

Mental Skills Training with Virtual Reality



Newsletter 1

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Center for Social
Innovation



VR-MS: Mental Skills Training with Virtual Reality

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Welcome to the European project VR-MS!

Aim

VR-MS - Mental Skills Training with Virtual Reality is an Erasmus+ Sports project that runs from July 2022 and will be finalised in June 2024.

The aim of the VR-MS project is to transform the training regime of Digenis Akritas Morfou (DAM), a second division football club in Cyprus, to include the exercise of mental skills. To do so, a small partnership is set up with (1) MentisVR Ltd, a company that develops Virtual Reality tasks for mental skills training in football, the Università degli Studi Gabriele d'Annunzio di Chieti-Pescara (UdA), an Italian institution with long expertise in sports psychology, and (3) The Centre for Social Innovation (CSI), a research and development organization which focuses on fostering social innovation that can bring about a positive change to local, national, regional and global contexts.

The partnership will design and evaluate an innovative Virtual Reality program for the training of mental skills and apply it to the coaches and players of the club, starting with 6-year-old players (of both genders) from the club's academies and going up to professional players in the club's elite men's team. A set of guidelines for adopting the mental skills training program by other clubs and/or national football associations will be produced and shared freely with the relevant stakeholders.



Virtual gym created by MentisVR to evaluate and train mental skills in athletes (left). Cyprus international and Ludogorec FC striker Pieros Soteriou warming up with MentisVR tasks in VR ahead of the Scotland-Cyprus match at Hampden Park on June 8, 2019



Objectives

- To establish a VR facility for mental skills at the training centre of DAM.
- To adapt the existing VR and PC-based apps of MentisVR to target specific mental skills that are essential to football (e.g., spatial awareness, attentional control).
- To design new tasks based on the input from the Uda sports psychology experts
- To evaluate the use of these apps with DAM young and adult football players.
- To disseminate the generate training program to other interested parties beyond the project consortium.

Target Groups

Football Clubs • Youth Football Academies • National, Regional and European Football Associations • Sport Science programs and academic departments • Sports Consultants and Professionals • Cognitive Scientists and Sports Psychologists • Coaches and Trainers • Decision-makers on football matters • Footballers • Associations

Work Packages

WP1 Project management and coordination • WP2 Facility set up and staff training • WP3 Selection of tasks • WP4 Data collection and validation • WP5 Education and Dissemination