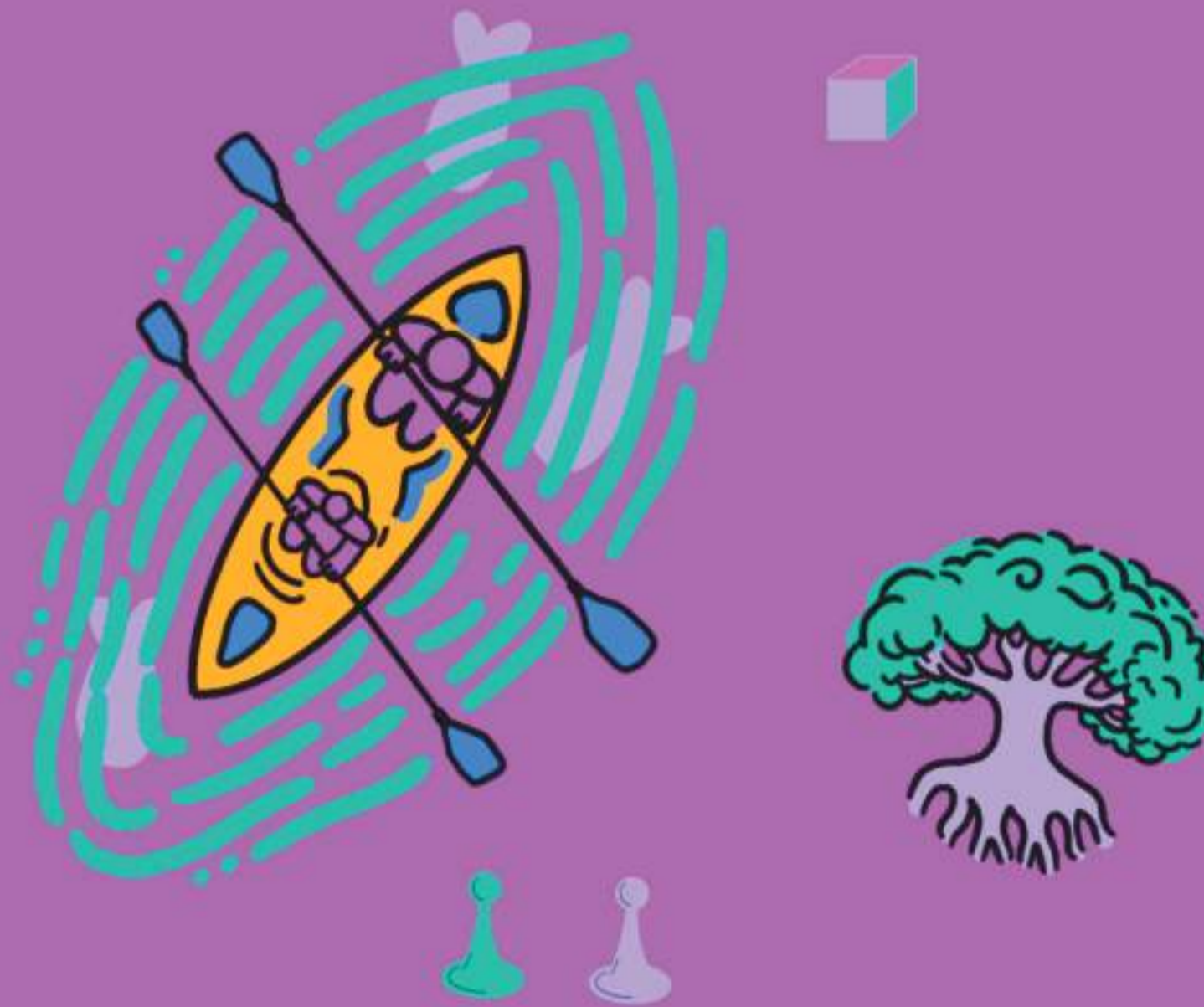# Practical tools for GBL strategies

THE POWER OF GAMES

Toolkit for Mentoring
Game-Based Youth Initiatives

IN NUTSHELLS ABOUT THE PROJECT AND THE TOOLKIT

To support the cause the YFY consortium embarked on a journey **to connect youth workers with the transformative power of games, so they can empower youth generations** to activate their capacity to identify problems, analyze them and find creative solutions by co-designing games.

Throughout our adventure and outputs, we explored international good practices and their learnings (IO1), developed an explorative how to guide in MOOC format (IO2) and last but not least trained facilitators (C1) and practiced development in various settings across countries and target groups (IO3) to be able to deliver to you our practical advices and findings on mentoring game-based youth initiatives.

