



February 2025

D6.4

Preliminary Exploitation Plan



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Grant Agreement no. 101132585

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: **GAME-ER**
 Title: Gaming Clusters Across Multiple European Regions
 Coordinator: **INOVA+ - INNOVATION SERVICES, SA** (Portugal)
 Call: HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01
 Type: HORIZON Research and Innovation Actions
 Topic-ID: HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01-06

Start: **1 March 2024**
 End: **28 February 2027**
 Duration: **36 months**

Website: **www.game-er.eu**

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9	KLASTER HRVATSKIH PROIZVODACA VIDEOIGARA	CGDA	Croatia
10	GAME ONLY	GO	France
11	HERNÍ KLASTR Z.S.	HK	Czechia
12	MUNICIPIO DO FUNDAO	CMF	Portugal
13	THE UNIVERSITY COURT OF ABERTAY UNIVERSITY	AU	United Kingdom

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Acknowledgements

This deliverable was developed based on collective efforts from all partners of the GAME-ER consortium.

DELIVERABLE DETAILS

Number: **D6.4**
Title: **Preliminary Exploitation Plan**
Lead beneficiary: **SPIN**
Work package: **WP6**

Dissemination level: **Public.**

Nature: **Report**

Due date: **28/02/2025**
Submission date: **28/02/2025**

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Reviewers: **Luís Leça, INOVA+; Stefano De Paoli, AU.**

VERSION HISTORY:

Date	Version No.	Author	Note
07.02.2025	0.1	Tirnavean Nicoleta, Renzo Giorgio Gentile, Roberto Nugnes (SPIN); Christian Violi, (NR).	First draft sent to internal revision.
17.02.2025	0.2	Tirnavean Nicoleta, Renzo Giorgio Gentile, Roberto Nugnes (SPIN); Christian Violi, (NR).	First draft sent to the coordinator and scientific coordinator.
18.02.2025	0.3	Stefano De Paoli, AU	Revisions of the scientific coordinator.
20.02.2025	0.4	Tirnavean Nicoleta, Renzo Giorgio Gentile, Roberto Nugnes (SPIN); Christian Violi, (NR).	Integration of the feedback received from the scientific coordinator.
21.02.2025	1.0	Luís Leça, INOVA+	Revision and input of the coordinator.
27/ 02/2025	1.1	Tirnavean Nicoleta, Renzo Giorgio Gentile, Roberto Nugnes (SPIN); Christian Violi, (NR).	Integration of inputs and updated version sent to the coordinator.
28/02/2025	1.2	Luís Leça, INOVA+	Final Version Submitted

Glossary and Abbreviations

Cultural and Creative Industries	CCIs
Interactive Methodological Toolkit	IMT
Intellectual Property Rights	IPR
Key Exploitable Asset	KEA
Key Performance Indicator	KPI
Memorandum of Understanding	MoU
Work Package	WP

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This deliverable, **D6.4 – Preliminary Exploitation Plan**, establishes the foundational framework for the **GAME-ER** project's exploitation process. The primary objective is to outline the initial strategic steps that will ensure the effective and comprehensive utilization of the project's Key Exploitable Assets (KEAs).

The deliverable presents core definitions and key concepts related to the exploitation process, providing guidance to project partners on these foundational ideas. This section ensures that all partners have a shared understanding of exploitation strategies, setting a solid foundation for the knowledge transfer and value creation process beyond the project's lifecycle.

It then provides an overview of the identified KEAs, detailing their potential impact, target groups, and exploitation pathways. The deliverable outlines preliminary exploitation strategies, including key market opportunities, intellectual property considerations, and stakeholder engagement plans. The approach ensures that the project's outputs can be effectively leveraged across different social, academic, and economic contexts.

In the later sections, the deliverable assesses **GAME-ER's** exploitation strategy and sustainability framework, detailing the planned Exploitation Strategy Timeline and activities such as licensing opportunities, collaboration with stakeholders, and policy recommendations. These efforts aim to establish a structured exploitation roadmap that fosters long-term sustainability and impact for the project's results.

Overall, **D6.4** serves as a foundation for the Final Exploitation Plan (**D6.5**), which will be delivered in M30. The final version will provide a comprehensive roadmap, defining tailored exploitation models and strategies to maximize the impact and market value of the project's KEAs. Additionally, it will establish clear commercialization pathways, including potential licensing agreements and partnerships, ensuring the continued uptake and sustainability of **GAME-ER's** outputs.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Overview

The Gaming Clusters Across Multiple European Regions (**GAME-ER**) project aims to explore the emergence, development, and sustainability of video game clusters, with a specific focus on local and regional clusters. The project will develop a comprehensive Interactive Methodological Toolkit, featuring policy and practical recommendations designed to assist local and national policymakers in establishing or enhancing Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) clusters within their regions or cities. Existing research often focuses on clusters outside Europe or within major metropolitan areas like Helsinki or Hamburg. However, **GAME-ER** addresses a critical gap by studying the dynamics of smaller, regional clusters, which play a significant role in driving innovation, growth, and regional cohesion. The project's core component involves a comparative analysis of six clusters in five European countries—France, the Czech Republic, Italy, Scotland, and Portugal. These clusters were chosen for their diverse levels of maturity and unique characteristics, including concentrations of creative talent and companies. In addition to this comparative study, **GAME-ER** will conduct a Europe-wide analysis of the spatial organization of the video games industry, specifically focusing on local and regional ecosystems. This research, conducted in collaboration with policymakers and industry stakeholders, will guide the formulation of actionable recommendations using a participatory approach. **GAME-ER** brings together 15 partners from 9 countries, encompassing expertise in social sciences, humanities, policymaking, business, and innovation.

1.2 Objectives of the deliverable

The **Preliminary Exploitation Plan** establishes the foundation for the **GAME-ER project's exploitation process**, setting the stage for the **effective utilization and long-term sustainability** of project outcomes. Its primary objectives are to:

- **Define Key Exploitation concepts:** Establish a common understanding of key terminology and concepts related to exploitation and knowledge transfer
- **Identify Key Exploitable Assets (KEAs):** Identify and describe the project's main outputs with the potential for further exploitation and value creation.
- **Outline Preliminary Exploitation Strategies:** Develop initial strategies for maximizing the impact and value of each KEA, considering various exploitation channels and stakeholder needs.
- **Establish the foundation for future knowledge transfer and sustainability:** Prepare the foundation for the subsequent phases of the exploitation process, ensuring the long-term sustainability and utilization of project results.

1.3 Exploitation in Horizon Europe

Exploitation refers to the process of transforming research outcomes and innovative ideas into tangible benefits, whether economic, social, or academic. It involves actively leveraging newly acquired knowledge or technologies to create value by developing new products and services, enhancing existing processes, or shaping policy decisions.

The European Commission defines exploitation as:

“the use of results in further research and innovation activities other than those covered by the action concerned, including among other things, commercial exploitation such as developing, creating, manufacturing and marketing a product or process, creating and providing a service, or in standardization.”¹

In this context, the term "results" is broad and encompasses any tangible or intangible outcomes of the project, such as data, know-how, methodologies, or insights, whether they are intellectual property-protected or not. This includes any rights associated with the outputs, such as Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).²

Distinguishing Exploitation from Dissemination

A crucial component of the exploitation process is dissemination and knowledge transfer, which involves sharing project results with relevant stakeholders through scientific publications, policy briefs, conferences, training programs, and licensing mechanisms.

However, it is essential to differentiate dissemination from exploitation (as illustrated in **Figure 1**). While dissemination focuses on making project results freely and publicly available, exploitation ensures that these results are effectively used and applied—whether for commercial, societal, or policy-driven purposes.

¹ European Commission. *Horizon Europe Programme Guide*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf

² European Commission. (n.d.). *Results*. Funding & tenders opportunities. Available at: <https://www.eumonitor.eu/9353000/1/j9vvik7m1c3gyxp/vku096w1i2tm>

Dissemination Make knowledge and results publicly available free-of-charge	Exploitation Make concrete use of results for commercial, societal and political purposes
For whom For those who can learn and benefit from the results, such as: scientists, industry, public authorities, policymakers, civil society	For whom For those who can take the results forward or invest in them, such as: researchers, stakeholders, industry (also SMEs), public authorities, policymakers, civil society
How Publishing results in: ✓ Scientific magazines ✓ Scientific and/or targeted conferences ✓ Databases	How ✓ Creating roadmaps, prototypes, software ✓ Sharing knowledge, skills, data
When ✓ Anytime, as soon as results become available ✓ Up to four years after the end of the project	When ✓ Towards the end of the action and beyond, as soon as exploitable results are available ✓ Up to four years after the end of the project
Why ✓ Maximise the impact of the action ✓ Allow other researchers to go a step forward ✓ Contribute to the advancement of world class knowledge ✓ Make scientific results a common good	Why ✓ Lead to new legislation or recommendations ✓ For the benefit of innovation, the economy and society ✓ Help to tackle a problem and respond to an existing demand
It is a legal obligation! Article 17 of Horizon Europe Grant Agreement	It is a legal obligation! Annex 5: Specific Rules and Article 16 of Horizon Europe Grant Agreement

Figure 1 - Differences between Dissemination and Exploitation processes. Source: European Union³

The exploitation process strives for sustainability, ensuring the long-term impact and that the results of the project are used by the stakeholders, with the possibility of being transferred to other contexts. Consequently, the aim of the **GAME-ER** Preliminary Exploitation Plan is to describe the starting point of the activities that should be undertaken to guarantee the continuation of the results after the end of the granted period of 36 months.

