



EU Health Policy Platform Annual Meeting – 2 March 2021

NGOs, schools and cities who are helping to give children a healthy start in life were rewarded for their efforts at the EU Health Award, which took place on 2 March 2021. The prestigious EU Health Award Ceremony takes place as part of the European Health Policy Platform annual meeting, which continues tomorrow, 3 March.

Presenting the awards were the European Commissioner of Health and Food Safety Stella Kyriakides and the European Commission's Deputy Director General for Health and Food Safety Pierre Delsaux. The meeting, which was held virtually, was chaired by John F. Ryan, European Commission Director of Public Health. The question and answer session was moderated by Isabel de la Mata, Chair of the Award Jury and Principal Adviser for Health and Crisis management in the European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Food Safety.

More than 160 people watched the event live, and the [recording](#) is now available online.

“We know that cities and NGOs, schools and kindergartens can have a major say in the health of their communities. You have real power, and your ideas and initiatives make a concrete difference,” said Commissioner Kyriakides, addressing the participants. The Commissioner also highlighted the importance of the EU Health Policy Platform in coordinating the efforts of health stakeholders, sharing expertise and creating synergies.

The 2020 Award, for the first time in its sixth year history, recognised outstanding initiatives in two different areas of health: one was promoting vaccination in children ages 0 to 18, and the other was promoting healthy lifestyles among 6 to 18 year olds.

The call for initiatives in the field of promoting vaccination in children was open

to NGOs, schools and kindergartens, and the call for projects promoting healthy lifestyles among children was open to cities and schools.

Three initiatives per category were selected for recognition, with the exception of the schools and kindergartens category for the call on vaccination, which was not awarded due to an insufficient number of submissions.

In the other three categories (NGOs for the vaccination call, and Cities and Schools in the healthy lifestyle call) the first prize winners were each awarded €50 000, the second prize winners received €30 000 and the third prize winners were given €20 000.

“Despite – and even in some ways because of - its incontestable success, childhood vaccination programmes have been disrupted by vaccine hesitancy, which has become a global health threat, said the Commissioner, before presenting the awards in the vaccination category.

“The pandemic, too, has made it hard to follow recommended childhood vaccination schedules. We need to make sure that childhood vaccination continues, on schedule, no matter what,” she said.

1st prize under the call on vaccination, category NGOs, went to the Cyprus Association of Cancer Patients and Friends (PASYKAF - Cyprus) for their project HPV Elimination Program. The Polish Pharmaceutical students' association took the second prize for their project Vaccines - it does not hurt, and taking third place was the Dutch Cancer Society for their project Online HPV Campaign.

Representatives from these organisations spoke briefly about their work as they accepted their awards.

Presenting the awards for the second award theme, Healthy Lifestyles, was Deputy Director General for Health Pierre Delsaux.

“I think it is really important to look at what is being done on the ground level,” he said, before announcing the winners in the cities category. I am very impressed by what I have seen, and these are exactly the kind of programmes we need to encourage and develop”

Taking 1st place was the Romanian city of Iasi, for their project Granny's Health Bag. Second place was awarded to Mollet del Vallès in Spain for their project Municipal Children Council for the promotion of healthy dietary habits, and taking third place was the Local Governments' Association of the Buda Region in Hungary, for their Partnership based complex health program for children in Hungary.

Representatives from each city spoke briefly about their projects as they received their awards.

Next, Deputy Director General for Health Delsaux announced the top three schools in the Healthy Lifestyle call for initiatives, first thanking educators for their role and impact on present and future generations. “Teachers and educators are key in shaping the future; they have great influence and power,” he said.

The Primary School "Vuk Stefanović Karadžić" Doboje from Bosnia-Herzegovina won 1st prize for their project Promotion of the importance of physical activity among children with disabilities. Taking 2nd prize was the Drakenhof primary school in Belgium, for their project Going and Bananas. The CEIP Juan Pablo I in Spain went home with third prize, for their project Neuroactive City 2020.

The audience got to hear more about these initiatives from school representatives, as they accepted their awards.

More information about these initiatives, the video recording of the Award Ceremony and the winner's presentations from the event are available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/health/award/home_en

The annual meeting continues!

The 2020 EU Health Award may be over, but stay tuned! On 3 March, there will be another opportunity to hear about innovative and successful projects to boost public health when the 2020 Thematic Networks present their Joint Statements on the second day of the EU Health Policy Annual Meeting.

The three projects to be presented are:

- Colorectal cancer screening in the European Union led by Digestive Cancer Europe
- Digital Doc led by Erasmus University Medical Center Rotterdam
- Profiling and training the health care workers of the future led by Health First Europe and European Health Management Association proposal

This online meeting will be held from 9:45 till 11:30 CET Brussels time.

Register and learn how you can lend your support for your favourite project following this link:

<https://ecconf.webex.com/ecconf/onstage/g.php?MTID=e09e2213de709fd5ad2dc7debd54d89fb>