

# Action plan extended reality

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT****STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN** **BELGIUM-FL**

## Timeline

**2021 Approved/Agreed****2022 Implementation****2023 Implementation****2024 Implementation****ID number 43800**

## Background

XR stands for extended reality and is used today to denote the entire continuum between physical reality and the digital universe, with all its intermediate forms. Within extended reality, three major technologies can be distinguished: augmented (AR), mixed (MR) and virtual reality (VR).

From the observed need for professionalisation of teachers regarding innovation in labour market-oriented training with extended reality is a need, we want to focus on the professionalisation and further expansion of these technologies to support learning effects in technical and vocational secondary education. To realise this, an XR-action plan was developed.

## Objectives

The XR action plan pursues the following objectives:

- (a) providing XR materials (hardware and software) for all secondary VET schools with a low-threshold access;
- (b) increasing the professionalisation of teaching staff regarding XR use and XR applications;
- (c) increasing knowledge about XR for all Flemish schools.

With the InnoVET XR projects we also want to create a broader basis for innovative XR use in the five provinces and build new innovative digital material (software, apps) that can be used by all teachers in technical and vocational education. This creates win-win situations from which all schools and companies in Flanders can benefit.

## Description

The XR action plan was concretised into four closely-intertwined actions:

Action 1. Practice-oriented research: an innovation can only be sustainably embedded if it can rely on (scientific) evidence about its effectiveness. Does this innovation actually contribute to achieving a certain objective? But also: what works in day-to-day educational

practice and in what circumstances/with what support? Additional scientific research is also needed for XR in general. It is a living theme, constantly changing and evolving.

Action 2. Hardware: surveys show that schools see opportunities in a lending service that, in addition to hardware, also offers prospects for substantive support and in-service training, and relieves schools of their own purchases and maintenance.

Action 3. Software: without software, hardware and in-service training is meaningless. To ensure that there is sufficient, and correct software to enrich the hardware of the lending service, efforts will also be made on software. To this end, an inventory is being made and also project work is being done. Two objectives are paramount: sustainability of existing software projects (which are not always geared to education) and new software projects.

Action 4. Support and in-service training: providing hardware and software is an important part of the XR story, but it is only one element in the whole. How to handle it, and how to implement it in a sustainable way, should also be encouraged. We provide in-service training and professionalisation around XR through an XR Academy and an XR Learning Network.

### **2021 Approved/Agreed**

The XR action plan was adopted by the Flemish Government in May 2021.

### **2022 Implementation**

In 2022, the four actions started to be implemented under the management of different partners.

### **2023 Implementation**

In 2023, XR material was deployed and could be loaned out. As a continuation of the implementation phase, schools can now loan out XR material through the Regional Technological Centres. They can use this XR material for educational purposes and after having followed a course on XR.

Continuous professional development actions: 'train the trainer' courses were set up, where ICT coordinators and teachers of schools were trained in how to use XR material. Following such a course is a prerequisite to be able to loan out XR material.

Lending service: An XR lending service was set up by the Department and the coordination given to the Regional Technological Centres.

A 'Learning Network' of XR professionals and researchers was established. This network will carry out practice-oriented research within XR, and will conduct an evaluation of XR in education to improve its effectiveness.

### **2024 Implementation**

The Flemish government freed up additional financial resources to boost the XR action plan in the coming years. In 2024 the first steps are taken to outline a new XR plan from 2025 to 2029.

## **Bodies responsible**

- Flemish Department of Education and Training

## **Target group**

**Learners**

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

### **Education professionals**

Teachers

### **Entities providing VET**

Companies

VET providers (all kinds)

## **Thematic categories**

### **Modernising VET infrastructure**

Improving digital infrastructure of VET provision

### **Modernising VET offer and delivery**

Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning; adaptable/flexible training formats

Developing and updating learning resources and materials

### **Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences**

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

## **European priorities in VET**

### **VET Recommendation**

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

### **Osnabrück Declaration**

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

Sustainability - a green link in VET

## **Subsystem**

IVET

## **Further reading**

[XR action plan: description of different actions and links](#)

“ ... ” **Cite as**

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