

Interreg



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CDO-VR

Centre for deficit occupations through virtual reality

**Common programme for the establishment of VR Centres for the Promotion
of Deficit Occupations**

August 2025

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1. General description of the activities of the Centre for the Promotion of Deficit Occupations through Virtual Reality (VR)

Within the framework of the CDO-VR project (Interreg programme Slovenia-Austria, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund), three **Centres for the Promotion of Deficit Occupations through Virtual Reality** are operating. The centres are located in the following locations:

- **Employment Service of the Republic of Slovenia, Career Centre Ptuj**, Osojnikova cesta 1, 2250 Ptuj
Mobile unit: Ljudska univerza Ptuj, Mestni trg 2, 2250 Ptuj
- **ISOP - INNOVATIVE SOCIAL PROJECTS**, Liebenauer Hauptstraße 2-6, 8041 Graz/Graz, Austria
- **nowa - Training - Beratung - Projektmanagement**, Jakominiplatz 16, 8010 Graz/Graz

These centres also have **mobile units** that carry out creative VR presentations on the ground. The purpose of the mobile units is to ensure accessibility to the Centre's content and services for schools, units of institutions located in rural/rural areas, at career and job fairs, career centres, information days, open days, etc.

All centres follow a common methodology and all have identical technical equipment to deliver creative presentations using Virtual Reality (VR), ensuring a comparable experience and a uniform standard of service quality. The services of the centre and the mobile units are free of charge for users. Physical locations also allow access to the facilities for people with reduced mobility, or providers ensure that the workshop is organised in such a way that it is accessible for people with reduced mobility, including with the help of mobile units.

14 professionals (trainers/consultants) have been trained to deliver VR counselling and content.

2. Objectives of the Centres

- Promoting deficit occupations in a dynamic, innovative and technologically advanced way.
- Raising interest in deficit occupations among target groups, taking gender equality into account.
- Early career guidance for young people (especially those aged 13 and 15) who are still deciding on a career.
- Increasing employment opportunities for young unemployed people considering new job opportunities or changing their career path.
- Raise the profile, role and importance of deficit occupations in society, thus improving their position in the labour market.
- Raise awareness of real labour market needs and retain staff on both sides of the border.
- Breaking stereotypes about professions with a particular focus on gender-based stereotypes in career choices and the world of work.

The project aims, among other things, to ensure the sustainability of the centres for the promotion of shortage occupations:

- The centres will work in cooperation with schools, employment services, careers advisers, etc., and will thus be integrated into existing career guidance and education systems.
- The methodology, materials, activities and consultancy tools developed within the project are freely available for further use by trainers, consultants and anyone interested in these topics.

- Introducing a "train-the-trainer" model for local consultants and teachers, allowing them to carry out activities independently after the project has ended.
- Long-term impact on the target groups (young and unemployed), who through VR are better able to get a realistic idea of careers and make more informed choices based on their experience.
- Increasing the attractiveness of deficit occupations, leading to a rebalancing of labour market supply and demand.

3. Organisation of operations

The centres in Graz and Ptuj provide professional support to users, with trained staff at each location providing career, vocational and employment counselling, guiding users in the use of VR technology, and delivering creative VR presentations.

3.1 Opening hours of the centres

The opening hours* of the centres are during the organisation's or institution's office hours, according to the centre's published timetable, or by prior arrangement.

The opening hours of each centre are listed in the table below.

Centre	Timetable	Contact
Ptuj Career Centre Ptuj, Slovenia	By prior appointment* Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 8.00-12.00, 13.00-15.00 Wednesday: 8.00-12.00, 13.00-17.00 Friday: 8:00-13:00	Osojnikova cesta 1, 2250 Ptuj, Slovenia 02 749 23 44 gpzrszptuj@ess.gov.si
MOBILNA ENOTA: Ljudska univerza Ptuj Ptuj, Slovenia	By prior appointment*	Mestni trg 2, 2250 Ptuj, Slovenia Phone: 02 749 21 56 Email: info@lu-ptuj.si
ISOP - INNOVATIVE SOCIAL PROJECTS, Graz, Austria	By prior appointment*	Liebenauer Hauptstraße 2-6, 8041 Graz/Graz, Austria Phone: +43 316 76 46 46 Email: hayriye.erogluschmid@isop.at
nowa - Training - Beratung - Project management, Graz, Austria	By prior appointment*	Jakominiplatz 16, 8010 Graz/Graz, Austria Phone: +43 316 482 600 Email: office@nowa.at

Note*: Due to the activity and availability of equipment in the field, prior arrangement for a visit to the centre is required, especially between October 2025 and April 2026. All creative presentations at the centre or in the field are by appointment only.

3.2 Mobile units for creative presentations using VR

Each mobile unit has 2 to 6 trained providers working within each centre. The number depends on the client or the intended purpose, programme, location, etc. The methodology for the delivery of creative presentations through VR is set out in the Joint Programme for the delivery of creative presentations and in the respective action plans. They provide guidance to the consultant for working with each target group. Consultants already have at their disposal a number of sample Action Plans, which are prepared according to location, target group, number of participants and include a set of activity suggestions, but can be adapted at any time to the needs and requirements of each implementation. Creative VR presentations and the selection of activities vary according to the purpose, target group, location, programme of the event or the needs and wishes of the client.

The venues are schools, institutions, organisations, companies, career centres in employment services, career centres, career and job fairs, various career events, open days, information days , etc.

