

Aphekom Second Plenary Meeting in Vienna

Interviews performed by Geoff Davies, external communication expert

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Klea KATSOUYANNI - NKUA - Athens, Greece
Athens Aphekom centre

Geoff: I'm now talking to Klea Katsouyanni, coordinator of the Apehea project and I'd like to ask you what do you think this project can bring in the European context?

Klea: Well the Apehea project is a project that started more than fifteen years ago, which stands for Air Pollution and Health a European Approach and it was actually a scientific project that had nothing to do with policy when it started because at that time we were not sure that air pollution had an effect on health.

So at the end of this project I think, we were sure and there were a consensus that indeed air pollution had major health effects and that the results of this project influenced the European Commission, the European Union legislative procedures.

So after that, after we had our risk estimates in place, the question was what does this mean for public health, what is the importance of this research findings for the level of public health and public health protection.

Then came in further European projects like the Apehis and now the Aphekom project which aims to link research findings with the public health policy. It aims to influence decision makers, it aims to influence the standards in the laws and the directives that come out from the European Union and actually influence all the European Union countries.

There are many environmental problems in the European Union countries, especially the southern countries and the new countries that joined the European Union and there is a lot to be done. Within Aphekom, there is also a need to update the research findings.

There are several questions which relate to source-specific effects, which relate to particle constituents, which relate to sensitive subgroups on the other hand and need to be taken into account in the health impact assessment. So we can say that the epitome of this project is exactly the link between research and policy and decision making in air pollution.

Geoff: Klea, thank you for your comments.