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Midterm conference report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The GAP (Gaming for Peace) mid-term conference was held in Espoo, Finland on 19th September 2017. The objective of the conference was defined as twofold: firstly to present GAP project findings concerning training design and secondly collect good practices from military, civilian and police training experts about training practices when preparing personnel to CPPB (Conflict Prevention and Peace Building) missions.

The conference was planned and conducted following the curriculum planning cycle, where training needs were first scrutinized and further developed with the needs leading to learning outcomes in the curriculum. After analyzing learning outcomes and main contents, the relevant training methodologies, simulation and gaming in were selected were accepted.

Every training event involves evaluation and assessment of learning before, during and after the training. This blended learning training model is widely used among the training community in peacekeeping. However, the utilization of modern technologies, gaming, in particular, is new in peacekeeping training and therefore this conference was received with enthusiasm.

The GAP consortium focused on effective dissemination and exploitation at operational end-user level. This is pivotal in order to ensure harmonization and standardization of GAP training curriculum and the GAP-game. The target audience was defined already at the early stage of planning as: *“Experts working with training and education in peacebuilding from academia, policymaking and training institutes (civilian, police, military).”*

Identification of key end-users and stakeholders of GAP is crucial in order to ensure end-user integration and engagement throughout the project. End-user engagement ensures the GAP project results will meet actual needs. This further supports the sustainability and credibility of the project.



1 Introduction

Personnel deployed on CPPB missions need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to perform successfully from the start of their tour of duty in the respective CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy) mission or operation. The Gaming for Peace project has consulted experts in the field and reviewed broadly relevant documentation, and identified gaps in training for the soft skills needed to perform successfully in EU missions. Based on this analysis, a curriculum, a specific delivery methodology and a digital online roleplaying game, is currently under development in the GAP consortium.

Identification of key end-users and stakeholders of GAP is crucial in order to ensure end-user integration and engagement throughout the project. End-user engagement ensures that the GAP project results will meet with the actual user needs to be addressed. Therefore, the target audience of the midterm conference was defined as: *“Experts working with training and education in peacebuilding from academia, policymaking and training institutes (civilian, police, military).”*

Identification of key end-users in terms of dissemination is crucial both within project level and with exploitation level. The key end-users disseminate information on GAP from the beginning of the project to the project end, ensuring the interest and engagement to the project.

The conference reached 96 end-users and they experienced conference as relevant and rated the event as good in the feedback (ANNEX 3). The structure of this report follows the programme of the mid-term conference. It starts with describing the planning, communications and target audience. Then it will summarize the conference presentations, finally reaching conclusions.



2 The mid-term conference: from planning to evaluation

2.1 Key message in mid-term conference

The key messages of the conference follow the communication strategy of the GAP project and are as follows:

New training curricula for enhancing the preparedness and skills of personnel for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building (CPPB) missions especially in high risk countries contributes to more efficient and effective conflict prevention and peace keeping missions. Ultimately, this should reduce the costs of such missions, whilst at the same time contribute to a more efficient implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

Personnel deployed on Conflict Prevention and Peace Building (CPPB) missions, particularly in high risk areas, need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to perform successfully from the start of their tour of duty in the respective CSDP mission or operation

2.2 Target audience

The target audience was defined at the early stage of planning as: *“Experts working with training and education in peacebuilding from academia, policymaking and training institutes (civilian, police, military).”*

Identification of key end-users and stakeholders of GAP is crucial in order to ensure end-user integration and engagement throughout the project. End-user engagement ensures the GAP project results will meet with the actual user needs to be addressed. This supports project results to fulfil the required needs providing sustainability to the project. Identification of key end-users in terms of dissemination must be clarified both within project level and with exploitation level. The key end-users are of great importance to themselves disseminate information on GAP from the beginning of the project to the project end ensuring the interest and engagement of the key end-users to the project. This will ensure the end-users will provide support to the project and deliver information on all aspects of the project. The purpose of integration is to increase knowledge of GAP extensively. The end-user groups within the GAP project include (list not exhaustive):

- Policy level: high representative, EEAS (European External Action Services), CEPOL (College European de Police), EDA (European Defence Agency), European Commission

