

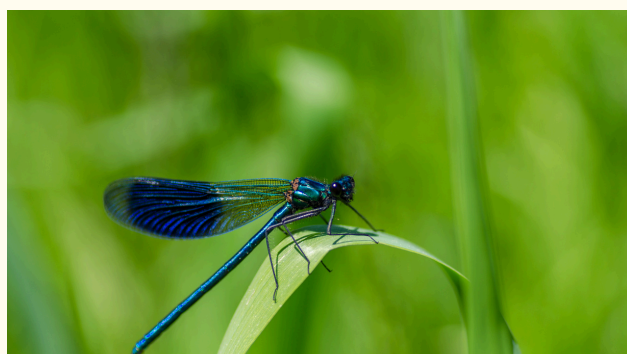
KNOWLEDGE IS HAPPINESS

THE LENS OF NATURE

*Youth Exchange*

13.08.2026 - 22.08.2026

BRĂDULEŢ (ARGEŞ), ROMANIA



Project financed by European Union  
through the Erasmus+ programme.



# FIRST OF ALL, WELCOME & THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE!

Let us tell you a little bit about us!

ARYAS NGO is an independent association that was born in 2016 when a small group of people expressed their willingness to contribute to building a stronger, more educated and more open society in Romania.

Our Mission: To contribute to the personal, social and civic development of people.

Our Vision: We shape a piece of future!

If you want to know more - you can check out our website  
<http://aryas.ro/>

We cannot wait to meet you and to have a great project together.

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This event is part of our “Knowledge Is Happiness” strategy.



# SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

**Name of the project**

**The LENS of Nature**

**Type**

**Youth Exchange**

**Dates of main activity**

**13.08.2026 - 22.08.2026**

**Project venue**

**Brăduleț, Argeș County, Romania**

**Eligible Partners**

**RO, SVK, BG, SRB, HU**

**Number of participants**

**4 / 5 participants + 1 group leader  
per partner**

**\*\* 13.08.2026 - 22.08.2026 are the arrival and departure days \*\***

**This means you are expected to arrive on 13th of August, anytime from 2:00 PM, when check-in begins, and to depart on 22th of August, before 11:00 AM, when check-out takes place.**

# PROJECT OBJECTIVES

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Young people today spend an increasing amount of their time in digital environments and structured indoor settings. While technology provides many opportunities, it also reduces the time available for direct experiences in nature. As a result, many young people have fewer opportunities to slow down, observe their surroundings, and develop a meaningful connection with the natural world.

Although information about environmental issues is widely available, knowledge alone does not always create a lasting connection with nature. The SENSE approach highlights that meaningful learning begins with curiosity, personal experiences, exploration, and emotional engagement. People are more likely to value and care for nature when they have the opportunity to experience it directly, discover it for themselves, and build personal memories connected to outdoor environments. Photography offers a powerful way to support this process. By encouraging participants to observe details, patterns, colours, landscapes, and human-nature interactions, photography transforms outdoor exploration into an active experience of discovery.

The project aims to encourage young people to reconnect with nature through photography, creating opportunities to explore outdoor environments, appreciate the beauty and diversity of the natural world, and reflect on the relationship between people and nature.

Specific objectives:

- To increase participants' connection with nature through direct outdoor experiences, exploration, and observation.
- To develop participants' photography and visual storytelling skills as tools for discovering and expressing their experiences in nature.
- To strengthen participants' appreciation of the relationship between people and nature, encouraging positive attitudes towards outdoor activities, well-being, and environmental responsibility.

# PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE

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- Should be between 16 and 25 years old.
- Must be residents of one of the partner countries.
- Should have an interest in nature, photography, outdoor exploration, creativity, and intercultural exchange.
- Should be open to spending time outdoors and joining activities that may include walking, observation, photography, teamwork, creative work, and reflection.
- Should be able to communicate in basic English, enough to take part in group activities, share ideas, and understand the main instructions.
- No previous experience in photography is required, but it's a plus. Participants can use either a camera or a smartphone during the project.
- Must be available for the full duration of the Youth Exchange, including preparation, participation, evaluation, and dissemination activities.
- Should be open to learning from others, sharing their own culture, and working in international teams.
- We especially encourage the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, including young people from rural areas, young people facing economic or social obstacles, young people with limited access to international opportunities, and young people who may feel less included in their communities.



# GROUP LEADERS' PROFILE

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- Must be at least 18 years old.
- Must be residents of one of the partner countries.
- Should have experience in youth work, volunteering, non-formal education, group coordination, or activities with young people.
- Should be able to communicate clearly in English and support communication between participants and organizers.
- Group leaders are expected to support their national team before, during, and after the project.
- Should promote a positive, respectful, and responsible attitude inside the group.
- Should support participants' active involvement, inclusion, reflection, and learning process.
- Should be ready to cooperate with the organizing team, respect the project rules, and contribute to a safe and constructive group atmosphere.



# ACTIVITIES AND METHODS

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The daily programme will include four main sessions, plus reflection and evaluation moments.

The first day will focus on arrival, group building, safety rules, project introduction, and creating a shared group agreement. Participants will also be introduced to the SENSE approach and to the idea of using photography as a way to reconnect with nature.

During the thematic days, participants will gradually move from learning how to observe nature differently, to exploring outdoor spaces, understanding the relationship between people and nature, discovering hidden details, and transforming their experiences into visual stories. The programme will include photography basics, observation exercises, nature photo challenges, guided photo walks, outdoor field assignments, detail and landscape photography, peer feedback, visual storytelling workshops, and preparation of a final photo exhibition.

The methods will be practical and participatory. Participants will learn by doing, observing, walking, taking photographs, selecting images, discussing their perspectives, creating visual stories, and reflecting together. Photography will not be treated only as a technical skill, but as a tool for curiosity, attention, discovery, and personal connection with nature.

Each day will have a clear theme, connected to the learning flow of the Youth Exchange: from building the group and understanding the project, to seeing nature differently, exploring nature through the lens, reflecting on the relationship between people and nature, discovering overlooked details, creating visual stories, and sharing the final results with others.

The final part of the project will bring together the participants' learning through a photo exhibition or a collection of visual stories. Daily reflection sessions will support participants in understanding what they learned and how they can use the experience after returning home. The Youthpass process will also be used to identify and describe their learning outcomes.

# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE THE EVENT

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**1. Read the project materials:** Please read the info-pack carefully and make sure you understand the project objectives, rules, travel conditions, accommodation details, and responsibilities.

**2. Prepare for the topic:** Before coming to the project, think about your relationship with nature and photography. What makes nature meaningful for you? What natural places do you enjoy or remember from your community? How do people in your area spend time outdoors? You can also bring a few photos that show nature, outdoor life, or the relationship between people and nature in your local context.

**3. Take part in preparation meetings:** You are expected to join the preparation activities organized by your sending organization or by the host organization.

**4. Organize your travel responsibly:** You must plan your travel in an economical and sustainable way, keep all travel documents, and confirm your travel plan with the organizers before buying tickets.

**5. Health and insurance:** You must have valid health insurance for the full duration of the mobility. Please inform the organizers about any health issue, allergy, dietary need, or important personal situation that may affect your participation.

**6. Cultural sharing:** Each national team is expected to prepare something for the intercultural evening: food, music, games, stories, photos, short presentations, or other cultural elements.



# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE EVENT

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- 1. Share your experience:** After the project, you are expected to share your experience with others through social media posts, photos, short reflections, or local discussions.
- 2. Organize a dissemination activity:** Each national team should organize at least one local or online dissemination activity, such as a presentation, workshop, informal meeting, school activity, NGO activity, or community event.
- 3. Complete your Youthpass reflection:** You will be invited to reflect on your learning process and contribute to your Youthpass Certificate.
- 4. Complete evaluation and reporting tasks:** You must complete the final evaluation forms and send any requested proof of dissemination to the organizers.



