



# New Horizons: Empowering Migrant Youth with Creative and Educational Initiatives



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## Activity Report: "Culture, Art, and Sustainability for Inclusion" Workshops

**Date:** March 2026

**Location:** Istanbul, Türkiye

**Organized by:** Bilim ve İnsan Vakfı (Science and Human Foundation)

### Introduction & Objectives

This series of workshops was implemented within the framework of the Erasmus+ KA2 project "New Horizons: Empowering Migrant Youth with Creative and Educational Initiatives". The primary goal was to use traditional arts as a tool for social inclusion, focus, and cultural integration for both local and migrant youth. By engaging with classical art forms, the program aimed to:

- Facilitate cultural integration and mutual understanding through shared aesthetic values.
- Enhance social adaptability and patience through disciplined artistic practice.
- Build a meaningful bridge between the participants' original cultures and their current environment.

### Participant & Facilitation Profile

The workshops reached a total of **56 participants**, including youth and youth professionals (facilitators and trainers). To ensure high-quality artistic instruction, the sessions were led by recognized experts:

- **A. Miniature Art: Reading and Painting**
  - **Lead Facilitator:** Mehmet Soymaz
  - **Participants:** 16 individuals
  - **Focus:** Understanding the historical and cultural background of Ottoman miniature art while developing practical painting skills.
- **B. Arabic Calligraphy (Hüsn-i Hat)**
  - **Lead Facilitator:** Beyzanur Türkeri
  - **Participants:** 24 individuals (conducted in two sessions)
  - **Focus:** Exploring the spiritual and technical aspects of calligraphy, focusing on patience, aesthetics, and the interpretation of classical works.

- **C. Watercolor Workshop**

- **Lead Facilitator:** Derya Sarr
- **Participants:** 16 individuals
- **Focus:** Using watercolor techniques to promote focus, peace, and emotional expression through art.

## **Detailed Workshop Methodology**

### **Workshop A: Miniature Art Exploration**

Participants engaged in "Miniature Reading," where they analyzed the storytelling techniques of traditional miniatures. This was followed by a hands-on painting session where youth experienced the traditional methods of this art form. The methodology emphasized **cultural awareness** by teaching participants to recognize the symbolism within the art.

### **Workshop B: Calligraphy and Intercultural Bridge**

This workshop was articulated in two distinct phases:

1. **Technical Foundation:** Facilitator Beyzanur Türkeri taught the basic techniques and the "spirit of the letter," emphasizing the patience required for traditional calligraphy.
2. **Collaborative Reading:** Local and migrant students worked together to analyze the works of master calligraphers. By discovering similarities between their own cultures and the art they studied, they established a strong cultural bridge.

### **Workshop C: Watercolor for Social Adaptability**

This session used a more fluid medium to encourage self-expression. The focus was on the quote by Pablo Picasso: *"Art wipes away the dust that daily life accumulates in our souls"*. Participants practiced watercolor techniques to improve their **concentration and patience**, resulting in a shared space of creative production.

## **Outcomes & Impact**

The evaluation of the BIV workshops demonstrated significant progress in three key areas:

- **Cultural Discovery:** Participants gained a deep appreciation for traditional arts and discovered shared aesthetic values that transcend borders.
- **Social Cohesion:** The collaborative nature of the calligraphy and miniature sessions successfully dismantled barriers between local and migrant youth.
- **Personal Development:** Significant improvements were noted in participants' artistic skills, patience, and ability to express complex emotions through non-verbal mediums.

The feedback from the **56 participants** was highly positive, emphasizing the transformative power of creating together in a historical setting like the Semiz Ali Pasha Madrasa.