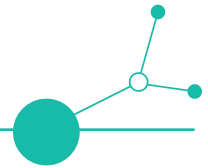


D.2.1.1 Catalogue of digital detox activities

Framework



Version 2
12 2024





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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. About the project

The BURNOUT PREVENT project is designed to strengthen entrepreneurial capabilities to address the escalating challenges of anxiety, burnout, and depression among employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It takes a holistic approach to tackling burnout by focusing on three key dimensions: the corporate environment, personal free time, and digital stress.

Anxiety and depression are now among the most common psychological challenges in workplaces, accounting for more than 20% of all sick leaves. This trend significantly affects productivity and innovation, resulting in an estimated annual economic loss of €202 billion in Central Europe. Sectors aligned with smart specialisation are particularly at risk due to the intense demands of a competitive global market.

The project aims to enhance entrepreneurial skills and introduce a comprehensive organisational model to build resilience against burnout in SMEs. It will focus on three key smart specialisation fields: Industry 4.0, Smart Health, and Sustainable Food. By providing managers and employees with essential knowledge and practical tools, the project will enable the effective implementation of burnout prevention strategies in both professional and personal contexts. Enhanced knowledge will contribute to raised innovation capacities, productivity and creativeness of SMEs.

1.2 Purpose of deliverable

Deliverable „D.2.1.1 *Catalogue of digital detox activities*“ is part of Work Package 2, „*Enhancing burnout preventive skills for S3 employees outside working time*“, where the main goal is to develop and test „digital detox“ activities for the prevention of burnout syndrome in workers from S3 sectors outside of their working time. The „*Catalogue of digital detox activities*“ will describe number of digital detox activities which can employees do after working time. The „*Catalogue*“ will help focus groups to select the most appropriate 2-3 activities to be tested with the goal to decrease of stress factors among workers employed in different smart specialisation fields. The *Catalogue of digital detox activities* is a part of activity „A.2.1 *Development and testing of digital detox activities for prevention of burnout syndrome in workers from S3 sectors outside of their working time*“.

1.3 Relation to other project activities and deliverables

The *Catalogue of digital detox activities* is strongly connected with the „B-SA tool“ (A.1.1) produced in WP1, „*Enhancing professional capacities and setting up organizational model for burnout resilience in SMEs*“, coordinated by PP2 (NIOM). Testing of the digital detox activities from the „*Catalogue*“ will be accompanied with the assessment of the level of burnout by B-SA before and after the testing digital detox activities to measure the potential improvements.

The *Catalogue of digital detox activities* will also be important building block for the solution designed in A.2.2 - „*Development of personal guide for reduction of digital stress*“. Personal guide will be used by S3 employees in their free time for preventive or curative measures when coping with everyday stress, and will be built up based on the „*Catalogue*“ (D.2.1.1) tested actions (D.2.1.2 - „*Do's and Don'ts check lists for burnout syndrome prevention*“) and recommendations from those, who successfully overcame burnout (D.2.1.3 - „*Transnational testing report of digital detox activities*“).



1.4 Contribution of the project partners

Work package leader PP3 Comenius University Bratislava (UNIBA), was supported in the preparation of the „D.2.1.1 Catalogue of digital detox activities” by the knowledge expert partners, PP2 Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine (NIOM), PP11 National Center for Public Health and Pharmacy (NNGYK) and PP12 Croatian Institute of Public Health (HZJZ). The role of the knowledge expert partners in our project is to contribute their specialized expertise in occupational health, encompassing areas such as health promotion, work psychology, and stress physiology. Additionally, they bring valuable knowledge and experience in conducting studies and implementing health promotion interventions in workplace settings.



2 Catalogue of digital detox activities

Welcome to the Catalogue of Digital Detox Activities, an innovative and comprehensive guide designed to help you reconnect with life beyond digital technology. This Catalogue is part of a unique program aimed at supporting your journey through a digital detox, offering a variety of activities to engage in during your detox period.

Each of the proposed aspects of the digital detox program is thoughtfully designed to provide meaningful alternatives to digital consumption, promoting well-being. The program itself is based on rigorous research. See the following chapters on development and philosophy, ensuring that this program is both scientific and practical.