**Your participation in this project is a commitment. The activities mentioned above are mandatory and must be completed within a maximum of three weeks after the end of the Youth Exchange.**

**Please note that travel reimbursement will be done only after all required documents and dissemination proofs are submitted.**



# SURROUNDINGS

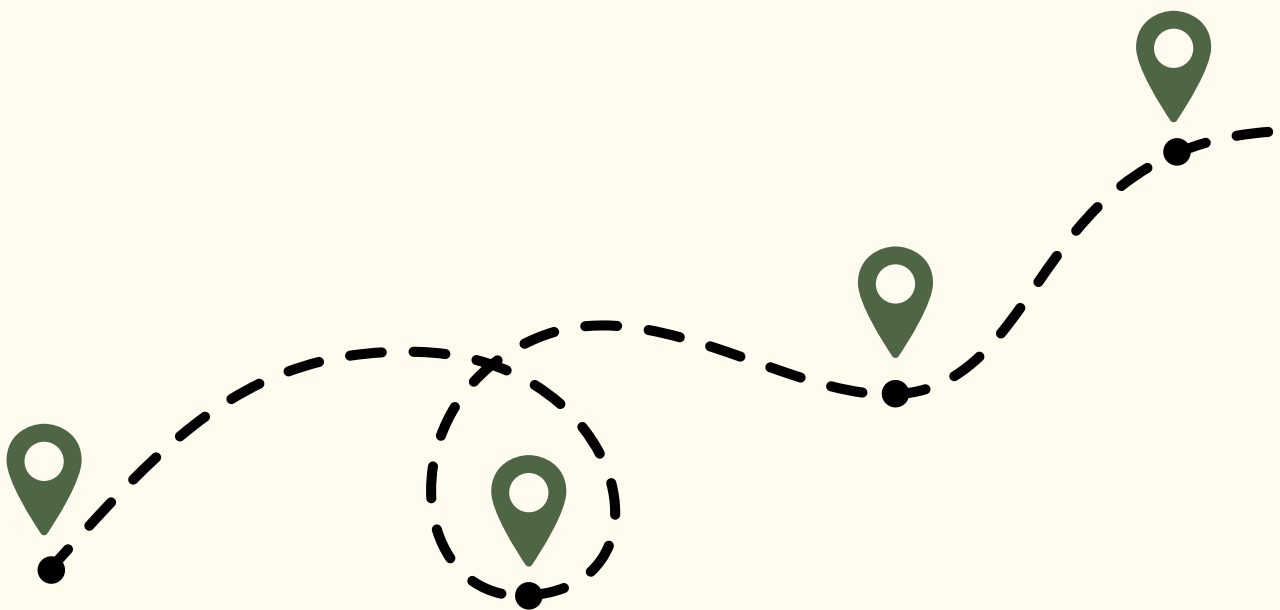
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Brăduleț is a commune in Argeș County, Romania, located in a mountain area known for its natural landscapes, fresh air, forests, rivers, and quiet village atmosphere.

The project will take place in Brădetu, part of Brăduleț commune, close to the Vâlsan Valley. The area offers a suitable setting for a Youth Exchange focused on nature connection, outdoor learning, reflection, and group activities.

Being away from a large city will give you the chance to slow down, spend more time outdoors, and experience a different rhythm of daily life. The surrounding area can support outdoor activities, nature observation, walking, creative work, and informal moments with the group.

Nearby, you can also discover parts of Argeș County's cultural and natural heritage, including Curtea de Argeș, a town known for its historical importance, and mountain areas connected to local stories, traditions, and landscapes.