The development of this toolkit is an important milestone of the cooperation aiming to share **the know-how to transform challenges via the game development process** that had been generated throughout local game development processes in the respective countries. To the local pilots young participants were invited to reflect on global problems from their local perspective and develop serious games that aim to generate solutions around their identified challenges that could be further developed into local youth initiatives.

After the local game development pilots with the **Toolkit and Facilitator cards** presented now to you, we have reached the hilly meadow to rest a bit and reflect in order to be able to share our experiences in an easy-to-use format addressing:

1. **Active citizenship**
2. **Entrepreneurship**
3. **Social skills/ Collaborative creativity**

As the key pillars of mentorship within the project. In addition, we will share some hints on using such methodologies in formal education and community settings.

"...based on your particular interest you may also decide to dive into any of **the mentorship pillars** separately as the presented activities may **not only function in game development processes,**

With the toolkit our intention was not to recreate the schematics of the Game Development Process (GDP), but to **guide our readers how similar processes can be better supported in a youth development context** beyond the mere focus of the game production. Therefore, besides the experiences shared, this toolkit will equip you as an educator **not only with practical tips, but also with actual tools,** so you are able to get started with similar processes in your local realities.

HOW TO ORIENT IN THE TOOLKIT?

The guide follows an easy structure. In the **introductory part** you will have the chance to:

> learn more about our general approach,

> identify basic game development related resources,

> get familiar with some of our easy to adapt grids for assessment and planning,

> explore the core phases that the pilots followed with some practical tips,

> and to understand better what serious games mean to our coordinators guiding you, before we part and you can get started with your own exploration :)

The toolkit was constructed in a manner that its content complement each other. However, based on your particular interest you may also decide to dive into any of the mentorship pillars separately as the presented activities may not only function in game development processes, but also in any general context to support youth to achieve their desired activities and become a better self of them.

In **each chapter** that represents a mentorship pillar will consist of the following:

> brief presentation of the grounding concept,

> practical methods and tools for exploration,

> and tips and tricks from the field.

Two additional chapters are also included to provide you with additional recommendations in case you would like to use the method in collaboration with:

> cultural and educational institutes

> municipalities and community planning.

In addition, the toolkit is supplemented with a **set of facilitator cards** that may help you to get started with your own process and provide you with detailed guidance and activities to be able to facilitate targeted activities as per the exact need of your target audience or focus of your activity. The facilitator cards are initially developed in English, but also will be translated to the following national languages: Danish, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish.

Both these cards and most of **the games developed** during the pilot process are continuously being made available free of charge and possible to download from our blog site as the YFY project progresses: https://youth-for-youth.weebly.com/intellectual-outputs.html

Under our **pilot blog**, you may also be able to gain more insight to the different processes and get in touch with our partners for further support as building both a local and international network is crucial to our consortium! In case you wish to get in touch, we are looking forward to hearing from you and wishing

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INTRODUCTION

OPENING NOTES ON THE POWER OF GAMES

So, what makes games so special that people still want to use them? Games impact people on an individual and societal level and a well-designed gaming experience can bring about positive change in our lives. Simply, because games are an amazing source of learning. Every society developed them not only to entertain but also to educate about social and cultural values. As a famous game designer, Jane McGonigal noticed: "They're like a healing balm for other areas of life. When we play games we allow ourselves the pleasure of going from scratch to success and mastery. This provokes a range of positive mindsets like curiosity, creativity, flexibility and, most importantly, self-efficacy — the experience of getting better at something through your own efforts and attention." (Faber, 2021).

Games Connect Us

Games connect people of varying ages – bringing peers as well as different generations. They promote not only fun and learning

from each other but also help develop communication skills and mutual understanding. Moreover, players confronted with challenges learn how to solve moral dilemmas, cooperate, or compete in the fair way.


Games Empower Us

Role-play games or computer games can also help us to recognize and build on our own best attributes (Bessière, 2007). By creating avatars or fictional characters, we create alternative versions of ourselves therefore we have the opportunity to look at our behaviour, understand our actions, in the end, reflect on who we are and grow

Games Spread Joy

Who of us have never felt the sweet taste of victory after finishing all levels of a video game or a seed of satisfaction while playing Monopoly and crushing your co-players, making them go around the board

bleeding? In an educational setting, games are an important tool that fosters creativity, joy in the classroom and allows each student to find their own style of learning. Gaming lets people try new things without fear of making mistakes.

Games Educate

There is evidence that games can have positive effects on reading, reasoning skills, and mathematics achievement. Game-based Learning (GBL) – together with developing a healthy culture of games, or "learning how to play" – can bring huge results at both cognitive and emotional levels, developing communication, engagement, promoting understanding of differences, problem solving, and teaching how to deal constructively with conflicts and emotions (Jabbar et Felicia, 2015).

