

Measure concept for vocational orientation



**in the commercial field
with a focus on digitisation
in the work / professional world**
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Introduction

The increase in globalisation and the swift technological and demographical changes as well as the resulting transformation and development of the commercial job market due to digitalisation have drastically altered the structure of the qualification needs and requirements. Not only is the structure of different work profiles changing, so is the very core of the work processes and the needs for a different type of competencies in the work place. The changes in the work profiles are varied – some are adapting, some are disappearing and many are formed completely anew. Our entrance into the fourth industrial revolution, ushering in digitization and automation, has shifted the commercial job market dynamics, influencing the entire ecosystem including the educational institutions and their processes. These changes require proactive adaptation, considering such large developmental steps require a fundamental transformation of numerous professions and their prerequisite vocational orientation (VO).

Following a comprehensive investigation concerning the status quo of the vocational orientation in the field of commerce and its changes due to digitization in Slovenia, it has become clear that although the core skillset of the VO trainers (pedagogues, teachers, experts) has remained somewhat unchanged – empathy, listening skills, questioning/interviewing skills, guiding and counselling, profiling – it is the underlying knowledge base and practical measures that require updating the most. While current knowledge of different work profiles and work processes are key to effective, up-to-date vocational orientation for the young people, it is the bridging of their theoretical outlines to practical application in the commercial sector that the investigation has identified as lacking. That is the basis for the newly and exclusively developed measure concept for vocational orientation of the target group, the young people in the process of VO.

Although the developed measure concept includes all aspects considered relevant that could be identified in Slovenia, they are not exclusively subject to country-specific conditions; the aspects, taken into account, were deemed universal for the target group and are independent of the different VO systems and formats of the EU countries and independent from the specific framework conditions of individual institutions.

The following measure concept was developed with the objective that the concept is easy to understand, practical and transferable to all EU countries, with options to adapt and modify its contents at all times while still offering the possibility of comparability. Below, we describe in more detail, not only the need for such a concept and its objective as well as the target group and the implementing institutions, but also the implementation itself and the necessary resources. Thus it should be ensured that the measure concept is used sustainably in different EU countries and meets the requirements of the abovementioned target group.

1. Initial situation and background of the measure

On the cusp of working life (before entering an internship or first employment in a commercial profession), young people should be well informed about the requirements and challenges of different professions in the field commerce. Their choice of career should stem from a comprehensive vocational orientation process, encompassing both theoretical as well as practical aspects. As the theoretical framework develops the prerequisite know-how and competencies for the vocational orientation measures, it is the measures that contribute significantly to orientate the young people vocationally, familiarizing them practically with various professions via internships and practical work, ultimately resulting in a successful VO process (e.g. career choice, vocational choice). This process has proven itself successful on a national scale and while the objective of vocational orientation measures is identical across EU countries, the implementation varies depending on respective VO systems and formats.

The general changes to the VO process require innovative approaches, shifting the role of the pedagogical experts in guiding the target group through the process from “sage on the stage” (leading by example) to a “guide on the side” (leading by involving). This shift also changes the way the young people enter the VO process – in a collaborative, cooperative manner, enabling them to actively engage themselves in the vocational orientation process, planning their career development, co-creating all VO phases, enhancing motivation for career choices with the ultimate support of the VO expert in planning and decision-making.

The results of the investigation have exposed the most concerning disadvantage of the target group in the VO process – lack of knowledge about the internship positions of the future, how the different commercial professions have changed due to digitization and what are the associated new challenges and requirements for potential interns. Addressing this disadvantage, the vocational orientation has to be modified from a digitization standpoint, supplementing the (largely theoretical) process with practical (digital) VO measures. Such measures should provide first-hand insight into the changed profiles, work processes, required competencies, skills and know-how, positioning all of the aforementioned into a commercial job market context of an internship or first employment.

Ultimately, it is the following measure concept, combined with knowledge about the changes to professions and the job market due to digitization, which will enable the target group to benefit from quality counselling and up-to-date VO.