³ **European Union.** (n.d.). *Communication, dissemination & exploitation what is the difference and why they all matter.* Horizon Europe

1.4 Key Concepts of the Exploitation Process

The following key concepts form the foundation of the **GAME-ER** exploitation process, guiding the effective utilization, sustainability, and impact of project outcomes:

Table 1 - Terms used in the Preliminary Exploitation Plan

Key Concept	Description
Business Model Canvas Analysis	A Business Model Canvas analysis is a strategic management tool used to visualize and assess a business or project's key components on a single page. It provides a structured overview of the value proposition, customer segments, channels, customer relationships, revenue streams, key activities, key resources, key partnerships, and cost structure. In the context of GAME-ER , this analysis will be applied to explore and evaluate various options for exploiting the project's results, particularly the Interactive Methodological Toolkit, to determine the most viable and impactful pathways to market or wider adoption.
Value Chain Analysis	This analysis examines the series of activities of GAME-ER from initial development to final use. Analyzing the value chain helps identify where value is created at each stage, understand the costs associated with each activity, and pinpoint opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance the value delivered to end-users.
Stakeholder Analysis	The analysis will involve identifying all end-users, groups, or organizations (stakeholders) who are affected by or can affect the exploitation of GAME-ER 's results. This includes understanding their interests, needs, influence, and potential impact on the project. Stakeholder analysis informs engagement strategies, communication plans, and helps build partnerships to support the successful exploitation of the project's outputs.
Risk Analysis	This systematically identifies, analyses, and evaluates potential risks that could affect the successful exploitation of GAME-ER 's results. This includes assessing the likelihood and potential impact of various risks, such as market changes, competition, technical challenges, and IPR issues.
Regulatory Aspects for Exploitation	Examination of the IPR associated with GAME-ER 's output. It will involve determining ownership of the IPR, evaluating the potential for patenting or other forms of protection, and developing strategies for managing and licensing the IPR to partners or third parties. This may involve drafting and negotiating license agreements, Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), or other contractual arrangements to ensure the proper and controlled exploitation of the IPR while generating value for the project and its partners.
Sustainability	In the context of the GAME-ER project, sustainability refers to the long-term viability and impact of the project's outputs, particularly the Interactive Methodological Toolkit, beyond the project's funding period. It

	involves ensuring that the Toolkit remains accessible, relevant, and continuously updated to support the development of the European video game industry and CCI clusters in the long term.
Commercialization	Commercialization refers to the process of bringing the project's outputs, particularly the Interactive Methodological Toolkit, to market to generate revenue and ensure its wider adoption. This can be achieved through various pathways, such as licensing the Toolkit to interested parties, developing initiatives based on Toolkit, or offering commercial services (e.g. consultancy) related to its implementation and utilisation.
Open Innovation	Open innovation is a collaborative approach to innovation that involves sharing knowledge and resources with external partners to accelerate the development and exploitation of the project's outputs. In the context of GAME-ER , open innovation can involve collaborating with other research institutions, industry partners, and policymakers to further develop, disseminate, and implement the Interactive Methodological Toolkit.
Knowledge Transfer	Knowledge transfer refers to the process of sharing knowledge, expertise, and research findings generated throughout the GAME-ER project with various stakeholders, including policymakers, industry professionals, researchers, and the broader public. Effective knowledge transfer ensures that the project's outputs are widely disseminated and utilized to support the development of the European video game industry and CCI clusters.
IPR Management	IPR management refers to the strategic management of intellectual property rights associated with the GAME-ER project's outputs, particularly the Interactive Methodological Toolkit. This involves identifying, protecting, and leveraging intellectual property assets to maximize their value and ensure their proper utilization and commercialization.

2. EXPLOITATION STRATEGY WITHIN GAME-ER

This chapter presents the **GAME-ER** exploitation strategy, detailing the processes and framework designed to maximize impact and ensure the long-term sustainability of the project's outputs. It outlines the identification and evaluation of Key Exploitable Assets, the development of tailored business and action plans, and the implementation of comprehensive exploitation strategies. Additionally, this chapter includes a visual representation of the exploitation timeline through a Gantt chart, illustrating key milestones and activities.

2.1 Roadmap of Activities

This section outlines the roadmap of activities for developing and implementing **GAME-ER**'s Preliminary Exploitation Strategy. The Preliminary Exploitation Plan is structured as follows:

- **Baseline Assessment (1):** Provides a definition of the exploitation process and outlines the key concepts used in the **GAME-ER** project exploitation strategy.
- **Exploitation Strategy Definition (2):** Describes the exploitation framework, channels, and procedures for ensuring the effective use and sustainability of **GAME-ER** outputs.
- **Key Exploitable Assets Definition (3):** Consists of a detailed identification and description of each KEA, including its objectives, target groups, and potential impact, highlighting their role in the exploitation process.
- **Strategic Framework for GAME-ER KEAs (4):** Introduces the evaluation framework for assessing KEA value and exploitation potential, including the circular strategy to ensure long-term sustainability and scalability.
- **GUEST Methodology (5):** Defines the GUEST methodology, a structured approach to innovation, and explains how it will be applied to KEAs. This section also details how the methodology will support the management and implementation of exploitation activities.
- **Impact Assessment and Evaluation of Exploitation Activities (6):** Definition of the KPIs that will measure the success of the exploitation strategy. It also outlines dissemination activities, stakeholder engagement efforts, communication strategies, and planned next steps to maximize impact.

2.2 Exploitation Framework

The **GAME-ER** exploitation strategy will be implemented in four distinct stages, ensuring a structured and sustainable approach to the utilization and long-term impact of the project's Key Exploitable Assets:

Stage 1: Identification and Evaluation

This phase focuses on identifying and assessing the commercial viability of all potentially exploitable results. It involves conducting a thorough analysis of each KEA, considering factors such as potential target markets, their size; the competitive landscape and existing solutions; the value proposition of each KEA and the resources required for further development and commercialization. In addition, an IPR assessment will be performed to identify existing IPR and the potential for new protection and to develop an IPR management plan to safeguard project outputs.

Stage 2: Business/Action Plan Development

In this phase, business/action plans will be developed. This includes conducting a deeper analysis of specific target markets for the KEAs and developing a comprehensive strategy. This strategy will define distribution channels (online platforms, partnerships, etc.) and plan dissemination and promotion activities (conferences, publications, webinars, etc.). Furthermore, this stage will outline the operational requirements for commercialization, including technology transfer, licensing, as well as financial resources and investment needs, team and infrastructure requirements. Finally, a risk assessment will be conducted to identify potential challenges to commercialization and develop mitigation strategies.

Stage 3: Exploitation Plan Creation

This stage focuses on creating and implementing comprehensive exploitation plans that ensure the sustained impact of KEAs beyond the project's lifespan. Detailed exploitation plans will be developed for the KEA, outlining specific actions, timelines, responsibilities, resource allocation, budget, and measurable KPIs to track progress. A robust monitoring and evaluation process will be established to assess performance against KPIs and the overall effectiveness of the exploitation plans.

Stage 4: Sustainability Plan

To ensure the continued impact of KEAs after project completion, a long-term sustainability plan will be developed. This will include the transfer of the main KEA to either one party in charge of exploitation and valorizations (through e.g. future investments) or to various parties (through e.g. a Memorandum of Understanding - MoU). The main aim of this phase will be to ensure that the main exploitation assets will continue to live and can be further updated after the end of funding and therefore continue to deliver impact in the medium/long term.