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- Operational level: national military and police services, international peacekeepers and police
- Academic level: training providers, military academy, social science departments/universities, academic partners specialising in political science, information technology, education, law, international relations, public administration, social sciences, economics and related fields
- Conflict prevention (involved with soft skills, such as mediation and negotiation)
- Training and education institutions: ECVET (European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training) national leads, Europass national leads, training providers, VET (Vocational Education and Training) institutions
- EU member state institutions (including governmental organisations): MoD (Ministry of Defence), MoI (Ministry of Interior), MFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- International organizations: UN (United Nations), OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), EU missions and operations
- Other FP7 (Foreign Framework)/H2020 (Horizon 2020) projects: IECEU (Improving the Effectiveness of Capabilities in EU conflict prevention); WOSCAP (Whole-of-Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding); EU-CIVCAP (Improving EU capabilities for peacebuilding); ProsocialLearn; TACTIC (Tools, methods And training for CommuniTies and society to better prepare for a Crisis) etc.

“GAP will achieve its objectives by bringing together a variety of actors to review and evaluate current training, to identify the gap for accessible, affordable relevant for CPPB missions soft skills training, to create a soft skills, game-based curriculum which can be delivered via a multiple player online role playing game, and to build into the game the means to measure learning outcomes. To do this, coordination is required from a variety of academic disciplines, experts in skill evaluation, game design and end-users. This is achieved through the composition of the project consortium and advisory boards.” (Grant Agreement, 2016)

2.3 Conference planning





Task	Responsible and contributor	Due time
Invitations	Laurea	August 2017
Conference room, coffee etc. reservations	Laurea	August 2017
Agenda	TCD	April 2017
Opening presentation	Laurea/ESDC	September 2017
Input presentation 1	TCD	September 2017
Input presentation 2	NUIM/UU	September 2017
Input presentation 3	WDU/WSPOL	September 2017
Input presentation 4	TCD	September 2017
Input presentation 5	HPS	September 2017
Moderator	Laurea	September 2017
Advertisement	Laurea	August 2017
Press Release preparation (as background paper)	Laurea	September 2017



4 Conference presentations: GAP project overview

After the opening remarks of the GAP Conference, Gaming for Peace project Principal Scientist and Project Coordinator, Associate Professor Anne Holohan provided the overview of past year progress and activities in the project (M1-M12). The presentation provided the introduction of the key challenges and gaps identified in the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Professor Holohan addressed that peacekeeping missions made up of diverse organizations and nations (militaries, police forces, civil organizations), gender, and culture (national, ethnicity, religion). Therefore, the necessary soft skills are required by the personnel to be deployed on peacekeeping operations. According to Prof. Holohan, GAP project aims to develop a curriculum to tackle the lack of soft skills training and moreover to provide digital online roleplaying game (Proteus Effect) which simulates scenarios from CPPB missions. The conference participants gained an overall picture of the background but especially related to GAP project implementation. All project partners were introduced to the audience and special attention given to the diversity of consortium partners; academic, governmental, SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) and end-users.

The GAP project identified the gap of soft skills training through end-user experience by completing 168 interviews in seven European countries. According to the interviews the relevant soft skills areas were recognized, such as; communication, coordination, gender awareness, cultural awareness, stress management and decision-making. The identification of soft skills needed in peacekeeping missions led to the development of learning objectives for the training, for consideration among training providers. This was supported by activities in the previous 12 months reviewing the soft skills against international standards of practice and international law. Management, communication and dissemination have been important processes throughout the project implementation to date. In total, many reports, deliverables, press releases and multiple presentations are given during the implementation of GAP project.

As a conclusion, the presentation gave an overview for the conference participant about the progress of GAP project and its development. Finally, Anne Holohan pointed out that the next steps will include further game design, assessments of the game completion by the learner as well as evaluation of the game development process. Beyond them, GAP consortium will pay further attention towards the dissemination activities.



