

## **We Love Eating kicks-off with intergenerational activities across seven EU cities**

In a colourful, happy and intergenerational atmosphere, seven cities across Europe celebrated simultaneously on 17 September 2014 the official launch of the We Love Eating pilot project, aiming to show citizens how enjoyable and healthy eating can be.

The kick-off events of this new EU-funded initiative included all sorts of relaxed activities to promote a healthy diet, from cooking contests to exercise exhibitions and games.

The participating cities of Banská Bystrica (Slovakia), Bradford (UK), Cluj Napoca (Romania), Deventer (Netherlands), Granollers (Spain), Poznań (Poland) and Roncq (France) were the hosts of these successful launch parties, which gathered hundreds of children, adults and special guests, who contributed with their presence to spread the key messages of the project.

We Love Eating (WLE) is about empowering EU citizens to make their lives and communities healthier, promoting the benefits of a healthy lifestyle over a lifetime. The initiative includes a series of enjoyable activities in the seven participating cities, organised to develop a positive relationship of citizens with food, and it is specifically targeting three groups on risk of an unhealthy lifestyle: children, pregnant women and older people.





## ***Banská Bystrica transforms its main square into the “Healthy Lifestyle Arena”***

The main square of Banská Bystrica became a colourful “Healthy Lifestyle Arena” to celebrate the launch of We Love Eating on 17 September 2014. Exhibition stands, contests and all sorts of enjoyable activities were held in collaboration with the city council and 15 local organisations to promote the six key messages of the EU initiative: enjoy shopping, cooking, eating together, drinking water, eating colourful fruit and vegetables, and physical exercise.



The day started with a press conference of Anastasiya Kuzmina, biathlon Olympic champion and ambassador of the WLE project; Dušan Chrenek, the Head of the European Commission Representation in Slovakia, and Peter Gogola, the Mayor of Banská Bystrica, who stated: “We can’t close our eyes in front of numbers demonstrating that our population suffers more and more health related problems caused by a bad diet. And what is more, this is not only a problem of adults, but more and more frequently of children, who suffer not only obesity but also disease related to it.”

Anastasiya Kuzmina pointed out that a top-level sports performance is inextricably linked to healthy habits and a healthy lifestyle. “My family and I try to lead a healthy lifestyle. Healthy diet gives us energy, and we want to serve as example for others.” Later on, at the end of the festive day, she was in charge of handing over the prizes to the winners of different competitions, who received t-shirts with the logo of WLE, promotional materials (badges, cards, and brochures) and vouchers for a healthy diet consultation, fitness packages, among others.

Throughout the morning, 500 children from local primary schools and kindergartens participated in a series of competitions, quizzes and didactic games related to healthy diets and healthy habits. Young students were challenged to visit the 13 We Love Eating stands placed in the square, each one dedicated to a specific healthy lifestyle aspect, and collect in a special card the 13 special stamps “issued” by the fair. If they collected all the stamps, they were eligible for a prize. Nevertheless, all children received a WLE present.



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At midday, five local restaurants from the square offered healthy menus to the visitors, who could also enjoy music performances and dance.

The afternoon was especially dedicated to the adult population, who were invited to participate in a series of educational and physical activities. Around 800 citizens, among them many seniors, were able to talk in the stands with different experts of the collaborating organisations and receive helpful tips to improve their nutrition and eating habits.



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## Bradford collects “pledges” for healthy lifestyle changes



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A double celebration took place in Bradford to celebrate the launch of the We Love Eating project. On 17 September 2014, local organisations and individuals who work with children, parents, pregnant women and older people were invited to the Forsters Bistro, in Centenary Square, where they were informed about the We Love Eating project and how they can get involved in it.

The Mayor of Bradford, Mike Gibbons, attended the event, as well as the Environment officer for Bradford Council, Pam Bhupal, who said: “We want people to enjoy food, we’re not saying do this, don’t do this. It’s about enjoying yourself and doing it together as a family and a community.”

Attendees were invited to participate in a water tasting activity and to “pledge” to do one healthy thing based on the WLE messages they had been introduced to at the presentation. A total of 49 pledges were gathered, from both individuals and organisations, going from small things that individuals offer to change in their day-to-day life, up to specific activities they are willing to run. For example, one organisation pledged to

replace tea and biscuits with water and exotic fruits at one of their group sessions. Others pledged to start yoga classes for their staff, reduce their sugar intake, hold a community rainbow eating day, or even just raise awareness through the district.

There was also a lunch buffet of healthy food. It included a selection of bite-sized cakes too, but obviously the healthy messages paid off because the leftovers at the end were mostly the cakes!

One day later, on 18 September 2014, a We Love Eating kick-off party open to the general public was held at City Park, where around 400 people enjoyed live cooking demonstrations, exercise sessions and healthy food giveaways, among many other activities.