2. Objective of the measure

In relation to the implementing specialists (teachers, pedagogues, counsellors, etc.), this measure concept for vocational orientation of “young people in the process of career choice in the field of commerce” has the objective to give them a newly developed measure concept for vocational preparation of the above-mentioned target group. To rephrase, a tool to give the target group more specific, professional advice in the career choice process, enabling them practical insight into respective commercial professions and work profiles (changed due to digitization) and, eventually, providing them with guidance and preparation for possible (commercial) professions.

On one hand, the measure concept offers the specialists, who counsel and advise the young people in the process of career choice, a course of action that builds on existing theoretically-derived knowledge, competencies and skills, and solves the deficits and problems within the adapting VO process, augmenting the potential gaps (in knowledge, competencies, skills) and answering potential questions with targeted practical implementation. On the other hand, the measure concept offers an instructive, helpful structure for vocational orientation specialists and pedagogues as it relates to career choices in the field of commerce and eases adaptation of the overall process due to digitization.

The main objective of the measure concept is acquainting the young people through virtual involvement in the commercial job market and through practical commercial work processes – with the changes of the knowledge, competencies, skills, as well the processes, work profiles and commercial job market due to digitization. The further objective is not only offering passive insight, but giving theoretical outlines of VO a practical context of a profession, enabling an active transfer of professional skills and abilities. This results in facilitation of the practical entry into internship or employment in the field of commerce, diminishing false expectations.

Furthermore, the objective is to improve adaptability of the VO process to the rapid changes due to digitization as it relates to the target group as well as the VO specialists. Considering that theoretical knowledge is usually a step behind the practical needs and requirements of the advancing commercial job market, simulating a (digitally influenced) current work process within an actual work environment (a commercial work profile, using current digital work tools) aims to fix or minimize that lag. Adapting the VO process in this manner should give young people the ability to make an up-to-date, well-informed, and independent vocational choice after finalizing the measure, with knowledge of job market demands due to digitization and employment opportunities in the commercial field.

The overall objective of the measure concept is a practice-oriented dynamic approach to vocational orientation of the target group, with practical individualized (work process simulation) and theoretical group (virtual company visit, discussions) aspects.

3. Starting position

3.1 Target group

The target group of the new vocational orientation measure concept encompasses young people between the ages of 16 and 20, engaged in the vocational education process in its career/professional orientation phase, before entering internship or work practice. This group can be further categorized, but is not limited to, students in the 3rd and 4th year of vocational education in the field of commerce. By focusing on this specific group, a following set of criteria applies:

- involvement in the vocational education process – nearly successfully finished (or a substantial part of it), with a comparable level of education among the individuals of the target group

- sufficient theoretical background and knowledge about the commercial job market, professions and work profiles to partake in their own vocational orientation process
- knowledge of digital tools and media
- active vocational orientation process – individuals are able to express their interests and professional wants, reflected in part by their skills and competencies

The newly developed measure concept is intended to further build and reinforce each of the prerequisite criteria of the target group. It also aims to eliminate specific knowledge gaps and deficits of the target group as they relate to vocational orientation in its final stages (within the vocational education process) – practical experience and knowledge of the digitization effects, the actual changes to the commerce job market, related work profiles, work processes and their requirements.

3.2 Implementing institutions and responsibilities

The newly developed measure concept for vocational orientation of “young people in the process of career choice in the field of commerce” is primarily suitable for implementation within institutions that have had experience with vocational orientation and have carried out such measures in the past. They should have the necessary resources for implementation of the measure concept, both in terms of the necessary specialized personnel and the necessary infrastructure. This is addressing primarily educational institutions for commercial vocations.

In addition to institutions with direct experience in the implementation of vocational orientation measures, the newly developed measure concept can also be implemented by other institutions and organizations that are performing vocational orientation:

- vocational training and vocational orientation centers
- employment services (regional and national)
- employment agencies
- chambers of commerce (regional and national), and
- ultimately, even the employers themselves (within an internship / training program)

However, it should be noted that, in this context, such institutions might not have the prerequisite necessary resources – staff/personnel (teachers, trainers) and infrastructure (class/training rooms, tools) – to implement the measure concept in its full intended format. In this case, cooperation with other vocational institutions can compensate for possible lacks.

Which institutions will ultimately be responsible for the implementation of the new measure concept depends on the VO system of the respective EU country. In general, any interested institutions, involved in the process of vocational orientation, has the opportunity to implement the measure concept, if they have the required necessary framework.

