

**link**

**Open Web Conference**

on gamification, game-based learning  
and digital learning

7th July  
2022



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## INTRODUCTION

The Open Web Conference of the European Project Link took place on the 7th July.

According to the conference agenda, after a brief introduction on game-based learning and gamification and a presentation of the Project Link, 6 contributors chosen among Partners and associated gave their speech on the following topics:

"Using distance digital programs in social service during the lockdown" by Ivo Bordjiev, Maria's World Foundation, Bulgaria

"Matching training practices targeted to people with disabilities with the job market requirements" by Ana Rita de Oliveira Matos Fernandes Mendes, APCC, Portugal

"Using digital and gamification tools in the teaching-learning process" by Mayte Galán, Ceba Teresa Enríquez, Spain

"Using ICT tools to gamify training activities and debriefing moments" by Giulia Amato, Erasmus Learning Academy, Italy

"Training at Appacdm Anadia: skills and certification for the job market" by Maria de Fátima Casimiro, Agrupamento de Escolas de Anadia, Portugal

"Working with individuals with autism spectrum disorders using STEAM activities" by Saulius Vasiliauskas, BalticOrbis and Robotics association, Lithuania.

## WELCOMING SESSION

During the welcoming session Sara Natalini from ELA, the organization that coordinates the European Project LINK, presented the countries involved in the conference and Link partners countries.

To be in line with the topic of the day, an ice breaker game was played to learn something about each other and participants were asked to write one thing that they already knew about the project in the chat.

That was followed by a brief reminder of the agenda of the conference.



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# FIRST PART

During the first part, LINK project has been presented in its principles and objectives. The project is named after the link between school life and job market and among people that it aims to create, always keeping in mind as a pillar. the word “inclusion”.



The audience was given general information about the duration of the project, the partners and its objectives. Among them, the idea of allowing young adults that have completed secondary school to develop digital and employability skills and enabling them to participate actively in the society “finding their own place” stand out.

To realize that main objective there is the intention to

- Develop a course, flexible and modular
- Design gamified or digital learning activities
- Inspire adult educators to provide high quality learning opportunities
- Raise awareness on the needs and potential of the target group

Then the two expected results - LINK course and LINK handbook - have been presented in detail followed by an informative timeline with the foreseen activities.



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- Open web conference
- Awareness campaign
- Training for associated partners
- Local adult course

The sharing and promotion phase plays an important role since the results are expected to be useful for the community and have an impact on their daily life.

The presentation of the project has been followed by a talk about the usefulness of games since they accompany us throughout our life while helping us to acquire skills. By playing games, you have the possibility to grow thanks to the possibility to make mistakes, to fail again and again in an environment that doesn't have any risk.

The 4 steps to gamify learning have been then presented to the audience: Determine learners characteristics, learning objectives, creating educational content and activities, adding game elements and mechanisms.

We also explored the differences between gamification and game based learning. Gamification means turning the process of learning into a game while game-based learning means using games as an integral part of the learning process. With games, learning takes place in an unconscious way.

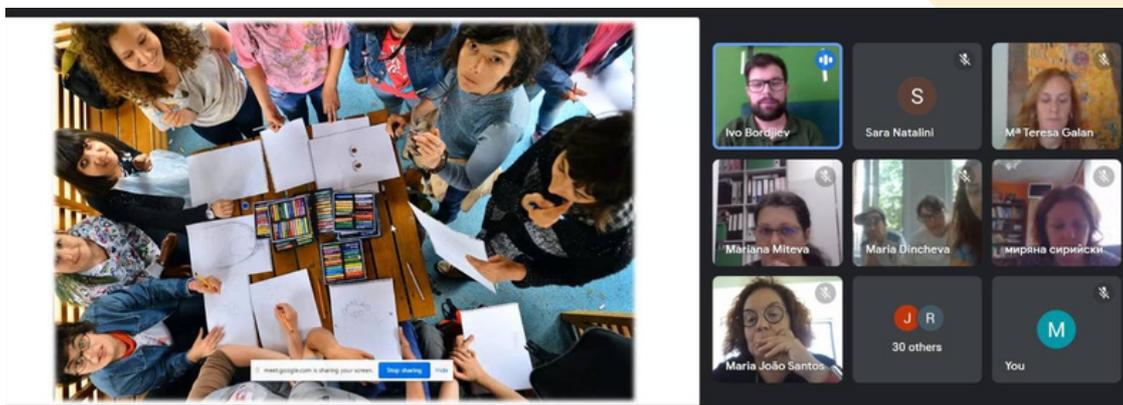


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## SECOND PART

Ivo from Bulgaria

*"Using distance digital programs in social service during the lockdown"*



The first speech was given by Ivo Bordjiev from Bulgaria who presented his organization (Maria's World Foundation) and their experience about teaching digital methods to people with disabilities during the lockdown.

