

GAME-BASED TEACHING OF MICRO-ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF HUMANITARIAN CRISIS ON POLISH-BELARUSSIAN BORDER

by Weronika Szatkowska, Kominski University

wszatkowska@kozminski.edu.pl

Abstract

Games to Play track

ABSTRACT

The article presents the use of a role-play simulation game "The People" to raise awareness of the impact of the humanitarian crisis of 2021-22 on the Polish-Belarusian border, on the microeconomic situation of the inhabitants of the borderland. The game uses experiential learning to make participants experience the difficulties faced by residents of the military-controlled zone of Bialowieza National Park, where the law is changing dynamically and tourism has died down due to the presence of refugees, exclusion of the border area from tourist traffic, and ban on the presence of the media. The article presents how a game is applied to explore microeconomic consequences of such a situation. The game was co-designed with activists and researchers at the border and conducted among more than 60 participants (high school and college students). In the paper, I discuss the main components familiarizing participants with the issues: narration structure and social dynamics resulting from the game mechanics. Based on the qualitative analysis of feedback from participants and debriefing in focus groups, it is concluded that the game raises awareness of the impact on the following aspects of the borderland microeconomy: employment structure, changes in existing business relationships, and changes in the habits of residents. It also explains the moral dilemma that shapes the dynamics of the community: obeying the law or one's own ethics. Finally, I express the need to build in a future a microeconomic model that would be focused strictly on the microeconomic change in borderland areas, and not treat it as one of the side effects of the political and social situation.

Keywords: *serious games, building awareness, micro-economics, humanitarian crisis*