3.3 Professionals (Counsellors/Trainers)

The Centre's content is delivered by 14 trained counsellors/trainers, who have acquired new skills in employment policy and new approaches in the field of deficit occupations, improved their competences in gender mainstreaming, upgraded their counselling competences through the use of an innovative VR tool, and acquired additional competences for the integration of people from rural backgrounds.

Implementers have at their disposal a Toolkit and a range of tools and materials, grouped together in a Toolbox. All the material is available to the consultants online and in physical form at the location of each centre.

To ensure the sustainability of the centres and mobile units after the end of the project, the developed methodology and material is also available to potential future consultants - creative presenters who can be trained by the centre for the purpose of the centre's operation.

3.4 Technical equipment

The centre has a room with technical equipment, which is available to participants free of charge, every day during the centre's opening hours. The same equipment is available in all centres, including

- VR glasses Meta Quest 3,
- audio-visual presentation equipment (projection screen, projector),
- laptop,
- software with VR scenarios developed for shortage occupations (metalworker-welder, electrician, chef, systems administrator, nurse-caregiver).

The VR equipment used to support activities in the centres is also mobile due to its specific nature, with expert staff giving presentations and advice in the field.

The VR app is pre-installed on all devices. If additional installation is required, the developer will manually install it on the device. The app will not be available in any public store.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1r2EtInF5WWWhMTinRKlqRh2JMIhu9nTj_oKiyvUT4z8/edit?tab=t.76372dqtq6k7#heading=h.ydk2re2uca45

When using VR lenses, it is recommended to wear a protective mask for hygiene reasons.

Each centre ensures that the technical equipment is properly maintained. Each user of technical equipment shall ensure that the equipment is used carefully and safely, in accordance with the instructions for use and the intended use. Each user shall endeavour to prevent, by careful use and diligent supervision of use, any damage or malfunction of the equipment.

Before each use, the battery in the VR glasses should be checked to make sure it is full. An insufficiently charged battery may affect the performance of the application.

3.5 The space where VR technology is used

The minimum technical requirements for the space in which VR technology is used are:

- good lighting of the room in which the presentation is being made;
- enough space to safely use the VR glasses - the person using the VR glasses must be standing and have at least enough space to rotate around their own axis with their arms outstretched (the professions of paramedic and metalworker require slightly more space);
- Connecting the VR app to a computer and viewing the action on screen requires the centre to have created a profile in the app and to have access to the internet. See instructions https://docs.google.com/document/d/1r2EtInF5WWWhMTinRKlqRh2JMIhu9nTj_oKiyvUT4z8/edit?tab=t.76372dqtq6k7#heading=h.ydk2re2uca45.

The minimum technical requirements must be taken into account in the framework of the agreements with the clients and be specifically mentioned in each action plan for the implementation of the creative presentations and adapted to the actual situation/agreed implementation.

4. Activities in the framework of the Centres for the Promotion of Deficit Occupations through VR

Within the Centres, counsellors/trainers provide career, vocational and/or employment counselling (Employment Service, ISOP), guide users in the use of VR technology and make creative presentations using VR.

Using tools and tools developed by the professionals, they help individuals to make decisions about education, training and careers, and guide them to manage their own life paths in learning, work and other environments.

4.1 Career counselling

Career counselling at the centres includes:

- Individual counselling using VR as a complement to traditional approaches.
- Group counselling using VR as a complement to traditional approaches.
- Using different methods (interview, questionnaires, various career guidance tools - see Toolbox).

- The consultant interprets the VR experience and relates it to the user's competences.

All detailed information, explanations, tools and materials are freely accessible and available to professionals for further use and can be found in the manual Toolkit, Toolbox and other.

4.2 Creative presentations using VR

Creative VR presentations are carried out in VR Centres for the Promotion of Deficit Occupations and in the field - schools, institutions, companies, fairs, etc.

The CDO-VR project team has developed innovative approaches and tools to promote occupations where there is currently a shortage of skilled and motivated workers. The aim of the presentations is to inspire young people in an interactive way about deficit occupations, which are crucial for the functioning of our society, but often not well known or attractive enough. Using virtual reality, they can experience first-hand different working environments and get an insight into the work of a cook, an electrician, a careworker, a metal technician with welding, a systems administrator and a builder.

The counsellors are trained to deliver creative, dynamic and informative presentations so that students and young unemployed people can use VR glasses to explore their chosen professions, learn about their job roles and the relevance of the profession in today's society.

The workshops are fully tailored to the target group. The content is designed in such a way that it can be further customised and upgraded according to the needs and objectives of the implementation. The consultants prepare an action plan for each workshop, which can be based on already prepared action plan models, a manual (Toolkit) and access to a toolbox of tools and activities (Toolbox).

The professionals shall agree all details of the workshop with the client (school, organisation, ...) in advance.

5. Participant monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Participants are monitored during the pilot period of the centre, i.e. from October 2025 to April 2026. The project team monitors the following key indicators:

Key indicators	Austria	Slovenia
Unemployed persons included	50	50
Schools involved	15	15

The consultant prepares a report that includes:

- a description of the counselling activities (before, during and after the demonstration - for the group or individual),
- description of activities,
- feedback from users, participants,
- evaluation of the event (event = workshop, fairs, etc.),
- photos, if available, ...

More detailed information on monitoring, evaluation and reporting is provided in the Toolkit in the relevant chapter. Professionals follow these procedures and ensure adequate monitoring, documentation and reporting.

Through innovative approaches to careers guidance using virtual reality, the CDO-VR project partners aim to inspire young people, the unemployed and individuals considering a career change to careers that are currently in higher demand from employers than on the labour market. In a youth-friendly and tailor-made way, we want to raise awareness of deficit occupations and strengthen their role and importance in society.