

# Hotspots



Funded by  
the European Union

## Why the Hotspots board game ?

### HOTSPOTS BLENDED LEARNING BOARD GAME

The Blended Learning Board Game is a result of the project HOTSPOTS Connecting European Suburbs through Smart Youth Work.

This game aims to reflect upon stereotypes and prejudices, enhancing youth empathy and critical thinking in order to avoid their reinforcement and to promote intercultural learning approaches.

### GAME'S OBJECTIVES

1. To reflect on young people's society pressure
2. To develop self-awareness on stereotypes and prejudices
3. To deconstruct the fear of differences
4. To understand the effects of labeling people





## STRUCTURE

- The game has been designed to be a pedagogical tool of non-formal education. The duration is about an hour, including 15 minutes for the debriefing session.
- In the board game, players are acting according to the figure/character received, while their main goal is to keep walking, passing through hotspots & challenges in order to arrive at the end.
- “Hotspots” is played by a minimum of four people, or four teams. The game can be played many times by the same people.
- The game always needs a game master (educator) facilitating the game.
- The questions are divided into four categories of real-life scenarios that youngsters may face, based on the outcomes of research implemented within Hotspots’ project (scan the QR code to read more).

## GAME MATERIALS



1 game board



Instruction's leaflet for players



Instruction's leaflet for the game master (facilitator)



4 figure cards



16 characteristic cards



8 cards with hotspot questions



2 cards with challenges



1 notepaper





## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

This game can be played with four players or four teams of players. Before you begin, print the 16 cards, one note paper (4 copies), the instruction leaflet (2 copies) and the board panel of the game. Place the card in piles, according to color, in front of you with the back of the card up.

### Step 1: Getting into the role

- Build your character with your figure and characteristics. Choose one green, blue, purple, yellow, orange card and keep it hidden from the team. Also, choose one random object as your pawn (examples: rubber, clip...).
- Take one note paper and describe (writing or drawing on it) your character. There are guiding questions on the leaflet to be answered.

### Step 2: Walking the path

- You walk the path, starting from the beginning and taking one step at a time. There are 30 steps on the path towards the end. 8 out of 30 steps are hotspots with questions. When/If you step into them, you randomly choose a question card. The facilitator reads aloud the question on the card, and you have to answer, according to your role.
- Two areas [bridge & cliffs] hide challenges. You face them when you arrive there, either by walking the path or when being sent there by the coordinator. The coordinator will read aloud the challenge card and you have to decide what you do.

### Step 3: Arriving to the finish line

- The game ends when all players win and reach the finish line. The game stops when all players arrive at the finish line. At the end, you reveal your character presenting the note paper and your cards to the team. A debriefing follows, led by the facilitator of the game.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GAME MASTER (Facilitator)

This game can be played with four players or four teams of players. Before you begin, print the 16 cards, one note paper (4 times), the instruction leaflet (2 times) and the board panel of the game. Place the card in piles, according to color, in front of you with the back of the card up.

### Step 1: Getting into the role [10 minutes]

- Ask one player to read aloud the instructions for players and afterwards to answer the questions on page 9.
- Ask the players to choose one gray card with the figure and ask them to keep it hidden from the rest of the team. Explain that the figures have animal heads and human clothes in order to avoid having stereotypical characters.
- Ask the players to choose their figure's characteristics, picking four cards with different colors (one card from the green, one from the purple, one from the yellow, and one from the orange). Explain that certain characteristics may become part of our identity, defying us in specific moments of our life. Participants are then asked to wear the shoes of their character with their characteristics and to play the game accordingly.
- Give a note paper to each player/team and ask them to describe their character in five minutes. They can describe the character writing or drawing on paper, imagining how their character acts in daily life. There are indicative questions on the top of the noter paper to be answered, helping them to get into their character shoes.

