



**Joint Action
on REspiratory
Diseases**

May - June 2026

Newsletter

Joint Action on REspiratory Diseases (JARED)

**Subject: Enhancing Lung Health Across Europe
JARED's Latest Progress & Opportunities**



Welcome to the 5th Newsletter of the JARED JA!

The JARED Joint Action continues to make significant progress in advancing the prevention and management of chronic respiratory diseases across Europe.

In recent months, partners have participated in major European events and scientific exchanges, sharing knowledge, promoting best practices and strengthening collaboration among key stakeholders in respiratory health.

The project has also developed evidence-based guidance to support healthier school environments, helping to improve air quality and raise awareness of respiratory health among children and young people.

Targeted activities are addressing the needs of vulnerable populations, including Roma communities and residents of long-term care facilities, with the aim of improving access to prevention, care and health education while reducing health inequalities.

At the same time, innovative pilot studies in Hungary and Latvia are testing new approaches to care delivery and infection prevention, combining clinical expertise, digital solutions and practical training to support better health outcomes.



***Read on to explore recent developments and key achievements
from across the JARED!***

📍 Breaking Barriers in Respiratory Care: JARED Takes Centre Stage in Brussels

The *International Respiratory Coalition (IRC)* National Coalitions Workshop took place in Brussels on **5–6 May 2026**, coinciding with World Asthma Day. The timing provided an important opportunity to highlight the need for stronger respiratory health policies across Europe and to reinforce the role of collaboration in improving care for people living with lung conditions.

A key contribution during the workshop came from **Prof. Ildikó Horváth**, who presented the EU-funded **JARED project**, an initiative focused on chronic respiratory diseases (CRDs). She outlined how the project aims to improve respiratory health outcomes by reaching underserved populations and communities that face barriers to diagnosis, treatment and ongoing care.

Speaking during a session on leveraging global and European policy initiatives for national impact, Horváth emphasized the *importance of ensuring that respiratory health strategies address inequalities and support access to care throughout the entire patient pathway. Her presentation highlighted the value of European collaboration in tackling chronic respiratory diseases and ensuring that no community is left behind.*

The workshop discussions echoed these themes, underlining the need for inclusive and sustainable lung health policies that support prevention, early diagnosis and long-term care. Held during World Asthma Day, the event served as a timely reminder of the importance of continued action to improve respiratory health across Europe.

📍 JARED Reaches Key Public Health Leaders in Croatia

During the specialized roundtable organized by the *Croatian Institute of Public Health (HZJZ)* in Zagreb on **26 May 2026** to mark World No Tobacco Day, the **JARED project** was introduced to key public health stakeholders at the headquarters of Croatia's National Institute of Public Health.

As part of the event, **JARED** informational leaflet was distributed to participants, including representatives from the Ministry of Health, HZJZ and leading respiratory health experts. The dissemination of project materials provided an opportunity to raise awareness of JARED's mission to improve the prevention, diagnosis, and management of chronic respiratory diseases, particularly among underserved populations.

The project was also presented through a short introduction that highlighted *JARED's objectives, ongoing activities and its contribution to reducing inequalities in respiratory healthcare across Europe.* Presenting the project at the headquarters of the National Institute of Public Health enabled direct engagement with national public health leaders and strengthened visibility of JARED within Croatia's public health community.

The event offered a valuable platform to showcase JARED's work alongside discussions on tobacco control, nicotine addiction, and respiratory health, reinforcing the importance of coordinated action to address the burden of chronic respiratory diseases and improve health outcomes for all citizens.



As Europe faces growing concerns about youth nicotine use, JARED is advancing tobacco prevention and smoking cessation efforts with a strong focus on protecting young people.

Recent project activities have explored smoking cessation support and school-based prevention initiatives across several European countries. Early findings highlight the rising popularity of novel nicotine products, such as e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches, among adolescents, underlining the need

for stronger prevention measures and targeted support for schools and healthcare professionals.

Through evidence generation, educational resources and the development of future training materials and guidelines, JARED is helping shape a more effective and youth-centred approach to tobacco and nicotine prevention. By turning knowledge into action, the project contributes to healthier futures and supports efforts to reduce the burden of tobacco-related diseases across Europe.

JARED Presented at European Parliament Event on Indoor Air Quality

The **JARED – Joint Action** on Chronic Respiratory Diseases project was showcased at the **SynAir-G** event held in the **European Parliament**, where researchers, public health experts and policymakers explored how scientific evidence can drive effective action towards healthier indoor environments for children.