Passersby were invited to sample a “rainbow cup” made from five different coloured fruits, learn how to make a “rainbow wrap”, take part in some exercise or have a go on the fun fruit coconut shy. One of the most popular activities invited to guess how much sugar contain certain drinks. The quiz was actually quite an eye-opener for a particular teenager, who revealed that he drank 15 cans of soft drink per day! He seemed really shocked and promised the Bradford WLE team to reduce his soda intake.



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Cooking demonstrations, exercise routines and food giveaways were overseen by healthy living organisation HALE and Jamie's Ministry of Food, who are helping to promote the initiative locally.

Over the next 12 months the We Love Eating initiative will organise in Bradford inter-generational cooking lessons and activities to help encourage citizens to eat and live healthily



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***The Mayor of Cluj-Napoca starts the WLE project preparing healthy salads for dozens of children***

The Mayor of Cluj Napoca, Emil Boc, literally puts his gloves on to celebrate the official launch of the We Love Eating project and prepared some healthy salads for dozens of children on 17 September 2014. Under a splendid weather, the event held at the Central Park and the Casino cultural centre gathered around 300 participants of all ages, who enjoyed free activities encouraging them to lead a healthy lifestyle.

“It is very important to pay attention to how we eat, and to the fact that physical activity is the key for a long healthy life, so I encourage both the young and the seniors from Cluj to adopt the principles of this European project, aimed at helping to change the lifestyle of the citizens of the European Union,” said the mayor, who dressed in his formal suit and with a pair of blue disposable gloves asked the kindergarten and primary school children gathered at the park what did they want to eat of the healthy buffet in front of them.

In a cheerful and relaxed atmosphere, Mayor Boc prepared in small plastic bowls vegetables and fruit salads, combining beans, corn, tomatoes, cucumber slices, pineapple, apple and orange, and gave them to the little ones, not without reminding them the benefits of choosing healthy foods.

Teachers and students from kindergartens and secondary schools, members from seniors clubs, from The Stork's Nest association for young mothers and the Minute of Movement, and representatives of the Cluj Salad Box, were among the participants in the kick-off celebration.



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Valentin Cuiabus, the city's School Inspectorate Director, stressed that one of the main goals of WLE is to "emphasise the idea of family participation, from the buying process of ingredients to cooking and eating together."

"Nowadays parents find themselves confronted with veritable challenges to find the time to share with their children, and since the whole We Love Eating initiative is about sharing time while adopting a healthy lifestyle we are hoping that the changes will show, and that they will be positive," he said.

The intergenerational event included free gym lessons for everybody, which was especially enjoyed by the children, and the distribution of WLE presents and information about the project.

Over the next year, students, mothers and pensioners will participate in several activities programmed by the WLE Cluj Napoca local promoting group, aimed to show citizens how good it can feel to eat and live healthily!



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## Deventer gets on two wheels to promote healthy living

Deventer launched the We Love Eating project and the city’s “Gezond in Deventer” programme (Healthy in Deventer) on 17 September 2014 with a cycling tour and a large number of actions, specially targeted to children and older people.

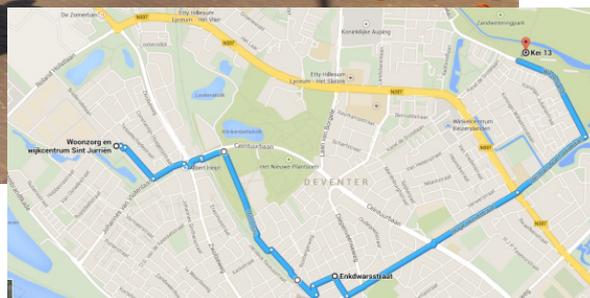
The activities took place throughout the morning at the elderly care home St. Jurriën, in Zandweerd; the elementary schools De Steenuil and Mikado; and at the child care centre Sam&Ko, in Voorstad and Keizerslanden. All three locations were visited by participants on a We Love Eating cycling tour, and then they were invited to take part in some of the games and taste some healthy snacks.

Members of the three collaborating organisations in the project took active part on the launch, as well as the alderman of Deventer, who encouraged all citizens to support this important project, which in its first day engaged around 400 participants. Previously, during the week, 1,800 parents received WLE goody bags with information booklets aiming to deliver the message that eating healthily is about more than getting the right nutrients in the right proportions – it’s also about the social bonds that are formed through eating together.

The “sugar blocks board”, a game used to show the amount of sugar contained in popular soft drinks and juices, was very successful. Children and parents made some interesting discoveries with the game, which will be sent in the following weeks to other child care centres in Deventer as an educational tool to strengthen one of the key messages of WLE: “Enjoy drinking water”.