5 Conference presentation: Soft skills training needs in peacekeeping missions

Dr. Róisín Smith and Dr. Philip McCready introduced the results of the state of the art research concerning training needs. As the curriculum development is based on the assessment of the training needs and gaps in existing learning, this session provided insight to the core of the GAP project. Quantitative assessment shows peace operations are both military and male dominated. United Nations and European Union have tried to introduce policies and implemented guidelines for peacekeeping training. **Consistent, coherent and systematic approach to peacekeeping training and effective monitoring/evaluation of training has yet to be fully implemented.**

To scope the GAP curriculum and gaming process soft skill terminology need to be defined. For the purpose of GAP, soft skills are defined as *skills that are cross-cutting across jobs and sectors and relate to personal competences and social competences, personal qualities, attributes, habits and attitudes, and non-job specific skills that are related to individual ability to operate effectively on peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions*. The mentioned competences reflect teamwork, communication, cooperation, facilitation, negotiation, leadership and decision making among others. This definition encompasses a combination of EU Commission and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) definitions of soft skills. Based on the comprehensive set of 168 interviews, the research identified key soft skills, such as:

- communication;
- cooperation;
- leadership;
- gender sensitivities;
- cultural distinctions;
- decision making;
- stress management

Furthermore, it was found out in the interviews that peacekeepers appreciate that is based on real-life context specific situations. These illustrate learning and training based on practice, not academic or theoretically driven training, and is delivered by those who have actually been in the mission area.

The interview results also stressed easily accessible lessons to train the personnel:

- irrespective of rank or operational remit
- for the social stress of being on a mission, family problems, isolation, working and living with colleagues 24/7
- on how to share information and how to build situational awareness
- on comprehensive approach to deal with civilian organisations would be beneficial
- remember the aims of the mission and the needs of the locals they are there to work with and not to assume that the aims of each are congruent



6 Conference presentation: gaps in gender awareness and cultural competence in peacekeeping missions

The GAP project aims to identify the soft skills needed in multicultural EU conflict prevention and peace building missions, and based on the training needs identified, create a digital online roleplaying game where soft skills can be trained. The role of gender is one of the issues facing CPPB missions.

Gender issues were addressed both in the morning session, as well as in the afternoon gaming workshops. It was noted that GAP has been actively working to understand the positive and negative role of gender in CPPB missions. The different experiences of women and men can be used in beneficial ways to improve the efficiency of the entire mission.

Quality and gender issues in peace keeping and CPPB missions have been an interest of research especially after the Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” implemented in the year 2000. More research will be needed on gender effects on the success of missions, though it was also noted that women are under represented on these missions. Finland is doing relatively well in gender issues, compared to many other seconding countries. Still, for example in peacekeeping, the number of women is very low, just some five percent.

It was discussed that people interviewed for GAP were both women and men who had been in peacekeeping or crisis management mission. Gender awareness could promote more successful missions. More soft skills training on gender issues is needed and attitudes towards gender should be changed towards the more positive. Further studies on the topic could include researching the role of local women in promoting more sustainable peace and addressing the role of masculinities in the structure and conduct of missions

The afternoon sessions included the game developer introducing four different options to the groups as examples and basis for 15 minute team discussions on the good and bad points found from a player`s point of view.

The player may, for example, select either a female or a male character in the game. This will show how gender may affect a peacekeeper`s performance in an intercultural context. The purpose of the game will be to show players, through these new experiences, how different aspects can have different effects depending, for example, on the gender of the participant. In short, the game gives the opportunity to be in somebody else`s shoes and think about how your own actions may make cooperation easier or more difficult.

For the most part the scenarios were found, by attending Laurea students, to be realistic, as they were based on CPPB expert interviews.



7 Conference presentation: designing the GAP curriculum: from needs to outcomes

Context of the Presentation: The curriculum is developed from the gap identified by the state of the art in training of softskills, including international standards, and enduser experience. GAP partners worked to extract learning outcomes, a selection of which will be embedded in the game design. Assessment of learning in GAP will be twofold: in-game metrics to capture decision point and behaviours which can be ranked as outstanding, competent or poor; and out-game assessment, primarily reflection before and after the game play, of the role-playing experience in the game. Out-game assessment will also include measures to assess level of proficiency in e.g. gender awareness, to be taken by the player before and after the game.

The Presentation

Professor Vinnie Wade from Trinity College Dublin's presentation focused on the process so far of developing a methodology for in-game assessment. The focus of this work lies on the competency assessment within the game. The question is how peacekeeping soft skills competencies can be assessed within an immersive serious game.