During the panel discussion, **Dr. Tamás Szigeti**, indoor air quality expert at the **Hungarian National Center for Public Health and Pharmacy (NNGYK)**, presented the work carried out within JARED, which focuses on indoor air quality and asthma. Drawing on the project's literature review, he highlighted several areas where further research and stronger evidence are needed to better support prevention strategies and policy development.

The review identified four key knowledge gaps:

- 🕒 **understanding** the combined effects of real-life exposure mixtures,
- 🕒 **improving evidence** on emerging indoor pollutants,
- 🕒 **strengthening knowledge** on effective school-based interventions,
- 🕒 **developing** harmonised monitoring and health assessment methods across Europe.

The event provided an excellent platform to raise awareness of **JARED's activities** among European stakeholders and to demonstrate **how the project is strengthening the evidence base needed to support healthier indoor environments and more effective prevention policies across Europe**.



Healthy School Environments for Better Respiratory Health

As part of the JARED project, an **evidence-based guidance document** was developed to reduce environmental risk factors for chronic respiratory diseases (CRDs) in schools and educational settings, from **National Centre for Public Health and Pharmacy (NCPHP)**.

The findings highlight that air quality in schools directly affects children's respiratory health, well-being and learning performance, while poor air quality can worsen asthma and other respiratory conditions.

Key Findings

- 🕒 Children are exposed to both outdoor and indoor air pollutants in school environments.
- 🕒 Major sources include traffic-related air pollution, inadequate ventilation, dampness and mould, building materials, cleaning products and biological allergens.
- 🕒 Improving indoor air quality can reduce respiratory symptoms, decrease school absenteeism and enhance concentration and academic performance.

Key recommendations

- 🕒 Improve natural and mechanical ventilation.
- 🕒 Use low-emission building materials and furnishings.
- 🕒 Prevent dampness and mould growth.
- 🕒 Reduce exposure to outdoor air pollution around schools.
- 🕒 Apply sustainable measures to improve thermal comfort.
- 🕒 Create asthma-friendly school environments through staff awareness, access to medication, and individualized asthma action plans.

Overall, the guidance demonstrates that targeted interventions in schools can significantly improve children's respiratory health while creating safer, healthier and more supportive learning environments.

Let's NOT forget those who NEED us the MOST

Living with chronic respiratory diseases – a life-span approach



Filming Marko (nurse in ICU, UHCZ), who is a native speaker in Bayash

Since the launch of the project, an abundance of different activities has taken place focusing on different aspects of living with different aspects of chronic respiratory diseases.

Focusing on **modern means of communication and digital interventions**, the team from **University Hospital Centre Zagreb (UHCZ)** in Croatia has prepared **educational video materials for Roma communities in Romani Chib and Bayash language**.

They chose film as an attractive medium for motivation and learning important facts about smoking, novel tobacco products, COPD, spirometry, vaccination, treatment and exacerbations of

the disease—all this to help building the new generations armed with facts and understanding of chronic respiratory diseases. In the process they already formed friendships with members of Roma community and established pathways for dissemination of knowledge.

As **Dr. Vukic Dugac** and **Dr. Ostojic** said: “But this is only the beginning. We are looking forward to spending time together and discuss the burning issues of smoking and COPD within Roma community, and we already anticipate the balance of productivity and lots of fun that will recharge us for future endeavors.”

Main learning objectives by topics

What is COPD?	→	• definition of the disease • symptoms and signs • clinical course of COPD
Treatment of COPD	→	• treatment modalities and outcomes • treatment adherence • non-pharmacological measures
Vaccination	→	• vaccination rationale • recommended vaccines • benefits of the vaccination
Spirometry	→	• basic facts about lung function measurement • reasons to postpone spirometry • the procedure explained
Smoking and E-cigarettes	→	• harmful effects of smoking • how to quit smoking easier • e-cigarettes are not healthier
COPD Exacerbation	→	• definition of the acute exacerbation • signs and symptoms of exacerbation • action plan

From Awareness to Action: Strengthening Infection Prevention in Long-Term Care

A new infection prevention and hygiene pilot is underway in Latvia as part of JARED's activities, bringing practical training and health education to long-term social care institutions across the country.

Led by the **Centre for Disease Prevention and Control** in collaboration with **Riga Stradiņš University**, the initiative empowers both care staff and residents with the knowledge and skills needed to reduce the spread of respiratory infections and promote healthier care environments.

The program combines **interactive learning** with hands-on practice, covering essential topics such as **proper hand hygiene and correct medical face mask use**. Participants take part in practical demonstrations and skill assessments, while **innovative evaluation tools**—including a hand hygiene scanner—help *measure the quality of handwashing and monitor improvements in infection prevention practices*.