3.3 Fields of action

The focus of the new measure concept lies in the individual practical approach to digitized commercial work processes and insight into a specific commercial workplace as well as the general commercial job market context. This then develops further into analytical, comparative and discussional group work.

The aforementioned translates into the following core fields of action:

- promoting of practical vocational skills (work skills)
- promoting of digital competences:
 - information and data literacy
 - communication and cooperation
 - digital content creation
- promotion of problem-identification competencies
- promotion of problem-solving competencies
- support in career choice within the VO process
- support in finding internships and the application process

These fields of action have a high level of interconnection, interdependence and overlap; however, they do not need to be addressed in a defined order within the framework of the measure. Considering the overall homogenous level of knowledge and experience of the target group, the deficits and needs of the respective participants should be similar as well, prompting a rather unified content design.

The commercial professions that the measure concept relates to, vary depending on the vocational education system and vocational structure of the commercial field within each respective EU country. Focusing on Slovenia, the measure concept applies specifically, but not exclusively, to the following vocations:

- economic technician
- economic-commercial technician

It should be noted that the professions in the field of commerce do not correspond to specific vocations, but rather fall under one or the other of the abovementioned general commercial vocations (vocational education titles) covering the general sectors of the field (sales, distribution, marketing and management).

3.4 Regional reach

Considering the total digital implementation of the measure concept, its reach is virtually limitless and its area of implementation completely flexible. Utilizing digital platforms, it can be implemented locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, depending on the potential restrictions by:

- the career choice within the vocational orientation process as it relates to the interests and needs of the individual (socio-economical, logistical, geographical, linguistic, cultural etc.)
- the needs and requirements of the commercial job market

The measure concept was developed with the objective that the concept is transferable to all EU countries, with options to adapt and modify its contents at all times while still offering the possibility of comparability.

4. Frame conditions

4.1 Participating actors – internal

As the newly developed measure concept addresses specific vocational orientation needs of the target group, the measure concept should be implemented by persons professionally involved in vocational orientation and/or career orientation (counselling, guiding). Whether it is teachers, counsellors, pedagogues, psychologists or other vocational orientation specialists, in order to effectively execute all parts of the module and assume all necessary roles (supervision, support, guidance, counselling), the specialists should have:

- many years of vocational orientation experience
- the requirements necessary to execute commercial vocational education
 - adequate pedagogical qualification
 - knowledge of the commercial job market (employment and internship options), commercial profession profiles and work processes
- communication, organizing and networking skills
- digital skills and competences and ability to relay/transfer them
- knowledge of advanced digital teaching methods and digitized VO measures
- general knowledge about digitization in the commercial sector

If the internal implementing specialists do not meet the requirements, different external cooperation partners can be involved in either the preparation (as facilitators or providers of the required necessary framework) or the execution of the measure concept to achieve a positive outcome (fulfilling measure objectives).

At the other end of the measure concept, complementing the internally employed specialists and the target group, is the employer in the field of commerce. Their involvement in the process is largely dependent on the networking, organizational and communication skills of the internal specialists in the preparation phase of the module. To meet the requirements for implementation of the measure, employers should:

- be able to digitally present themselves in the form of a virtual company visit, outlining the work professions and work processes and their changes due to digitization
- provide a digital work process simulation with a clear outline of the digitization elements and analysis of the work process within the general workflow
- clearly and thoroughly describe the professional layout regarding the required competencies, skills and know-how (preferably noting their practical implications during the work process simulation)
- present possible employment and internship opportunities
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4.2 Involved partners and institutions – external

In addition to internally employed specialists and cooperating employers/companies, different external partners can be involved, either facilitating cooperation between the employers and specialists (networking) or providing the required framework (personnel, facilities, tools etc.). These include:

- employment agencies
- employment services
- chambers of commerce
- vocational training and vocational orientation centers
- other vocational education institutions
- regional companies in the commercial sector
- business associations, professional associations, trade unions

Cooperation with these institutions significantly contributes to a positive course of the measure, with a broader range of quick and flexible options to counter possible implementation problems. Ideally, such co-operations have the potential to develop possible internships and employment options for the target group.