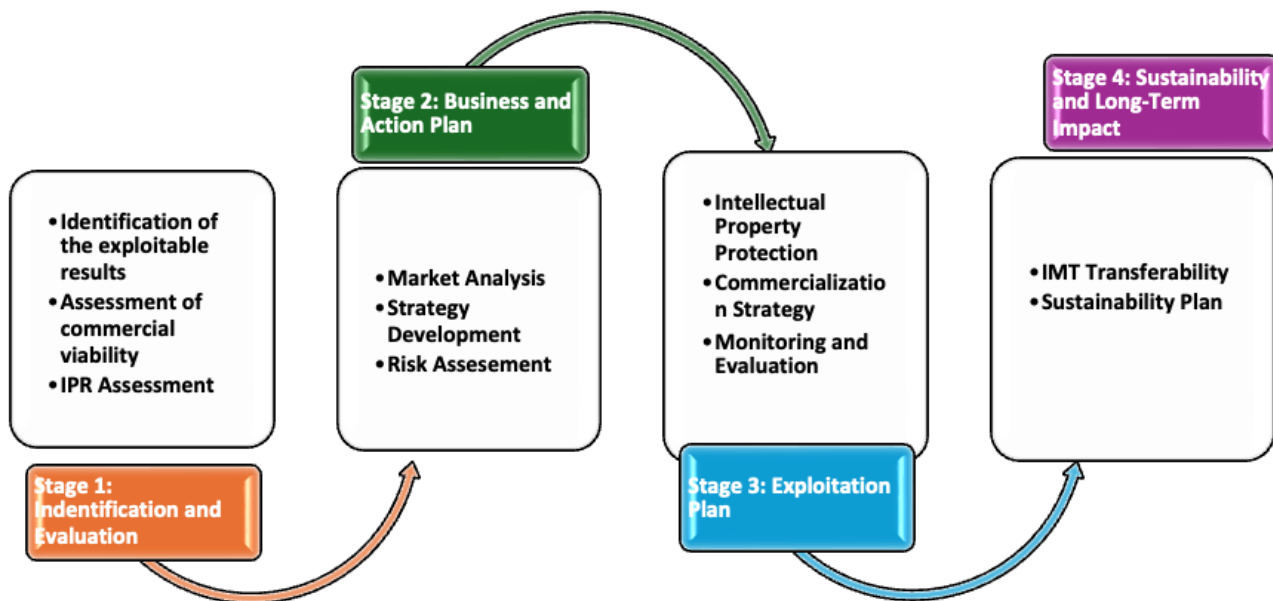


Figure 2 - Exploitation strategy graphical representation

2.3 Exploitation Channels

To maximize the impact and ensure a wide reach of the KEAs, **GAME-ER** will adopt a diverse and strategic approach to exploitation, utilizing multiple channels to disseminate project outcomes and engage with various stakeholders:

Internal Exploitation: **GAME-ER** partners will actively integrate the knowledge and tools generated into their own operations and service offerings. The internal exploitation ensures that the project's benefits extend directly into the partners' activities, enhancing their practices and maximizing the value derived from the research (for instance, the industrial partners like **OGR**, **GDACZ**, **HK** will integrate the Interactive Methodological Toolkit in their day-to-day activities; academic partners like e.g. **AU** or **UNITO** will exploit the project results through publications and further research).

Collaboration: Partners will actively collaborate with stakeholders, including policymakers, industry professionals, and researchers, to share knowledge, co-create solutions, and foster the adoption of project outputs. This collaborative approach ensures that the project's benefits extend beyond the

consortium, leading to broader impact and sustainable outcomes. For example, the **T5.3: Validation Webinars** with policy & decision makers will present and discuss interim results with policy and decision makers and with the support of the project advisory board, around the policy and practical recommendations, and have validation sessions. Participation will further be open to all potentially interested parties and the webinars will take the form of a discussion. Representatives of each of the clusters will also be invited to participate to offer first-hand accounts of their experiences and challenges.

Conferencing and Networking: **GAME-ER** partners will participate in conferences, workshops, and networking events to disseminate findings, engage with stakeholders, and build connections within the gaming industry and CCI clusters. In WP2, for example, the main objective is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the spatial organization of the European video game clusters. Specific objectives include comprehensive identification of video game clusters in EU countries and regions, characterization of cluster structure according to firm and labor characteristics, analysis of spatial complementarities with other CCIs, and analysis of the relationship between video game industry clusters and indicators of industrial and innovation policies at national and regional levels. The networking activities undertaken as part of WP2 will help to disseminate **GAME-ER**'s findings, build connections with key stakeholders, and foster collaboration in the field of European video game cluster development.

Further Research: Project outputs will be used as a foundation for further research, generating new knowledge and contributing to the advancement of the field. For example, Comparative Typology (produced in WP3) will be used by **CRG, AU, UNITO, CU, OGR, HK, CMF, GO, and EP** to share knowledge in open access in both scientific publications and other mediums (e.g., online videos, newsletters). This will allow academic partners to increase their international standing in research on CCIs, and support them in obtaining further funding, or allow the participant researchers to have the related publications included in e.g. national assessment of research (like the one conducted by ANVUR in Italy, or the REF in the UK). Cluster project partners (**OGR, HK, CMF, GO, AU**) will see their innovative position and regional innovation system to be increasingly recognized as leading in the European context and beyond.

Educational Materials: **GAME-ER** outputs will be transformed into educational materials, such as training modules, case studies, and online resources, to facilitate knowledge transfer and capacity building. The spatial analysis of CCIs clusters in relation to regions (WP2) will be used by **UNITO** to share knowledge in open access in both scientific publications as well as in other mediums (e.g., online videos, newsletters). This will allow **UNITO** researchers to strengthen their position in the field of economic research on regional innovation systems.

To further enhance the exploitation of project results, **GAME-ER** will leverage various tools and resources made available by the European Commission. These tools include the **Horizon Results Booster**, which provides support for the development and implementation of exploitation strategies; the Horizon Results Platform, which offers a platform for showcasing project results and connecting with potential investors and partners; [InvestEU](#), which provides funding opportunities for innovative projects; and the Innovation Radar, which identifies and promotes high-potential innovations from EU-funded research projects.

2.4 Exploitation Strategy and Sustainability Timeline

To ensure the effective implementation and long-term impact of the **GAME-ER** project's exploitation strategy, a clear timeline outlining key activities and milestones will be established. This timeline will guide the execution of various exploitation actions, ensuring that they are aligned with the overall project timeline and that the project's valuable outputs achieve lasting impact and contribute to the advancement of the European video game industry and CCI clusters. The following Gantt chart provides a visual representation of the timeline:

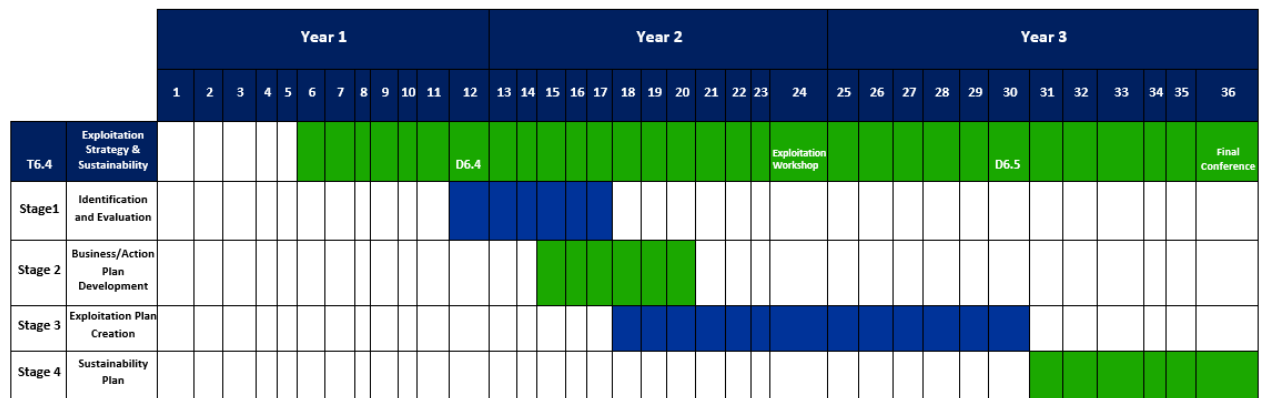


Figure 3- Exploitation Activities Timeline

3. DEFINITION OF THE KEY EXPLOITATION ASSETS

GAME-ER's core objective is to investigate the emergence, development, and sustainability of video game clusters, specifically those located outside major metropolitan areas. The research will be based on multidimensional case studies (conducted in five European countries: France, Czechia, Portugal, Italy, and Scotland). Moreover, the project will develop a comprehensive understanding of the spatial patterns and factors influencing the European video game cluster ecosystem, and its connections to regional innovation and Cultural and Creative Industries ecosystems. The innovative aspect of this approach is the systematic integration of established comparative methods (both quantitative and qualitative) into research on European video game clusters to understand local-level development paths. **GAME-ER**'s research and innovation aspects will culminate in an interactive and user-friendly "Methodological Toolkit" website. The toolkit will provide recommendations for local, national, and European policymakers, along with best practices, gap identification, and action methods for various stakeholders (industry, companies, investors, incubators, educational institutions, innovators). Furthermore, the project partners have identified the main exploitable assets:

Table 2 - GAME-ER's identified Key Exploitable Assets

No.	Name of the KEA	WP	Partners involved in the Exploitation
KEA 1	Interactive Methodological Toolkit	WP5	All.
KEA 2	Comparative Typology of European Video Game Clusters	WP3	CRG; AU; UNITO; CU; OGR; HK; CMF; GO; EP.
KEA 3	Spatial Analysis of CCIs Clusters in Relation to Regions	WP2	UNITO
KEA 4	Review of European Innovation Policies	WP2; WP5	CUNI; UNITO; GDACZ; AU; CRG; INOVA+; CGDA.