To support lasting behavioral change, participating care homes receive *educational resources, including videos, brochures and posters, that reinforce key hygiene messages in everyday practice*. A follow-up



assessment three months after the training will evaluate knowledge retention and the sustained adoption of healthy hygiene habits. By turning knowledge into action, the **Latvian pilot** strengthens infection prevention in long-term care settings while advancing JARED's mission to improve health literacy and protect vulnerable populations across Europe. Building on the success of an initiative launched in **Hungary** earlier this year, this research activity continues through the collaboration of experts from across the consortium, led by the **National Korányi Institute for Pulmonology (NKIP)**, further strengthening scientific cooperation and supporting the project's objectives.

* LSMU Reaches New Milestone in International Respiratory Health Research

Projektas „Bendrieji veiksmai kvėpavimo takų ligoms“. Minint Pasaulinę astmos dieną

JARED (angl. Joint Action on Respiratory Diseases) – tarptautinis projektas, finansuojamas Europos sveikatos ir skaitmeninės ekonomikos vykdomosios agentūros (HaDEA), vienijantis partnerius iš daugiau kaip 15 Europos Sąjungos šalių. Lietuvos sveikatos mokslų universitete šio projekto veiklas koordinuoja Pulmonologijos klinika. JARED projektui vadovauja Pulmonologijos klinikos vadovas prof. Skaidrius Miliauskas, projekto koordinatore – docentė Kristina Biekšienė. Projekte taip pat dalyvauja LSMU Medicinos akademijos (MA) Seimos medicinos klinikos, MA Slaugos fakulteto bei LSMU Visuomenės sveikatos fakulteto tyrėjai.



■ JARED projekte dalyvaujanti LSMU Pulmonologijos klinikos komanda (iš kairės): projekto vykdymojo, administratore I. Jemalavičiūtė; projekto koordinatore doc. dr. K. Biekšienė; projekto vadovas prof. S. Miliauskas; projekto įmonėjai mokyto darbuotoja G. Graublytė, projekto vykdymojo, administratore K. Paulaitė.

Projektu siekiama stiprinti lėtinių kvėpavimo ligų (KLK) prevenciją, ankstyvą diagnostiką, gydymą ir ligalaidžių ligų valdymą, pasitelkiant inovatyvius skaitmeninės sveikatos sprendimus. Vienas svarbiausių projekto tikslų – ankstyvas lėtinių kvėpavimo ligų nustatymas ir prevencija. Projekto metu siekiama gerinti ankstyvą astmos ir lėtinės obstrukcinės plaučių ligos (LOPL) diagnostiką bei gydymą, stiprinti diagnostinius spūčius ir skatinti spirometrijos taikymą pirminėje sveikatos priežiūroje. Ne mažiau svarbus tikslas – didinti sveikatos priežiūros specialistų informuotumą apie kvėpavimo sistemos ligų atpažinimą ir prevenciją. Pulmonologijos klinika yra atsakinga už šios projekto krypties įgyvendinimą ir koordinuoja 6.1 darbo uždavį bendradarbiaudama su partneriais iš Lenkijos, Ispanijos ir Moldovos. Tarptautinėje komandoje dirbantys tyrėjai – docentė Kris-

tina Biekšienė, gydytoja rezidente Greta Graublytė ir bendrosios praktikos slaugytoja Inesa Jemalavičiūtė – vykdo pilotinį tyrimą, kuriame vertinamas spirometrijos reikšmingumas ankstyvai astmos diagnostikai bei kvėpavimo sistemos sveikatos būklės įvertinimui. Šiuo metu jau sėkmingai užbaigta pirmasis tyrimo etapas. Kiekvienas metas pirmąjį gegužės antrą dieną minima Pasaulinė astmos diena. Šia proga Pulmonologijos klinikos docentė K. Biekšienė parengė informacinę medžiagą apie ankstyvos astmos diagnostikos svarbą. Lankstinuko formato medžiaga buvo išsiųsta visiems JARED projekto dalyviams, siekiant ją pasiskleisti savo šalių sveikatos priežiūros specialistams. Savo ruožtu šią informaciją išplatinsime pulmonologų, alergologų ir šeimos gydytojų bendruomenėms.

Pulmonologijos klinikos inf.



