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VOL #3

ENVIRONMENT REINTEGRATION AND AWARNESS-BASED ART THERAPY FOR RURAL ELDERLY

Project No: 2024-1-TR01-KA220_ADU-000250176 FEBRUARY, 2026

COGNITIVE HEALTH OF RURAL OLDER ADULTS IN EUROPE

ERA PROJECT RESEARCH RESULTS (WORK PACKAGE 2)

A CROSS-NATIONAL STUDY WITH 632 PARTICIPANTS

TWithin the ERA Project (Environment Reintegration and Awareness-Based Art Therapy for Rural Elderly), coordinated by Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, the partners conducted scientific research for Result A2.1. The aim was to assess older adults' memory, attention and problem-solving skills.

The self-assessment questionnaire was developed by the State Psychiatric Hospital "St. Ivan Rilski" (Bulgaria), together with the Turkish and Lithuanian partners. It measured cognitive abilities in performing everyday tasks such as orientation, calculation and metaphor recognition.

A total of 632 people participated in the study: 364 from Türkiye, 220 from Bulgaria and 48 from Lithuania. Each beneficiary completed the study in their native language to ensure the reliability of the data.

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IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND NEXT STEPS

ADAPTING ART THERAPY TO REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES

Cognitive challenges: Although many participants performed well in the area of logic, a considerable proportion experienced difficulties with attention, memory and orientation in familiar places.

Daily functioning: Approximately one-third reported difficulty performing familiar tasks, such as managing finances or using household appliances.

Health factors: More than 50% of participants have chronic illnesses, which may affect motivation and everyday independence.

Educational diversity: As literacy levels vary, accessible content for all educational backgrounds is being developed within the project.

The results confirm that although broad abilities are maintained, there is a natural age-related decline that requires individualised support. These findings are now being integrated into the ERA Project's virtual reality and art therapy toolkits to promote healthy ageing through culturally meaningful activities.



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