Please take the time to read through this Catalogue carefully. We invite you to explore how to detox from technology, challenge yourself, and transform your relationship with technology.

2.1 Development

The presented digital detox program comes from evidence-based sources. We have followed a systematic approach in its development - we have created a systematic review of the previously published scholarly literature on the topic of digital detox in the adult working population, with a focus on the non-work context. The way we went through all the studies could be equated to a funnel. Using predetermined criteria, we progressively reduced and narrowed our selection of the most relevant studies that provided information on digital detox activities. One key finding is that the literature addresses digital detox per se but does not offer options for detoxing - it does not say what to do when people detox, and thus lacks suggestions for "how to detox" activities. Despite this gap in the literature, we identified 12 studies covering this area (Brown & Kuss, 2020; Gill et al., 2019; Keller et al., 2021; Marx et al., 2022; Mirbabaie et al., 2022a; Nguyen & Hargittai, 2023; Paris et al., 2022; Schmitt et al., 2021; Schmuck, 2020; Syvertsen, 2022; Vanden Abeele & Nguyen, 2023; Verlinden et al., 2024). From these studies, we extracted activities suitable for digital detox and supplemented them with additional literature (e.g., Nassen et al., 2023) and our expert knowledge. Through this process, we offer guidance on digital detoxification for the working population with an emphasis on the non-work context. Figure 1 presents the procedure in the form of a flow diagram.

2.2 Philosophy

Although information and communication technologies have several benefits, research also points to their negative impact on several aspects such as work performance and well-being (Nassen et al., 2023; Radtke et al., 2022; Schmitt et al., 2021; Umasankar et al., 2022). Digital detox appears to be a promising strategy for coping with this overload (Adam et al., 2016; Mirbabaie et al., 2022b). Digital detox is a broad concept whose definition varies across the literature - it is not clearly established what everything falls under digital detox. For example, Oxford Learner's Dictionary (n.d.) conceptualizes digital detox as "a period of time when a person does not use digital devices such as smartphones or computers, especially in order to reduce stress and relax". Similarly, Syvertsen and Enli (2019) refer to digital detox as "periodic disconnection from social or online media, or strategies to reduce digital media involvement" (p. 1). Thus, digital detox may not only be a radical switching off all digital technologies but can also be a strategy to regulate and balance the use of technology. As we live in a world where long-term disconnection may seem like an impossibility for many, we have tried to provide several alternatives for users. Firstly, we offer the possibility to choose one level of digital detox, which can be "total", "partial" or "selective". These levels vary in the degree of restriction. Secondly, there is a choice of one time horizon, i.e., the duration and frequency of the digital detox. There are a number of options available but in principle, the shorter the duration of the detox, the more often it should be practised. Finally, there are seven rich packages of activities, from which each



individual chooses two or three that are close to his/her heart, committing to carry out some of the activities included in the packages for the three months of the digital detox. Thus, through the procedure shown in Figure 2, we propose a digital detox program that is individualised.

Figure 1. Flow diagram representing the procedure for selecting relevant studies.

