

## Press release

Vienna, 2022 May 24th

### CATRINA: PROMOTING CIVIL COURAGE IN AN INNOVATIVE AND PLAYFUL WAY

FFG project led by AIT investigated gender- and diversity-specific factors for civil courageous action and developed three game concepts.

Vienna (AIT): Pickpockets, sexual harassment, racism, bullying and violence in public spaces or in families - in everyday life there are various situations where courageous intervention is required. "It's about looking and acting instead of looking away and staying silent," emphasises Anke Schneider, computer scientist at the AIT Center for Technology Experience and project manager of the research project CATRINA (Courage Activation Research and Influencing Factors for taking Action). [www.catrina.at](http://www.catrina.at)

The question of whether civil courage can be promoted through gender- and diversity-specific game concepts was analysed in detail in the CATRINA consortium led by the AIT Center for Technology Experience together with the Playful Interactive Environments research group from FH OÖ Campus Hagenberg, Rudy Games, City Games Vienna, SOS Menschenrechte and the Centre for Interaction, Media and Social Diversity (ZIMD).

The CATRINA project team wants to sensitise (especially young) people to the topic of civil courage and has chosen the medium of games as a research method for this purpose. Civil courage can thus be experienced in a safe way. Different options for action in delicate situations can be tested through play and the consequences of one's own actions can be experienced.

"With our game concepts, we want to improve everyday courage and the willingness to act in society in an innovative way," Anke Schneider underlines the innovative and interdisciplinary approach in the project. "It is particularly important that the games are designed in a diversity-sensitive way, i.e. that they do not contain any discriminatory elements. But we also pick up on the diversity of the players and link them to their social environments," adds Julia Himmelsbach, expert for diversity-sensitive development at the AIT Center for Technology Experience.

#### Individual readiness for civil courage

The willingness to show moral courage is very individual and socially distinctive. In general, people react very differently in safety-critical, delicate situations due to their socialisation and different experiences. Precisely for this reason, based on scientific analyses of factors that influence civil courage (such as individual willingness to take risks, sense of social responsibility, intervention skills or the number of passers-by) and analyses of civil courage training practices, three different game concepts were developed in an experimental process to promote civil courage in a playful way: A concept for a virtual reality game, an urban game approach and a hybrid game concept.

### Hybrid Spiel

The hybrid game is played as a classic card game in combination with an app on a smartphone or tablet. At the beginning of the game, a certain situation is introduced that requires civil courage. Up to eight players are then challenged to bring the situation to a good result by skilfully playing the cards in their hands.

### Urban Game

The Urban Game is a game in public space. An adventure is started by a phone call, which requires civil courage to act. Using the mobile phone keypad, it is possible to make decisions and easily select different options for action in order to cope well with the situation.

### Virtual Reality Spiel

The virtual reality game allows you to immerse yourself in a scenario in virtual space in which moral courage is called for - a newspaper saleswoman is insulted by a man in front of a supermarket and the situation escalates. But what is the right way to react now? In virtual reality, you are (almost) lifelike in the situation and can control the dialogue and the course of the game with eye and hand interaction.

### Project results, conclusion and outlook

An experiment with 57 participants showed that moral courage and social responsibility have an extremely high value for all social groups. Civil courage is important to the majority of people, but there are differences in who benefits most from learning and trying out new ways of acting through play. "Our studies show that especially those who have not yet had to experience discrimination can learn the most from the games," explains Julia Himmelsbach. The feeling of connection with the characters in the game and with the other players is also particularly important for learning success - this promotes the courage to act with civil courage.

For the first time, gender-sensitive game concepts for civil courage were developed with the help of new technologies. The knowledge built up in the project can be used for civil courage training and measures to increase civil courage nationally, but also internationally. The findings can be used in schools, for example, in the area of "social learning", but also in the public sector for further training measures. All three game concepts are available as prototypes and can be tested on request. A project video explaining and illustrating the three game concepts is available on the CATRINA website: [www.catrina.at](http://www.catrina.at)

### Project facts

CATRINA (project no. 872969) is a FEMtech research project funded by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) as part of the 6th call for proposals 2018 and runs until the end of May 2022. The project partners are the AIT Center for Technology Experience (project management), FH OÖ/Campus Hagenberg, City Games, Rudy Games, SOS Menschenrechte and the Centre for Interaction, Media and Social Diversity (ZIMD). [www.catrina.at](http://www.catrina.at)

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