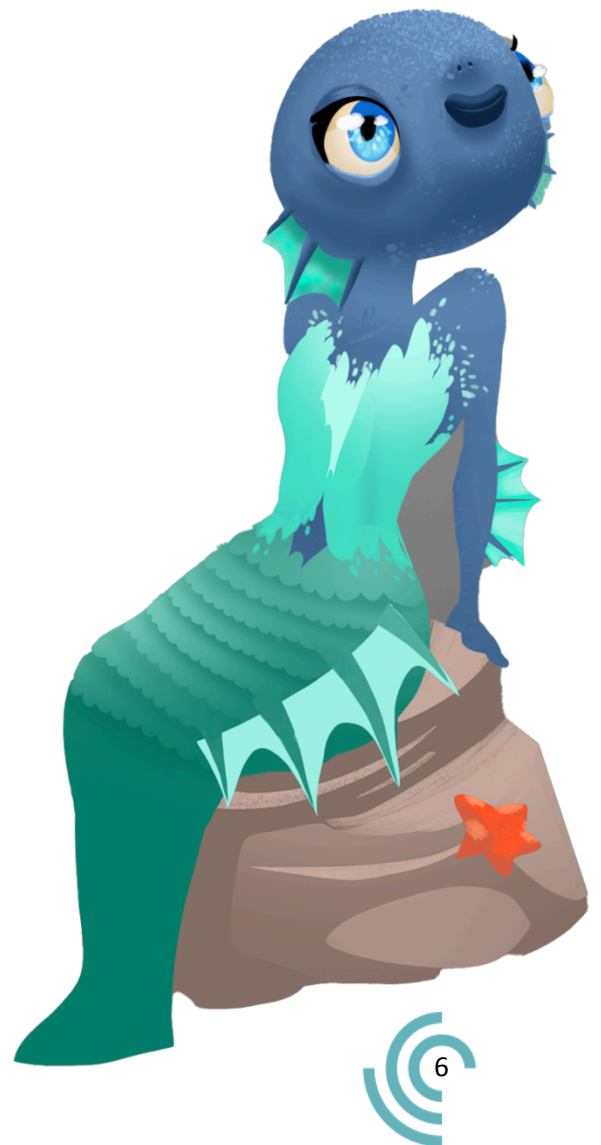
### Step 2: Walking the path [35 minutes]

- The players walk the path starting from the beginning and taking one step at a time. Explain to them that all the participants win when all of them arrive at the end. The game stops when all players arrive at the end. It's important to know it from the beginning. Notice if this fact will change the playing attitude all along the game.
- When/If they step into hotspot questions, they choose randomly a question card. You read aloud the questions and ask them to answer, according to their character and main characteristics. The questions are divided into four categories of real-life scenarios that youngsters may face, based on the research outcomes of Hotspot's project (school, job, environment, friends/online).

- When reaching the rocky areas of the path or the wooden bridge there are some challenges to enhance the cooperative dynamics among players. You read the relevant card and ask them to decide what you do.
- The game ends when all players arrive at the end. If there is only one player still walking, while the rest have arrived, we need to be patient, because for the purpose of this collaborative game it is very important that each one will arrive at the end.

### Debriefing [35 minutes]

- At the end, the players reveal their character, presenting the note paper and their cards to the team. It follows the debriefing led by the game master/facilitator. The Indicative questions for the debriefing/group discussion are included in the next section “Questions for debriefing session”.



## DEBRIEFING SESSION INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GAME MASTER

**Debriefing:** in the non-formal education activities, the debriefing is a session normally run right after the activity itself and which is played with the group. The debriefing can be considered a kind of group discussion. When the non-formal education activity it's over, the group remains in plenary, possibly in a circle, to reflect upon the activity. Therefore the debriefing session is a tool to reflect on what has happened, on the feelings experienced, on the major elements noticed and on the workshop's main subject. The debriefing is therefore a valuable tool for individuals and group learning where the final knowledge is not coming in a top-down approach, but in a bottom-up perspective, because it is built on the collective knowledge created during the game.