3.1 KEA1: Interactive Methodological Toolkit

A key objective of the exploitation process is to ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of the **GAME-ER** Toolkit beyond the project's funding period. To achieve this, the consortium will explore various strategies and channels to secure Toolkit's future. All partners will contribute to Toolkit's sustainability by exploring different avenues for its continued development and maintenance. This includes considering further takeover and investment in Toolkit (e.g., monetary or in-kind) by **GAME-ER** partners and external stakeholders. To maximize impact and reach, the consortium will actively engage with relevant EU associations, sharing the Toolkit and inviting their participation in its further development and dissemination.

The already involved associations in the project (e.g., **GDACZ**, **CGDA**) will play a particularly active role in this effort. The involved clusters, such as **OGR**, have expressed their commitment to integrating the Toolkit into their everyday activities after the project concludes. They will utilize the Toolkit to support their operations, organize capacity-building workshops, and conduct training programs. The Final Conference, scheduled for M36, will serve as a key milestone for promoting the **GAME-ER** Toolkit and other project results. This event will provide a platform for showcasing Toolkit's value and engaging with potential stakeholders for its continued development and adoption.

Table 3 - Interactive Methodological Toolkit

Interactive Methodological Toolkit	
WP	The Interactive Methodological Toolkit will be developed under WP5, more specifically T5.4
Lead Partner	GDACZ
Partners involved in the development	All partners will be involved in the development process.
Description	The Interactive Methodological Toolkit will be an online resource (User-friendly website format) with data visualizations, maps, videos, and other multimedia elements. It will present evidence-based policy recommendations derived from research (spatial & comparative cluster analysis) on fostering CCI cluster development, particularly in the video game sector.
Target Groups	Policy and decision-makers at local, regional, national, and European levels; researchers; CCI cluster members and SMEs.
Impact	It will provide the best practices to support policymakers and decision-makers in developing and strengthening CCI clusters in the video game industry. It will influence policy and strategic decision-making at local, regional, national, and European levels.
Innovative aspects	Foundation in evidence-based policy recommendations from comprehensive research; Interactive multimedia elements for engaging and accessible presentation. Iterative development incorporating stakeholder feedback. Focus on long-term sustainability.
Partners involved in the Exploitation	All partners will be involved in the exploitation process

3.2 KEA2: Comparative Typology of European Video Game Clusters

The exploitation paths for Comparative Typology will be considered by sharing the knowledge in open access in scientific publications, while other contexts will be considered (newsletters, online resources). Disseminating knowledge through this method will enhance the international standing of academic partners in CCI research, support further funding, and contribute to national research assessments. Additionally, cluster project partners will gain recognition for their innovative approaches and regional innovation systems, establishing them as leaders in the European context and beyond.

Table 4 - Comparative Typology of European Video Game Clusters

Comparative Typology of European Video Game Clusters	
WP	WP3
Lead Partner	CRG
Partners involved in the development	CRG, AU, UNITO, CU, OGR, HK, CMF, GO, EP
Description	Comparative analysis of European video game clusters, examining their history, geography, organization, governance, roles, effects, and territorial relationships.
Target Groups	Academics, researchers, policymakers, regional development agencies, CCI cluster managers, video game industry stakeholders.
Impact	It will form policy recommendations for supporting the development and growth of video game clusters by identifying key success factors and challenges. Provides evidence-based insights for effective policy interventions.
Innovative aspects	Comparative analytical framework for video game clusters; In-depth exploration of skills and competencies dynamics;
Partners involved in the Exploitation	CRG, AU, UNITO, CU, OGR, HK, CMF, GO, EP

3.3 KEA3: Spatial Analysis of CCI clusters in relation to regions

The exploitation paths for the Spatial analysis will be similar to the KEA 2, more specifically sharing the knowledge openly through scientific publications and other mediums like online videos and newsletters, strengthening the position of academic partners in economic research on regional innovation systems.

Table 5 - Spatial Analysis of CCI clusters in relation to regions

Spatial Analysis of CCI clusters in relation to regions	
WP/ Task	WP2
Lead Partner	UNITO
Partners involved in the development	UNITO
Description	The spatial analysis of video game industry clusters across Europe will map and characterize the clusters, including relationships with other CCIs and the broader industrial and innovation policy landscape. It will use a data-driven approach, combining various data sources and techniques like web scraping and text matching.
Target Groups	Academics, researchers, policymakers, regional development agencies, CCI clusters
Impact	It will provide new knowledge about the spatial organization and dynamics of video game clusters. Moreover, it will offer a novel methodology for analyzing CCIs. The spatial analysis will inform evidence-based policy decisions and cluster development strategies.
Innovative aspects	Novel methodology for analyzing the spatial organization of CCIs; Comprehensive data collection and analysis of video game industry clusters across Europe; Integration of spatial analysis, historical analysis, and innovation system approach.
Partners involved in the Exploitation	All academic partners

3.4 KEA4: Review of European innovation policies

For the fourth KEA, partners will actively pursue various exploitation pathways. These include offering consultancy services to policymakers at local, regional, and national levels, providing expert advice and guidance on CCI cluster development and related innovation policies. Partners will also leverage their expertise and the findings of the review to conduct further research on CCI cluster policies, contributing to the knowledge base and informing policy development. Finally, partners will actively participate in new project initiatives focused on CCI cluster development and innovation, applying their knowledge and experience to support the growth and sustainability of CCI clusters across Europe.

Table 6 - Review of European innovation policies

Review of European innovation policies	
WP/ Task	WP2; WP5
Lead Partner	GDACZ; UNITO
Partners involved in the development	All partners
Description	A comprehensive review of European innovation policies related to CCI clusters. Provides an overview of current policy approaches across European regions to foster CCIs and related innovation.
Target Groups	Policymakers at local, regional, national, and European levels. Researchers.
Impact	It will increase the understanding of existing policy approaches and inform the development of more effective policies to support CCI cluster development and provide a basis for learning from different regional strategies.
Innovative aspects	Comprehensive and comparative nature of the review, highlighting best practices or identifying gaps and inconsistencies in existing policies.
Partners involved in the Exploitation	CUNI, UNITO, GDACZ, AU, CRG, INOVA+, CGDA

4. EXPLOITATION FRAMEWORK FOR GAME-ER KEAS

4.1 Assessing KEAs value and Exploitation Potential

To maximize the impact of **GAME-ER** 's KEAs, a comprehensive value and innovation potential assessment will be conducted. This assessment, based on a value ring analysis, will examine each KEA in relation to stakeholder needs, benefits, and potential barriers. Under the framework of this analysis, various aspects of the innovation value proposition will be addressed. For example, it will address how innovation can improve the stakeholder's experience. Moreover, the analysis will assess the economic aspects and benefits which are being associated with innovation (including potential market adoption and profitability), followed by societal impact of the innovation and its contribution to technological advancement.

The value for the **GAME-ER**'s outputs will be defined by its potential societal, scientific and commercial impact. This includes improving practices within the video game industry and CCI clusters, influencing policy decisions related to CCI development, and increasing public awareness of the video game industry and its potential. Additionally, the project will contribute to scientific advancement in the field of CCI development, particularly within the video game sector, through generating scientific publications, influencing further research, and introducing innovative methodologies. The commercial potential of KEAs, particularly the Interactive Methodological Toolkit, will be considered, including exploring potential for licensing, and further development. The assessment will involve three core steps:

1. **Stakeholders need analysis**, which will be conducted under the guidance of the exploitation team. This analysis will identify and understand the needs, challenges, and priorities of key stakeholders, including policymakers, industry professionals, researchers, and community members.
2. **The evaluation** will be articulated and a clear value proposition for each KEA will be analyzed, outlining its specific benefits for each stakeholder group. For example, policymakers will gain evidence-based policy recommendations, best practices, and cluster analysis and evaluation tools. Industry professionals can access data and insights on the video game industry, networking opportunities, and guidance on skills development and talent attraction. Researchers can benefit from research findings, datasets, and methodologies. The community can experience increased awareness of the video game industry and its overall potential.
3. **Potential barriers to KEA exploitation** will be identified, such as: lack of awareness, accessibility issues, implementation challenges, policy and regulatory constraints.

4.2 Circular Strategy Analysis

A circular strategy will be employed for each KEA, emphasizing sustainability and long-term value creation. An assessment of the market value of each KEA will determine potential for commercialisation, licensing, or other further scientific reproduction or reuse. **SPIN** will gain an understanding of target audiences, specific needs, and the competitive landscape, defining the overall value proposition. This will involve analysing the value chain, from development to end-use, addressing key exploitation activities that will enable value creation for each KEA. As mentioned in the *section 4.1 Assessing KEA Value and Exploitation Potential*, a comprehensive stakeholder analysis will be conducted. This analysis will identify relevant stakeholders involved in each KEA's lifecycle, as they will be important for an effective engagement and communication strategy. Analysing stakeholder interests, needs, and potential influence will enable future collaborations and support for exploitation activities.

