Vol.: 06

ENVIRONMENT REINTEGRATION AND AWARENESS-BASED ART THERAPY FOR RURAL ELDERLY

Project No: 2024-1-TR01-KA220_ADU-000250176 www.erasmusera.com NOVEMBER, 2026

CELEBRATING OUR JOURNEY: FROM ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS TO ACTIVE AGEING

A JOURNEY OF CREATIVITY, INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABILITY

As the ERA Project approaches its conclusion, we are delighted to share the sixth and final edition of our newsletter, celebrating the achievements, experiences and valuable contributions of our international partnership.
Coordinated by Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University in Türkiye, with partners from Lithuania and Bulgaria, the ERA Project has brought together environmental awareness, creative arts and adult education to support the social participation and well-being of older adults.



Throughout the project, our consortium has worked to demonstrate how nature-inspired artistic activities, recycled materials and collaborative learning can create meaningful opportunities for older people to remain active, creative and socially connected.
This final newsletter reflects on our shared journey, highlights our main achievements and looks ahead to the sustainability of the project's results.

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UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF OLDER ADULTS: OUR RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

One of ERA's major achievements was the implementation of an international needs analysis involving 632 participants aged 65 and over across the partner countries.
The research included:



- **Türkiye:** 364 participants
- **Bulgaria:** 220 participants
- **Lithuania:** 48 participants

The findings provided valuable insights into older adults' everyday experiences, social participation, environmental awareness and opportunities for creative engagement.

These results helped guide the development of project activities and educational materials, ensuring that ERA's approach responded to the needs and circumstances of its target groups.
By connecting research with practical adult education, ERA has contributed to a better understanding of how creative and environmentally responsible activities can support active ageing.

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SIX ECO-ART THERAPY ACTIVITIES: THE HEART OF ERA

A central achievement of the project has been the development of the ERA Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit, bringing together six creative approaches that combine artistic expression, environmental responsibility and meaningful participation.



The toolkit includes:

1. **Eco-Marbling**
2. **Stone and Diamond-Patterned Tapestries and Mosaics**
3. **Hand Embroidery**
4. **Decorative Creations from Raw Wool**
5. **Scrapbooking**
6. **Eco-Stone and Wood Painting**

These activities encourage older adults to explore their creativity through accessible, culturally meaningful and environmentally conscious materials.

The toolkit is designed to support adult educators, caregivers, therapists, social service professionals and organisations working with older people.

Beyond artistic production, the activities provide opportunities for communication, collaboration, intergenerational learning and the sharing of personal experiences.

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LEARNING TOGETHER: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES



International collaboration has been one of the defining strengths of ERA.

Through transnational meetings, training activities, pilot implementations and exchanges of experience, partners from Türkiye, Lithuania and Bulgaria have contributed their expertise to the development and improvement of the project's results.

An important milestone was **the Learning, Teaching and Training Activity held in Klaipėda, Lithuania, from 30 June to 2 July 2026.**

The programme provided opportunities to explore Eco-Art Therapy approaches, exchange professional knowledge and discuss how the project materials could be applied in different educational and social settings.



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FROM PROJECT RESEARCH TO ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE

ERA has also contributed to academic dissemination through research based on data collected within the project.
An academic article entitled:
“Memory, Attention and Cultural Comprehension among Older Adults in Turkey: An Investigation of Cognitive Functions”
was prepared by Dr. Bilal Kılınç and Prof. Dr. Ayşe Canatan of Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University.
Based on data from 364 participants aged 65 and over, the study examined memory, attention, orientation, everyday functioning and cultural-semantic comprehension.
Its findings indicate that culturally acquired knowledge and semantic memory remain relatively well preserved among older adults, while certain attention-related and complex daily activities may become more challenging.



The study highlights the importance of considering cultural experiences and everyday social environments when developing activities for older populations.
This academic contribution represents an important step in transforming ERA's research findings into knowledge relevant to the wider scientific and educational community.

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ERA MULTIPLIER EVENT SUCCESSFULLY HELD IN TÜRKIYE

On 9 October 2026, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University hosted the ERA Project Multiplier Event at its Itrî Campus in Ankara.

The event brought together participants interested in active ageing, adult education, environmental sustainability, creative learning and social inclusion.

During the event, the project team presented ERA's objectives, international research findings, Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit, pilot activities, educational materials and academic contributions.





Participants were introduced to the project's achievements and the opportunities for transferring its approaches to different institutional and community settings.

The event also provided an opportunity to discuss the importance of sustainable dissemination and continued access to the project's educational resources.

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FINAL TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT MEETING IN SOFIA

The ERA consortium held its final Transnational Project Meeting on 2 October 2026, hosted by Medical LOT in Sofia, Bulgaria, with hybrid participation. The meeting provided an opportunity to review project progress, examine the implementation of planned activities and discuss the final steps required for successful project completion. Special attention was given to dissemination, project outputs, sustainability and the continued use of ERA resources after the funded project period.





The meeting also reinforced the strong cooperation established among the partner organisations throughout the project.

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THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF ERA



As we publish our sixth and final newsletter, we extend our sincere gratitude to all project partners, researchers, adult educators, caregivers, participating older adults, institutions and stakeholders who have contributed to ERA.

Your cooperation, commitment and creativity have been essential to our shared achievements.

Together, we have connected art, nature and people — creating opportunities for a more inclusive, creative and sustainable future.

Stay Connected with ERA

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