



## CODE-YAA@PC-EDU

### Empowering Ethics and Leadership Education in Palliative Care Programme

### Summer School, Pamplona, Spain 2026

Memory and Visual Report | 8-12 June 2026



# 1. General overview

The CODE-YAA Empowering Ethics and Leadership Education in Palliative Care Programme Summer School 2026 was held in Pamplona, Spain, from 8 to 12 June 2026. The programme brought together young researchers, clinicians, educators and palliative care professionals for an intensive week focused on leadership, ethics, education, quality improvement and humanising approaches to palliative care.

The 2026 edition was designed as a highly interactive learning environment. It combined short conceptual inputs with case-based discussions, project design exercises, reflective work, art-based learning, peer exchange and informal networking activities. This structure aimed to strengthen participants' capacity to translate palliative care education into practice, institutional change and future collaborative projects.

## 2026 AT A GLANCE

<b>5</b> training days	<b>16</b> workshops	<b>35</b> COST trainees and trainers	<b>12</b> local Spanish trainees and trainers	<b>12</b> countries among COST trainees
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# 2. Educational pillars and objectives

The 2026 programme is built on three connected educational pillars:

**Leadership for change:** developing strategic, relational and practical leadership competencies for palliative care education and service transformation.

**Ethics in education, research and clinical practice:** strengthening ethical reflection, case-based reasoning, culturally sensitive teaching and decision-making in end-of-life care.

**International collaboration and professional development:** creating a safe, interdisciplinary and cross-cultural space for networking, peer learning and future project development.

Across the week, the programme aimed to empower participants to design and evaluate educational initiatives, engage with ethical complexity, use quality improvement methods, integrate arts and reflection in professional formation, and communicate palliative care more effectively across settings.

# 3. Participants and faculty profile

The COST trainee cohort included 30 accepted face-to-face participants from 12 countries. In addition, approximately eight local participants from Spain joined selected activities, creating a bridge between the international COST Action network and the host institution.

The trainee cohort was predominantly young researchers, educators and early-career professionals, with senior profiles and academic leaders as well. This mix supported intergenerational dialogue and enabled participants to discuss leadership and ethics from both emerging and established professional perspectives.

### 3.1 Country distribution of COST trainees

The 2026 Summer School brought together a geographically diverse cohort of 30 COST trainees from 12 countries. The largest group came from Türkiye, followed by Italy and Germany. Additional participants represented Estonia, Poland, Spain, Kosovo, Finland, Portugal, Moldova, Albania and Israel, reflecting the international scope of the CODE-YAA network and its commitment to cross-country exchange in palliative care education.

The participant profile also reflected the programme's emphasis on early-career development and inclusiveness. Most trainees were young researchers, and more than half came from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC). The cohort was predominantly female. Overall, this composition supported the Summer School's aim of creating an interdisciplinary, international and inclusive learning environment for emerging professionals in palliative care.

In addition to the COST trainees, the Summer School also welcomed a group of local participants from Spain, strengthening the connection between the international programme and the host academic and clinical community in Pamplona.

### 3.2 Faculty and facilitation team

The broader faculty and facilitation team included local members from the host institution and international facilitators from multiple European and neighbouring contexts. The faculty profile included expertise in palliative care education, curriculum design, project management, quality improvement, clinical ethics, research ethics, communication, medical humanities and professional identity formation.

Facilitator countries/backgrounds represented in the programme materials: Spain (6), Germany (3), UK (2), Spain/Canada (1), Spain/Argentina (1), Italy (1), Kosovo (1), Finland (1), Türkiye (1).

## 4. Programme structure and workshop synthesis

The Summer School was organised as a five-day intensive programme combining leadership development, ethics, curriculum design, quality improvement, communication, arts-based reflection and international exchange. Across the week, the 16 formal workshops were articulated around six thematic clusters: leadership for change; curriculum, evaluation and quality improvement; humanisation, arts and professional formation; research ethics and advance care planning; clinical ethics and decision-making; and communication, culture and teaching.

Day	Main educational focus	Integrated workshop synthesis
<b>Monday 8 June</b>	Opening and leadership foundations	The programme opened with the arrival and welcome session, introductions and icebreakers, followed by workshops on leading change in palliative care and leadership in curriculum design. The day introduced the Summer School as a collaborative learning space and established the foundations for leadership, educational innovation and peer networking.
<b>Tuesday 9 June</b>	Humanising education, purpose and design	The second day focused on the human and reflective dimensions of palliative care education. Sessions included Arts and Life, leading with purpose, professional coping in palliative care and design thinking in educational projects. The guided museum tour reinforced the role of arts, reflection and professional identity in health professions education.
<b>Wednesday 10 June</b>	Project work, quality improvement and research	The third day moved from leadership concepts to practical implementation. Workshops addressed project management strategies, quality improvement for palliative care educators and leaders, curriculum evaluation and research, and research ethics with a focus on advance care planning with frail patients. This day connected educational leadership with project development, evaluation and ethically grounded research.
<b>Thursday 11 June</b>	Clinical ethics and communication	Thursday centred on ethical reasoning in clinical practice and the relational dimensions of care. Through case-based reflection, discussion of ethical challenges, communication exercises, participants explored decision-making, professional dialogue and the complexity of real-world palliative care situations.
<b>Friday 12 June</b>	End-of-life decision-making, teaching ethics and closing	The final day brought together clinical, educational and cultural dimensions of ethics. Sessions addressed hydration in the dying phase and ethics in everyday education, with attention to power, culture and emotions in palliative care teaching. The programme concluded with a wrap-up session that invited participants to consolidate learning and consider future applications and collaborations.

