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Promoting inclusion, digital innovation and green transition in VET through the acquisition of green entrepreneurial skills of DHH students for better skills match with the labour market

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From Classroom to Climate Action: How Co-Design and Immersive Tech are Rewriting VET for DHH Learners

While the European labor market rapidly shifts toward a climate-neutral economy, traditional Vocational Education and Training (VET) frameworks are scrambling to keep pace—particularly in how they serve Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) individuals. The GreenSkills4Deaf project is addressing this by moving past standard adjustments and restructuring the VET system through two specific drivers: **transnational co-design** and **technology**.

Bridging the Systemic Gap in Vocational Training

Most green sector training relies heavily on auditory cues, traditional lecture formats, and standard terminology that lacks established equivalents in sign language. This creates an immediate barrier at the entry point of the green economy.

To bypass this, the project rejects top-down educational models in favor of a co-design methodology. This framework forces VET schools, educators, language experts, and actual labor market stakeholders into the same room. Instead of educators guessing what the market needs, or companies assuming what DHH students can do, the curriculum is built backward from real-world workplace requirements. The result is the EU Green Sign Language Framework—a standardized linguistic foundation that ensures environmental and business concepts are structurally accurate and accessible across borders.

Preparing Trainers to Teach Green Competencies

An inclusive curriculum is useless without educators equipped to teach it. A core, often overlooked pillar of this initiative is the systematic upskilling of VET trainers and interpreters themselves. By aligning educator profiles with the European Green Competence Framework, the project ensures that sustainability is not treated as an afterthought or a separate seminar. Trainers are equipped with micro-credentials that certify their ability to deliver complex green entrepreneurial training natively to DHH students, closing the pedagogical loop.



Immersive Simulations: The Reality of Tech-Driven Inclusion

The most tangible shift in this educational model is the integration of Virtual Reality (VR) simulations and interactive mobile apps. For DHH learners, visual and experiential learning is an effective vector for mastering complex technical systems.

- **Risk-Free Technical Mastery:** VR allows students to interact with green technologies in a fully visual, interactive environment.
- **Linguistic Integration:** The interactive app embeds the newly developed Green Sign Language terminology directly into the practical exercises, reinforcing vocabulary through muscle memory and spatial awareness rather than rote text memorization.
- **Workplace Simulation:** By simulating green workplace environments, these tools prepare students for the physical realities of SMEs, reducing the initial friction often experienced during transition into the labor market.

A Structural Blueprint for the EU

The ultimate goal of GreenSkills4Deaf goes beyond localized classroom success. By connecting six organizations (Coordinator: Społeczna Akademia Nauk, Partners: DISE, CitizensACT, Ergon, Cooperation Bancaire Pour L'Europe, Polski Związek Głuchych Oddział Łódzki) across four EU countries, the project is assembling a flexible network intended to influence policy and recruitment practices. When VET institutions and labor market actors share a unified communication channel, inclusive green entrepreneurship stops being a compliance checkbox and becomes a viable economic drive



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