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**Granollers welcomes with a engaged spirit the We Love Eating project**



The city of Granollers welcomed with a truly festive spirit the kick-off of We Love Eating, a project that will dedicate the next 12 months to promote healthy eating habits and the benefits of the local traditional Mediterranean diet. Headed by Mayor Josep Mayoral i Antigas and Ferran Tarradellas Head of the European Commission Regional Office in Barcelona, among other high level authorities, the official We Love Eating launch event on 17 September 2014 took place at local museum and was followed by a successful intergenerational fair at the Granollers Porxada square.

The local coordinator of the project, Esteve Llargués, from the Hospital of Granollers, presented the objectives of We Love Eating and the activities that will take place in the city during the upcoming months. He also showed for the first time the video produced by the local promoting group covering the key messages of the initiative, which were also underlined by Carmen Cabezas, from the Catalan Ministry of Health.

Furthermore, she stressed the importance of the local Mediterranean diet and the need to involve older people in its transmission to younger generations, especially to their grandchildren. “Let’s encourage grannies to teach them how to enjoy a healthy diet”, she said.

To those with a busy schedule, chef Néstor Fabián Contreras, member of Euro-Toques, (European Community of Cooks), explained that it is indeed possible to eat healthily in a restaurant... it’s just a matter of making a healthy combination of plates!



*Granollers (Spain)*

The official launch at the Museum of Granollers was followed by a celebration at the Porxada square, with a sunny afternoon full of activities for everybody, especially for children, pregnant women and older people. There were yoga classes for moms-to-be, stands with information and food, drawing activities and musical performances.

And, of course, special kudos for the l'Estel school students, who were actively involved in the fair, showcasing some experiments with sugar, proteins and fat in order to raise awareness on healthy diets.



© Esteve Liarqués



## ***“Master Chef” finalist supports the WLE launch in Poznań***

The Castle cultural centre in Poznań was transformed on 17 September 2014 into a healthy lifestyle oasis to welcome the We Love Eating project. Michal Muskala, finalist of the popular TV show “Master Chef”, was the guest star of a programme full of fun and free activities for all the family.

Outside the castle, an artificial lawn with natural grass especially prepared for the WLE day, hosted throughout the morning a series of physical activities, from tai chi and yoga sessions to Nordic walking training. There was a place for a picnic as well, with deck chairs and volunteers who welcomed visitors with tempting baskets full of fresh and tasty apples, pears and plums.

Meanwhile, inside the cultural centre, there were lectures on health diets, workshops, dance and game sessions for people of all ages, informational stands, nutritionists providing advices, and stalls offering healthy snacks and recipes, among others.

The lectures on healthy diets were especially welcome among seniors, who also seemed to enjoy very much the workshops with intergenerational dancing and games, where many participants were grandparents with children.

The chef Michal Muskala encouraged the audience of his conference to prepare healthy snacks and take into account nutrition values when preparing meals for the family.

Stalls with local and home-made products such as tasty sugarless cakes and whole-meal bread contributed to demonstrate the around 600 citizens who attended the event that healthy food does not mean boring or unattractive!



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## **Roncq receives WLE with promoting healthy activities among older people**

A healthy breakfast for 72 children and parents at the Neruda primary school marked the kick-off for the We Love Eating launch activities in Roncq on 17 September 2014. Aiming to raise awareness among families on the importance of a balanced meal to start the day, participants were offered a special buffet and received information on how to prepare a full breakfast with all the essential nutrients.



© Roncq

One of the goals of the WLE programme is to encourage conscious eating and more physical activity in daily life, offering realistic ways to adopt a healthier lifestyle. With this objective in mind, the Roncq local promoting group and Johan Vander-Elstrate, from the council's Sports department, put together a programme of activities targeting older people that took place throughout the morning at the Jules Gilles sports hall and the Salle Selandre swimming pool. There were training sessions for all tastes and abilities, from ball and racket competitions to balance and motor development classes, and also an aqua-gym session. Around 30 seniors participated, acknowledging at the end that physical activity not only helps them to keep fit but also to have a nice time among peers.

A healthy snack with vegetable brochettes and different sorts of natural smoothies and fresh juices was offered to the members of the Restaurant Convivial to promote a regular consumption of fruits and vegetables and offer a fun and positive image of these nutrient-charged foods.

The WLE programme also visited the elderly home of La Colombe (decorated with fruits and vegetables for the occasion!), where residents played a memory game around food. The objective of the activity was to raise awareness on healthy habits and stimulate the memory of seniors, who also enjoyed a healthy snack.

The Mayor of Roncq, Vincent Ledoux, presented the project at a press conference, stating that he is "very proud of participating together with other cities that are much larger than us in a project that will have European impact." He also underlined the fact that the project is based on a positive attitude, on pleasant dynamics that aim to boost the health capital of the youngest ones and also of the elderly.



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After that, the mayor enjoyed a healthy snack with 60 children and parents at the Triolet school, where he sat down with the families and talked with them about how nice can breakfasts be if some coloured fruits are added into them!



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