The risk analysis will encompass a broad range of potential challenges, including technical risks, market risks, financial risks associated with development and commercialisation costs, and risks concerning intellectual property or regulatory compliance. For each identified risk, potential impact and likelihood will be assessed, allowing for prioritization and focused mitigation efforts. This process will be iterative, with the risk analysis being revisited and updated regularly as the KEAs progresses through its lifecycle.

The protection of the intellectual property associated with each Key Exploitable Asset will be assessed for realizing the value and enabling successful commercialization or licensing. This involves determining IP ownership, exploring appropriate IP protection mechanisms (patents and other relevant options) and developing licensing strategies. Well-defined and comprehensive legal agreements, such as license agreements and Memorandums of Understanding, will control the beneficial exploitation of the KEA's.

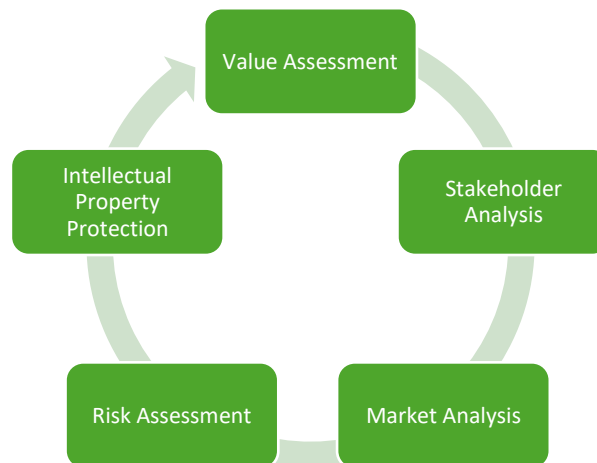


Figure 4 - Graphical representation of the circular strategy employed for GAME-ER.

4.3 Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement

To ensure the **GAME-ER** project's KEAs effectively reach the right end-users and maximize their impact, a thorough stakeholder mapping and engagement process will be implemented. This process will begin with compiling a detailed database of potential end-users at local, regional, national, and European levels who could benefit from and apply the project's outputs. The database will serve as the foundation for identifying stakeholders from a wide array of sectors, including public, private, and academic entities.

A key aspect of this process will be an in-depth analysis of stakeholders, which will evaluate their interest in **GAME-ER** outputs, the development of CCI, and the video game sector. Additionally, the analysis will assess each stakeholder's capacity to influence policy decisions, their potential resources to implement recommendations, and their ability to effectively utilize the project's KEAs. Based on this assessment, stakeholders will be prioritized according to their potential to contribute to the exploitation and uptake of KEAs.

Following stakeholder identification and prioritization, customized engagement strategies will be developed. This will involve defining appropriate communication channels and outlining a dissemination plan that includes activities such as workshops, webinars, and publications. Furthermore, targeted communication materials—such as policy briefs, presentations, articles for the website, and social media campaigns—will be created to ensure that the project's message reaches the relevant audiences in an impactful and effective manner.

4.4 Market Analysis

The analysis will be conducted with a specific focus on the European video game industry and CCI clusters. It will involve engaging with key stakeholders, such as policymakers, industry professionals, and researchers, to collect insights into their needs and preferences within the video game sector. This engagement will help gain a deep understanding of the challenges and requirements faced by the target audience, which each KEA aims to address.

To achieve this, the analysis will be based on a thorough review of existing research, alongside the administration of surveys and interviews with relevant stakeholders. This will provide valuable feedback on the specific needs and pain points of the industry. Additionally, the analysis will identify existing solutions and competitors in the market, enabling an assessment of the KEAs' unique value propositions and competitive advantages. By evaluating other similar initiatives, the strengths and weaknesses of those solutions will be compared with the KEAs, providing insight into the market's response to similar offerings.

The viability of each KEA will be evaluated across several key dimensions. These include:

- **Market Size and Growth Potential:** Analyzing the size of the market and its potential for expansion within the European video game industry and CCI clusters.
- **Competitive Landscape:** Assessing the competitive environment, identifying how the KEA stands out in comparison to other solutions, and considering any gaps that may be filled.
- **Regulatory Environment and Barriers to Entry:** Understanding the regulatory landscape across different European countries, identifying potential barriers to entry that could affect the implementation or uptake of the KEAs.
- **Financial Projections and Revenue Potential:** Estimating the potential for generating revenue through avenues such as licensing, commercialization, and other forms of exploitation.

This comprehensive analysis will ensure that the KEAs are positioned effectively within the market, with a clear strategy for addressing the identified needs and securing their long-term viability.

4.5 Risk Assessment and Mitigation Measures

The risk assessment for the **GAME-ER** project will involve a comprehensive evaluation of several key risk categories, including:

- **Technical Risks:** These risks relate to the potential challenges associated with the development, implementation, and scalability of the KEAs. Technical risks may include issues with software performance, hardware compatibility, or integration problems. The assessment will focus on identifying the likelihood of such challenges and their potential impact on the project's success.
- **Market Risks:** involve uncertainties related to market demand, competition, and the adoption of the KEAs. These could include shifts in the video game industry or CCI sectors, changing consumer preferences, or new emerging competitors. The risk assessment will analyze how these factors might impact the KEAs' adoption and uptake.
- **Financial Risks:** encompass the potential for insufficient funding, changes in the financial landscape, or financial mismanagement. This category will consider factors such as cash flow issues, difficulty in securing revenue streams, or the financial sustainability of the KEAs over time.
- **Legal Risks:** involve challenges related to compliance with local, national, or European regulations, intellectual property rights, and contractual obligations. The assessment will identify potential legal issues, such as intellectual property disputes, data privacy concerns, or regulatory changes that could impact the development or commercialization of the KEAs.

For each identified risk, the potential impact and likelihood of occurrence will be evaluated, using a risk matrix to categorize risks based on their severity and probability. This method will help prioritize risks and determine which require immediate attention and which can be monitored over time.

Mitigation strategies will be developed for each prioritized risk. These may include:

- Developing contingency plans to address technical challenges, such as backup systems or alternative solutions to maintain project progress in case of technical failures.
- Monitoring market changes regularly to stay ahead of potential shifts and adjusting marketing strategies accordingly.
- Ensuring legal compliance by conducting periodic legal reviews to identify and address any potential compliance issues or regulatory updates that could impact the KEAs.

The risk assessment will not be a one-time process; it will be an ongoing effort with regular monitoring and reassessment of risks throughout the KEA lifecycle. By keeping risks under constant review, the project will be better positioned to respond proactively to any emerging challenges.

For each identified risk, the potential impact and likelihood of occurrence will be carefully evaluated, potentially using a risk matrix to categorize risks based on their severity and probability. Allowing the prioritization and the development of focused mitigation strategies. Potential mitigation strategies could include developing contingency plans to address technical issues or market change and conducting regular legal reviews to ensure compliance with relevant regulations. The risk assessment will be an ongoing process, with regular monitoring and reassessment of risks throughout the KEA lifecycle.

4.6 IPR Management and Exploitation of Results

*"Intellectual property includes all exclusive rights to intellectual creations. It encompasses two types of rights: industrial property, which includes inventions (patents), trademarks, industrial designs and models and designations of origin, and copyright, which includes artistic and literary property. Since the entry into force of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) in 2009, the EU has had explicit competence for intellectual property rights (Article 118)."*⁴

In the context of the **GAME-ER** project, IPR refers to the ownership and control of the project's outputs (mainly for the Interactive Methodological Toolkit). The process will involve determining the ownership of IPR, exploring appropriate protection mechanisms, copyrights), and developing strategies for licensing and commercialization. Well-defined agreements, such as licensing agreements and Memorandum of Understanding, each beneficiary of the project has an obligation to protect the results for a period, if the results have a commercial potential. A proper management of intellectual property will be an important phase in the overall exploitation process. Depending on the type of project result, the most relevant type of protection will be chosen. Considering the nature of the **GAME-ER** outputs:

In the context of the **GAME-ER** project, Intellectual Property Rights refer to the ownership and control of the project's outputs, particularly the Interactive Methodological Toolkit. The process will begin with determining the ownership of these IPRs, followed by exploring appropriate protection mechanisms, including copyrights, trademarks or licensing.

Each beneficiary of the project will be required to adhere to well-defined agreements, such as licensing agreements and MOUs, ensuring that the results with commercial potential are protected for a specified period. This obligation is vital to safeguarding the project's outputs and fostering a sustainable exploitation process.

⁴Alexandru-George Moş, Mariusz Maciejewski, Udo Bux, "Intellectual Property in the European Union," European Parliament, 2023, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/36/intellectual-industrial-and-commercial-property>

Proper IPR management will play a critical role in the overall exploitation strategy, ensuring that the project's results are adequately protected while also enabling opportunities for commercialization and licensing. Depending on the nature of each result, the most relevant form of protection will be selected. For example, considering the interactive and digital nature of the **GAME-ER** outputs, the appropriate protection mechanisms will be carefully chosen to secure the toolkit's unique value and prevent unauthorized use. This will allow the results to be efficiently exploited while maintaining compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks.

