

# Newsletter



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## Learning by Gaming– Introducing LEAGE

Lifelong learning is an important factor for social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, especially for people over 65 years of age who are usually retired. It is a well-known fact that the European population is ageing: over the next 30 years one in three Europeans will be over 60 years old, and about one in ten will be over 80. However, most educational systems are focused on younger people and limited progress has been made in adopting educational systems to the needs of older learners, who also have enormous potential in terms of what they can contribute to the learning of others.

LEAGE is a research project of the Lifelong Learning Programme funded by the Education, Audiovisual, Culture and Training Agency of the European Commission. The project aims to motivate older people to participate in lifelong

learning activities by transforming those activities into games.

For this purpose, LEAGE has chosen two popular mediums, digital TV and the Kinect for XBOX 360 console, in an effort to combine learning and socialising with friends and family members (grandchildren).



Within the project users from Greece, Netherlands and Spain are involved, both for designing and evaluating the games and the overall educational methodology.

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75 users from Greece, The Netherlands and Spain will use and evaluate the games for a period of 3 months!

## Project key details

Start date: 1 January 2011— Duration 26 months

Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) - GRUNDTVIG, Education and Culture DG

## User Requirements: focus groups—Summer 2011

A number of focus groups with a total of 92 older people were performed in Greece, Spain and The Netherlands in order to gather an understanding about older people's perceptions and needs for educational games. We gratefully acknowledge their participation in the project!



Qualitative results showed that the users' main interests were the social aspect of the gaming experience, to experience challenge, to combine cognitive and physical activity, and to acquire specific abilities or skills. In respect to the appearance of the learning games, childish figures and graphics were not appreciated (as in Nintendo's Big Brain Academy) and could interfere with the participants' perception of the games as motivating or challenging. In

terms of contents, users agreed in the development of brain training games like Sudokus, 'find-the-differences', crosswords or visual memory games, as well as other topics such as games related to travelling and geography. With regards to specific features of the games, two components were commonly agreed in three participating countries: challenge and socialization. The findings from the focus groups will be used as input for the design and storyboard of the LEAGE game.



## Game concepts

From the results of the focus groups, a number of educational goals were extracted which will be used for the content design of the LEAGE game: brain training / memory, learn new foreign phrases, learn about each country, motivate exercise, teach first aid, and learn about technology.

The following topics have been suggested for the LEAGE learning game:

- medicine – first aid,
- nutrition – local recipes,
- well being – exercise – local dances,
- history,
- literature,
- geography,
- key phrases in foreign languages,
- country trivia,
- memory / brain training.

## For more information

For more information on the project's progress, related events and publications, to contact us or to get involved in the LEAGE community, please visit our website at <http://leage.exodussa.com>.

## Game Storyboard

The LEAGE project team is currently working on the storyboard for the game. A preliminary idea about the design is that each country is represented by 4-5 major cities, preferably with an important landmark or something distinctive. In addition, each city is a game / challenge with a different educational goal. Players will need to complete a challenge to proceed to the next city, but can always play the games with a lower difficulty level.

Countries and cities are presented on a map with a path and are unlocked as the player proceeds. A player may return to a previous game to achieve a higher score overall or in-game score and each time the player completes a challenge he/she gets a



*JOURNEY THROUGH EUROPE (1982)*  
*Ravensburger: Board Game*

souvenir (token), which may be of three types: (according to the player's score, i.e. success %):

- Tourist
- Frequent visitor
- Native

represented by the same souvenir but from different material (e.g. wood, silver, gold).

The player's score is based on time (how fast a challenge is completed) and/or number of correct answers.

These are just some preliminary ideas which will be further discussed with the participants from the focus groups to meet the needs of older people in respect to learning games.

## Agenda 2011-2012

In the following months LEAGE partners will make an effort to participate at the following events:

- March 2012: Gerontological and geriatric conference in Athens, GR
- June 2012: Annual Meeting of the Spanish Society of Geriatrics and Gerontology in Santiago de Compostella, ES
- June 2012: Congress Domotica and eHealth in Eindhoven, NL
- June 2012: ISG ISARC 2012 in Eindhoven, NL

- July 2012: AMDO in Mallorca, ES
- September 2012: AAL Forum
- November 2012: Games for Health Europe Conference in Amsterdam, NL
- November 2012: Smart Homes fair in Eindhoven, NL

More information about these events will soon be published on the project website.

The next project meeting will take place in April 2012, in order to finalise game development and plan the evaluation phase.

## The LEAGE Advisory Board

The LEAGE Advisory Board has been set up in order to feed specific domain knowledge and expertise into the project throughout its entire lifecycle, providing valuable guidance to the project team. Advisory Board members act both as advisors and quality assurance enforcers to the project and as liaison to the European and national markets, their organisations, their networks and beyond.

The composition of the Advisory Board reflects different categories of stakeholders:

- Gerontology / Geragogy
- Graphics
- Serious games

Feedback from the Advisory Board will be provided several times during the project:

- after the collection and analysis of the user requirements;
- before / after the system and games design;
- for the prototype evaluation .

In addition to this, through the various institutional networks the individual Advisory Board members have access to, the Advisory Board constitutes a valuable channel for disseminating and exploiting project outcomes in a target-oriented manner to relevant constituencies respectively.

Various cooperation means have been defined and agreed in consultation with the Advisory Board members, including:

- Advisory Board meeting and/or thematic workshops.
- Ad-hoc consultation of individual Advisory Board members in relation to specific issues that may emerge during the project's life cycle.
- Peer reviewing of key project deliverables and other documents/material.

The first workshop with the Advisory Board will take place in November 2011.



## Project partners

- EXODUS S.A. (Coordinator) — GR ([www.exodussa.com](http://www.exodussa.com))
- VICOMTECH — ES ([www.vicomtech.es](http://www.vicomtech.es))
- Fundación Instituto Gerontológico Matia - INGEMA — ES ([www.ingema.es](http://www.ingema.es))
- Univ. of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences — SI ([www.fdv.uni-lj.si](http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si))
- ANANZ wonen-welzijn-zorg — NL ([www.ananz.nl](http://www.ananz.nl))
- Smart Homes: Dutch Expertise Centre for Smart Technology & Smart Living — NL ([www.smart-homes.nl](http://www.smart-homes.nl))
- 50plus Hellas — GR ([www.50plus.gr](http://www.50plus.gr))



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