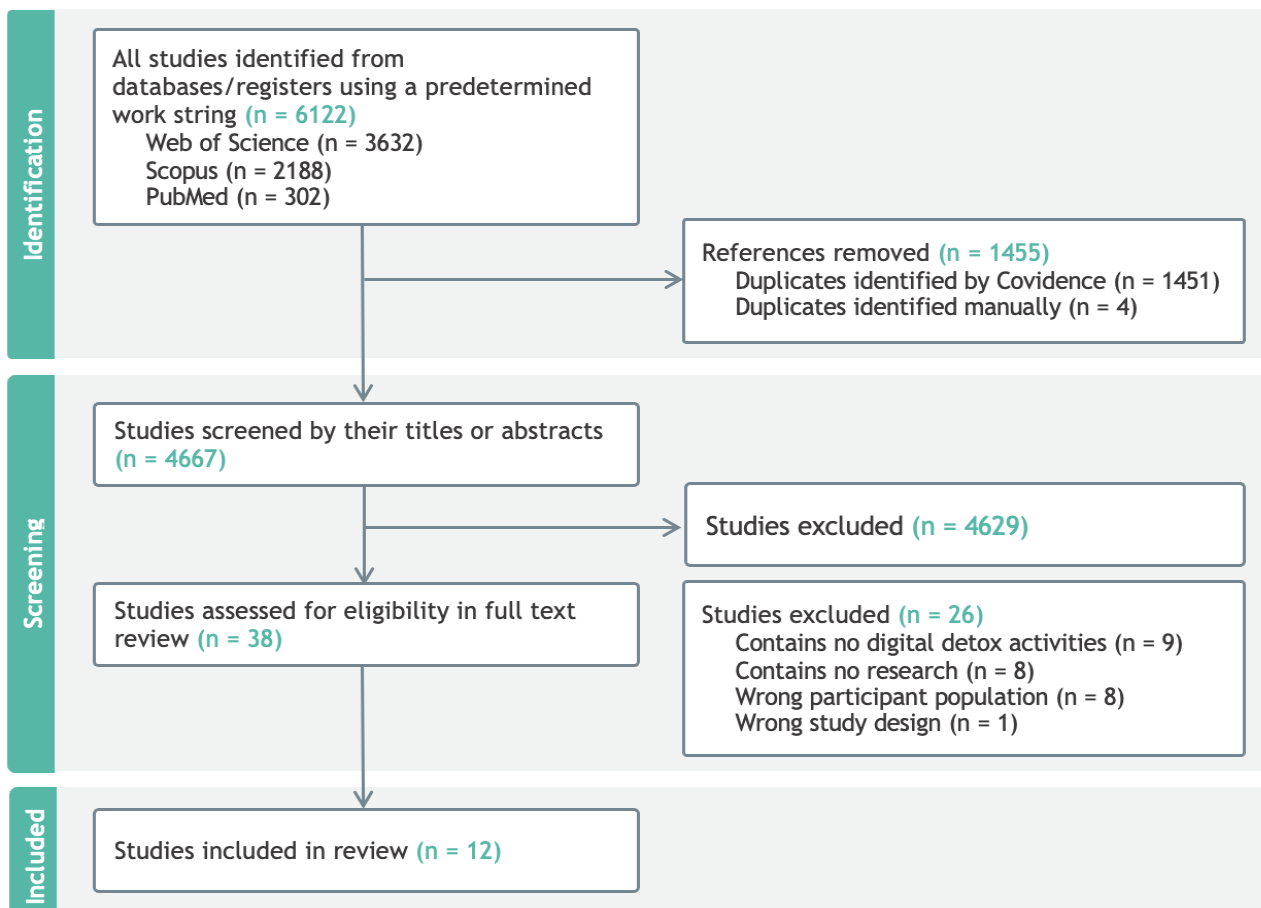
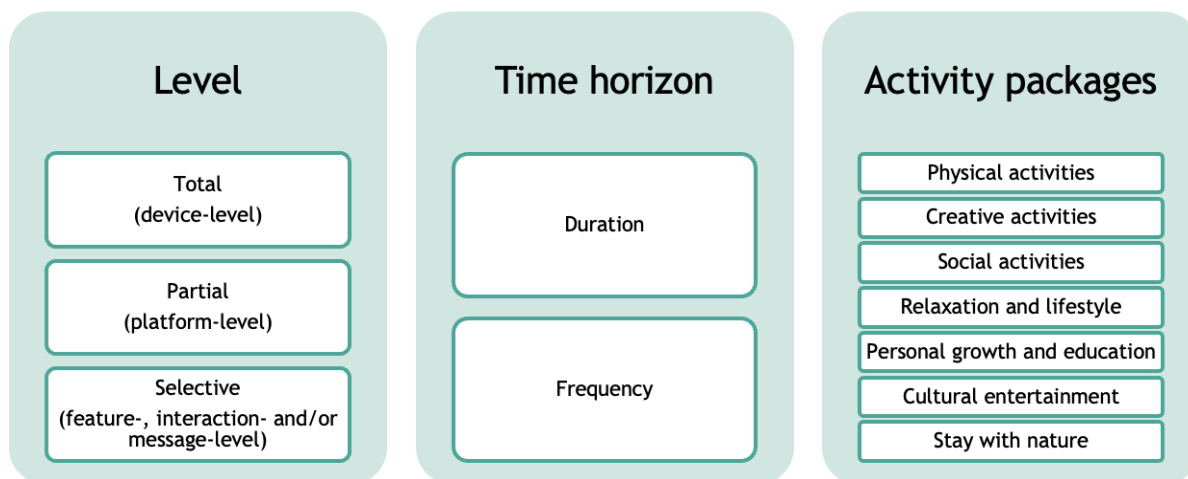