Table 7- Overview of IPR Associated with KEAs

Name of the KEA	Result Type	Explanation
Interactive Methodological Toolkit	Invention/Software/Website	IMT is classified as software due to its interactive nature and potential for online delivery.
Comparative Typology of European Video Game Clusters	Intellectual Analysis/Research findings/	The Comparative Typology of European Video Game Clusters is primarily an output of intellectual analysis and comparative research.
Spatial Analysis of CCIs Clusters in Relation to Regions	Intellectual Analysis/Research findings	The Spatial Analysis involves both research findings and potentially a novel methodology for spatial analysis.
Review of European Innovation Policies	Intellectual Analysis/Research findings	The Review will be a comprehensive analysis of already existing policies.

Copyright and related rights:

Copyright ensures that authors, composers, artists, filmmakers and others receive payment and protection for their work. Digital technologies have profoundly changed the way creative content is produced, distributed and accessed. EU copyright legislation consists of 13 directives and two regulations which harmonise the essential rights of authors, performers, producers and broadcasters. By setting some EU standards, national discrepancies are reduced, a level of protection required to foster creativity and investment in creativity is ensured, cultural diversity is promoted and access for consumers and businesses to digital content and services across the single market is facilitated.

Term of protection of copyright and related rights:

These rights are protected for life and for 70 years after the death of the author/creator. [Directive 2011/77/EU](#) amending Directive 2006/116/EC on the term of protection of copyright and certain related rights extended the term of copyright protection for performers of sound recordings from 50 to 70 years after recording, and for authors of music, such as composers and lyricists, to 70 years after the author's death. The term of 70 years has become an international standard for the protection of sound recordings. Currently 64 countries around the world protect sound recordings for 70 years or longer.

Computer programs and databases:

[Directive 91/250/EEC](#) required Member States to protect computer programs, by copyright, as literary works under the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. It was codified by [Directive 2009/24/EC](#). [Directive 96/9/EC](#) (the Database Directive) provides for the legal protection of databases, defining a database as 'a collection of independent works, data or other materials arranged in a systematic or methodical way and individually accessible by electronic or other means. The directive stipulates that databases are protected both by copyright, which covers intellectual creation, and by a *sui generis* right protecting investment (of money, human resources, effort and energy) in obtaining, verifying or presenting content.⁵

5. DEFINITION OF GUEST METHODOLOGY

The GUEST methodology is a structured, iterative framework designed to facilitate collaborative innovation and strategic decision-making, particularly within multi-actor projects. It emphasizes a user-centric approach, encouraging active participation and knowledge sharing among diverse stakeholders to address complex challenges. The methodology is characterised by its five distinct phases, each contributing to a progressive problem-solving process:

GO: This initial phase focuses on establishing a shared understanding of the project's context. It involves defining the problem or opportunity, identifying key stakeholders and their perspectives, and analysing the relevant environment. The goal is to create a common ground and establish a clear direction for the project. Operational aspect of the GO phase is to allow key partners to contact the right stakeholders for potential development of one or more cluster-types (according to IMT) and assess their full comprehension of the reasons for their engagement and the related availability to be part of the process. Key aspects to make it concrete are:

⁵ European Parliament. (n.d.). Intellectual, industrial and commercial property. Fact Sheets on the European Union. Retrieved from <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/36/intellectual-industrial-and-commercial-property>

- Sharing objectives of the project,
- Offering a proper overview of project/process development and coordination
- Showing benefits per each stakeholder,
- Clarifying expectations from each of them,
- Identifying resources to involve for the entire process (ie. HR)

UNIFORM: This phase aims to develop a shared language and understanding among stakeholders. It involves defining key concepts, establishing common terminology, and developing visual tools and representations to facilitate communication and collaboration. This ensures everyone is on the same page and can effectively contribute to the project. The UNIFORM phase allows stakeholders involved in the project to deeply understand how they are required to contribute and what is the value-chain they must follow. The UNIFORM phase must involve only official representants authorized by each stakeholder to:

- Know each other's goals (they must be fully committed)
- Define who does what and when
- Share expected milestones and deadlines of the plan (they must guarantee enough time and resources to meet their goals on time)
- Establish a proper dashboard to monitor the global development of the general plan

EVALUATE: In this phase, stakeholders collaboratively explore and evaluate potential solutions or options. This involves brainstorming, analyzing different approaches, and assessing their feasibility, viability, and desirability. A structured prioritisation process is used to select the most promising options for further development. This phase needs a schedule of meetings to plan each task in detail:

- Each single task of the plan (per single stakeholder) must be analyzed, structured and planned
- Each actor must decide which resources are needed to investigate how to proceed in each step
- Training on how to proceed must be provided to people involved in each process
- Specific documents, papers, records and information material must have a proper organization, and all people involved in each operational step must be aware how to manage it
- Ideally, a monthly WIP report must put together the status quo of each task according to the dashboard

SOLVE: This phase focuses on developing and implementing the selected solutions. It involves detailed planning, resource allocation, and execution of the chosen strategies. This phase may also involve prototyping, testing, and refining the solutions to ensure they meet the project's objectives. This is the longest phase of the plan: during this period, all stakeholders, all their resources are engaged to work on developing their specific tasks. A supporting team must be created by Supporting Actors (i.e. Project Consortium Members and Technical Solution Providers), according to needs and complexity managed by each stakeholder. A specific plan of support will be defined if any stakeholder will ask for it (to keep all activity in line with related schedule). No lack of understanding is possible during this phase.

TEST: The final phase involves testing and validating the implemented solutions. This includes gathering feedback from stakeholders, evaluating the impact of the solutions, and identifying lessons learned. The results of the testing phase are used to inform further iterations of the process and ensure continuous improvement.⁶ The TEST phase is the management control phase of the Methodology. KPIs, milestones and deadlines are monitored (and potentially adjusted) according to the development of each task. In this phase only the total view must be considered: single processes must be assessed and managed during SOLVE phase. The TEST phase needs all stakeholders present during scheduled meetings and specific report must be written and shared.

6. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND IMPACT

6.1 Exploitation KPIs

GAME-ER 's success in achieving its exploitation objectives will be measured using KPIs developed in T6.4. These objectives focus on successful adoption of project results within the gaming industry, research communities, policy circles, and among advisors, as well as ensuring the sustainability of the Key Exploitable Assets, its commercialization, and future research uptake.

Table 8 - Exploitation KPIs

KEA	KPI Category	Description
KEA1: Interactive Methodological Toolkit	1.Quantitative	Number of website visits and unique visitors/number of subscribers. Number of downloads of the toolkit. Number of new clusters/startups/projects/initiatives launched. Number of registered users on the toolkit platform. Number of social media mentions and shares related to the toolkit.

		Number of policy documents/ work in progress reports or initiatives citing or referencing the toolkit.
	2.Qualitative	User feedback and satisfaction surveys on the toolkit's usability and effectiveness. Expert reviews and evaluations of the toolkit's content and recommendations. Case studies demonstrating the successful application of the toolkit in different contexts. Questions/User clarifications on the Toolkit. Evidence of missing information/data.
KEA2: Comparative Typology of European Video Game Clusters	1.Quantitative	Number of downloads and citations of the typology report. Number of presentations and publications featuring the typology. Number of social media mentions and shares related to the typology.
	2.Qualitative	Expert reviews and feedback on the typology's accuracy and relevance. Case studies demonstrating the application of the typology in cluster development initiatives.
KEA3: Spatial Analysis of CCOs Clusters in Relation to Regions	1.Quantitative	Number of downloads and citations of the spatial analysis report. Number of presentations and publications featuring the spatial analysis. Number of social media mentions and shares related to the spatial analysis.
	2.Qualitative	Expert reviews and feedback on the spatial analysis methodology and findings. Case studies demonstrating the application of the spatial analysis in regional development initiatives.
KEA4: Review of European Innovation Policies	1.Quantitative	Number of downloads and citations of the policy review report. Number of presentations and publications featuring the policy review. Number of policy dialogues or consultations referencing the policy review.
	2.Qualitative	Expert reviews and feedback on the policy review's comprehensiveness and relevance. Case studies demonstrating the influence of the policy review on policy development or implementation.

6.2 Impact and Networking

GAME-ER is committed to maximizing its impact and ensuring the long-term sustainability of its outputs. The project actively cultivates its online community and leverages social media platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and X to strengthen its position within the gaming industry, highlight innovation, and emphasize the replicability of its results. The project website and social media channels are updated weekly with tailored key messages for various stakeholders, reflecting an active engagement strategy.

Social Media and Website Impact:

GAME-ER 's social media strategies are designed to reach a diverse audience and maximize the project's impact across different channels:

GAME-ER Website:

GAME-ER 's website strategy prioritizes informing, disseminating project outputs, engaging with stakeholders, and promoting the project's impact and achievements. The website aims to reach policymakers, cluster managers, industry professionals, researchers, and the general public. It features a user-friendly design, with a homepage providing a clear project overview, a project section detailing methodology and findings, a cluster section showcasing participating clusters, news and events updates and a contact section for stakeholder interaction.