Professor Wade defined competency as a combination of knowledge about a topic, the skills to do it and attitudes which are applied appropriately to a context to achieve a desired outcome (OIEU 2016). GAP is developing the GAP methodology. This includes the identifying of peacekeeping competencies, based on use of knowledge and behavior applied to a particular context of peacekeeping, as well as the generation of authentic scenarios with relevant narratives encompassing the required behaviours.

As input to the process, GAP has conducted state of the art analysis, and mapping to standards, as well as interviews and their analysis. Thereafter, competencies from scenarios were identified from the interviews, and dimensions of competencies were defined. The finding was that multiple competencies and multiple skills were used together, typically with an overarching objective. This allowed GAP to interrelate the specific skills in the context of a particular situation, and to identify the behavior(s) which characterizes that particular competency. GAP is using BARS – behavioural anchors rating scales, which allowed an understanding of how good the behaviour was in the situation. This included input from subject matter experts, which resulted in a set of competencies with concrete examples, anchor points and ratings of behaviours, which provide an indication towards the online and offline assessment possibilities.

BARS workshops were held in three countries, where 9-15 experts drawn from military, civilian, police and academia participated. The methodology was piloted in the workshops with the results extracted from the workshops as observable behaviors. Although competencies and behaviours were identified in all of the workshops, only two of the workshops resulted in concrete behaviours observable within a game setting. The workshops resulted in a set of competencies and those competencies' interrelationships in a particular scenario and experience. This allows the identification of the rating of that observable behaviour, using a three-part scale; outstanding, competent, and unsatisfactory. Experts are being consulted regarding the ratings to receive a broad understanding of the behaviours and ratings for reliability and validity purposes.



Professor Wade concluded that GAP will move from scenario-building to identify behaviours and techniques to assess the behaviours of players in the game, including the pre-assessment and post-assessment review process.



8 Conference presentation: benchmarking GAP learning outcomes, producing a skills passport

Stephen Rice from Upskill Enterprise presented a step-by-step guide on the mapping processes completed to date, and how these impact the innovative development of the GAP skills passport. The mapping involved the use of international, occupational and professional standards of work from across the military, civilian and police sectors within peacekeeping and the wider justice and security arena to identify best practices, a common language, and cohesion. The mapping process provided clear performance criteria and knowledge and understanding to write evidence-based learning outcomes. This is vital in establishing reliable and valid assessment as well as a strong and credible curriculum. Following initial mapping, further research was completed to ensure incorporation of the key themes would be actionable both offline in the wider curriculum, and online within the game.





The next stage of development from Upskill Enterprise is the production of the GAP Skills Passport in line with the principles of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training initiative. It will be a digital document validating the soft skills acquired via GAP. The peacekeeper will accumulate equivalences or 'units' which can then be accredited in their own nation/jurisdictions according to European Qualifications Framework and National Qualification Framework principles. Both peacekeeping and Vocational Education and Training initiative experts will ensure that GAP's learning architecture meets the learning curriculum standards required. The passport will support peacekeepers career mobility, permeability with other learning and skills, ensure quality and provide transparency of achievement.



9 Workshop: designing a game that delivers effective training in building trust, communication, cooperation, gender and cultural awareness, and stress management:

The Haunted Planet team led the two-hour afternoon workshop entitled, “Designing a Game that Delivers Effective Training in Building Trust, Communication, Cooperation, Gender and Cultural Awareness, and Stress Management.” After an initial introduction that used Project Syria (2014) as a visual reference point, four high-level game concepts were presented one at a time to the ~60 end user participants. The end users then discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each concept in small (6-person) breakout groups for about 15 minutes. The participants were asked to give feedback on how well each concept might include learning outcomes in particular related to Trust Building, Communication, Cooperation, Gender Awareness and Cultural Awareness. Each breakout group had a note-taker from one of the GAP partners assigned whose job it was to record the key points raised at each table.

The four concepts’ main differences were in relation to the structuring of the game experience with two main parameters being varied: number of scenes and number of playable characters. The table below shows the four concepts:

	One Scene	Multiple Scenes
One Character	 Concept 3	 Concept 1
Multiple Characters	 Concept 4	 Concept 2

For example, in Concept 1, the player controls the same character through three different scenes. The different scenes could be in different game world areas across different days, but there would be a narrative continuity between the scenes. Actions performed in an earlier scene can affect the options available in later scenes. The advantage of this approach is that the player is familiarized with the character and sees the wider context in which s/he lives and works and also gets to see the effects of their actions. In response to this concept, the end users felt that seeing the consequences of actions was extremely important, and it was good to get to know the character, see them develop over time and understand them as a result of the play experience. However, the single-character perspective was seen to be too limited in scope compared to some of the other concepts.