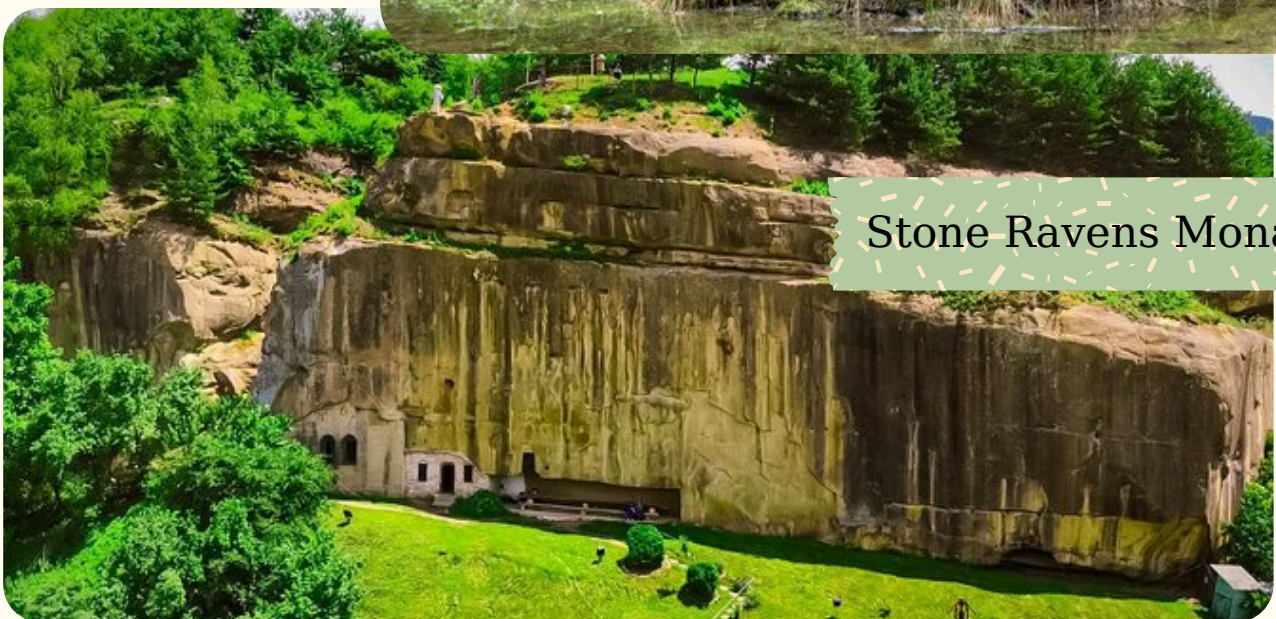




Brădetu Village



Valea Vâlsanului



Stone Ravens Monastery

# ACCOMMODATION

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- Accommodation for the duration of the activity will be covered by ARYAS NGO.
- The project will take place at **Pensiunea Ciprian**, located in Brădetu, Brăduleț commune, Argeș County, Romania.
- The guesthouse will be rented fully for our group. This means that, during the project, the venue will function as our shared home. **There will be no other tourist groups staying with us, but this also means that we all have the responsibility to respect the space and keep it clean.**
- Participants will be accommodated in shared rooms of 2 to 4 people (apartments). Rooms are equipped with all basic facilities, private bathrooms and the guesthouse provides accommodation suitable for group activities.
- Wi-Fi is available, but please remember that many people will use the same network at the same time. The connection may not always be strong or stable. Take this project as an opportunity to spend less time online and more time with the group and the natural environment around us.
- The guesthouse has shared indoor and outdoor spaces that will be used for activities, meals, free time, and group work.
- **Because the venue is fully rented for the project, participants will be involved in maintaining the common spaces.** This includes keeping rooms clean, cleaning after activities, respecting shared bathrooms and common areas, and helping the group leave the place in good condition every day.
- **Breakfast will be prepared by us.** Participants will be divided into daily teams and will take turns preparing breakfast, setting the tables, cleaning the kitchen, and washing the dishes. This is part of the project's learning process and is connected to responsibility, community living, and cooperation.
- Lunch and dinner will be provided through catering during the project.
- **All costs for the accommodation and food for the duration of the activity will be covered by ARYAS NGO.**



# BUDGET FOR TRANSPORTATION

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The travel cost eligible for each participant is calculated based on distance from your departure city, to Braduleț, based on the [Erasmus+ distance calculator](#).