Additionally, essential to any learning experience, the ability to focus and engage can be achieved by gameplay that keeps people's attention much longer and more easily as we believe. Therefore, on behalf of the Youth for Youth (YFY) tribe, a team of seven partners - Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain - connecting in a Strategic Partnership Cooperation for Innovation, we invite you on an explorative journey to deep dive into our findings and local game developments run with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme.

How am I?
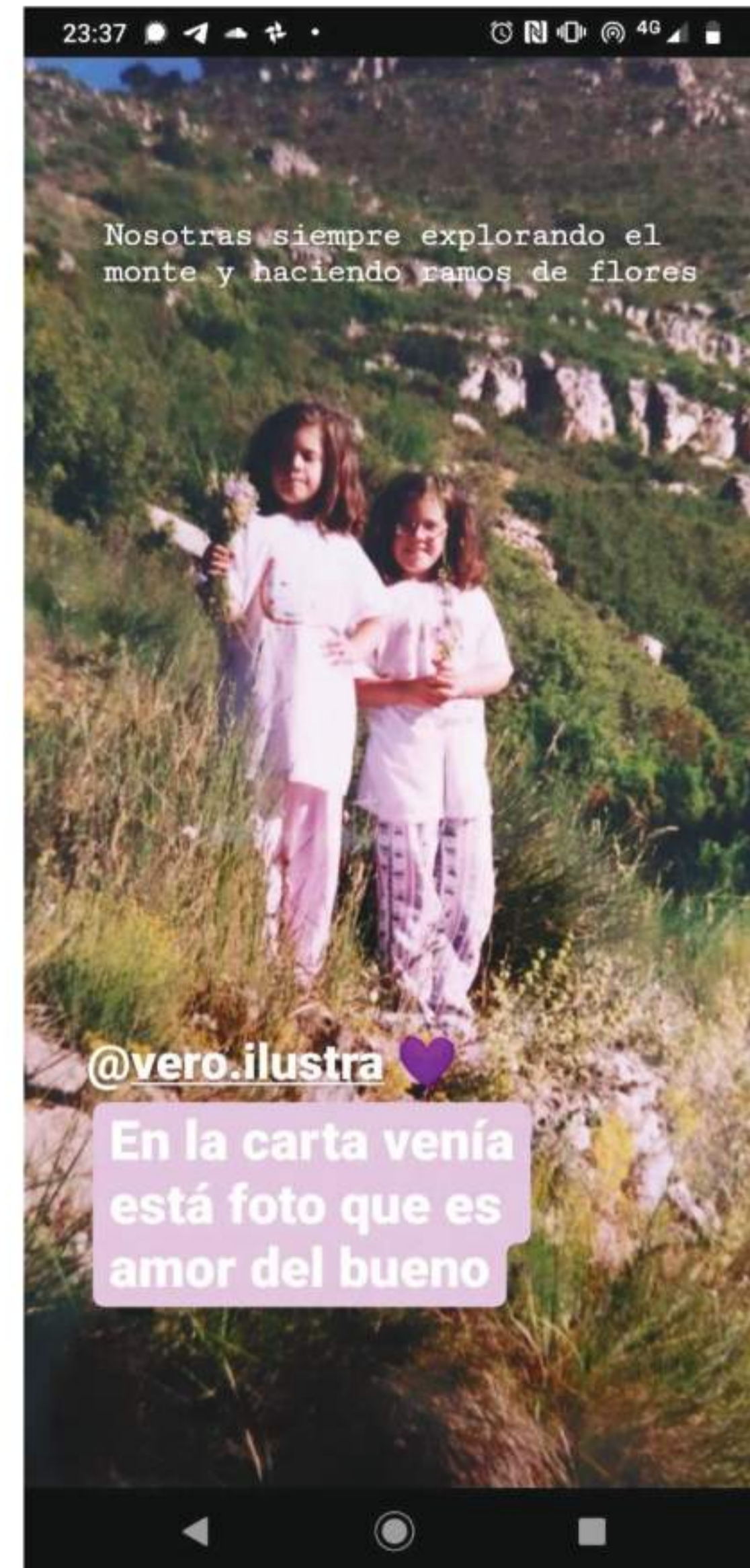
What I do that can help others?

What about you?

Better TOGETHER

GBL...😉

Let's make it diverse!

Based on collaboration and interaction

Can we make it game based?

NEEDS + LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Let's play to understand these key questions better!

From individual experience to cooperative

0. The current situation I have

1. The need of my target group

2. The learning objective I want to address

Now! I dare you 😉🎉

Let's create a game together

Groups of 5 max

Gather based on your profesional field

Spark and Define 🧭⏰

Game brainstorm to understand better the approach

GOAL of the game?

WHO is gonna play it?

HOW do we integrate participation and interaction?

WHY are we creating it?

WHAT are the learning objectives?

HOW will we assess that learning?

Thank you! 🧡

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