In addition to the concept-specific feedback, the end users also offered overall thoughts on what is important in a game intended to facilitate the learning of soft skills. End users emphasized the importance of conveying the playable character's context, e.g., personal history and training as well as mission mandate and code of conduct. The context of the conflict was also seen as important, such as history, culture and religion. In terms of interaction, body language was seen as important, and in terms of realism, it was highlighted how crucial it is that characters and events are realistic, not so much in visual fidelity but in behaviour and believability. The question "Could this happen in a real setting?" should always be answered in the affirmative.



10 CONCLUSIONS

The GAP project aims to identify the soft skills needed in multicultural EU conflict prevention and peace building missions, and based on the training needs identified, create a digital online roleplaying game where soft skills can be trained. Against this the conference provided with an opportunity to further develop GAP curriculum and identify the characteristics of the game.

The conference was planned and conducted following the curriculum planning cycle, where training needs are scrutinized and further developed to learning outcomes in the curriculum. After analyzing learning outcomes and main contents, the relevant training methodologies, simulation and gaming in this example, are selected. Every training event involves evaluation and assessment of learning before, during and after the training. This blended learning training model is widely in use among the training community for peacekeeping. However, the utilization of modern technologies, gaming in particular, is new in peacekeeping training and therefore this conference was received with enthusiasm by most of the participants.

The conference participants, as end users of the game, emphasized the importance of conveying the playable character's context, e.g., personal history and training as well as mission mandate and code of conduct. The context of the conflict was also seen as important, such as history, culture and religion. In terms of interaction, body language was seen as important, and in terms of realism, it was highlighted how crucial it is that characters and events are realistic, not so much in visual fidelity but in behaviour and believability.

The next steps in the game development should include the end-user experiences to the game design, assessments of the game completion by the learner as well as evaluation of the game development process. Beyond them, GAP consortium should pay further attention towards the dissemination activities.



ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 PARTICIPATION LIST

Aholaakko Teija-Kaisa

Aho-Pynttäri Marja

Altpeter Christian

Barrett Rachel

Björklund Andreas

Cotton Roisin

Devenyi Kinga

Doyle Kieran

Dumur-Laanila Hanne

Eich Irene-Maria

Feilke Markus

Galica Artmir

Grönlund Ville

Haahr Mads

Hario Pasi

Harston Julian

Heinonen Jarmo

Henriksson Kristina

Holohan Anne

Hyppönen Laura

Hyttinen Kirsi

Hyvönen Reijo

Hägglund Senja



Keltanen Mikko

Kemppi Savelij

Ketonen Julius

Korja Oula

Kuusela Anssi

Lane Denny

Lane Mrs.

Lepojärvi Kati

Maunila Lassi

McCready Philip

Mekri Maria

Mickos Meri

Murphy Sean

Mustonen Jari

Mäkinen Satu

Nevmerzhitskaya Julia

Nieminen Lari

Nikkinen Teemu

Norvanto Elisa

Nowak Aleksandra

Nurkkala Nina

Palo-oja-Mertanen Katri

Partanen Teemu

Pouw Dick

Purcell Stephen



Puska Juha-Pekka

Rice Stephen

Roininen Antti

Ruoslahti Harri

Savoranta Ville

Sell Vesa

Smith Roisin

Stoianov Nikolai

Taitto Petteri

Thompson Gareth

Timms Rowena

Toussaint Mascia

Trochowska Kamila A.