## 5. Evaluation and participant feedback

The 2026 Summer School evaluation is conceived not simply as satisfaction feedback, but as an independent mixed-methods research project: The benefits of a summer school in continued medical education in palliative care. Its purpose is to assess the extent to which the programme contributes to theoretical knowledge, practical skills and reflective learning, while identifying areas for improvement and the potential benefits and challenges of this type of continuing education.

The study includes three questionnaire rounds: before the Summer School, immediately after the event and three months later. To deepen the quantitative findings, selected participants and facilitators may also take part in semi-structured online interviews of approximately 30 minutes, focused on their experiences of palliative care education and on the perceived value of the Summer School.

Participation in the evaluation study is voluntary, confidential and based on informed consent. Data will be analysed in anonymised form and any quotations, if used, will be de-identified. The project has received ethics approval from the Ethics Committee of the Medical Faculty at RWTH Aachen University. In this memory report, only aggregated information and selected consented reflections are included, preserving the distinction between the visual memory of the Summer School and the formal research evaluation.

## 6. Reflections and testimonials

*“One of the most valuable lessons for me was the importance of humility. The more I learned, the more I realised how much I still have to learn. At many moments, I felt that I knew very little. Rather than being discouraging, this was inspiring. It reminded me to remain curious, open-minded, and willing to continue learning from others throughout my professional and personal journey. The Summer School was a constant and inspiring challenge. It encouraged me to step outside my comfort zone, build new connections, speak in public, and develop my language skills. Above all, it helped me become more culturally sensitive and aware.”*

**Rita Figueredo, RN, Adjunct Professor of Nursing, MGS PhD, Portugal**

*“Participating in the CODE-YAA Summer School in Pamplona was an enriching and inspiring experience both professionally and personally. (...) The workshops on ethics, leadership, communication, and person-centred care encouraged me to think beyond disciplinary boundaries and reflect on how these principles can be applied in the education of future care professionals. I was particularly impressed by the interactive teaching methods and the openness of discussions among participants from different countries and professional backgrounds.”*

**Neslihan Nur Pehlivan, PhD Hitit University, Türkiye**

*“The CODE-YAA Summer School 2026 opened a brand-new window in my life. Discussing different leadership style approaches allowed me to restructure how I handle problems. The 'Go Wish Game' experience, in particular, was a turning point for me; it prompted me to question what is truly important in life from a deep perspective I had never considered before. As an educator, seeing how meticulously and inclusively the workshops were planned broadened my horizons. But perhaps most importantly, it allowed me to witness once again the critical, demanding, and invaluable role that palliative care health professionals undertake.”*

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Serap Büyükkıdık, Istanbul University-Cerrahpasa, Turkiye.**

*“One of the aspects I valued most was the opportunity to spend a week with people from different countries, disciplines, and areas of healthcare. The sessions covered a wide range of important topics, and I gained valuable knowledge from all of them. However, my main takeaway goes beyond the theoretical content. The programme encouraged me to reflect on my own professional path, my interests, and the type of impact I would like to have in the future. The experience inspired me to become involved in new projects, seek opportunities for collaboration, and explore programmes and initiatives. Overall, the summer school was not only an excellent educational experience but also a source of inspiration and motivation!! Thank you all.”*

**Paola González, Research Fellow, University of Navarra, Spain/Ecuador.**

*“Taking part in this Summer School was a genuinely eye-opening experience for me. Coming from a background outside of clinical practice, I gained a perspective I had never encountered before. I had the privilege of seeing doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals who care deeply and sincerely about their patients' final wishes, and witnessing that level of compassion up close was profoundly moving. I leave this experience with a deeper appreciation for the people behind palliative care and a renewed conviction that thoughtful, situational leadership has a real and lasting impact in this field. I am grateful to have contributed and to have learned so much from everyone involved.”*

**Blerona Shala Ph.D Candidate. Kosovo**

*“This course was extremely well organized and helped me gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of palliative care through the perspectives of experts and peers. It highlighted the importance of using diverse teaching methods and ensuring that the principles of palliative care are accessible to both healthcare professionals and the wider community. The course also emphasized that palliative care requires more than clinical skills, underscoring the value of art, ethics, critical thinking and moral responsibility.”*