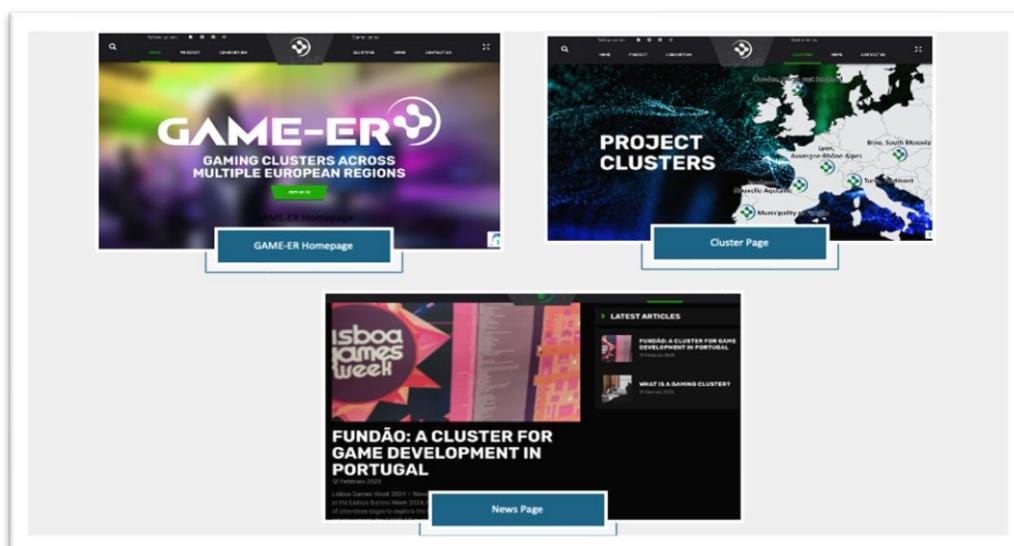


Figure 5 - GAME-ER Website

LinkedIn:

GAME-ER 's LinkedIn strategy focuses on reaching key stakeholders in the European video game industry. These stakeholders include industry professionals, cluster representatives, policymakers, researchers, and the public interested in video games and the creative economy. The content strategy employs a mix of formats, such as text posts, images, videos, articles. **GAME-ER** 's LinkedIn strategy ensures that key decision-makers and influencers are aware of the project's findings and recommendations. This can lead to increased adoption of the project outputs (e.g Interactive Methodological Toolkit), influence policy decisions, and foster collaboration within the European video game industry.

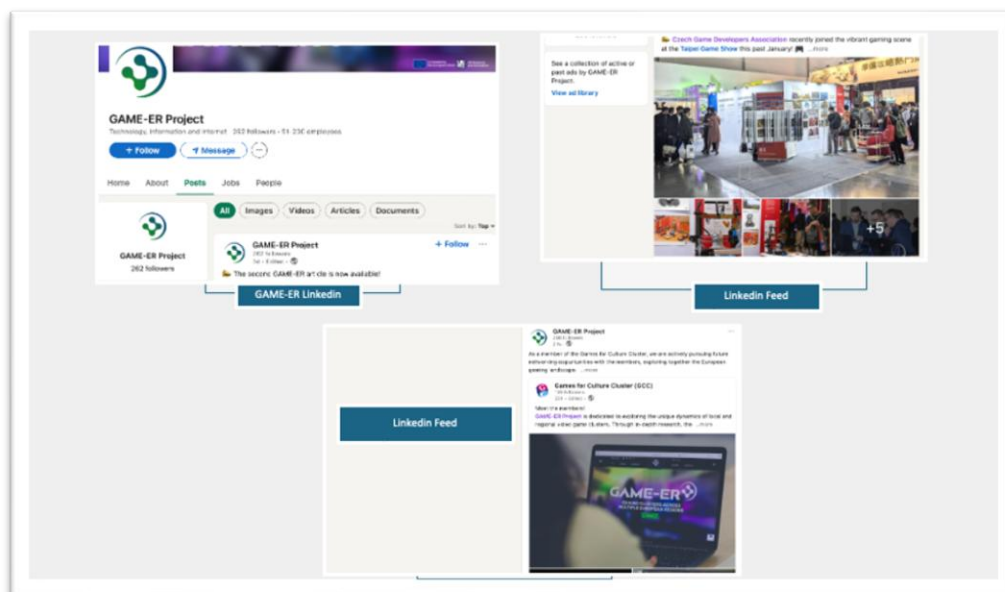


Figure 6 - GAME-ER LinkedIn Account

Twitter / X:

GAME-ER uses X to connect with a wide range of stakeholders in the European gaming community. By sharing project updates and highlighting innovative approaches and best practices, **GAME-ER** aims to raise awareness and encourage the adoption of its findings. The project's target audience on X includes policymakers at all levels, business support organizations, investors, universities, and representatives from the gaming industry and various clusters. **GAME-ER** 's content strategy on X involves sharing updates on the project's innovative approaches, highlighting partnerships with industry clusters, disseminating best practices for re-application, and posting about project outcomes and relevant articles. This approach not only disseminates project findings but also fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing among key stakeholders.

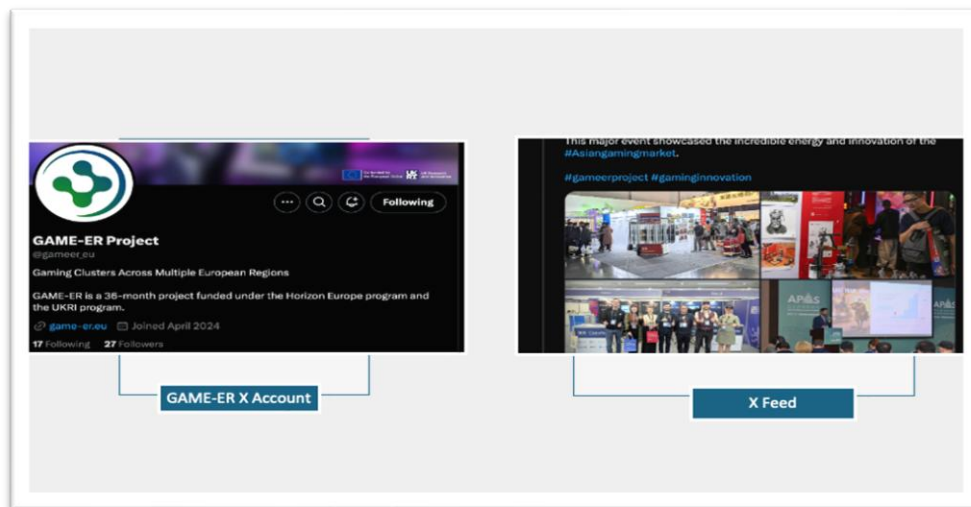


Figure 7 - GAME-ER Twitter / X

Facebook:

GAME-ER 's Facebook strategy targets a diverse audience, including young people, the general public, video game companies, start-up incubators, CCIs, and educational institutions. The content strategy focuses on showcasing project objectives and activities, presenting partner and cluster profiles, sharing articles about partner activities, and featuring video interviews with industry experts. The main aim of the Facebook strategy is to showcase the project objectives and to increase public awareness of the project and its potential impact on the European video game industry.

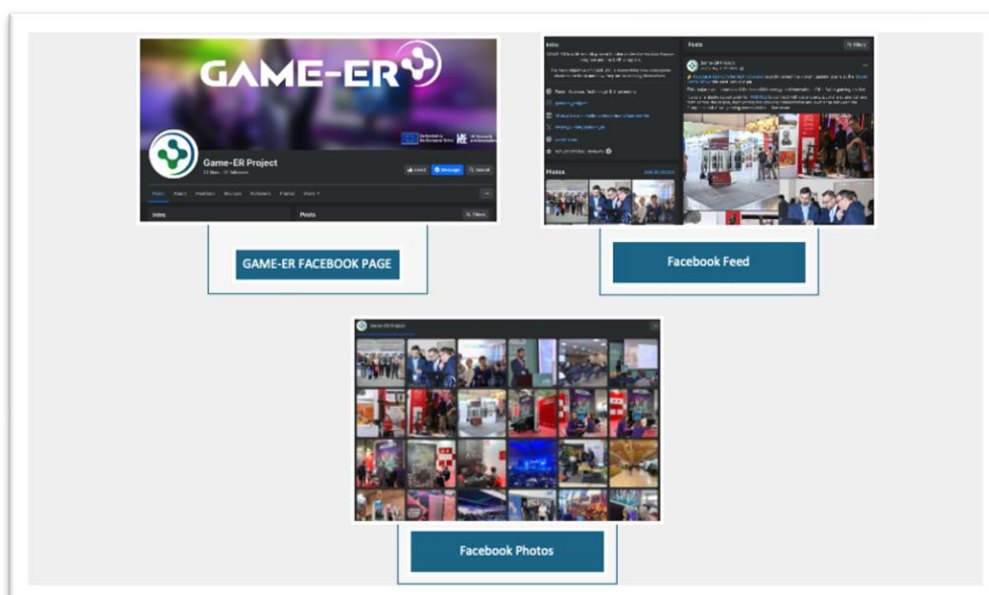


Figure 8 - GAME-ER Facebook Account

Instagram:

GAME-ER 's Instagram strategy targets young people, the public, video game companies, CCIs, incubators, ICT SMEs, educational institutions, and start-up incubators. The content strategy highlights the innovative aspects of the project and its potential impact through posts detailing project research, success stories from similar initiatives in the gaming industry, project objectives and activities, and video interviews with industry experts. **GAME-ER** also cross-posts with the project partners to reach a wider audience. This approach can lead to increased awareness and interest in the project's findings and tools, potentially driving the adoption of the Interactive Methodological Toolkit and fostering innovation within the industry. Additionally, by cross-posting with project partners, **GAME-ER** can reach a wider audience and amplify its impact on the European gaming community.