Tsonev Tsvetelin

Vainionpää Susanna

Wade Vinnie

Williams Peter

Vuorikuru Janette

Ylinenpää Janne

Österlund Peter

Abraham Edel

Backman Jafet

Bennani-Smires Anas

Berlinger Philipp

Charrier Samuel



Eloranta Samu

Friberg Aleks

Gong Ruohan

Hamers Luc

Hicking Tim

Isoranta Niina

Karikoski Riku

Körner Sophie

Lavikka Eeva

Lee Soyoung

Lehtinen Juhomatti

Loikala Markus

Luoma Solomon

Marjotie Marc

Meriläinen Sampo

Mountou Olivier

Nguyen Minh Thanh

Obanla Olawale

Pekkala Joonas

Salo Salla

Schröder Mona

Taimoor Yousaf

Tennberg Reino

Urosevic Alex

Van Zwieten Jorike



ANNEX 2 AGENDA AND PRESENTATIONS

The presentations are uploaded to the GAP project website.

TOPIC	INSTITUTION RESPONSIBLE	PRESENTER
Opening Remarks	Laurea	Kirsi Hyttinen
	ESDC	Irene-Maria Eich
Overview of Project	TCD	Prof. Anne Holohan
Soft Skills Training Needs in Peacekeeping Missions	NUIM	Dr. Roisin Smith
	UU	Dr. Philip McCready
Gaps in Gender Awareness and Cultural Competence in Peacekeeping Missions	WDU	Dr. Kamila Trochowska
	WSPOL	Aleksandra Nowak
Designing the GAP Curriculum: From Needs to Outcomes	TCD	Prof. Vinnie Wade
Benchmarking GAP Learning Outcomes, Producing a Skills Passport	UPS	Stephen Rice
Closing Remarks	Laurea	Petteri Taitto

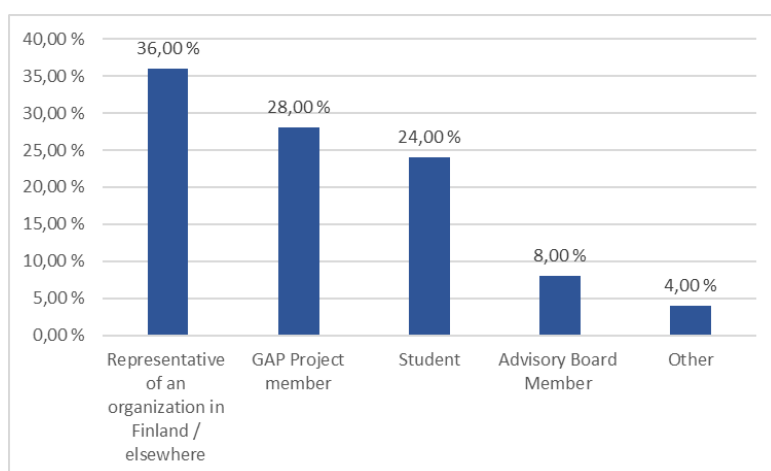


ANNEX 3 FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

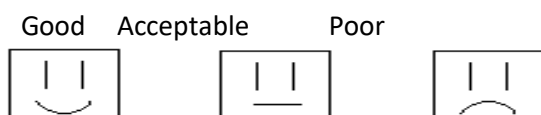
Overall 30 feedback forms were returned. A total of 25 persons shared their background details.

Background details

*Representative of an organization in Finland / elsewhere	9: 36%
*GAP Project member	7: 28%
*Student	6: 24%
*Advisory Board Member	2: 8%
*Other	1: 4%