Figure 2. Overview of the proposed digital detox program. The program can be made up of different digital detox levels, time horizons and activity packages.





2.3 General instruction

Over the next three months, your role will be to actively participate in a digital detox program. The purpose of this initiative is to offer you a structured, individualized approach to disconnect from digital technologies and reconnect with meaningful, real-world experiences. You will choose your preferred level of digital detox, select for how long and how often you will detox (duration and frequency), and pick two or three activity packages to engage in during your detox periods.

We all differ in how much we use information and communication technologies. You will have the opportunity to select from varying levels of detox, each with a different degree of restrictions. It is important that you choose a level that is challenging for you. For example, if you rarely engage with social media, selecting a detox that only limits social media use may not be sufficient. We encourage you to push your boundaries and choose restrictions that truly test your digital habits. The same recommendation applies to the choice of time horizon. Choose the duration and frequency of digital detox that is feasible for you but try to expand your regular practise.

In addition to selecting your digital detox level and time horizon, you will pick two or three activity packages that will guide how you spend the time freed up by disengaging from technology. These activities are designed to enrich your experience throughout the program. Please remember that this detox is an opportunity to reflect on how we spend our time outside of work.

You are encouraged to take this experience seriously and commit fully to your choices. While this program is designed to be flexible, its effectiveness relies on your active participation and willingness to embrace discomfort for the sake of long-term benefits. Set realistic goals, but don't shy away from pushing your limits. The greater the challenge, the more rewarding the outcomes.

2.3.1 Digital detox level

This section contains descriptions, goals and preparation instructions for implementing each level of the digital detox. Read them carefully and decide on one of them to follow during the next three months of the digital detox.

I. Total digital detox (device-level)

- **Description:** Complete exclusion of all digital technologies (mobile, computer, internet, TV, wearable technologies [e.g., smart watches]). See Table 1.
- **Goal:** Complete disconnection from the digital world and return to analogue activities and interactions.
- **Preparation:** Turn off or put away in a safe place all digital technologies from your surroundings. Let family and friends know that you are going to disconnect from technology and specify the time when you will not be available on your mobile phone or/and social networks.
- **Restriction level:** High.

II. Partial digital detox (platform-level)

- **Description:** The use of mobile phones, computers and the internet is prohibited, while the use of passive media such as television and streaming services (Netflix, Spotify, YouTube, etc.) is allowed. See Table 1.
- **Goal:** Reduced technological interactivity and avoided overload while passive consumption of content is enabled.



BURNOUT PREVENT

- **Preparation:** Limit your use of specified digital technologies by turning them off or putting them away in a safe place. You can use certain technologies without restrictions. Let family and friends know that you are going to disconnect from technology and specify the time when you will not be available on your mobile phone or/and social networks.
- **Restriction level:** Medium.

III. Selective digital detox (feature-, interaction- and/or message-level)

- **Description:** Restricting the use of only certain applications, such as social media or other communication applications including email, but other activities such as using maps on a computer or mobile phone or watching TV are allowed. See Table 1.
- **Goal:** Reduction of technologies that contribute to congestion while others remain available
- **Preparation:** Limit your use of certain digital technologies by turning off or muting notifications, putting the device on flight or sleep mode. You can use digital detox apps to limit your use of social networking sites, for example. You can use certain technologies without restrictions. If you feel it is appropriate, let family and friends know that you are going to disconnect from certain technologies and specify the time when you will not be available on your mobile phone or/and social networks.
- **Restriction level:** Low.