In march 2020 everything closed and everything was new for them. They had to understand what to do with their guys.

They discussed a lot and decided to create a distance program to support those people at home and give them activities to do during the isolation.

They presented their difficulties (use of computers, tools...) since they had really little experience with technology. At first they decided to use Skype, by consulting clients and parents. It seemed the best way to manage discussions and have control over the participants. It is a user-friendly platform. They also experimented the use of Vibes for smaller groups.

The goal was to be able to teach them and communicate together.

Given that not everyone was able to understand the logic of technology, they decided to talk to everyone and analyze the kind of skills they have. They decided to keep contact with those people through phone calls.

They shared topics, emoticons, pictures, videos and polls or quizzes with them. They worked with different groups on different topics, creating and giving them material and resources for their free time; for instance they adapted a book to make it more accessible for them.

As a result, they noticed that the guys are continuing to communicate in that way, even after the lockdown, and that they stay much more connected now with respect to past times in which they were not able to use those platforms.



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Ana Rita from Portugal

*”Matching training practices targeted to people with disabilities with the job market requirements”*



Ana Rita de Oliveira Matos Fernandes Mendes, from Portugal belonging to APCC, talked about a parallelism between what is foreseen in a curriculum and what the job market requires.

They identified areas and 5 sub areas that need to be part of an effective program for the target group: language and communication, citizenship and employability, Math for life, training for integration, information and communication technology.

She stressed on the fact that they noticed that ICT is like a bridge between all these subareas.

So they thought about skills like being able to safely operate the computer, using a word processing and information presentation program, using a spreadsheet application, using the internet, transmitting and publishing information, the labor market requires all these things. So they realized that they needed to update tools and methodology according to the demands of job markets.

These are the ideas they came up with to shape a new program including basic but fundamental activities like

Communicating through multiple channels, they help them to create an email account, to be aware of netiquette, and explain to them how to log in on the platforms.

Knowing how to Search and analyze info online

Knowing how to use office and google drive tools (parallelism)

Knowing how to convert different type of files

Knowing how to save and store files

Basic knowledge of image, video editing and personal presentation skills.

Using different platforms, contact with different devices and operating systems.

Understanding security and privacy procedures.

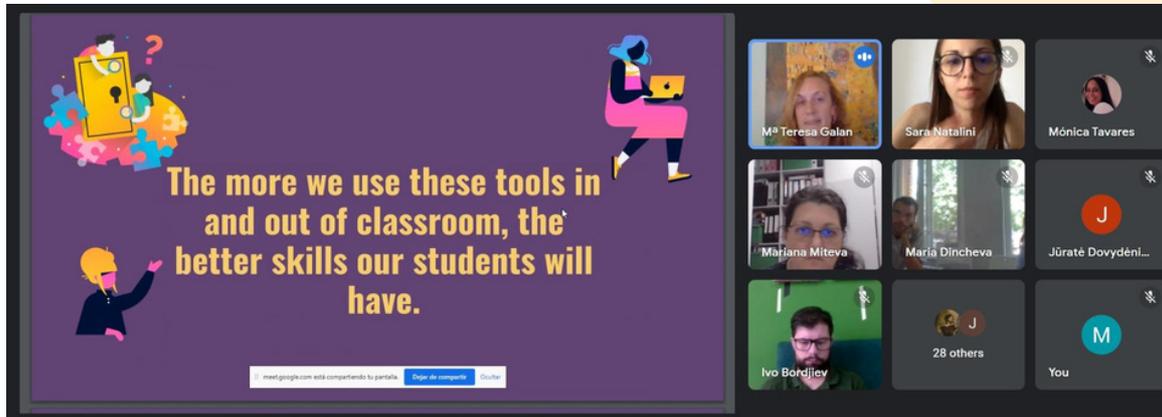
She concluded her presentation with a video showing their real experience.



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Mayte from Spain

*“Using digital and gamification tools in the teaching-learning process”*



Mayte Galán, from Spain, working at Cepa Teresa Enríquez, talked about her process of realizing the potential of implementing game-based learning in the classroom.

Originally, she used to introduce games at the end of a lesson as a reward for consolidating and monitoring the learning process. Later, she realized that she could use them at the beginning as a warm up and a review of the topics of the day before with the aim of catching their attention from the very beginning while at the end, she realized that she could use it during the entire lesson.

The idea behind is to practice the content applying the concept of “learning by doing”.