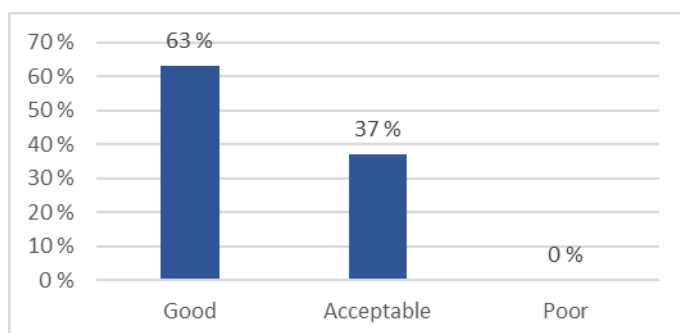


Feedback ratings



1. Overall, How would you rate the event?

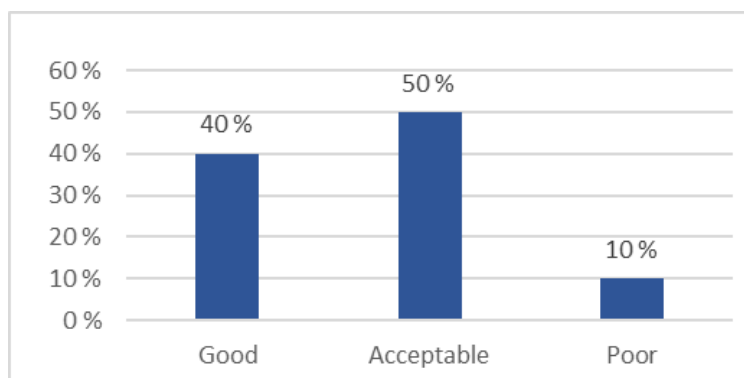
Good	Acceptable	Poor
19	11	-
63%	37%	0%





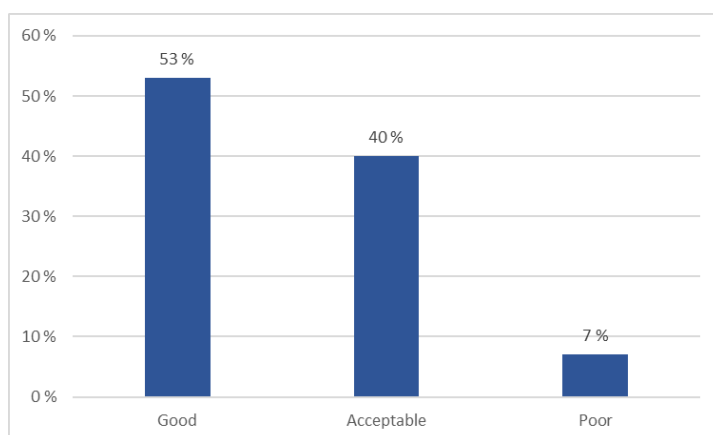
2. How would you rate presentations and contests of the conference?

Good	Acceptable	Poor
12	15	3
40%	50%	10%



3. How would you rate the food offered at the event?

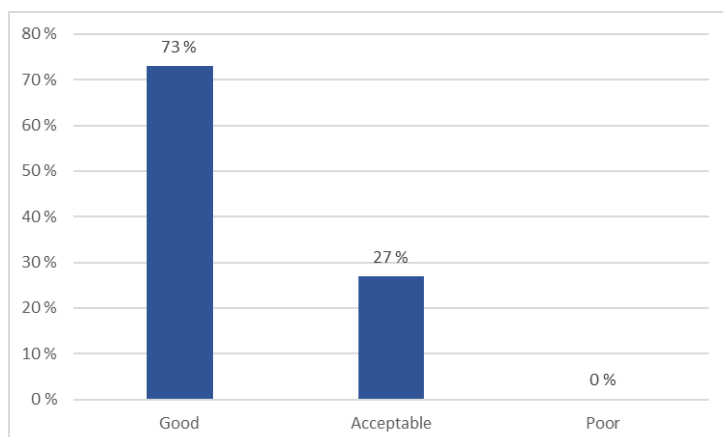
Good	Acceptable	Poor
16	12	2
53%	40%	7%





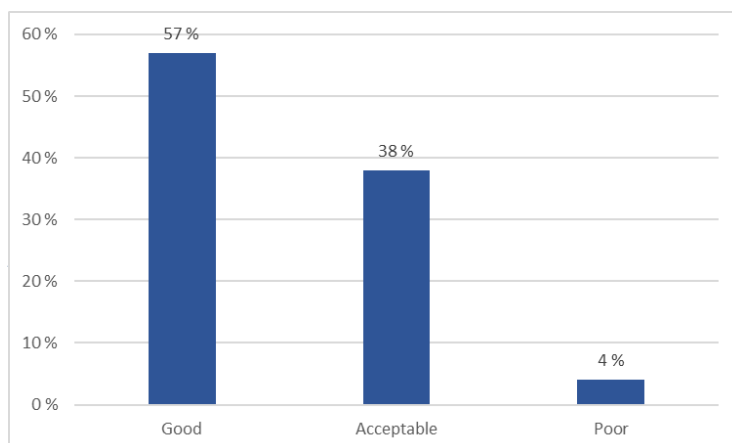
4. How would you rate arrangements of the event?

