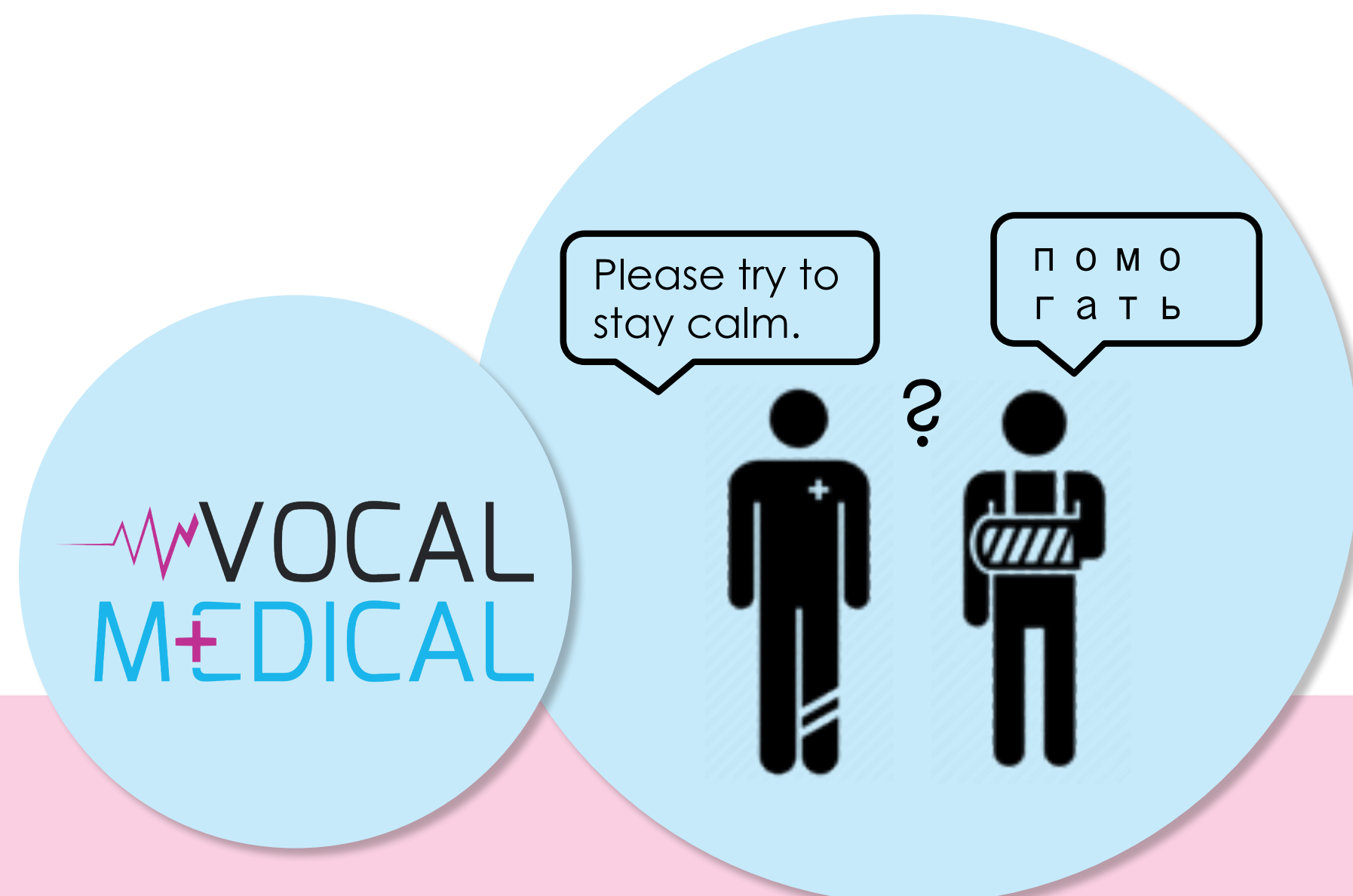


# Overcoming barriers in healthcare communication

How can patient and healthcare professionals of different language and cultural background understand each other in emergency cases?

The EU project VOCAL-Medical aims at improving this interaction by 2 multilingual, interactive tools: an intercultural and language learning tool for healthcare professionals and a translation tool.



## BACKGROUND

Good communication is essential in the healthcare sector, where it can literally make the difference between life and death.

Increased mobility and demographic change mean that more and more healthcare situations involve people who do not share a common language or cultural background.

The project aims to bridge this language gap by providing language training materials and a translation support application.

## TARGET GROUP

For staff and students in the medical sector (medical doctors, nurses, paramedics, first-aiders...) in communication with patients of different language and / or cultural background.

## LEONARDO DA VINCI TRANSFER OF INNOVATION PROJECT

- „Vocationally Oriented Culture and Language“ (VOCAL)
- Following two earlier successful EU projects
- Project team: 14 Partners from 10 countries
- EU-Grant: 278.000 €, total cost: 377.000 €
- Duration: February 2014 - February 2016
- Project Launch: 14th - 15th January 2016 in Krakow, Poland
- Testing of tools: currently

## LEARNING TOOL

### EXAMPLE A

A medical student is planning a practical training abroad.

- He/she will work in a foreign country with a different healthcare system
- He/she will meet patients speaking different languages and with different cultural backgrounds

Good preparation is necessary!

- What are the basics of the national health system of ...?
- How should I start the conversation with a patient from ...?
- Which keywords and phrases will I need?
- Which questioning techniques should I use to obtain all the information needed from the patient?
- What are the dos and don'ts in cross-culture communication?
- Which specific religious aspects, gender attitudes, health beliefs do I have to keep in mind?
- How can I deal with cross-cultural situations?

Web based learning & training for medical staff

» [www.vocal-medical.eu](http://www.vocal-medical.eu)

Self tests, dialogues imitating real-life situations, phrases, keywords, intercultural training & comments, audiofiles, switching between 10 languages, information on health systems



## TRANSLATION TOOL

### EXAMPLE B

Emergency case: a Doctor from country A is treating a patient from country B.

How can they talk to and understand each other?

Mobile translation application

» [www.m.vocal-medical.eu](http://www.m.vocal-medical.eu)

- Includes a set of questions to be posed by the first aider
- Mobile website (for mobile phones and tablets)
- Includes a set of possible answers in the patient's language
- Switching between 10 languages



## CONTACT

Angela Wittkamp

Coordinator of Leonardo-Office Saxony-Anhalt at Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg  
[angela.wittkamp@ovgu.de](mailto:angela.wittkamp@ovgu.de)  
[www.leonardo.ovgu.de](http://www.leonardo.ovgu.de)

Kristin Brogan

Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITT)  
Lead Project Partner VOCAL-MEDICAL  
[kristin.brogan@staff.ittralee.ie](mailto:kristin.brogan@staff.ittralee.ie)

