

# BRIDGE: The Heritage of Connecting Places and Cultures

**Abstract title:** WWI - the Water Connection

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**Since far back into history armies have needed to cross water.** The importance of these crossings is reflected in the phrases "burning your boats" and "burning your bridges". In WWI, there was a lot of water on the Western front, but mainly static water, so it was not so much bridges as pontoons that needed to be built. Rather, many bridges were destroyed all over Europe.

**The effects of bridge destruction are not intrinsically military.** Although the effects on the local population - loss of mobility, reduction in trade - may be considered to be military objectives, there may also be other side effects. The destruction of large bridges over a wide navigable river may prevent commercial shipping and the use of the channel until the wrecked structures are removed, a process that can extend well beyond the end of the conflict. Most importantly, **bridges play a major social role and are of psychological relevance. Wars break bridges, in so doing destroying contacts and creating enemies.** On the contrary, shared values and the recognition of a shared history are fundamental for strengthening the common sense of belonging and mutual understanding among today citizens.

This paper has two main purposes:

(1) To **provide scientific basis to design and develop an online multiplayer co-op learning game.**

The game will be based on an interactive data visualization that can actively engage both young and adult users from all European Countries at the same time. The spatial and historical information is not just used and seen, but lived and experienced, going a step higher in the understanding process, from information to knowledge.

(2) To **organize the conference, "How much does separation cost?"**, and to support European regional and national policy makers to foster connections and to promote a new governance based on cultural heritage and sharing.