT literacy, technological tools such as gaming and online classes) today and in the near future will probably play the most vital role in promoting in general any institution, standards, perceptions. Due to easy access to websites and social media one can read, be informed, users via technology have greater comfort and easier to be anonymous, share something with the public,</p>	<p>3% answered negatively. Technology would reinforce social inequalities,</p>

	<p>offers the advantage of disseminating information quickly and efficiently, it is easier to present any difficulties faced by isolated groups, to have their voices heard, but at the same time it is a very effective medium of manipulation and misinformation of the citizens. In other words, technology is a strong weapon to raise awareness to a community on a local as well as international level. Nowadays there are existing paradigms of active citizenship via technology. Social groups have already formed protest groups, either against violence against women, against inequality and racism, or against the fight against social inequality, where citizens sometimes protest, sometimes organize protest marches, express their fears and concerns, and all together able, not only to participate in the commons but also to determine, many times, the political and social developments of their state. With appropriate social media campaigns, especially since most young people and teenagers surf on the internet, technology can help strengthen citizen participation in the public, by promoting the right measures, education campaigns, information. Through applications, websites, text, actions, online lectures teleconferences (Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams), online voting etc. could be done through technology to make it easier for the citizen to make this process boring and less time consuming.</p>	<p>since the lower socioeconomic classes do not have easy access to it.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Almost half (42,4) of the participants answered that are not aware of any game-based learning initiatives. 57,6% of the participants' answered in a rather general mode while some of them mentioned as game-based learning initiatives the following: (a) "Assassins Creed" an action-adventure stealth video game with an interactive journey in Ancient Greece and references to ancient greek mythology (b) lumosity, elevate (c) EU funded projects e.g., CSI Children First and (d) the Augmented Reality game "Pokemon Go".</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>42,4 of the participants mentioned that they are not aware of any initiatives on young people's civic engagement that they consider best practices, while 57,6% in total answered the following: The involvement of</p>	

	<p>young people with the public to this day is based on outdated practices, which essentially do not encourage active participation, because it is considered as an “adult sport”. On the contrary, if the use of new technology is promoted, it will encourage youths to participate more actively. Some cases of initiatives on young people’s civic engagement in the Cyprus are: (a) The organization Cyprus Youth Diplomacy, wherein any young person interested in international relations, politics and diplomacy can organize and participate in events and conferences on diplomacy where well-known diplomats and politicians are invited; (b) Cyprus ComiCon; (c) Cyprus Youth Council; (d) European Youth Parliament; (e) Sports; (f) Seminars; (g) Makerspaces (h) Facebook groups and (i) Educational activities.</p>	
11.	<p>16,2% of the participants agree with all activities and practices mentioned in the question. Moreover, 18,9% suggests that open (online) discussions with diplomats, scientists and academics may be successful practices for fostering civic participation, social inclusion and gender equality among young people. 13,5% agree with workshops, 16,2 suggests theatre and cinema, 5,4% exhibitions, 5,4% events and festivals, 2,7% simulation activities and the majority suggests various competitions 18.9%.</p>	
12	<p>To date, gaming has been a key tool of entertainment without having the opportunity to show the aspects of success such as socialization, youth engagement, and the need for professionalism and survival. If games taught to dealing with the public issues and pass on social messages to the users, then surely many of the modern scourges such as the rise of neo-Nazism would have been avoided. Therefore, while it can be used as a tool to reinforce critical thinking, video games have not been used successfully until now. Through video games, many will have the opportunity to come in contact with views they have never shared before. Video games could be based on realistic social and political issues e.g., a game combating racism, social inequality, empowering critical thinking, learning through experience, socializing and meet other people, decision making with</p>	<p>Correlation of a game with a social problem might not reinforce critical thinking on social and political issues, as if it could be</p>

	<p>teammates. A video game should be also competitive. Such games could also be included as a subject in schools in the form of a short report on the thoughts and feelings caused by this game to young people. Maybe through an application that would be spread through Facebook and YouTube, which they would download and learn things through questions and finally in a quiz depending on their score they would go to the next level to learn more. They could also share their progress on Facebook. By using some fun tools and collaborating with people from isolated groups who are considered "bad" (e.g., immigrants) through the game, it could show that we are all the same people. For example, in a video game, when a user walks through a "poor" city, he appears to be full of homeless people, with police violence and rubbish on the street. It would be beneficial to raise social and political issues more often through games. For example, there are video games that address issues such as mental health and racism, creating scenes, scenarios and situations that express or even involve the player in this issue. These games can help develop critical thinking and decision making on such issues.</p>	<p>used for these issues it might lack the entertaining character that attracts young people.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>The final additional comments of the participants are summarised as follows: The INGAME project is an interesting initiative. It is suggested to promote the video game with politicians playing it and take photos for social media. Additional suggestions on the design of the game are suggested including the following c) A game should have a number of variables in order to actually succeed in its purpose. Some of the fundamentals are: (a) progress in the game; (b) clear UI; (c) a character to create some emotional bond (eg., GLaDOS in the Portal series); (d) variance for example the Dungeons in "Links' Awakening" where the user can create their own dungeons using the tools in the game. This creates a situation where the player feels smarter than the developer itself; (e) sparks creativity and a feeling similar to Minecraft; (f) alpha testing before release.</p>	



INGAME

Gaming for Social Inclusion and Civic Participation