4.3 Description of a required infrastructure

The target group – students in the 3rd and 4th year of vocational education in the field of commerce – is formed during the process of vocational education, which encompasses the process of vocational orientation. The physical infrastructure for the measure are the institutions of vocational education (their classrooms, workshops, lecture halls), with vocational education and orientation specialists in their employ as personnel infrastructure. Key to the implementation to the measure are digital tools (computers, tablets, mobile devices, etc.) and their connectivity, platforms and software, interweaving the essential physical and digital infrastructure.

4.4 Timeframe of the measure

The whole measure is set in a period of 5 days, with preparation taking up one (1) day and implementation the remaining four (4). This timeframe is considered minimal, any of the phases (days) can be extended as per demands of the target group and whether the VO specialist deems it necessary to reach the objective of the measure.

4.5 Structure of the measure

The modular structure of the measure provides a concise and flexible approach, with the possibility of supplementing the measure by adding or removing individual modules. Each individual day is considered a separate module. The basic outline of the structure of the measure is as follows:

Day 1 – Introduction and preparation	<i>The target group is introduced to the measure and prepared for the first digital company visit and work process simulation (in presentation form, without active participation in the work process itself)</i>
Day 2 – First digital company visit with a passive work process simulation	<i>Participants are taking part in a digital company visit and watch a virtual presentation of a work process simulation</i>
Day 3 – Discussion and preparation	<i>The target group analyse and discuss the digital company visit and work process simulation experiences; preparations for the second visit follow</i>
Day 4 – Second digital company visit with an active work process simulation	<i>Participants take part in a digital company visit and engage in an active virtual work process simulation with an interactive analysis of the process</i>
Day 5 – Final discussion and evaluation	<i>The target group analyses, compares and discusses both practical experiences and partake in the final evaluation</i>

5. Implementation of the measure concept

Below, based on the results of the investigation concerning the status quo of the vocational orientation in the field of commerce and its changes due to digitization, first, the general principles of the implementation of the measure will be briefly described, and then the two main phases of the structure of the measure, the preparation and implementation, will be outlined and explained. The focus is on the objective – to acquaint the young people – through virtual involvement in the commercial job market and through practical commercial work processes – with the changes of the knowledge, competencies, skills, as well the processes, work profiles and commercial job market due to digitization; maintaining the underlying objective of counselling, guiding the young people in their vocational orientation and career choice processes.

5.1 General principles of the action

In order to achieve quality, concise, focused and effective implementation, the measure is underpinned by the following general principles:

Digitization

Each content module is developed in a digital-first format, meaning that each action can be executed in a digital/virtual environment via virtual chat rooms (discussions), presentation and organisational chart programs (presentations and lectures), web conferences (virtual visits and work process simulations) and using digital media and tools (personal PCs, tablets, mobile devices, digital presentation boards).

Flexibility and connectivity

Besides promoting digital skills and competencies of participants, the predominantly digital format of the measure allows complete mobility and unlimited reach, connecting any and all of the participating actors (target group, specialist and employer) remotely in full capacity.

Employability

By connecting the target group with the employer and giving them an insight into the broader (workflow) and specific (work process) context of the workplace, the measure should contribute to the target groups employability, with potential subsequent internships or first employments coming to fruition.

Transfer and comparability

The contents of the measure are created in a way that the measure results should be comparable across countries and institutions as well as between the participants. The acquired skills, competencies and know-how are part of actual work professions and should be transferrable to internships or employment at any time.

Cooperation

Within the framework of the measure, cooperation with other institutions, involved in vocational education and vocational orientation, is preferable.

Networking

As the implementation of the measure depends on cooperation, the measure promotes networking between the implementing institutions (and specialists in their employ) and employers in the field of commerce. The measure should ultimately result in promoting the participants' networking skills.

Transparency

The content of the measure is created with the purpose of transparency and universal comprehensibility for all participating actors.

5.2 Preparation

Initially, the VO specialist should conduct an assessment of the target group. This can be done as part of the measure, in the very first module, in questionnaire or test form, with possible following discussion to further specify the target group criteria.

Based on the determined target group criteria (and their heretofore vocational orientation process), the VO specialist should choose a suitable employer with corresponding work profiles and work processes from an established cooperating network and contact them with a concise explanation of the measure and implementation requirements.