**Food for thoughts:** below you can find a list of tips and suggestions for the debriefing, to encourage the active participation of everyone, and to boost the participative approach during the discussion.

Being this game structured on the main non-formal education principles of inclusiveness and horizontality, please consider the elements listed below only as inspiring food for thoughts and guiding suggestions to be taken into account. You are not forced to use them all, because it always depends on the group structure, needs and compositions. For this reason, flexibility along the process is the key.

Be ready to change and modify the structure and the questions accordingly to the young people involved in the debriefing/discussion.

### Tips for the game master:

- As a first step, ask participants to reveal their cards and character.
- Before starting, run a small de-rolling session to have participants exit from their character.
- Conduct the discussion in a circle to promote horizontality and active listening.
- Ask the open-ended questions with the proposed order, if it suits the needs of your group.
- Ask the questions to the whole group (not to a specific person) and leave them the proper time to reflect and to answer.



- Allow the players the choice to respond or not without imposing or urging any particular answer.
- Avoid expressing your point of view and give neutral feedback to their answers.

### De-rolling

Once the facilitator concludes the activity, participants are asked to gather in a circle, encouraged to unwind, and instructed to engage in deep breathing exercises. It is important that participants will steam out from the energies and emotions they felt during the activity and that are back on themselves (if they feel they are still wearing the shoes of the characters performed before, the debriefing will not be effective at all and it will simply generate confusion).



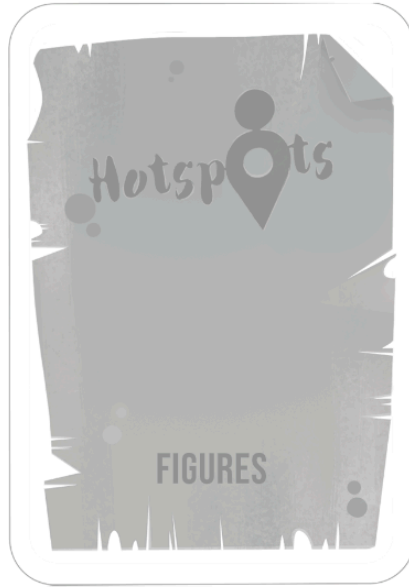
## QUESTIONS FOR THE DEBRIEFING SESSION

- How did you feel during the game?
- Which was your character and how did they move through the game?
- How did you feel when the other players started to move quicker than you?
- How did you feel when the other players started to move slower than you?
- In the wooden bridge challenge, what was the decision you took? How did you take such a decision and why?
- At the cliff's challenge, what made you decide to help the others moving forward or continue walking?
- Would you act differently, now that you know the identities of the other players? If yes, how?
- Now the game it's over, what would you do differently to support the other players?
- Do you see any parallel between what happened in this activity and the real world? If yes, what?



