

# Social Seducement

## Developing a serious online role play game for social entrepreneurship training.

The Social Seducement project was funded by Erasmus+ (2014-1-UK01-KA200-001830) and ran from 2014-2017. The aim of the project was to develop the key competences and skills of adults with disadvantages, and in particular those being unemployed, to help them start up a collaborative enterprise. We developed a serious online role play game with accompanying materials and piloted this in Italy, Spain, UK, Belgium and Sweden. This brochure explains the key results and lessons learnt by the project.



### About Social Seducement

Between 2014 and August 2017 our partnership developed and tested a serious online role play game (SocialPlaNet) to support people with disadvantages to set up a social enterprise together. We believe that people with disadvantages, though sometimes struggling in the mainstream labour market, have much to offer European economies and societies. Collectively run social enterprises are one way in which work integration can happen and the risk of entrepreneurship be mitigated. And whilst the European policy context is very supportive of building entrepreneurial skills among all population groups, the stakeholder consultation we carried out highlighted a lack of learning programmes and absence of entrepreneurial culture as two key barriers for becoming (social) entrepreneurs. What is needed, in their views and in the views of VET and other training providers we surveyed, are training programmes that involve: skilled facilitation, training that is grounded in reality and that practices soft skills. This is what our game offers.

### Key features of the SocialPlaNet ORPG

The Social PlaNet online role play game is a web-based simulation game which puts players in the role of would-be social entrepreneurs.

- Players play in groups of 3-6 people, each using an avatar to represent them.
- Players go through the game as a group, and have a choice of different roles: task leader, follower, as well as a range of business roles.
- They have access to a facilitator who supports the group in line with their needs while players pass through the game.
- Together, players develop an idea for a social enterprise, and work through a series of tasks and missions to scope out the key activities, values, income streams etc of their 'fantasy social enterprise'. Real-life stories stimulate thinking about common business challenges.
- Quizzes need to be solved and missions accomplished. In doing so, players accumulate points which they can spend to furnish their in-game office.
- At the end of the game, players receive a completed business model canvas which they can choose to develop into a full business plan.

## In the words of players

“It was a great experience I have learnt a lot and found working with the team we all learnt some really good ideas from each other”.

*“I learned many things that I was previously not aware of that I need to know to start a business”.*

“I enjoyed the critical thinking. The process, if you seriously think about something, got the numbers right and as clear as possible”.

*“I have got new skills now if I was going to start a social enterprise I have been given the opportunity to learn how to which I never had before.”*

## In the words of game facilitators

“We will run the game again. The game helps build groups and helps them work together and give an equal voice...”

*“A very positive outcome (...) has been the empowerment of the weak participants in the game. Some of them started as really insecure and depressed people and are now much more self-confident and optimistic about themselves and what they can do of their life.”*

“This experience has been a true cultural enrichment. I was very nervous at the beginning, not knowing properly how to address players through the game given their specificity. In the end the experience was very enriching and made me learn a lot.”

## Key Results

A number of European policy initiatives seek to build entrepreneurial skills, and the New Skills Agenda for Europe includes entrepreneurial competences as the key set of skills everyone should have. The vast majority of VET and other training organisations in our five partner countries we surveyed considered ‘soft skills’ (such as the ability to organise oneself or teams; and interpersonal skills such as ability to work in teams and capacity to listen) as most relevant to train. This was mirrored by the views expressed in our stakeholder consultation.

And yet it is in these areas that local training provision is weakest. The SocialPlaNet serious online role play game, developed as a result of the Social Seducement project, wants to make a contribution to filling this gap. Testing the game with nearly 180 players in Italy, Spain, UK, Belgium and Sweden and assessing their learning gains through a rigorous before and after evaluation showed that:

- **Players’ awareness of social entrepreneurship increased significantly.** The proportion of players who understand what it takes to set up a social enterprise increased by 43 per cent; and the proportion intending to start a social enterprise increased by 16 per cent.
- **The game produced statistically significant improvements in players’ self-efficacy.** Improvements were most significant in assertiveness, confidence in dealing with unexpected events and problem solving.
- Participation in the game also **improved acquisition and application of digital competences.**

These changes were independent of country of origin, gender, age, educational level, ethnicity or labour market status. Team formation among players as supported by game features and responsive facilitation of player groups are two important factors that have contributed to these positive results.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Project outputs and further information on the game and all materials are available on [www.socialseducement.net](http://www.socialseducement.net)

You can also contact us on [socialseducement@tavinstitute.org](mailto:socialseducement@tavinstitute.org)

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