Table 1. Examples of digital technologies and their usability at different levels of digital detox.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES	DIGITAL DETOX		
	Total	Partial	Selective
Smartphone (calling, non-interactive apps)	X	X	✓
Desktop or laptop (non-interactive activities)	X	X	✓
Tablet (non-interactive activities)	X	X	✓
Internet (e.g., use of Google)	X	X	✓
E-mail	X	X	X
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter). Applies to all your social media networks.	X	X	X
Instant messaging (e.g., WhatsApp, Messenger, Telegram)	X	X	X
Games and consoles (e.g., PlayStation, Xbox, Nintendo Switch). Applies to all multiplayer games.	X	✓	✓
Smart watches	X	✓	✓
Electronic book readers	X	✓	✓
Digital cameras and camcorders	X	✓	✓
Television	X	✓	✓
Radio	X	✓	✓



BURNOUT PREVENT

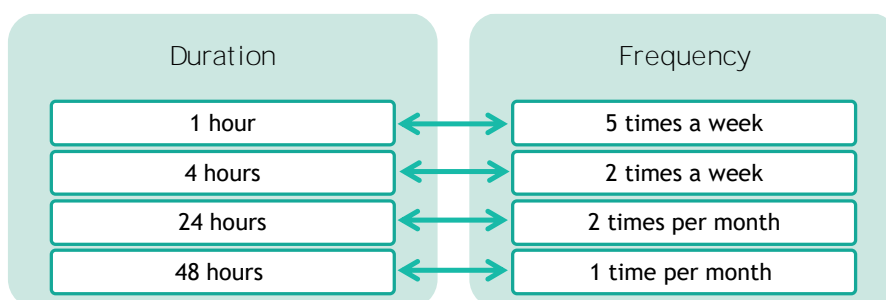
Streaming services (e.g., Netflix, Spotify, YouTube)	X	✓	✓
Virtual reality (VR headsets)	X	✓	✓
Transport and navigation (e.g., Maps, Uber, public transport apps)	X	X	✓

2.3.2 Time horizon

Choose one of the following combinations of digital detox duration and frequency. You will perform your digital detox for the next three months during the selected time horizon.

To ensure we can evaluate the program effectively, you will need to stick to a single combination of time frames for your digital detox. This means you cannot mix or match different durations and frequencies - it is important to follow the exact combination you choose (e.g., 4 hours + 2 times a week). Having consistent time frames across participants helps us analyse the results accurately and fairly. Take your time to pick the option that suits you best, knowing that your consistency is key to the program’s success.

Figure 3. Duration and frequency of digital detox. Each time length has a set amount of time for how often it needs to be performed.



2.3.3 Activity packages

From the following seven activity packages, choose two or three packages containing digital detox activities that are close to your heart and that you can see yourself doing over the next three months. Each package is a covering category for more similar activities - you choose only the package and can perform different activities within the package. Before selecting, carefully read their descriptions, examples of activities and how to prepare for doing them.

I. Physical activities

- **Description:** Physical activity is an excellent way to reduce overload and gain distance from technology. This package includes activities that focus on physical movement.
- **Examples of activities:** Hiking, cycling, running, swimming, dancing, weight training, yoga, pilates, outdoor/indoor sports (football, tennis, badminton, etc.).
- **Preparation:** Make sure you have comfortable sports clothing and suitable footwear. If you exercise at home, make sure you have equipment (e.g., dumbbells, yoga mat). While doing your chosen activities, stick to your chosen level of digital detox, its duration and frequency.



II. Creative activities

- **Description:** Creative activities help stimulate the mind and promote rest without the use of technology. Do art, crafts or writing.
- **Examples of activities:** Painting, drawing, writing (journals, poems, short stories), needlepointing, embroidering, handcrafting (DIY), cooking, baking, puzzling.
- **Preparation:** Make sure you have the necessary materials such as canvases, paints, thread, needles, notebooks, or raw materials. If you choose cooking, it is recommended to have printed recipes available beforehand. Set aside a technology-free space where you can get creative. While doing your chosen activities, stick to your chosen level of digital detox, its duration and frequency.