**Amaia Mir Tabar, RN, PhD Student, University of Navarra, Spain**

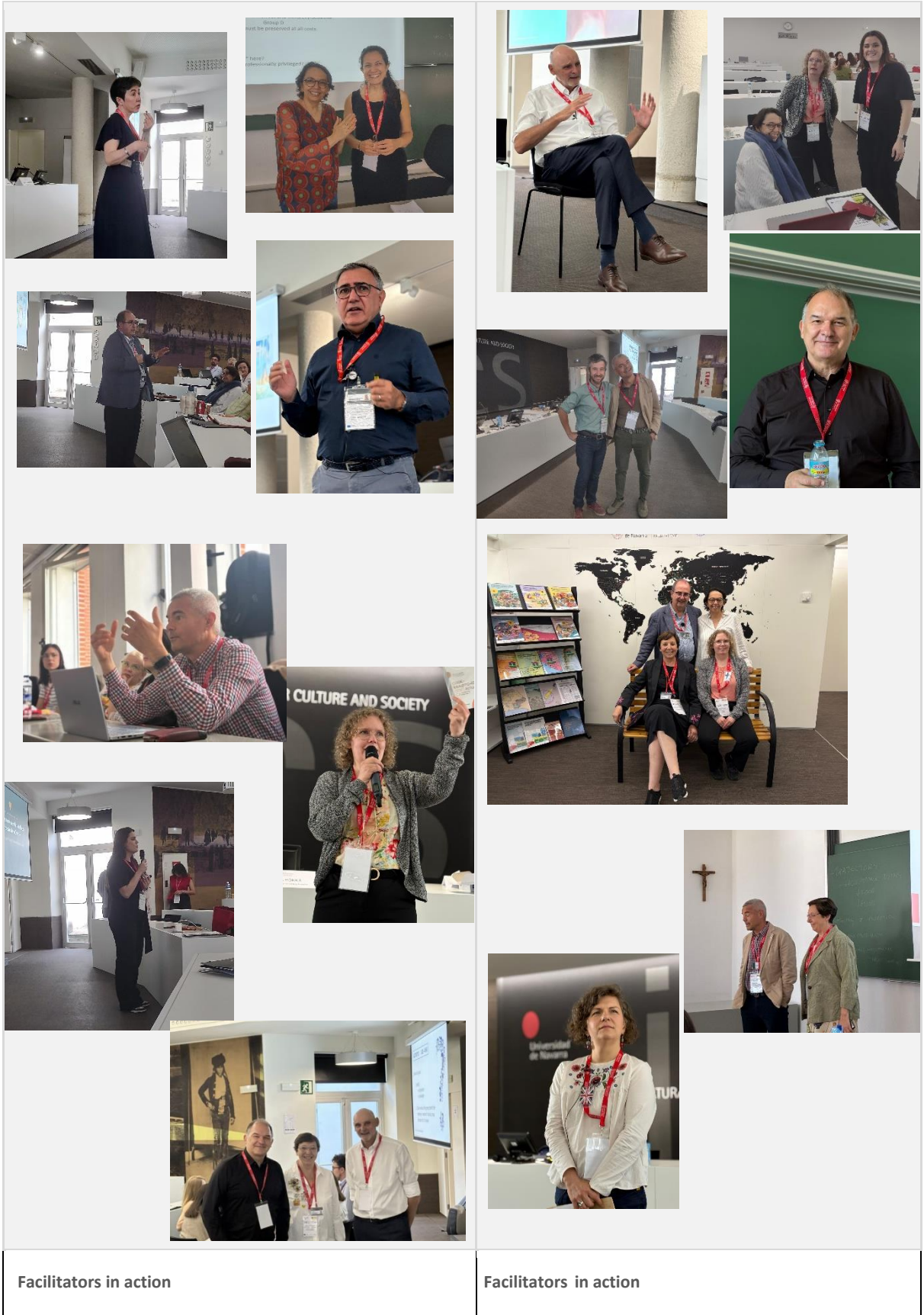


## 7. Visual highlights from the week



Opening session and welcome to the 2026 Summer School.

Interactive leadership and ethics workshops.



Facilitators in action

Facilitators in action

## 10. Closing reflection

The 2026 Summer School created a concentrated learning community around leadership and ethics in palliative care education. Its value extended beyond the formal workshops. Throughout the week, participants and facilitators shared a relational space in which they could test ideas, reflect on uncertainty, discuss real clinical and educational challenges, and explore how palliative care education can be adapted to different professional, cultural and institutional contexts.

The programme showed the strength of combining leadership development, ethical reflection, quality improvement, arts-based learning and international networking within a single educational experience. This integration offers a solid foundation for future CODE-YAA activities and for the continued development of palliative care education across diverse settings. More importantly, it leaves a network of emerging and established professionals better connected, more reflective and better prepared to translate learning into practice, projects and collaboration.

**Vilma Tripodoro and Simone Veronese**

**Co-Chairs CODE YAA@PC EDU Work Group**

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