

#Me-Rest: Exploring and designing Resilience in response to Covid-19

An Erasmus+ project bringing together 4 European countries to provide emotional support to adults using creative methods is now being launched. In line with the most recent research conducted in the European context in the aftermath of COVID-19, #Me-Rest addresses the groups most affected by the pandemic in order to strengthen resilience and all those skills that can be used to face contemporary challenges.

#MeRest_Project

#Resilience

WWW.MERESTPROJECT.EU

Resilience refers to the capacity of a system, whether that system is a person, a family, an economy or a community, to adapt successfully to challenges that threatened the functioning, the survival or the development of that system. Resilience capacities are constantly challenged by crisis, traumas and adversities at individual and societal level and with the recent coronavirus crisis being only the latest example. While resilience is generally considered as a rather “natural” attribute of human beings, research (Infurna and Luthar, 2016) showed that, when confronted with major life stressors, most individuals are deeply affected and it can take several years for them to recover and get back to previous levels of functioning.

On the other hand, although there is no consensus whether resilience should be considered as a personality trait or as a skill – and therefore something that can be thought and learnt –, there is agreement on the fact that resilience can be **strengthened and promoted** and so are the skills that support coping and adaptation to new situations.

But resilience is not the sole capacity that Europeans need to practice to thrive. As also stated in a report by the European Union/JRC, the COVID-19 pandemic

“for its duration and intensity, request us to go beyond [resilience], taking it as an opportunity to progress and “bounce forward” through adaptation and transformation”.

Creativity, flexibility, openness to innovation are therefore capacities that Europeans of all ages need to reinforce and further develop to respond to modern challenges.



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The **#Me-Rest Erasmus+ project** aims precisely to respond to these needs by developing and testing resilience-strengthening non formal educational activities based on self-narration through visual arts and drama, by involving the three social categories most affected by the pandemic: older people or people with disabilities, people with mental health issues and health care professionals. The #MeRest partnership, indeed, will support them in paths to tell their stories of adaptation and transformation following the pandemic through the use of creative methods.

In its **24 months** of duration, the project will design, implement and validate **3 main results**:

- **Narrative-based workshop guidelines** to elicit participants' reflective and resilience stories related with COVID-19.
- **Visual-art workshop guidelines** to accompany participants in visually expressing their experience, their hopes and strengths in creative ways.
- A **handbook** providing guidelines, recommendations and best-practices on how adult educators can replicate and adapt the project resources in their daily work.

#MeRest project involves a group of **4 partners**, coming from **4 different countries**:

1. **ASOCIACIJA KURYBINES ATEITIES IDEJOS** – KAI (Lithuania): is the Project Coordinator and a Lithuanian NGO working with different youth and adult groups and organizations in non-formal education field.
2. **ASOCIATIA DEMETRIUS** (Romania): is a non-profit organization that organises activities with public impact, addressing adult people, professionals, youngsters and children with focus on disfavoured groups from urban and rural areas.
3. **EDRA** (Greece): is a non-profit organisation-social cooperative operating in the fields of mental health and mental retardation since 2001, aiming at the promotion of mental health, defending the rights of vulnerable groups and raising awareness in matters concerning mental health.
4. **ANZIANI E NON SOLO** – ANS (Italy): is an NGO with extensive expertise in project management and a specific focus on management of projects and realization of services and products in the field of welfare and social inclusion.

#Me-Rest project partnership is glad to launch the **new project website**: www.merestproject.eu. Through the web platform we will share all the steps and outputs of our project which aims at providing an innovative training package for strengthening adult resilience to life's challenges and innovative tools for professional development of adult educators, in relation to the goal of increasing resilience.

Project leaflets are available in English, Lithuanian, Romanian, Greek and Italian on the project website at the link: <https://merestproject.eu/downloads/>

NOTES TO EDITORS

- To find out more about the #MeRest project and to get involved in the activities please follow the link www.merestproject.eu
- #MeRest is co-funded by the European Commission under the Grant Agreement: Erasmus+ 2022-1-LT01-KA220-ADU-000085035

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