She talked about her method integrating traditional games with board and paper like Scatergories, Hangman, Bingo, Roleplay (e.g. play to search a murder) with digital games using big screen and mobiles or other devices. She mentioned the tools that she uses, specifying the point of view of her students. They love playing with Kahoot, Socrative and Baamboozle.

Having a look at the benefits of game based learning in the classroom she mentioned that it reduces stress, fuels motivation and creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom. It also allows them to acquire cooperation and digital skills.

In conclusion, she talks about digital tools that support teaching practice like Microsoft teams, Google Drive for sharing materials, and Genially to create visual content.

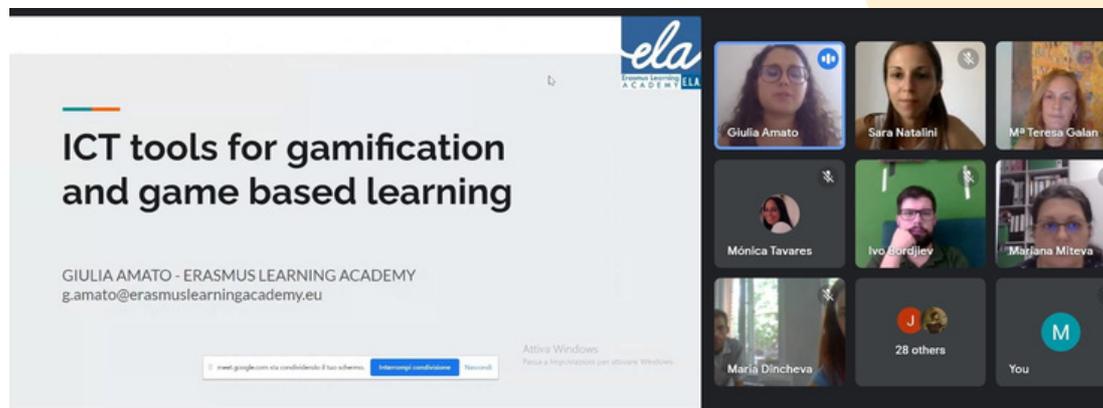
“The more you use these tools the better skills our students will have.”



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Giulia from Italy

*"Using Ict tools to gamify training activities and debriefing moments"*



Giulia Amato, from Italy, works at Erasmus learning academy (ELA) and she talked about her experience in ICT tools for learning purposes stressing on the following phase, the debriefing session, a step that is fundamental in order to understand what students learned through the gamified session and that shouldn't be skipped. She presented some of the tools that she uses during her teaching sessions:

Mentimeter, a tool that is really useful to hold the debriefing session thanks to the word cloud type of slide that allows teachers to collect in real time feedback from the students asking them to answer with keywords.

It can be used both to guide the reflection about the past activities and as a starting point for further discussions.

She also presented Baamboozle, Quizlet that is really useful for language learning and that is also really engaging for students thanks to the possibility of generating a live collaborative game in which the students are divided in teams automatically. It enhances their collaborative and team group skills thanks to the characteristic of putting the correct answer only on one of the devices belonging to the team. In order to find it they need to collaborate. They can't do anything alone. Another characteristic that makes it really interesting is the Live leaderboard that the students will see projected on the screen that fuels healthy competitiveness that can be an added value.

She continued with the presentation of an innovative use of Genially for creating escape rooms, another educational activity that is based on lots of didactic pillars.

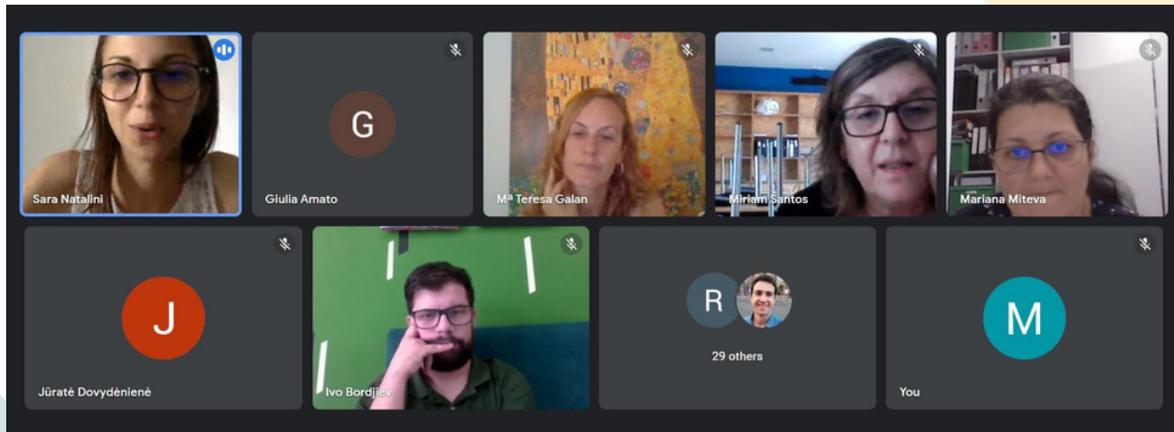
She concluded by talking about the use of Socrative "exit tickets", really useful when it comes to doing formative assessment at the end of the day and Socrative quick questions to be implemented during the debriefing part.