Travel Distance	Green Travel
0 - 99 km	56 EUR
100 - 499 km	285 EUR
500 - 1999 km	417 EUR

If you travel from a city other than your organisation's official location, this must be duly justified in advance.

## INSURANCE

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- Having valid medical insurance for the full duration of your stay in Romania is mandatory.
- European Union citizens are entitled to have a European Health Insurance Card, which can be obtained from the national health authorities and used in Romania. However, you may also choose private travel and medical insurance for the duration of your stay.
- Participants from non-EU countries must make sure they have valid health insurance accepted for travel and stay in Romania.
- **You are responsible for choosing an insurance provider that suits your needs. Please remember that travel insurance, medical insurance, luggage insurance, or other personal insurance costs are not covered by the project budget.**

# TRAVEL

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- Travel expenses of the participants are covered in line with Erasmus+ Programme rules.
- Please keep the originals of the travel tickets (bus, train receipts/invoices, gas tickets, tolls receipts etc.), as without such documents we will not be able to make the reimbursement.
- Reimbursement of travel expenses for the participants will be carried out through bank transfers (to the account of the sending organization) after the main activity, upon collecting all relevant documentation.
- The costs will be reimbursed **ONLY** if you take part in **ALL** of the activities foreseen within the project, including the dissemination and evaluation.

**This project promotes Green Travel, in line with the priorities of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2021–2027.**

**Participants are expected to use low-emission means of transport, such as train, bus, or carpooling, in order to reduce the environmental impact of travel and support more sustainable mobility practices.**

**For this project, **only Green Travel options are accepted.** Participants should therefore plan their journey using bus, train, or shared car travel.**

# TRAVEL

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If you are not travelling by car, most probably public transportation will take you first to Bucharest.

From Bucharest, you need to reach Curtea de Argeş. The trip usually takes around 2–3 hours, depending on the transport option. You can travel from Bucharest to Curtea de Argeş:

1. By train, from **Gara de Nord**. Please note that trains in Romania are not always the fastest, but they work - [cfrcalatori.ro](http://cfrcalatori.ro)
2. By bus, from **Autogara Militari**. This is often a practical option for reaching Curtea de Argeş - [autogari.ro](http://autogari.ro)

From Curtea de Argeş, you will still need to reach Brădetu / Brăduleţ, where Pensiunea Ciprian is located. Depending on your arrival time and route to Curtea de Argeş, we will provide you with detailed information about the local transportation.

If you travel through a different route, do not worry. We will support you with more information about public transportation schedules during the preparation stage.

**Please contact us before arranging the travel and buying the tickets. Not confirmed travel arrangements may be subject to mistakes (wrong dates, wrong schedule, etc.) and you risk not being reimbursed.**

**We expect news from you regarding this by the latest 15th of July 2026. Due to bad past experiences (drop-outs, lack of communication, etc.), the participants who do not comply with this deadline will be excluded and replaced with people from the reserve list.**