# Game Elements



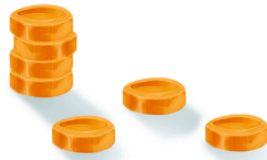


## LOW LEVEL INCOME



**BORN IN A CONTEXT WITH**

## MIDDLE LEVEL INCOME



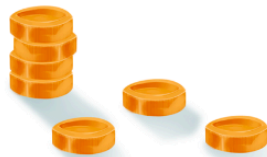
**BORN IN A CONTEXT WITH**

## HIGH LEVEL INCOME



**BORN IN A CONTEXT WITH**

## MIDDLE LEVEL INCOME



**BORN IN A CONTEXT WITH**



## **CISGENDER PERSON**

ADJECTIVE REFERRED TO PEOPLE WHOSE GENDER  
IDENTITY MATCHES THE SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH

## **AGENDER PERSON**

LITERALLY "GENDERLESS", THIS TERM REFERS TO  
PEOPLE WHO DO NOT IDENTIFY WITH ANY GENDER IDE

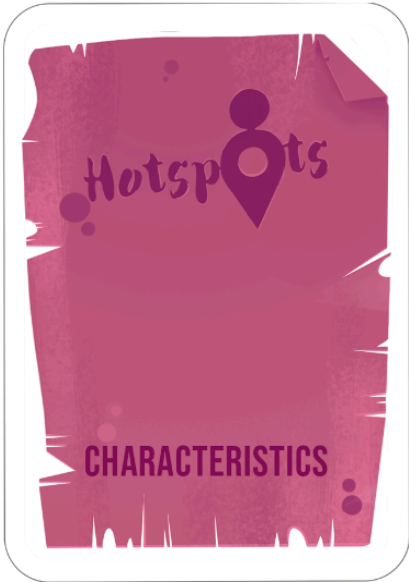
## **NO BINARY PERSON**

TERM THAT REFERS TO A CONCEPT OF GENDER THAT DOES  
NOT FALL INTO THE TRADITIONAL MALE/FEMALE  
CATEGORIES.

## **TRANSGENDER PERSON**

UMBRELLA ADJECTIVE USED TO DESCRIBE PEOPLE  
WHOSE GENDER IDENTITIES AND/OR GENDER  
EXPRESSION ARE NOT WHAT IS TYPICALLY EXPECTED FOR  
THE SEX TO WHICH THEY WERE ASSIGNED AT BIRTH





JOB  
**STUDENT**

JOB  
**UNEMPLOYED**

JOB  
**TEACHER**

JOB  
**INFLUENCER**



RELIGION  
**MUSLIM**

RELIGION  
**ATHEIST**

RELIGION  
**JEWISH**

RELIGION  
**CHRISTIAN**



**DISCRIMINATION**  
**TOPIC: SCHOOL**

**YOU ARE ATTENDING A HIGH SCHOOL CLASS IN A EUROPEAN COUNTRY. HAVE YOU EVER ENCOUNTER RUMOURS, BULLYING OR ISOLATION/DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE YOU OWN A CERTAIN CHARACTERISTIC?**

**IF NO, TAKE TWO STEPS FORWARD.  
IF YES, STAY WHERE YOU ARE.**

**CURRICULUM / MENTAL HEALTH**  
**TOPIC: SCHOOL**

**DURING YOUR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE, DID YOU HAVE FACED CONFUSION, STRESS AND/OR ANXIETY BECAUSE OF THE BUSY SCHEDULE AND OVERLOADED CURRICULUM?**

**IF YES, MOVE ONE STEP BACKWARDS.  
IF NO, MOVE ONE STEP FORWARD.**

**NEED OF BELONGING / CONFORMITY**  
**TOPIC: FRIENDS/ONLINE**

**HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN A SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE (FOR EXAMPLE THE BLUE WHALE CHALLENGE) THAT YOU KNEW THAT WILL BRING NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES BUT YOU DID IT TO FEEL PART OF THE GROUP?**

**IF YES, MOVE ONE STEP BACKWARDS.  
IF NO, MOVE ONE STEP FORWARD.**

**POVERTY / RESOURCES**  
**TOPIC: FAMILY**

**DURING YOUR SCHOOL TIMES HAVE YOU EVER FELT THAT YOU HAD LESS OPPORTUNITIES THAN YOUR PEERS (FOR EXAMPLE: DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL TO HELP AROUND THE HOUSEHOLD OR WORK, NOT HAVING THE SAME QUALITY OF FOOD OR RESOURCES TO PARTICIPATE IN SOME ACTIVITIES)?**

**IF YES, WHEREVER YOU ARE, MOVE TO THE FIRST STEP OF THE CLIFFS. THE FACILITATOR HAS A CHALLENGE FOR YOU.**

**IF NO, STAY STILL.**

**SELF-ESTEEM**  
**TOPIC: FAMILY**

**IN YOUR FAMILY EXPERIENCE, DID YOU EVER FACED PRESSURE AND FELT PUSHED BY YOUR PARENTS TO FULFIL THEIR NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS (AS IF, THROUGH YOU THEY WISH TO SATISFY THEIR OWN DREAMS)?**

