

Ongoing Projects on Serious Games

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Abstract

This number of the EAI Transactions on Serious Games is dedicated to a set of ongoing research and development projects in this area. The selected articles represent very well the diversity of approaches, contexts and objectives that foster and render highly dynamic this area of study. In Europe, several funding programmes like the 7th Framework Programme, the Lifelong Learning Programme and the most recent Horizon 2020 made specific provisions to support Serious Games projects. At the same time, enterprises are recognizing more and more the potential of SG to train and to motivate their workforce and are therefore joining forces with the academy and SG producers to design specific SG.

Serious Games became one of the most interesting “places to be” due to its growing scientific and practitioner community. We can say that the motivating and addictive character of games has been successfully transmitted to the research and development of Serious Games.

Keywords: European Projects, Serious Games, Research, Game-Based Learning

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1. Introduction

This number of the EAI Transactions on Serious Games is focused on ongoing research and development projects targeting or using Serious Games. The selected articles represent very well the diversity of approaches, contexts and objectives that foster and render highly dynamic this area of study. From Higher Education to primary education, from academic to vocational training, from 2D games to mixed reality games, we can find different aims and distinct methodologies and tools.

This shows that Serious Games has become one of “hottest” research areas due to its growing scientific and practitioner community. We can say that the motivating and addictive character of games has been successfully transmitted to the research and development of Serious Games.

This has been recognized by governments and leading organizations. In Europe, several funding programmes like the 7th Framework Programme, the Lifelong Learning Programme and the most recent Horizon 2020 made specific provisions to support Serious Games projects. At the same time, enterprises are recognizing more and more the

potential of SG to train and to motivate their workforce and are therefore joining forces with the academy and SG producers to design specific SG.

We start this number with Sousa and Costa presenting the results of the use of a serious game to develop project management leadership skills. The scope for this research was the international project GREAT funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme - Leonardo Da Vinci Action. The research used a qualitative methodology through content analysis of the information shared between participants of several GBL courses with SimCity Social as the mean to accomplish the goals of the learning process.

Loiseau et al present a research related to the development of a new type of game-based learning environment. They focus on a (M)MORPG based on mixed reality, applied in the archaeological domain. They propose a learning scenario that enhances the players’ motivation thanks to individual, collaborative and social activities that bridge the experience between a virtual environment and the real (physical) counterparts like archaeological sites and museums. Their objective is to raise the awareness on the scientific approach in Archaeology,

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Hauge et al reflect on the deployment of serious games and their insertion in higher education curricula. They discuss why this integration is still done in a very small scale and blame the lack of papers describing deployment of SGs in HE critically showing educational benefits and providing guidelines and good practices for their use. Their study reports their own experience in using state of the art managerial SGs in MSc engineering/business courses in four different European universities. Their work was partially funded by the European Union, under the Framework Programme 7 (Information Society Technologies - ICT), in the Games and Learning Alliance (GaLA) Network of Excellence and supported in part by the Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate in Interactive and Cognitive Environments, which is funded by the EACEA Agency of the European Commission.

Van Rosmalen et al present the design and the first evaluation of a set of mini-games to practice research methods. They describe how to use cognitive task analysis to identify the knowledge and competences required to develop a comprehensive and usable understanding of research methods and how to implement that through serious games. Their research was conducted in the scope of the CHERMUG project, partially supported by the European Community under the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Finally, Weizman's research goal was to investigate the relation between the game design parameters and the learning experience using the flow model as the theoretical scaffold. The framework comprised a series of pilots in a primary school class, in which flow was evaluated.