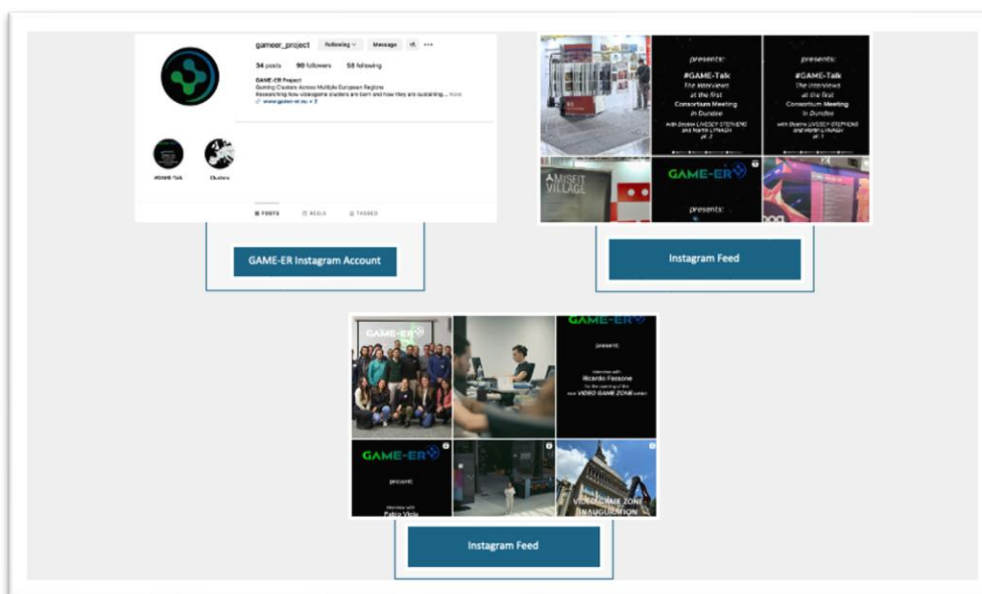


Figure 9 - GAME-ER Instagram Account

Networking Activities:

In addition to its online presence, **GAME-ER** actively participates in networking activities to further amplify its impact and foster collaboration within the European gaming industry. Furthermore, **GAME-ER** has joined the Games for Culture Cluster⁶, fostering networking opportunities with other projects. This collaboration will broaden the project's impact and establish a contact base for future **GAME-ER** networking activities, such as the **WP5** webinars organized by **PNPTC**.

⁶ Games for Culture Cluster website: <https://games-for-culture.eu/>



Gaming Clusters Across Multiple European Regions

The GAME-ER project aims to explore the emergence, development, and sustainability of video game clusters, with a specific focus on local and regional clusters across Europe. The primary goal is to generate actionable insights that will help policymakers and industry leaders strengthen or foster the growth of Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) clusters in their respective regions or cities.

While much of the existing research on video game clusters has focused on major cities, both outside of Europe and within large metropolitan hubs like Helsinki or Hamburg, GAME-ER fills a critical gap by investigating the untapped potential of local and regional clusters. These clusters, though smaller in scale, play a pivotal role in driving innovation, fostering economic growth, and enhancing regional cohesion.

The project will conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis of **six local and regional video game clusters** across five European countries: **France, the Czech Republic, Italy, Scotland, and Portugal**. These clusters have been selected for their varying stages of development, as well as for their unique characteristics, such as the concentration of creative talent or the presence of innovative companies.

In addition, GAME-ER will undertake a Europe-wide study of the spatial organization of the video game industry, focusing on the dynamics of local and regional ecosystems. The research will be underpinned by a participatory approach, engaging both industry stakeholders and policymakers to develop practical

Figure 10 - GAME-ER presentation on the Games for Culture website.

To further amplify its impact, **GAME-ER** will organize several networking activities, including meetings with the business sector, webinars, policy discussions, workshops, industry events, and a final conference in M36. Project partners have already begun showcasing **GAME-ER** at key industry events ([ReebotInfoGamer](#), [Lisboa Games Week](#), [Meet and Build](#), [Game Developers Session](#), [Taipei Game Show](#)) reaching a broad and international audience. Beyond the grant period, the partners will continue disseminating **GAME-ER** results, further maximizing the exploitation impact of its outputs.

6.3 Upcoming Activities

To optimize the exploitation of **GAME-ER** 's outputs and ensure a robust strategy tailored to the European gaming market, **SPIN** will actively engage with project partners through various activities. These activities aim to address key questions, clarify market needs at the European level, and refine implementation strategies.

Regular Meetings with partners

Ongoing engagement will include regular meetings with **GDACZ** and other partners to monitor the progress of the Toolkit development and discuss preliminary exploitation strategies. Additionally, meetings with **CRG**, **UNITO**, and **AU** will ensure consistent updates on the status of KEA 2, KEA 3, and KEA 4, fostering alignment and collaboration across the project. These meetings will help ensure the project stays on track and maximizes its impact by regularly checking the Interactive Methodological Toolkit's development against the exploitation plan and partner expectations, continuously improving exploitation strategies based on partner feedback, project updates, and market changes, and incorporating updates on KEA 2, 3, and 4 into the overall exploitation strategy for a cohesive approach.

KEAs Assessment Process

SPIN, from M12, will conduct a thorough assessment of the market value of each KEA, considering factors such as the target audience for each KEA, its potential impact on the market, and the overall market demand for the knowledge or innovation it offers. Further, from M15 the business plan phase will start focusing on identifying and prioritizing key stakeholders for each KEA and developing engagement strategies; analyzing market trends, competitor activities, and potential barriers to entry for each KEA; identifying and assessing potential risks associated with the exploitation of each KEA and developing mitigation strategies; and determining IP ownership, exploring appropriate protection mechanisms, and developing licensing strategies for each KEA.

Exploitation Workshop

As the initial version of the Toolkit will be live in M24, a key engagement activity will be an exploitation workshop, strategically planned during the Consortium Monthly Meeting in M24. The workshop will encourage open dialogue and collaborative brainstorming among partners, enabling them to share perspectives and propose improvements to refine exploitation strategies. Furthermore, it will clarify market needs within partner countries, identify potential competitors, and analyze the competitive landscape to enhance understanding of key concepts. The workshop will also provide a platform for partners to co-create solutions and develop strategies for maximizing the impact and long-term sustainability of **GAME-ER** outputs. Key concepts explored during the workshop will include the GUEST Methodology applied to **GAME-ER** KEAs, providing a structured framework for collaborative innovation and strategic decision-making. Additionally, partners will utilize an Assessment Grid to evaluate market needs and formulate individual exploitation plans for each KEA, and conduct a SWOT Analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the exploitation of project outputs. The insights and outcomes generated during this workshop will be instrumental in refining the final Exploitation Plan due in M30, ensuring a comprehensive and well-informed approach to exploiting **GAME-ER** 's outputs.

Submission of the Final Exploitation Plan

The final Exploitation Plan will be compiled by M30, consolidating all exploitation strategies, activities, and outcomes into a single deliverable.

7.CONCLUSION

The **Preliminary Exploitation Plan (D6.4)** establishes the foundational framework for the **GAME-ER** project's exploitation process, outlining the initial steps to maximize the impact and value of its Key Exploitable Assets (KEAs). By defining core concepts, identifying KEAs, and presenting preliminary exploitation strategies, this document provides a solid basis for future knowledge transfer and value creation.

The strategies and activities detailed in this plan will be refined and expanded throughout the project's lifecycle, ultimately leading to a comprehensive and finalized **Exploitation Plan (D6.5)** by M30. This iterative approach ensures that the exploitation process remains adaptive, aligning with the project's evolving objectives and responding to the dynamic landscape of the European video game industry and creative and cultural industries clusters.

The **GAME-ER** project is committed to ensuring that its innovative research findings and outputs leave a lasting impact, contributing to the growth and advancement of the European video game industry and CCI clusters. This plan acts as a strategic roadmap, guiding project partners to effectively exploit the project's results and deliver sustained value to the European gaming ecosystem. Through this approach, **GAME-ER** aims to foster long-term innovation, collaboration, and success in the sector.