Projekto numeris: 101183991
Projekto akronimas: JARED
Projekto vadovas (LSMU): Skaidrius Miliauskas Projekto koordinatore: Ona Jemalavičiūtė Pulmonologijos klinikos (Vengrija): Ildiko Toth, toth.ildiko@koranyi.hu
Projekto terminas: nuo 2024-12-01 iki 2027-11-30
Finansavimas: Europos sveikatos ir skaitmeninės ekonomikos vykdomoji agentūra (HaDEA)
Bendra projekto vertė: 4 799 999,95 Eur
Projekto vertės dalis, skirta LSMU: 363 209,36 Eur
Projekto puslapis: www.europearlung.org/jared/

Pulmonology Clinic, in collaboration with partners in Moldova, have **successfully completed the first phase of a pilot study** investigating the role of spirometry in the early diagnosis of asthma.

The study enrolled 235 participants, including 150 patients from Lithuania and 85 from Moldova. Following baseline assessments, *all participants will undergo a second spirometry evaluation after a one-year follow-up period*. The project is expected to provide valuable evidence on the effectiveness of spirometry in identifying early signs of asthma and further strengthen international collaboration in respiratory medicine.

The successful completion of the first phase marks an important achievement for LSMU and its partners, contributing to the advancement of evidence-based respiratory healthcare.

* Bringing Prevention Closer to Communities

Raising awareness and promoting early detection are central to JARED's mission. Beyond research and policy activities, project partners actively engage with **local communities**, bringing trusted information and preventive services directly to the public.

Through collaborations with municipalities, local organisations and event organisers, **JARED helps promote healthier lifestyles, increase awareness of respiratory diseases and encourage screening and early diagnosis**. Recent initiatives included participation in the Municipality of Taksony's Health Day and a public awareness event at the Budapest Zoo and Botanical Garden, where **healthcare professionals interacted with hundreds of visitors**.

These partnerships highlight the vital role of community in prevention, showing that informed conversations and accessible health information can inspire people to take proactive steps towards better lung health.



From Planning to Practice

Progress Updates from JARED Pilot Studies

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Improving Health Literacy Among Older Adults with Chronic Respiratory Diseases in Italy

As part of the JARED Joint Action, a pilot study is being conducted in the province of Pistoia, Italy, to assess health literacy (HL) and electronic health literacy (eHL) among older adults with chronic respiratory diseases, particularly COPD.

Originally designed as an online survey, the study was adapted to recruit patients directly through pulmonology outpatient clinics after evidence suggested that limited digital skills among older adults could reduce participation. The project brings together public health researchers and clinicians to better understand patients' information needs and their ability to access, understand and use health information.

The study also **evaluates a health literacy-informed educational intervention using accessible, easy-to-read printed materials designed to support treatment adherence and improve quality of life**. Participants are assessed before and after the intervention, with a three-month follow-up.

Although implementation was delayed due to ethics approval procedures and staffing changes, recruitment began in February 2026 and is progressing.

Early observations indicate low levels of digital tool use and a high prevalence of limited health literacy, highlighting the importance of tailored patient education and support.

JARED is funded by the EU4Health Programme and supports its goals of improving public health and strengthening healthcare systems across Europe.

Through activities focused on respiratory disease prevention, patient care and reducing health inequalities, JARED contributes to healthier communities and better health outcomes for European citizens.

Country spotlight

Introducing Greece – Strengthening Communication and Respiratory Health in JARED

Greece plays a key role in the JARED Joint Action through the leadership of Work Package 2 (WP2) by the 1st **Health Region of Attica (1st YPE)**. WP2 focuses on communication, dissemination and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that project activities, results and best practices are effectively shared among partners, policymakers, healthcare professionals, patient organisations and the wider public.

As one of Greece's largest regional health authorities, **1st YPE** provides strategic direction for communication and dissemination activities, supports cooperation across the consortium and promotes the uptake of JARED results at both national and European levels. Through these efforts, it helps maximise the project's impact and visibility while facilitating the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

Sotiria General Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, the affiliated partner of **1st YPE**, contributes its extensive expertise in respiratory medicine. As Greece's largest specialised respiratory hospital and a national reference centre for pulmonary diseases, Sotiria strengthens the project's scientific foundation through its experience in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and research, supporting innovation and high-quality standards in respiratory healthcare across Europe.

JARED is on social media

- 🌐 The official social media pages of the JARED-JA on Chronic Respiratory Diseases are now live!
- 🌐 Follow us for our latest news and updates!
- 🌐 We want you to be part of the community!
We are building a network committed to preventing and managing chronic respiratory diseases and improving respiratory health across Europe, the more people join, the greater impact we can make together.

Please take a moment to like and follow our pages. Feel free to share them with your professional network.

Your support helps amplify our mission!

Thank you for being part of the JARED community—together, we breathe for a healthier future!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JaredJointAction>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/jared-joint-action-on-chronic-respiratory-diseases/>