

RU EU? A game-based Approach to exploring 21st century European Identity and Values



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Needs the project addresses



- At a time of **change, uncertainty** and **increasing tension** across Europe, it is important to try and understand:
 - **why** European citizens have very **different views** of themselves and others
 - **what motivates** these differences
 - Brexit?????
- To widen the horizons of those who cannot travel:
 - Erasmus programme costs
 - Erasmus programme eligibility
 - Digital education and experience reduces barriers to engagement



Aims of the RU EU? project



- To develop an innovative online game, the RU EU? game, that will engage students in:
- To develop a **better understanding** of their own **national** and **European identity** and values, as well as those of others
- To **examine** and **reflect** upon the impact of their own identity and values on their interactions with others
- To have them reflect on/about their **attitudes and prejudices** in tackling **problem solving tasks** that involve national and European identity
- To allow students who are **unable** to travel internationally to **engage** internationally



- An active, situated and social form of learning, providing a balance between enjoyment and learning, and between formal and informal learning.
- Supports learners in reflecting on their own experiences by receiving immediate and differentiated feedback.
- Positive effects on both players' motivation and learning outcomes.
- A fun way of inculcating skills, including critical thinking, challenge, curiosity, collaboration, argumentation, problem-solving, and reflection.
- To overcome barriers – physical, social, economic, and temporal

Project Partners



Scotland

Scotland
University of the West of
Scotland

Germany

Germany
Biba - bremer institut fuer
produktion und logistik
gmbh

Netherlands

Netherlands
Open Universiteit
Netherlands

Croatia

Croatia
Tehničko veleučilište u
Zagrebu

Greece

Greece
University of Peloponnese

- ***Co-Principal Investigators Elizabeth Boyle & Murray Leith. Co-Investigators & wider team: Graham Scott, Duncan Sim, Melody Terras, Alan Williams, Arno Van der Zwet, University of the West of Scotland; Jannicke Baalsruud Hauge, Nadera Sultana Tany, Sundus Fatima, Heiko Dunn (BIBA, Germany); Hans Hummel, Jeroen Storm (OU Netherlands); Athanassios Jimoyiannis, Panagiotis Tsiotakis, University of Peloponnese, Greece; Petar Jandrić, Milan Bajić, Tehničko veleučilište u Zagrebu***

- *A European game required a European Team!*
- *Partnership of equals bringing a variety of specialisations across disciplines and experience*
- *University of the West of Scotland*
 - *Project Leads; social scientists, content specialists, e-games experience and computing*
- *BIBA, Germany*
 - *Specialist insight into online games design and delivery*
- *OU Netherlands*
 - *Online educationalists and content specialists*
- *University of Peloponnese*
 - *Educational specialisms and learning*
- *Tehničko veleučilište u Zagrebu*
 - *Science communication and specialist development*

Components to consider in designing and developing the RU EU? game



Interdisciplinary

- **the instructional content** – EU identity
- **the learning outcomes** – increase in understanding of EU identity
- **the learning mechanics/ pedagogy** – social constructivism - taking part in realistic activities that present multiple perspectives on a topic doing a range of tasks with similar information
- **the game mechanics** – role playing game
journalist narrative, interaction, progress, personalization, feedback, drag and drop