Finally, the VO specialist should provide the necessary technical infrastructure (equipment, software, connectivity) and materials for implementation and inform the target group and employer about the framework (timeline, structure, processes) of the measure.

5.3 Implementation

The measure is structured into five modules (five days), generally comprised into three larger units: preparation, passive virtual simulation with discussion/analysis, active virtual simulation with discussion/analysis.

Description of content:

First module

In the first module, the specialist introduces the target group to the measure, outlining the initial situation and background of the measure and explaining the changes to the field of commerce due to digitization – the changed requirements and challenges of different professions in the field of commerce. Prefacing the first digital company visit and work process simulation, the criteria of the target group are assessed with a test or questionnaire, prepared by the specialist to choose a suitable employer with corresponding work profiles and work processes from an established cooperating network. The specialist then contacts suitable employers with a concise explanation of the measure and implementation requirements.

Second module

The virtual company visit and virtual work process simulation in the second module can be considered as *'first contact'* of the target group with an employer in the commercial job market. The specialist connects the target group and employer via a web conference platform, with a two-way video and audio connection.

There is no interaction, instead the employer performs a digital presentation of their company (work profiles, work processes with corresponding requirements, general workflow, and company network, etc.) and shows a virtual work process in action, highlighting the digitization aspects and outlining the context of the work process in the general workflow of the company.

Third module

The target group reflects upon the first virtual visit and simulation, analysing and discussing the experience as it relates to their expectations (how they have changed or remained the same). The simulated work process is broken down with corresponding skills, competencies and know-how in order to prepare the target group for an active virtual work process in the next module.

Fourth module

Going into the fourth module, the specialist has two options – either repeat the visit and work process simulation with the same employer as in the 2nd module, with the active element being the modifier; or, optimally, execute a virtual interactive company visit and work process simulation with a different employer. The option with the same employer should be considered if the VO specialist's cooperating network of employers is very limited.

Once again, the target group, VO specialist and employer are connected online, with video conference tools and a two-way video and audio connection, with optional remote software for the target group to directly partake in the use of employer's digital tools (work programs, platforms).

The second virtual company visit should be an interactive experience for the target group, with a Q&A after the presentation or an option for the participants to pose questions during the presentation itself. The work process simulation requires participants to execute work tasks, understanding their relevance within the profession as well as the broader workflow.

Fifth module

The fifth and final module starts with the target group discussing and analysing the second, active virtual visit and work process simulation. A key aspect the target group should address is contrasting and comparing the active experience of the 4th module to the passive experience of the 2nd module. To gauge the results of the measure, the specialist performs an evaluation of the target group's experience within the measure, either in questionnaire or in test form. This evaluation will serve to determine the success of the measure and help the specialist in the continuation of the vocational orientation process.

Time schedule:

1st module (day 1) – Introduction and preparation	<i>The target group is introduced to the measure and prepared for the first digital company visit and work process simulation (in presentation form, without active participation in the work process itself)</i>	
9:00–10:00	<i>Introduction to the measure</i>	The specialist introduces the target group to the measure, outlining the initial situation and background of the measure and explaining the changes to the field of commerce due to digitization
10:00–11:00	<i>Assessment of the target group criteria</i>	The criteria of the target group are assessed with a test or questionnaire, prepared by the VO specialist
11:00–11:30	<i>Morning break</i>	
11:30–12:30	<i>Discussion</i>	Discussion by the target group to further specify their interests in relation to choice of work profile, work process or employer
End of 1st module		VO specialist contacts suitable employers (before 2 nd module begins)
2nd module (day 2) – First digital company visit with passive work process simulation	<i>Participants are taking part in a digital company visit and watch a virtual presentation of a work process simulation</i>	
9:00–10:30	<i>Virtual company visit (passive)</i>	After a short introduction into the 2 nd module, the specialist connects the target group and employer via a web conference platform; the employer performs a digital presentation of their company
10:30–11:00	<i>Morning break</i>	
11:00–12:30	<i>Virtual work process simulation (passive)</i>	Employer performs a virtual work process in action, highlighting the digitization aspects, with no input from the target group
End of 2nd module		
3rd module (day 3) – Discussion and preparation	<i>The target group analyse and discuss the digital company visit and work process simulation experiences; preparations for the following second visit</i>	