Good	Acceptable	Poor
22	8	-
73%	27%	0%



Overall ratings. Four different questions, thirty answers each, 120 answers overall.

Good	Acceptable	Poor
69	46	5
57%	38%	4%





ANNEX 4 PRESS RELEASES

There were two press releases made from the mid-term conference. First one was published at the official GAP website on 19th September and the second at Laurea's website on 20th September.

GAP mid-term conference: Learning Soft Skills in Peacebuilding 'Training Through Gaming' hosted by Laurea

Laurea University of Applied Sciences hosted GAP-project's mid-term conference in Espoo, Finland on 19th September. The theme, Learning Soft Skills in Peacekeeping "Training Through Gaming", attracted around 100 participants interested in how gaming can improve the training of civilian, military and police to be deployed to crisis management missions.

During the conference experts from different partner organizations held sessions on various topics concerning soft skills in crisis management training. On workshops facilitated by the Haunted Planet Studios, the participants gave input to different concepts of GAP's digital roleplaying game. The Haunted Planet Studios continues to develop the game format based on the views of the workshop participants.



[<https://gap-project.eu/2017/09/19/gap-mid-term-conference-learning-soft-skills-in-peacebuilding-training-through-gaming-hosted-by-laurea/>]

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Learning Soft Skills in Peacebuilding conference was organized in Leppävaara campus 19th of September

The objective of this conference was to present findings concerning training design and collect good practices from military, civilian and police training experts about training practices when preparing personnel to Conflict Prevention and Peace Building

The conference was targeted to experts working with training and education in peacebuilding from academia, policymaking and training institutes (civilian, police, military).

Personnel deployed on Conflict Prevention and Peace Building (CPPB) missions need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to perform successfully from the start of their tour of duty in the respective CSDP mission or operation. The Gaming for Peace (GAP) project has consulted experts in the field and reviewed broadly relevant documentation, and identified gaps in training for the soft skills needed to perform successfully in EU missions. Based on this analysis a set of curricula and a specific methodology, multiple player online game, is currently under development in the GAP consortium.

GAP project creates a knowledge around the importance of cultural awareness and self-awareness

One of the universities in this project, Kennedy Institute, has co-operated with Laurea in two different projects. First one is the GAP project and the other one is IECEU project which is a project that looks the effectiveness of EU missions that are deployed abroad to try to build peace around the world.

"I must say, we have had very close connections with Laurea. We are very impressed with the level of investment to research and teaching within this area", Keiran Doyle from Kennedy Institute says.

The wider influence of GAP project is that it creates a knowledge around the importance of cultural awareness and self-awareness for people and agencies as they deploy in to peace building environments.

"We live in a very connected world, the implications of actions by people at every level within the Peace Building mission can be very influential and perhaps even at times catastrophic. I think if GAP project can build a tool, an instrument that can help people to work in that environment, I think that's very important contribution to Peace Building", Keiran Doyle tells.

"The goal of GAP is to think about the social skills peacekeepers need and to train them to work with people who are different than themselves. Whether that is different organization, gender, sexuality, culture among other things", Principal Investigator Dr. Anne Holohan, Trinity College Dublin, the coordinator of GAP project explains.

There are already existing games that teach soft skills, communication and cooperation, but not yet in the Peace Building context. *"And we are also interested in the roleplaying aspect, to get people play with their online character is something different from already existing games,* Dr. Anne Holohan tells.

In the workshops participants were developing the design of the game

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The GAP project develops an innovative game environment where Conflict Prevention and Peace Building (CPPB) personnel can experience a range of real life simulated scenarios. real life ge of real-life simulated scenarios.

The participants in the workshops were planning for example how the game is going to look like and feel like and what kind of movement there will be in the game.



Picture 1. Workshop in Leppävaara Campus

One participant of this conference was Jari Mustonen, who has worked as a peacekeeper for different operations around the world for seven years. Jari has also participated a one day workshop for GAP project before. *"This is very promising project. I think gaming can be used as a tool when training soft skills. We should also always remember to include face to face communication to the training. It is great that this is not only national but international project focused on EU missions".*

[<https://www.laurea.fi/en/news/Pages/Learning-Soft-Skills-in-Peacebuilding-conference-was-organized-in-Lepp%C3%A4vaara-campus-19th-of-September-.aspx>]