# TRAVEL NON-ELIGIBLE COSTS

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- 1. Non-Approved Travel Arrangements:** All travel arrangements must be confirmed by the organizers before purchasing to ensure they are well planned and allow participants to reach the accommodation without issues.
- 2. Travel unrelated to the project:** Trips taken before or after the official project dates that are not directly linked to project participation. You can travel a few days before or after the official project dates, and the cost of the journey from home to the project location (and back) will be reimbursed. However, any additional travel costs, such as detours or extensions for leisure purposes, are not eligible for reimbursement.
- 3. Upgraded travel options:** Costs for first-class or business-class tickets and additional fees for premium services (e.g., extra legroom, seat selection).
- 4. Non-sustainable transportation options** (when alternatives exist): Use of environmentally unfriendly transport modes without justification when sustainable options are available.
- 5. Travel insurance:** Costs related to personal travel or medical insurance.
- 6. Excess luggage charges:** Fees for carrying extra or oversized luggage beyond what is deemed necessary for the project.
- 7. Unjustified changes in travel arrangements:** Fees for last-minute changes or cancellations not related to valid reasons such as illness or emergencies.
- 8. Non-documented expenses:** Travel costs that are not supported by invoices, boarding passes, or other valid documentation.
- 9. Non-compliance with distance bands:** Travel costs exceeding the allocated budget for the respective distance band.

# OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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You need to make sure **your journey is planned wisely, economically, and sustainably**. Since the project is financed with public money, you are not allowed to travel in first class, use taxis without approval, or purchase additional services such as extra legroom, special seating, or other unnecessary upgrades.

**Please remember that the project is not about tourism.** You will have opportunities to discover the local community and Romanian culture, but the main purpose of the mobility is learning, participation, and group work. If you want to travel for personal reasons before or after the project, you must cover all extra costs for accommodation, food, and local transportation yourself.

**The accommodation space does not have hotel-style cleaning services for our group.** Because the venue will be fully rented for the project, we will be responsible for keeping the rooms, kitchen, activity spaces, dining area, and common areas clean during the whole mobility.

There may be a kitchen or shared food preparation space available for the intercultural evenings or breakfast duties. Please keep in mind that the kitchen will not clean itself. Every day, we must leave it exactly as we found it.

You will receive a **Youthpass Certificate** at the end of the project, confirming your participation and supporting the recognition of your learning outcomes.

Except for illness or other well-justified situations, you are expected to participate fully in all project activities.

**Bring with you:** comfortable clothes for indoor and outdoor activities, warm clothes, a rain jacket, outdoor shoes, slippers, personal hygiene products, any medication you may need, a reusable water bottle, **a smartphone or camera for photography activities**, and one laptop per national team, if possible.

We expect you to bring your respect, responsibility, curiosity, and good mood with you.

# LANGUAGE

Romanian is a Romance language that developed from Latin. It is spoken by approximately 24–26 million native speakers, mainly in Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

Hello! - Salut!

I am from... - Sunt din...

My name is... - Mă numesc...

Sorry! - Scuze!

Thank you - Mulțumesc!

Help! - Ajutor!

I do not speak Romanian - Nu vorbesc românește

Where is...? - Unde este...?

Can you call this number? - Poți suna la numărul acesta?

Can you help me? - Poți să mă ajuți?

ă - we pronounce it like "e" in baker or "a" in above.

â/î - for this there is basically no sound in English... if you want to hear it, you can check it [here](#).

ș - we pronounce it like "sh" in shopping.

ț - we pronounce it like "ts" in cats.



# DATA PROCESSING

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As part of your involvement in this Erasmus+ project, certain personal data will be collected and processed. This includes your name, date of birth, contact details, nationality, and any other information required for participation, travel arrangements, insurance, and certificates (such as Youthpass).

Your data will be used only for project implementation, communication, and reporting to the National Agency and the European Commission, as required by the Erasmus+ Programme.

Your data will be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently
- Stored securely and accessed only by authorized staff
- Not shared with third parties outside the project
- Kept only for the time needed to fulfil legal and administrative obligations

You have the right to:

- Request access to your data
- Request corrections if data is incorrect
- Request deletion of your data (where possible)
- Contact the project coordinator with any concerns

By joining this project, you agree to the processing of your data as described above.

You can read the full Erasmus+ privacy statement here:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-esc/index/privacy-statement>



# CONTACT

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## ARYAS NGO

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