9:00–10:30	Discussion and analysis	The target group reflects upon the first virtual visit and simulation, analysing and discussing the experience
10:30–11:00	Morning break	
11:00–12:30	Breakdown and preparation	The work process, simulated in the 2 nd module is broken down with corresponding skills, competencies and know-how; the target group is prepared for an active virtual work process in the following module
End of 3rd module		VO specialist contacts suitable employers (before the 4 th module begins)
4th module (day 4) – Second digital company visit with active work process simulation	<i>Participants take part in a digital company visit and engage in an active virtual work process simulation with an interactive analysis of the process</i>	
9:00–11:00	Virtual company visit (active)	After a short introduction into the 4 th module, the specialist connects the target group and employer via a web conference platform; the employer performs an interactive digital presentation of their company with a Q&A after the presentation
11:00–11:30	Morning break	
11:30–13:00	Virtual work process simulation (active)	Employer enables the target group to actively participate in a virtual work process, remotely executing work tasks
End of 4th module		
5th module (day 5) – Final discussion and evaluation	<i>The target group analyses, compares and discusses both practical experiences and partake in the final evaluation</i>	
9:00–10:30	Discussion and analysis	The target group reflects upon the second virtual visit and simulation, comparing the passive and active experiences
10:30–11:00	Morning break	
11:00–12:30	Final evaluation	The specialist performs an evaluation of the target group's experiences, either in questionnaire or in test form
End of 5th module		VO specialist determines the success of the measure and plans the subsequent vocational orientation process of the target group

Used methods:

The preparation phase is largely enacted in lecture form, with questioning or testing in order to specifically assess the criteria of the target group and possible discussion to further specify their interests in relation to choice of work profile, work process or employer.

The first virtual company visit and work process simulation are executed in presentation form, with no input from participants.

The discussion method after the first virtual visit and simulation should stimulate participants to practice thinking about the experience they have gained and how their expectations might have shifted, preparing them for the next virtual visit and active work process simulation.

The second virtual company visit and active work process simulation are executed interactively, with a presentation and an interactive Q&A with the employer and practically-oriented, active work process simulation.

The final module is conducted with a final discussion, analysing the complete experience, contrasting and comparing the passive and active visits and work process simulations. Final analysis is then transferred to an evaluation – in questionnaire or test form, using the goal-based and process-based methods, focusing on the target group criteria.

Used materials:

The materials, used for measure implementation, are:

- for the virtual company visit:
 - computer with a connected (digital) projector; or
 - individual PCs or tablets with webcams and headsets or speakers and microphones;
 - webconference/videoconference programs and/or platforms;
 - presentation programs (PPT, organisational chart software, etc.);
 - internet access (LAN or Wi-Fi)

- for the virtual work process simulation:
 - computer with a connected (digital) projector; or
 - individual PCs or tablets with webcams and headsets or speakers and microphones;
 - webconference/videoconference programs and/or platforms;
 - software for simulating a work process (if necessary, otherwise simulation can be done entirely remotely);

- for the discussion and final evaluation:
 - blackboard or whiteboard;
 - flipchart or digital presentation board with organizational chart software;
 - printer (for physical questionnaires, printed slides); or
 - personal PC (for digital questionnaires and digital presentations) with internal network connectivity.

5.4 Follow-up

There are no specific anticipated follow-ups related directly to the measure as the measure itself is regarded as an integral part of the vocational orientation process, with the continuation of this process itself considered as an extended follow-up. This means that the effects of the measure in the VO process have to be observed and analysed, giving consideration to (partially or completely) repeating the measure if deemed necessary for the advancement of the VO process.

5.5 Expected results

The expected results of the measure correlate with the fulfilment of the predetermined criteria and needs and requirements of the target group.

The measure should supplement the target group's:

- theoretical background and knowledge about the commercial job market, professions and work profiles to partake in their own vocational orientation process;
- knowledge of digital tools and media and related skillsets and competencies;
- vocational orientation process, building upon the individuals' abilities to express their interests and professional wants, reflected in part by their skills and competencies;
- overall involvement and insight into the commercial job market, boosting employability of the individual participant and awareness of their employment options.

