



APRIL 2021

## STAY SAFE!

THIS IS THE SECOND NEWSLETTER OF VR-ME. EVERYONE AROUND THE WORLD IS COPING AND ADJUSTING WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, WHICH HAS HIT THE ONE-YEAR MARK. IT TOO AFFECTED THE DEVELOPMENTS OF THIS PROJECT. NEVERTHELESS, PERHAPS SLOWER THAN ANTICIPATED, WE ARE STEADILY MAKING PROGRESS IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE SAFETY OF OUR FISHERMEN AND WOMEN.

IN DECEMBER 2019, SIX VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDER EXPERTS, AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN FISHING INDUSTRY, STARTED AN ERASMUS+ PROJECT CALLED 'VIRTUAL REALITY FOR MARITIME EMERGENCIES', UNDER THE ACRONYM 'VR-ME'. FOR 30 MONTHS THE PROJECT PARTNERS WILL WORK ON DEVELOPING A TRAINING PROGRAMME AND VIRTUAL REALITY SIMULATION FOR MARITIME EMERGENCIES ON BOARD A FISHING VESSEL.

## VIRTUAL REALITY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

**Stay safe!** It is an expression that we often hear or use in this time of the coronavirus pandemic.

To stay safe, we prepare ourselves for a situation; we wear a face mask, we keep a social distance and wash our hands to name the most general measures. By now, we are also better informed about how and for how long to wash our hands and how to put on and take off our face mask safely. The first time putting on a face mask might have felt a bit clumsy, the face mask might have been upside down or you might have grabbed the face mask at

the front, exactly where you should not be gripping the mask. Spectacle wearers should also take extra care that the glasses do not fog up, because when the exhaled air at the top of the face mask passes behind the glasses, it causes this inconvenient fogging up. Imagine it will happen to you, just when you want to cross the street with a lot of traffic passing by. By now we are used to it and although it might be no fun, we know better how to protect our health and safety. In short, safety can be learned by taking in information and practising.

This also applies to everyday activities in the fishing industry. Inasmuch as we try to work safely, there can be situations where the safety and health of fishers is at stake. Because fishermen and women work at sea where emergency services are not available within minutes with just one emergency call away like on shore, fishers need to prepare for those situations by absorbing information and practising emergency procedures. It can be quite exciting to fight a fire for the first time, or to jump from a height with a life jacket on.

VIRTUAL REALITY CAN BE A GREAT ADDITION TO FAMILIARISING FISHERS WITH SAFETY PROCEDURES IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT. A NICE ADDITION TO THEORY AND PRACTICAL EXERCISES.

The VR-ME project aims to develop virtual reality scenarios for maritime emergencies in fisheries in order to familiarise fishers with some of the emergency procedures to be followed and thus contribute to the safety of our fishers.

## TRANSFERRING SCRIPTS TO VIRTUAL REALITY

Thus far, we have created what we call scripts to represent the basic and elementary information to address a maritime emergency situation with ensuring the maximum guarantees for its safe outcome. This will bring us closer to creating a virtual reality scenario, requiring elements, information, and actions indicated for each of the crew members on board.

Let us take the example of abandoning ship, which entails actions like an emergency call, pick-up of the radio beacon, how to wear the life jacket and

immersion suit, access to the life raft, meeting point and so on, for which each crew member should know instinctively what to do, how, and when.



The eventual training tool will hereby be able to provide a virtual environment where the user moves on a fishing vessel and has to face several emergency scenarios, hence contributing to the necessary familiarisation of handling with maritime emergencies.

We are currently figuring out how many emergency scenarios of high standard can be developed in virtual reality. For each scenario selected, there will be one crewmember that based on his/her role will have to perform some actions in order to complete the training.

## WHAT IS NEXT?

The development phase has already started with the 3D elements and basic environment development.

Upon the completion of the first phase of the development, the scenarios will be tested by the partners to provide feedback for improvements. The simulations will be also improved via several tests in the various project partner EU countries with the future training course users. The simulations are then to be complemented with a handbook to manage the software properly, with a training program, and all contents developed in the different project partner country's languages, which are English, Spanish, French, Dutch, and Greek.

## STAY TUNED

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Contact us directly via <https://vr-me.eu/contact/> or +33 297350430.

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Thank you!