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Maria de Fátima from Portugal

*"Training at Appacdm Anadia: skills and certification for the job market"*



The 5th contribution was given by Maria de Fátima Casimiro, from Portugal, Agrupamento de Escolas de Anadia.

She started presenting the staff of the organization in which she works. The training at Appacdm Anadia started in May 1994. It has kept the same profile of courses: Carpenter, Agricultural Operator and, in the Hotel Industry, Waiter / Waitress and Floor Maid Service. The definition of these training areas resulted from a partnership with the entrepreneurial tissue of the territory to which they respond.

Their courses are financed by the EU and the activities carried out are in line with two objectives: to intervene with people with disabilities and develop, with them, skills that make them competitive for the work market; to be a training tool to support and implement relevant measures provided for in the CNQ, and that certifies people for employment.

At the end of the courses they give them a double certification. Thus, they develop training organized actions based on the Qualification Adapted to People with Disabilities, adapted training references, which integrate the CNQ, aimed at people with alterations of mental functions, multi-disability and others, without conditions of access to regular education and training courses.

She claimed that students with learning disabilities need more time to learn, for this reason they want to join these courses.

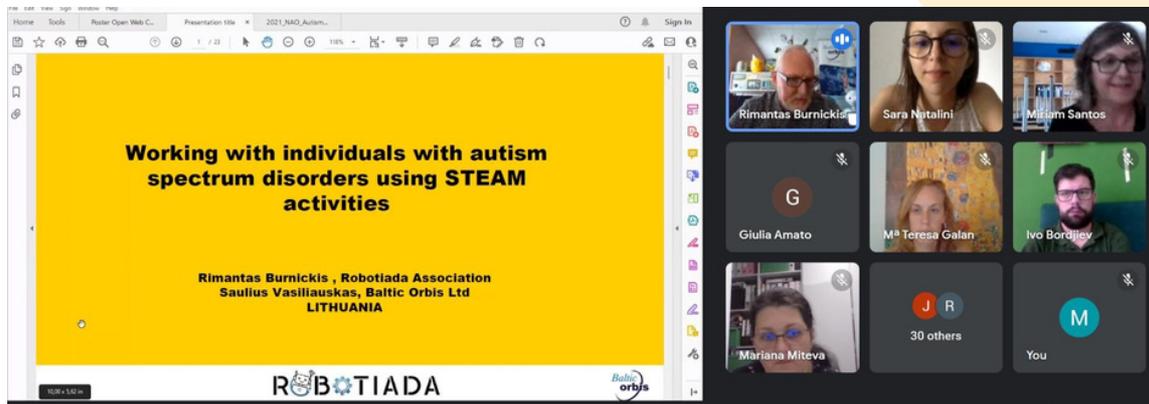
She stressed also on how tangible is the difference between using a game and not using it in the classroom: students are more focused and more willing to learn.



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Saulius from Lithuania

*"Working with individuals with autism spectrum disorders using STEAM activities"*



The last contribution was given by Saulius Vasiliauskas, from BalticOrbis and Robotics association in Lithuania.

His talk was based on their experience in working with children with difficulties using STEAM activities.

He showed the audience a graphic about STEAM major rate, science concentration, computer science concentration, stressing on the fact that adults usually are not able to understand what their needs are.

He presented the "Lego therapy" based on the idea that with bricks children can create the rules of life. The same is with Robotics: thanks to it they understand coding really easily.

The Lego learning system is based on learning through playing and Lego foundation works in education developments. He stressed on how robots and the Lego system can help kids to develop their STEAM skills.

He talked about some research that demonstrate how helpful the use of robots can be for kids with autism because basically, they look like friends not adults to their eyes.

The lego foundation invests USD 20 million to catalyze innovation supporting neurodivergent children. With this learning method they can acquire social skills, create and understand the rules of life, solve problems and then work in the STEAM area.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude the conference the audience was asked to write in the chat one thing they think they can give as contribution to this project and one thing they think they will add to their "luggage" thanks to this project.

This report is the outcome of the Open Web Conference of the European Project LINK to share best practices and experiences in the field of the project, with speakers and participants from all over Europe.

To learn more about the conference and the project, visit the official website <https://eulinkproject.com/>



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