Designing Serious Games

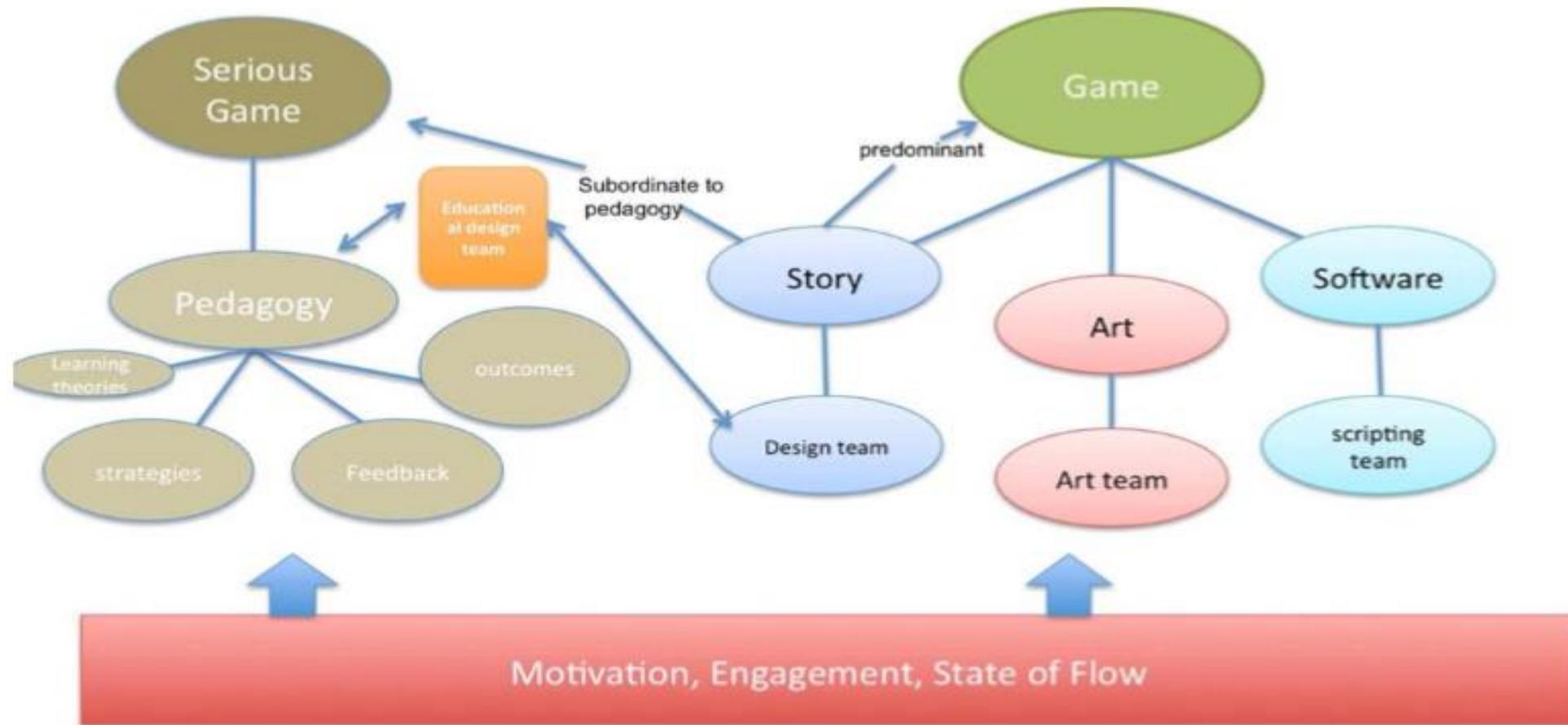
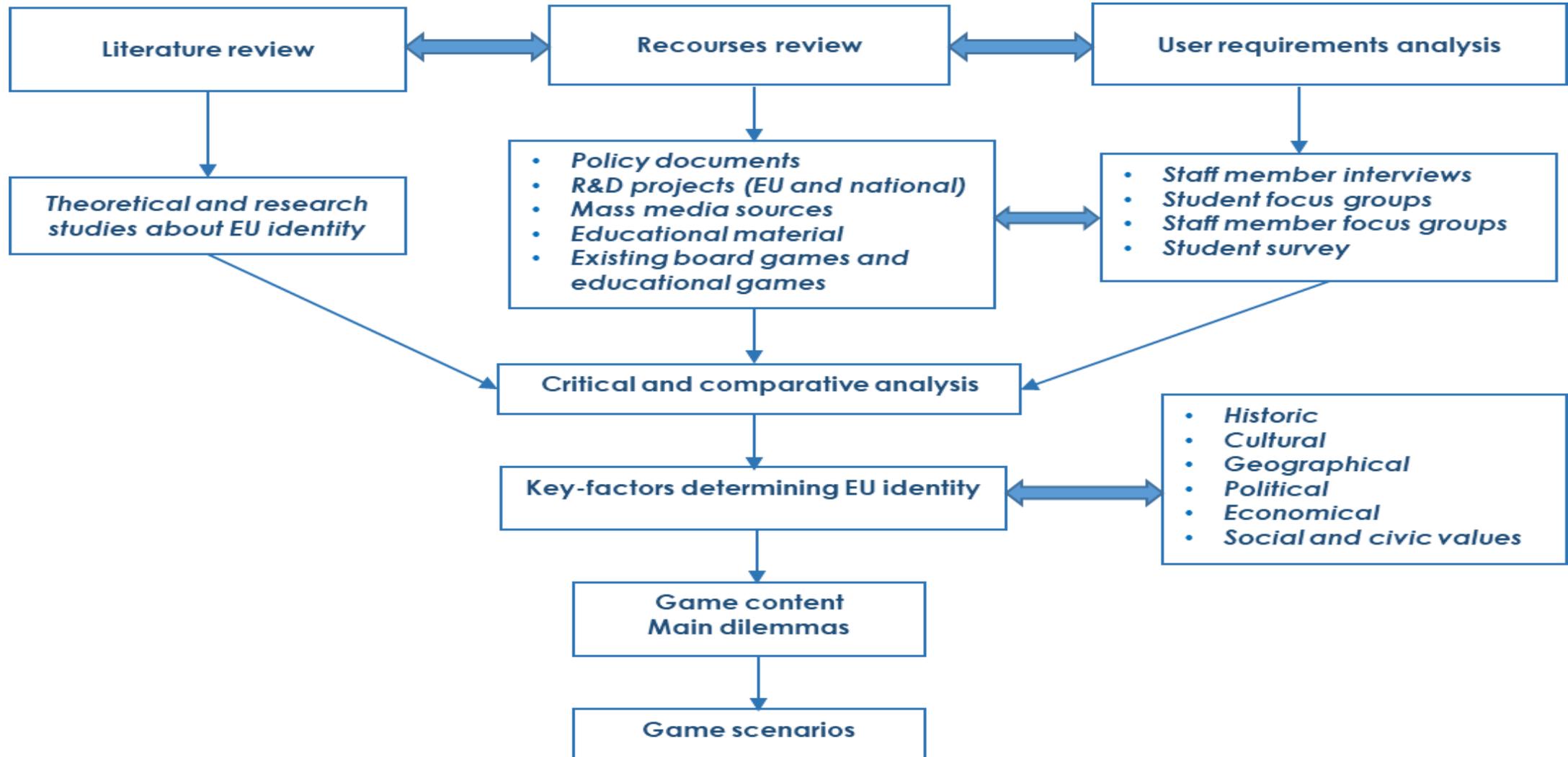


