

## Website Article - REBALANCE Project Abstract

### **Title: The REBALANCE Project**

Engaging Physiotherapists and gymnasts in the digital performance of their profession for distance guidance in physical exercise

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**Background:** Many Europeans work at least one-third of their day (1). Hybrid work, or “Working from Home (WFH),” merges the office and home environments into the everyday workplace and is not a new concept (2). However, in 2019, WFH surged in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Mandatory WFH measures prompted employees to move workplaces from offices to homes, often lacking suitable environments. Consequently, in tandem with increased WFH, prolonged sitting, screen time, and sedentary behaviours, workers' mobility decreased, and aches in the back and neck increased (4).

In addition, exercise barriers provoked people to become more aware of their activity levels and fitness training technologies (videos, apps) were developed to encourage the public to be more active at home (4). However, not all exercises were guided or created by professionals (e.g., physiotherapists, trainers), worsening users' mobility and/or creating musculoskeletal issues. Physiotherapists, exercise science, fitness, and training professionals are essential in addressing these issues. and, therefore, require the technical skills to instruct and support their clients effectively online.

**The aim of the REBALANCE project is** to equip physiotherapists and exercise, sports, and health training professionals with accessible training materials to upskill them in new digital technologies, tools, and trends so that they can adapt their services to meet the requirements of clients in remote locations.

**Methods:** A multi-method design was employed. Needs Analysis: Preliminary desk research, surveys, and interviews were conducted to identify challenges and needs among target groups informing the development of the ‘Skills Enhancement Framework (R1)’ and ‘Cross-Training Platform (R2)’. Development and Execution: involved in creating R1 educational material, establishing a learning environment, micro-credential framework, R2 platform development, instructional design, integration, and gamification. Validation and implementation included gathering qualitative and quantitative data from internal and external target audience piloting, followed by refinement of R1 and R2.

**Results:** (R1) The Skills Enhancement Framework is designed for professionals to provide valuable insights on integrating digital practices into their profession. It equips professionals with knowledge and skills to effectively support and train clients while preparing them to adapt and thrive as digital technologies evolve. It comprises a (i) Training Curriculum and an (ii) E-learning Micro-credential Course designed for Physiotherapists, exercise science, fitness, and training professionals. (R2) Cross-Training Platform exercise suite developed by physiotherapists and sports trainer professionals supports physiotherapists, fitness, sport, and health trainers in providing exercise guidance at home that meets their clients' training and movement needs. R1 and R2 are embedded in the REBALANCE Club virtual space.

**Expected Impact:** REBALANCE enhances the provision of professional movement services across Europe. R1 addresses the digital skills gap in remote professional movement guidance and promotes safe home-based exercise availability. R2 offers free online tools for physiotherapists and trainers to enhance their services and provide precise in-home exercise guidance tailored to their clients.

**The REBALANCE Virtual Club:** <https://rebalance.erasmusplus.website/entry-point>

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**Project Partnership:** Atlantic Technological University, Ireland; ATERMON BV, The Netherlands; Turku University of Applied Sciences, Finland; Hearthands Solutions, Cyprus; Lithuanian Sports University, Lithuania; Centros Escolares De Ensino Profissional, Portugal.

**Project Partnership:**

### Partners:



### References

- [1. (Andrew Naber et al., 2007)]
- [2. (Minoura et al., 2021)]
- [3. (Fukuskima et al., 2021)]
- [4. (Newbold et al., 2021)]