

# GAP NEWSLETTER

**The GAP Game** already exists with promising capacities to teach and learn soft skills in the peacebuilding context. Now soft skills training and assessment is possible through a role-playing computer game. The past months our project experts and researchers have facilitated the evaluation of the GAP application's constituent components in order to ensure that the game's operational, educational, technical and specialist content is robust and relevant to end users in operational context. The community of end users cri-

tically assessed the content and usability of GAP Game. In this Newsletter, the end users describes their user experiences when playing and testing the game in practice. **The Soft Skills in Peacebuilding Summit** will be organised in Dublin (Ireland) in January 2019. The registration with programme and conference flyer is available in our website :

[www.gap-project.eu](http://www.gap-project.eu)



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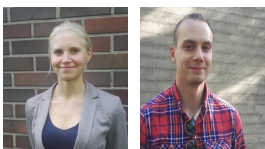


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***“It was nice – I took the attitude to play along and see how I would do, if on a mission”***

said Paula Himanen who tested the GAP Game in Finland.



The GAP Game Testing was organized in seven different locations. Between August and end of October 2018, members of the GAP team facilitated the testing events in Ireland, Portugal, Bulgaria, Poland, Finland and Northern Ireland for different stakeholders and end users of GAP soft skills game. The overall purpose of the evaluation testing was to evaluate the emerging and developing platform technically and in terms of the assessment in the game and the pre and post play assessment.

The GAP game was tested at Laurea University of Applied Sciences on September 25th. Ten well motivated experts, students and alumni with various backgrounds used the day playing and evaluating the game. One of the Finnish game test players was recent Laurea University of Applied Sciences security management graduate Paula Himanen. She has served voluntary military service in the Finnish defense forces and did her bachelor thesis (The role of gender in crisis management and peacekeeping) for GAP, and has applied for peacekeeping missions. Thus Paula’s interest has deepened and she found playing the game interesting. It was eye

opening for her to look at issues from a new perspective, such as playing the role of a male policeman. She liked how the game was worked, though it would have been nice to receive some more feedback during the game. “It was nice – I took the attitude to play along and see how I would do, if on a mission”.

Paula finds the game useful and different from traditional training. “It is good to put yourself in other people’s roles, it is a good point that I hadn’t thought of before”. Paula finds the information on the mission nation, culture, and language phrases useful. The issues are better remembered, when learning through playing a game. “I imagine that it will help, those going on missions”.

A veteran of two peace keeping missions Jaakko Hiltunen studies social sciences at the University of Tampere, and has always enjoyed playing video games. Jaakko was pleasantly surprised how well the game fit the operative atmosphere that he had experienced in Lebanon. It was easy to identify with the situation, and it even hu-

morously depicted some of the cultural issues when collaborating with different the nationalities on missions. “The game describes that there are different kinds of people”. Jaakko notes that the GAP game teaches a peacekeeping attitude, it teaches how one should be. Jaakko felt that some of the ways which gender issues were presented in the game were from a somewhat shallow perspective, but then in some parts they were brought up in very novel ways.

Jaakko recommends using the game during pre-deployment training, because, at least his training included relatively little information on the local culture; “It was interesting to have the opportunity to participate and influence the way in, which the game will develop”. Peacekeeping missions should focus more social skills, says Jaakko, and noted that the work of a soldier is different from the work of a peacekeeper, and that the game can help bridge these two roles together. “It is great that this type of projects get funded”.





## CSDP Course and GAP Summit, January 2019

### Would you like to improve your performance in future peacebuilding missions?

Trinity College Dublin, and the GAP team, in close cooperation with Laurea University of Applied Sciences, has the honour of co-organising a pilot course on **Improving Performance in the CSDP Missions** under the auspices of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) to be held in Dublin, Ireland, from 7 to 9 January 2019. The course aims to increase the performance of future mission personnel when communicating in a stressful environment, taking into account cultural diversity and gender aspects, and thus to enhance the effectiveness of the CSDP Missions and Operations as part of the EU Integrated Approach. The course is designed to ensure that deploying personnel is equipped with the necessary knowledge of the soft skills needed in the mission environment.



### Are you a peacebuilding expert, researcher or policy maker? Would you like to learn and share your expertise?

The Soft Skills Summit "How to Train for Soft Skills Through Digital Games – A Case Study for Training Peacekeepers" in Trinity College Dublin in January 10th & 11th, 2019. The Conference will also host demonstrations of the GAP game, and special events to bring together key personnel in this area. More information about the project is available at our website. The Conference will cover areas such as;

- A Model Using Real World Experiences to Develop Scenarios and Learning Objectives for a Serious Game which has Inbuilt and Standardized Assessment
- Contemporary Peacekeeping Missions: Military Training Needs
- Game-Based Soft Skills Learning in Different Sectors
- Gender Training: Challenges & Benefits
- A Curriculum for the Role of Police in Peacekeeping
- Assessment in Serious Games
- Culture as a Resource
- Curriculum for Training Civilians on Complex Missions
- Need for Standardization of Accreditation
- Exploring Alternatives in Learning Through Gaming

**The Keynote Speaker** is Michael Beary, Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). **Other Speakers:** Anne Holohan, Mads Haahr, Vincent Wade, Kieran Doyle, Petteri Taitto, Gillian Wylie, Wilma Rooney, Justyna Pyz, Mascia Toussaint





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# GAP CONFERENCE

January 10 & 11th, 2019. Trinity College Dublin, Ireland



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