Figure 3: Conceptions of serious games design (adapted from Zyda, 2005) [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

Game Design Method and Processes



Overarching narrative for the Game



- **The player is a freelance research journalist whose task is to compile a set of articles about European identity.**
- **Game tools** expose players to different viewpoints on European identity
 - (a) Select the most relevant aspects of pro or anti debate (interview tool)
 - (b) Select statements they agree with (discussion tool)
- **Tasks** require categorisation, discrimination and evaluation
 - Support reflection and critical thinking

Five Game Scenarios



Suggested from Design Tasks

1. Brexit and balance between national and EU identity
2. Rights of EU citizens to work across Europe
3. Rights of immigrants
4. Who is European anyway? - differences between nations
5. Changes in EU identity over time

- **Limits of Technology versus ‘vision’**
 - Spirited debate among team members (positive though)
 - Competing visions of ‘gamification’
- **Design Costs**
 - Academic budgets are limited + developers are expensive
 - Content can never measure up to professional outputs
- **Implementation and delivery**
 - Piloting/beta testing
 - Variety of platforms and browsers
 - Reaching your audience and engaging your audience

- **How Effective is the game in supporting young people towards understanding the various aspects of European identity and values? A large-scale evaluation involving students at three partner institutions (Scotland, Greece and Croatia) reported:**
 - Increased awareness of term 'European Identity'**
 - Increased attachment to feeling 'citizen of Europe'**
 - Increased sense of pride in being 'EU Citizen'**
 - Increased feelings of being 'European' and 'European + X'
- Our objective was awareness not positive change – but results...?
- **Such changes also noted among control group

Concluding Thoughts



- Gaming has become a key component of everyday life
- Gaming can be a fun way of inculcating skills and provides a good balance between formal and informal learning.
- A game such as the **RU EU?** game seems highly appropriate at the present time, to get students to think about Europe and European issues.
- Educational Awareness seems to be a positive.
- A game such as this could be useful in a wide variety of educational and disciplinary settings
- Check the website for information about the game, the software and availability for use (free) and further development

<https://rueu-project.eu/>

Acknowledgement



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