Reflections of Lysander Slyngborg at the European Public Health Conference 2022.

Tell us a little about you and why you are a citizen scientist at this stage of your life
I'm Lysander, I'm 24 years old and I've been a citizen scientist since 2021. I'm a citizen scientist because I believe that having someone who has personal knowledge of certain groups or conditions, will be able to provide much more valuable and important elements that might overwise have been overlooked.

What motivated you to come to EUPHA in Berlin and agree to participate in our engaging stakeholders workshop?
I was invited because of a research project I did as a citizen scientist, and was after asked if I wanted to participate in the engaging stakeholders workshop. I said yes because I thought it was a valuable topic to be able to speak on.

How did you feel before the session?
Nervous! I somewhat felt like a "fraud" being in the presence of very knowledgeable people. But I was reassured by the other participants in the workshop, and that helped me feel encouraged about my participation.

What went well?
I think the workshop part where the groups were supposed to talk about their own ideas, was great. Most of them had similar ideas, or ideas that overlapped – and all of those ideas were great. It was also great to be able to tell my own story of citizen science, so that people were aware that young people can be involved and want to be involved.

How did you feel afterwards and since about it?
I felt very encouraged about my own participation, but also the inputs that others voiced during the session. It made me feel very hopeful about people involving young people and children in future projects. I also had talks with people who came to the workshop, who seemed very interested in how they could involve young people in their research.

Any advice for the next session in Dublin 23 to make it better?
I don't think I have any, other than it's important to keep involving young citizen scientists in these sessions.

What are the key takeaway messages from the session you helped to organise for the fifteen EPH Conference here in Berlin?
- *Involving citizen scientists in sessions, talks and research is a great (and easy!) way to get valuable commentary and input from unheard voices.*
- *People want to involve citizen scientists in their research*
- *It's important to involve young people/kids from all groups of life, as their circumstances and therefore commentary/input might differ from other young people/kids.*

Please, tell us three concrete actions to involve young people in health policy making.
- *Have other young people be the "face" of the involvement that young people are engaging in, whether it's in person or on social media.*
- *Instil confidence in them so they're aware that they're not just "test subjects" but citizen scientists whose voices are valued and important.*
- *Give them a monetary gift for their contribution to the research*

And now please tell us how young researchers can be protagonists in this process.
Ask and listen to them about what they feel is important to them in regards to the health policy being made, and then ask and listen again. It's important to give them a lot of responsibility so they feel their contribution is valued, but also not give them so much responsibility that they feel overwhelmed – be interested in their life outside of the project, and let them be flexible in how much work they can put into the research.

Lysander Slyngborg   **November 2022**