III. Social activities

- **Description:** Although humans are social creatures, face-to-face social interactions are currently being abandoned. This package is therefore aimed at promoting social interactions without technology.
- **Examples of activities:** Meeting friends or family in person, playing board games, visiting a café or restaurant in the company of other people.
- **Preparation:** Arrange to meet friends or family at a specific location (this can also be time spent with them at home). Skip the use of your digital technology during meetings and focus on face-to-face interactions. You can also ask the social group to limit their technology during the meeting. Prepare games or activities to encourage fun together. While doing your chosen activities, stick to your chosen level of digital detox, its duration and frequency.

IV. Relaxation and lifestyle

- **Description:** Focus on improving your mental well-being using relaxation techniques, meditation and mindfulness exercises.
- **Examples of activities:** Meditation, mindfulness, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, long bath, wellness, massages, beauty procedures, listening to music, time alone.
- **Preparation:** Find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. If you want to meditate, prepare a mat or a comfortable place to sit. Make sure all technology is limited so you can fully concentrate on relaxation techniques. While doing your chosen activities, stick to your chosen level of digital detox, its duration and frequency.

V. Personal growth and education

- **Description:** Use your cognitive capacity meaningfully and focus on your learning through offline resources.
- **Examples of activities:** Studying from printed sources, reading books, participating in workshops or playing experiential games. It can be language learning, development in science, technology or humanities, or even motivational literature. Consider also volunteering or attending coaching sessions (if it is possible, take coaching sessions with a professional coach).
- **Preparation:** Choose a book or study materials that interest you. Make sure you have a comfortable place to study, for example at home or in the park, without access to digital devices. While doing your chosen activities, stick to your chosen level of digital detox, its duration and frequency.



VI. Cultural entertainment

- **Description:** This package includes activities related to visiting cultural events or places without technology. You can engage in cultural enrichment through art, history and traditional customs.
- **Examples of activities:** Visiting a museum, gallery, theatre, historical places, festivals.
- **Preparation:** Plan your visit in advance to minimize the need to use (navigation) technologies. Prepare tickets and disconnect from digital devices, or minimize them to essential use (e.g., digital elements in an exhibition, audio guide). While doing your chosen activities, stick to your chosen level of digital detox, its duration and frequency.

VII. Stay with nature

- **Description:** Nature has a calming effect and is a promising environment for digital detox. This package includes activities such as staying in nature, picnics or camping.
- **Examples of activities:** Walks in the woods, picnics, camping, bird watching, gardening, time with pets.
- **Preparation:** Plan any outdoor activity, such as a walk or camping trip. Prepare picnic food, blanket and comfortable clothing. If you plan to be in nature for a longer time, provide basic necessities (water, maps, compass) but minimize the use of technology. You can also combine these activities with taking care of your pets. While doing your chosen activities, stick to your chosen level of digital detox, its duration and frequency.

2.4 Summary and final checklist

In summary, as you embark on your digital detox journey, we encourage you to thoughtfully choose one of the three proposed detox levels, tailored to suit your personal needs and goals. Additionally, select one time horizon option (considering both duration and frequency) that will best align with your lifestyle. Finally, choose two or three activity packages from our Catalogue that will not only engage you but also enhance your detox experience over the next three months. Remember, this process is about pushing your boundaries and finding balance in the digital world. We look forward to hearing about your progress and the positive changes you experience!

Please tick the combination you have chosen in the form below (Table 2). Your task will be to stick to your chosen categories for 3 months. This form is for your summarisation purposes only. In order to help us record your selection, please also fill in the form electronically via the link provided.



Table 2. Final checklist for summarisation.

Digital detox level (tick one)	
Total digital detox	
Partial digital detox	
Selective digital detox	
Time horizon (tick one)	
1 hour, 5 times per week	
4 hours, 2 times per week	
24 hours, 2 times per month	
48 hours, 1 time per month	
Activity package (tick two or three)	
Physical activities	
Creative activities	
Social activities	
Relaxation and lifestyle	
Personal growth and education	
Cultural entertainment	
Stay with nature	



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