



‘Assess Yourself and Learn from the Best – Showcasing and Rewarding European Public Excellence’

PRESS RELEASE

European Public Sector Award – EPISA 2015

“Three ground-breaking initiatives addressing labour market integration, youth protection and urban environment and health were awarded yesterday in Maastricht during the EPISA 2015 Award ceremony.”

During a well-attended and entertaining award ceremony which took place on Wednesday the 18th of November at the Provincial Government House in Maastricht, the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) presented the European Public Sector Awards 2015 to the 3 winning projects, respectively in the European/National/Regional, Supra-Local/Local and Cross-cutting category (a project drawn from the two administrative categories demonstrating an exceptional cross-administrative, cross-sectoral or cross-border dimension).

This prestigious award recognises the best and most innovative performers in public administrations across Europe. Over 150 guests from more than 20 European countries and the European institutions participated in the range of EPISA 2015 events held in Maastricht on 17-18 November 2015.

The 3 **award winners** are:

The award in the supra-local/local administrative category was presented to the initiative ***Every Child Safe Forever – The Development of Relentless Family Case Management and the End of Parole and Other Court Orders***, submitted by the Youth Protection Amsterdam Region (NL). This project is an innovative example of effective public service delivery through efficient and effective family-based case management. This new method was achieved by changing all the important elements of the organisation: structure, support systems and physical working environments. The principle applied is *One Family, One Plan and One Professional*. Thus, it is a tailored and user-centred service involving each family as key stakeholder and taking their reality into account. The holistic change methodology applied can be considered as brand-new. This change has significantly improved situations for children and their families and at the same time resulted in budget savings of overall €30 million so far.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy was awarded the EPISA trophy in the European/national/regional category for their project ***BQ-Portal – The Information Portal for Foreign Professional Qualifications***. This initiative addresses an issue of high-level political importance in Germany, namely skills shortages, and in the EU in the form of mutual recognition of qualifications. All relevant information on the

equivalence of a wide range of foreign vocational training systems and individual foreign professional qualifications is consolidated in a single database. This is a unique initiative as it is the first portal of this kind at national or European level. The portal achieved significant results such as the impressive number of 73 country profiles and more than 1400 professional profiles. The high level of user satisfaction equally underlines the importance and relevance of this exceptional project. The project addresses a challenge that many European countries face and thus holds valuable lessons for other administrations.

The Cross-cutting award went to the project ***Urban Environment and Health*** submitted by the Barcelona Provincial Council. Introducing health perspective in the design of cities and towns is clearly a novel approach. The resulting joint activities such as building knowledge, developing products and promoting research present a true added value for society as they improve the health of all citizens. This project creates synergies between different areas of political action and across 13 administrative departments (involving 49 professionals from 15 different disciplines) to promote healthy urban environments. This project is innovative as it truly breaks down institutional silos, crosses different sectors and engages in horizontal and vertical administrative cooperation. Health is integrated into other policies not only by regulation, but mainly by “leading by example” and by providing training coupled with a well-stocked online database. This is an excellent example of how education can work to help realising goals.

The award ceremony was preceded by keynote speeches by Theo Bovens, Governor and King’s Commissioner for the Province of Limburg; Marga Pröhl, EIPA’s Director-General; Zoltan Kazatsay, representing the European Commission; Guy Wagener on behalf of the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union; and Loes Mulder, representing the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

The EPSA 2015 Final event started on Tuesday 17 November at the EIPA premises in Maastricht with keynote speeches addressing issues such as the European Commission Agenda for quality and innovation in public administration, and the future of social innovation in public administration: co-creating with citizens. Then the nine nominated projects had the opportunity to present their respective outstanding initiatives during parallel workshops.

In the late afternoon, the Best Practice Certificates were presented to a group of selected initiatives at the Maastricht Town Hall where the EPSA group was welcomed by the Mayor of Maastricht, Ms Annemarie Penn-te Strake. This long but fruitful and inspiring day was closed with a festive dinner gathering the whole EPSA community at the Grand Café Maastricht Soiron.

The detailed programme is available online.

More information as well as pictures and all project presentations will be available online in the next few days. Keep checking our website www.epsa2015.eu for new updates.

Note for the editors
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