**IF YES, TAKE ONE STEP BACKWARDS.  
IF NOT, MOVE THREE STEP FORWARD.**

**MENTAL HEALTH/ CANCEL CULTURE**  
**TOPIC: FRIENDS/ONLINE**

**DO YOU FEEL FREE TO SHARE ONLINE WHATEVER TYPE OF POST RELATED TO YOUR LIFE, WITHOUT BEING JUDGED BECAUSE OF YOUR PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS?**

**IF YES, WHEREVER YOU ARE, MOVE TO THE FIRST STEP OF THE BRIDGE. THE COORDINATOR HAS A CHALLENGE FOR YOU.  
IF NO, MOVE ONE STEP FORWARD.**

**WELL-BEING**  
**TOPIC: ENVIRONMENT**

**ARE THERE ENOUGH YOUTH CENTERS OR SPORT FACILITIES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD THAT YOU CAN USE EASILY?**

**IF NO, MOVE ONE STEP FORWARD.  
IF YES, TAKE TWO STEPS BACKWARDS.**

**LANDSCAPE**  
**TOPIC: ENVIRONMENT**

**FROM THE PLACE WHERE YOU LIVE, IS IT EASY TO REACH THE CENTER OF THE CITY OR OTHER IMPORTANT PLACES OF USE (LIKE HOSPITAL, ETC.)?**

**IF YES, TAKE ON STEP BACKWARDS.  
IF NO, MOVE THREE STEP FORWARD.**



## NOTE PAPER

Take a deep breath and some time to think about your character (close your eyes if necessary).

How do you imagine your character?

How old are they?

What do they look like?

What are their main characteristics?

What is their way of acting?

Where do they live? With who?

What are they doing right now?

How is their routine?

What do they like to do in their free time?

What do their friends look like?

Describe (writing or drawing) the character that you represent.





## HOTSPOTS BLENDED LEARNING BOARD GAME

The Blended Learning Board Game is the Project Result 3 of the project HOTSPOTS Connecting European Suburbs through Smart Youth Work and it is part of the project's educational package, conceived to equip youth workers, peer educators and young facilitators from different European countries with tools and interactive methods for intercultural learning activities, where the online and the offline sphere are present and in some cases, combined. Moreover it is a powerful tool for the young people to reflect upon the subject of stereotypes and prejudices, enhancing youth empathy and critical thinking in order to avoid their reinforcement and to promote intercultural learning approaches.

HOTSPOTS Connecting European Suburbs through Smart Youth Work is a Cooperation Partnership in the field of youth, 26 months long, supported by the Erasmus+ Programme, Italian National Agency for Youth, coordinated by Lunaria and involving partners from Italy, Finland, France, Portugal, Romania and Spain.

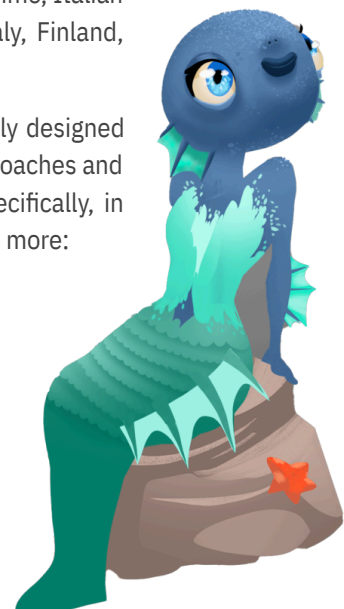
The project aims to develop non formal education tools and methods within a newly designed pedagogical approach, to enhance both online and offline intercultural learning approaches and attitudes among young people coming from suburban backgrounds, and more specifically, in national and transnational activities, within the Erasmus+ program. Scan below to see more:



**Toolkit for diagnostic and tool sharing**



**Handbook for a smart youthwork**



INFINITIVITY  
DESIGN LABS



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