These results should be reflected in their final evaluation as well as the continuation of their VO process. The properly executed measure should also result in benefiting the specialists' experience, competencies, skills and know-how as they relate to carrying out vocational orientation and digital VO measures.

6. Resources and funding

6.1 Personnel requirement and their use

The institution implementing the measure should provide the necessary specialist (or specialists) according to the professional field in which it carries out the vocational education and orientation process. The specialists will assume a multitude of roles – supervising, supporting, guiding and counselling, imparting knowledge.

As such they must have many years of relevant vocational orientation experience; years of experience in commercial vocational education; communication, organization and networking skills; ability to impart digital skills and competences to young people; knowledge of advanced digital teaching methods and digitized vocational orientation measures; and ultimately, in-depth knowledge about digitization and its influences on the commercial sector.

It should be noted that the required number of employed specialists (staff) has to be based on the results of the status quo investigation and the experiences of the project partners in vocational orientation. Generally, the required number of staff should be determined in a way to ensure each individual young person is provided with comprehensive, professional vocational orientation.

Taking this principle into account and considering that the specialist will be assuming all the roles and executing all the phases of the module, the proposed ratio is 1 specialist (teacher, counsellor etc.) to 20 young persons (participants of the target group).

6.2 Room and technical equipment

The institutions enacting the measure should have classrooms or lecture halls available; if these are unavailable, the implementing institutions can and should cooperate with other (educating, training) institution to outsource spatial requirements.

The classrooms should be equipped with:

- conventional presentation media: (digital) projector, blackboard or whiteboard, digital presentation board, flipcharts, etc.;
- digital media tools – individual PCs, tablets, webcams, headsets or speakers and microphones, printers;
- software – webconference/videoconference programs and platforms, presentation programs, specific programs to simulate work processes;
- connectivity – internet access (LAN or Wi-Fi), internal network connectivity.

Finally, it should be noted, that the institutions must provide the necessary teaching and learning materials and vocational information materials.

6.3 Costs and possible financing of the measure

The financing of the measure in the respective EU countries should be provided by the institutions that partake in vocational orientation or vocational education in the field of commerce. Which institution is responsible for the financing of the measure per participant depends upon the particular vocational education system and which institutions are responsible for vocational education (and subsequently, orientation). So the measure could be financed by ministries, chambers, education institutions, business associations and organisations, projects, foundations etc. The amount of the final costs covered by the implementing institutions ultimately depends on the number of participants and the resources and may need to be calculated individually. Considering the completely digital implementation of the measure, the actual operational costs of implementation would be fairly low to none, with the infrastructural (physical/spatial, personnel, technical) requirements representing the biggest part or perhaps the entirety of the cost.

6.4 Required contacts and contact establishment

To ensure optimal outcomes of the measure, the implementing institution (or its employed specialist) should have an extensive network of available cooperating employers (companies, enterprises, organisations and associations) in the field of commerce. Optimally, this cooperation would directly tie-in with the commercial job market via internship or recruitment/scouting programs. This network usually stems from the institutions involvement in the vocational education process. However, it is highly advantageous that the specialists themselves are personally engaged in networking as they are able to establish a more personal, in-depth cooperation, acquainting themselves with the employers exact work profiles, work processes and the prerequisite competencies, skills and know-how. Such direct connections most often result in a vocational orientation process that is better attuned to the individual young person (and the target group overall).

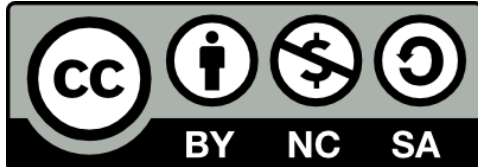
7. Evaluation of the measure

The evaluation of the measure should be performed by either the implementing specialist or a supervising specialist, with both or either monitoring and analysing the results of the measure. The evaluation should be modified to the target group's specific vocational orientation and their results as well as the specifics of the measure implementation process – i.e. which employer, which work profiles, which (digitized) work processes, which skills/competencies/know-how etc. The acquired skills, competencies and know-how can also be evaluated and assessed using standardised vocational orientation and digital proficiency testing or other VO assessment tools.

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