

THE PROJECT

The WHO has reported that globally at least 2.2 billion people have a visual impairment or are affected by blindness and that this number is set to increase due to the growing and ageing world population (1). Moreover, their World Report on Vision (2) states that effective rehabilitation interventions are currently available, but that there is a need for qualified rehabilitation professionals to apply new transdisciplinary and person-centered approaches in their daily practice (3).





In this scenario, the **Visual Disabilities Rehabilitator (VDR)** qualification has not yet been universally formalized and this fragmented approach affects the quality of training and the recognition of the qualification.

The constant demand for trained practitioners and the WHO International Consensus Conference (4) on vision rehabilitation standards, which calls for service standards and therefore the employment of specialised practitioners, underline the need to address this issue.

The oMERO project aims to overcome this high-skills gap and to formalize a curriculum leading to a new specialist, the VDR, who provides psychophysical and sensory rehabilitation services in a new trans-disciplinary, person-centered and ICT-based approach.

MAIN RESULTS

The project's main innovative results are published on the website <https://www.visualrehabilitator.eu/> and include:

-  the **VDR Professional Profile (PP)**, compliant with EU standards such as EQF and linked to ESCO, which identifies 17 Key Activities and several Core Competencies;
-  the **VDR curriculum**, based on the PP and defined in terms of Learning Outcomes (LOs);
-  the **7 public deliverables**, corresponding to as many Intellectual Outputs providing, for instance, guidelines for the curriculum localization and the design of the pilot courses;
-  **REALTER**, i.e. a VR device that simulates in real time different visual impairments and can be used as a training tool for VDR especially with regard to "orientation and mobility".

(1) World Health Organization. (2013). Universal eye health: a global action plan 2014-2019. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/universal-eye-health-a-global-action-plan-2014-2019>

(2) World Health Organization. (2019). World report on vision. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241516570>

(3) Stein, M. A., Stein, P., Weiss, D., & Lang, R. (2007). Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. European Journal of Health Law, 14(3), 281-298. https://legal.un.org/avl/pdf/ha/crpd/crpd_e.pdf

(4) World Health Organization. (2015). International standards for vision rehabilitation: Report of the international consensus conference. Rome: World Health Organization. <https://www.iapb.org/learn/resources/who-international-consensus-conference-on-vision-rehabilitation-standards/>

VDR CURRICULUM





The VDR Curriculum is a general, flexible and transnational EU reference document. In compliance with the main EU standards on Vocational Education and Training (VET), it allows every Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Europe to set up a specialization course (60 to 120 credits) for people with at least a first academic degree.

The guidelines provided by the project make it possible to localize the general Curriculum into concrete courses, taking into account each country's specific rules and laws concerning VET and rehabilitation practice.

FUTURE STEPS

Through the project's dissemination events, the partnership aims to build **a network of oMERO stakeholders for a lasting and sustainable cooperation at European level.**

The future steps in this regard are:

-  to stimulate discussion on how to contribute to person-centered integrated care services to meet healthcare needs via this new European VDR curriculum;
-  to promote the employment of specialists in the habilitation and rehabilitation of blind and visually impaired persons for an impact on quality of life or service;
-  **pilot training courses** based on the VDR curriculum in the project partner universities;
-  to focus on the importance of innovative learning methods and an 'experiential' approach in VDR training to better understand feelings and barriers of impaired people.

PARTNERSHIP

Fondazione David Chiossone (APPLICANT), Italy - www.chiossone.it

Università degli Studi Di Genova, Italy - www.unige.it

Mutualité Française Paca Ssam, France - www.lamut.fr

Lietuvos Sveikatos Mokslu Universitetas, Lithuania - www.lsmuni.lt

Si4life – Scienza e Impresa Insieme per Migliorare La Qualita' Della Vita, Italy - www.si4life.it

The Provost, Fellows, Foundation Scholars & The Other Members Of Board Of The College Of The Holy & Undivided Trinity Of Queen Elizabeth Near Dublin, Ireland - www.tcd.ie

Umea Universitet, Sweden - www.umu.se

Université Côte D'Azur, France – www.univ-cotedazur.fr

Göteborgs Universitet, Sweden - www.gu.se/en