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FOCUS GROUP with ASD Professionals

T1.1 Skills Needs in Special Education



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Platform:	ASPAJUNIDE Association
Date:	6 October 2022
Timing	60 min
Participants:	ASD professionals 5 participants
Output discussed:	1 – Needs of ASD professionals/teachers 2 – Needs of ASD students

The focus group started with and **introduction** to the project **Bit the Spectrum**, where the aims of the project were presented to the assistants, as well as the prospective results and the research obtained until now. Afterwards, a specific introduction to **VR and AR technologies** and their possible use in education was held.

The main **purpose** of the focus group was to understand some of the needs of ASD professionals and ASD students in education, consolidated in four questions of debate.

The summary of the conclusions obtained by the answers are the following:

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS
What needs do VET teachers have regarding the education of ASD students?
To the question below, the participants concluded that training is essential, but day-to-day experience is the most decisive factor in good performance. Therefore, having previous experiences or training periods where the most recurrent conflict situations are shown, to be able to anticipate and redirect behaviours is the need that was most highlighted.

**What do ASD students need to improve social and literacy skills?
And how could you (teachers) benefit from the use of interactive tools/immersive environments for that aim?
Specific to their field: mechanic, social skills...**

To the question below, the participants concluded that an early detection of ASD is fundamental to adapt their development and learning to their characteristics. *"With interactive tools we have an attractive scenario in terms of development (as it is like a game) and effective for development and learning".*

Regarding the activities of the student with ASD in the VE:

- How should the exposure to stimuli be? Active? Passive?
- What kind of simulations do you think are more relevant for these students?
- What should be avoided at all costs?

To the question below, the participants concluded that we must guide the situation at all times. In the development of the exercises, we must be: concise, direct and very visual when posing the questions. The most appropriate simulation for each person is conditioned by what he/she is going to develop in his/her day-to-day life, so raising known scenarios with situations and actions that are going to occur allows us to anticipate and sequence the process (something fundamental with an ASD). We should omit at all costs ambiguities, double meanings, free interpretation... to be as literal and direct as possible.

Propose a specific Virtual Environment

The virtual environments prototypes suggested by the assistants were:

- Situations in the work or training environment (employment centre, supported employment, performance of usual jobs...).

- Situations in their daily actions (personal hygiene situations, preparation of meals, choice of clothing, dealing with different climatic situations...).

Collaborating:



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THANK YOU!