Editorial

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The International Journal of Serious Games has reached its 6th year of publication. The 21st issue features five regular papers dealing with a variety of aspects such as gamification, design methodologies, effective virtual environments.

Before going in the detail of the issue, I am proud to announce the 8th edition of the "Games and Learning Alliance" (Gala) Conference, that will be held in Athens, Greece, November 27-29, 2019. The conference will be chaired by Antonios Liapis, of the University of Malta. Co-chairs are Manuel Gentile (CNR-ITD), Manuel Ninaus (IWM Tuebingen) and Georgios Yannakakis (Univ. Malta). The conference will host demos and tutorials, with competitions for academic and business serious games. Best papers will be selected for the dedicated special issue that we will be published in September 2020.

The first paper of this issue, "An interdisciplinary perspective on gamification: Mechanics, psychological mediators and outcomes" [1], by Helmefalk, presents an overview on gamification analyzing 77 articles across 7 disciplines, namely health and wellness, crowdsourcing, sustainability, computer science, software development, business, and tourism. The findings highlighted potentially causal and correlational relationships between several concepts. This research presents an zzuniform perspective on gamification to better understand its functioning and potential impact.

"The Play Your Process Method for Business Process-Based Digital Game Design" [2], by Classe et al. addresses the challenge of providing a method for the design of serious business process games. The authors propose a method receiving business process models as input and comprising steps to (i) map business process elements into game design elements, game design and development, and (ii) evaluate games with game designers, process actors, and game players. A set of games were designed to validate the methodology. Players´ understanding regarding the touched processes increase after playing the games, even if fun and entertainment can still be improved.

"May the Plan be with you! A Usability Study of the Stimulated Planning Game Element Embedded in a MOOC Platform", by Antonaci et al. [3], presents the first prototype of the Stimulated Planning game element. Inspired by implementation intention theory and strategy games, it aims at enabling MOOC users to achieve their goals. The authors positively investigated SP usability via usability test, eye tracking and the retrospective think-aloud.

In "Lessons learned from implementing project management games" [4], Rumeser and Emsley applied a triangulation method that qualitatively blends the perspectives of project management practitioners, game designers, and learners. Their findings suggest principles of game realism, context, display, gameplay clarity, target audience, feedback, setting, debriefing, communication mode, and personalization. The study provides a useful comprehensive guideline for project management game design and implementation.

In "Applying constrained virtual environments to serious games for heritage" [5], Hanes and Stone propose "constrained virtual environments", which provide an environment through a series of reduced fidelity two-dimensional (2D) scenes without exhaustive detail. The authors present an exploratory experiment which discovered that participants experienced a similar sense of presence in the constrained environment to that of the 3D environment and rated the two games to be of similar

quality. Participants were equally likely to pursue further information on the subject matter afterwards and collected more information tokens from within the constrained environment. A subsequent interview with a museum expert explored opportunities for such games to be implemented in museum displays. A preliminary set of guidelines was also compiled for implementing future constrained virtual environments within serious games for heritage.

References

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