



LUNGS EUROPE

A partnership of the European Respiratory Society and European Lung Foundation

Strategic role in EU respiratory health

Established in November 2019, Lungs Europe is a Brussels-based organisation which is a partnership between the European Lung Foundation (ELF) and the European Respiratory Society (ERS). Lungs Europe is well placed to play a significant role in EU funding programmes and projects related to respiratory health and disease, supported by the stakeholder networks of ELF and ERS.



ELF is a patient-led organisation that works internationally to bring patients and the public together with healthcare professionals to improve lung health and advance diagnosis, treatment and care.



ERS is the largest scientific and clinical organisation for respiratory medicine in Europe. Its members are scientists, clinicians, allied healthcare professionals and other experts from around the world.

In 2024/25, Lungs Europe advanced its role as a key partner in EU funding programmes through regular engagement with EU institutions, coordinated communications across ELF and ERS and targeted advocacy on lung health topics. Lungs Europe was awarded an **EU4Health operating grant**, a milestone enabling significant expansion of its activities.



Expanding advocacy and policy influence

The EU4Health grant positioned Lungs Europe to scale up its policy engagement across health and environmental issues, including prevention, cancer, tobacco control, air pollution, climate change, nutrition, mental health, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and digital health literacy. Key highlights:



Reestablishing the MEP Lung Health Group, connecting with newly elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and ensuring lung health was recognised as a parliamentary priority.

Supporting the MEP Lung Health Group events:

- Strasbourg visits in June and September 2024 addressing occupational lung disease, tuberculosis and mental health.
- November 2024 **virtual launch of the 9th LuCE Report** on lung cancer awareness and patient empowerment.
- **Healthy Lungs for Life exhibition** at the European Parliament in February 2025, featuring free lung testing, policy discussions and prevention advocacy.



Policy influence

- Supported the European Parliament's April 2024 vote to strengthen the **Ambient Air Quality Directive**.
- Contributed to the featuring of respiratory health in **Renew Europe's** position.

Participation in EU consultations on health programme planning, environmental legislation, air quality standards, rare disease policy and non-communicable disease prevention.

High-level engagement: Lungs Europe engaged in high-level activities, including European Parliament debates on mental health, smoke- and aerosol-free environments, COPD, cancer, rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases, health inequalities in Central and Eastern Europe, complemented by multiple meetings with the European Commission.

Joint advocacy with NGOs including ECDA, EPHA, and HEAL on tobacco control, **Europe's Beating Cancer Plan**, and clean air.

Publishing position papers on antimicrobial resistance (with AMR-Lung CRC), mental health (with ELF Mental Health Working Group) and rare respiratory diseases, alongside patient-facing AMR resources. **Learn more.**

Supporting the Council Recommendation on smoke- and aerosol-free environments, contributing to its adoption by the Council of the EU.

Strengthening stakeholder networks

Lungs Europe focused on reinforcing and widening its network of stakeholders to ensure patient and professional perspectives were consistently represented in EU health discussions. This included an audit of existing stakeholders and the development of a targeted strategy, resulting in new partnerships and increased visibility among EU civil society organisations. Particular attention was given to youth engagement, support for activities in Ukraine, and a review of partnerships across Europe to guide more targeted outreach.



Youth engagement

Lungs Europe prioritised youth involvement to ensure young voices were represented in discussions on lung health and environmental advocacy. Key activities included:

- **October 2024:** Panagiota-Maria Triantfyllopoulou (aged 16) spoke at the **SynAir-G workshop in Athens** about her experiences with asthma and poor indoor air quality.
- **February 2025:** Youth group participation at **Healthy Lungs for Life exhibition** at the European Parliament
- **March 2025:** At the **WHO Global Conference in Cartagena**, Ed Powell and Nadine Peters presented on youth advocacy and ELF-led projects promoting cleaner air.



Engagement in Ukraine

Lungs Europe prioritised activities in Ukraine to strengthen patient and professional collaboration and support the roll-out of **the ELF European Patient Ambassador Programme (EPAP)**. Key initiatives included:

- **December 2024:** **Patient-clinician conference in Lviv** attended by 48 participants. EPAP was launched in Ukrainian as well as a new community survey.
- Establishment of the **Ukrainian Respiratory Coalition** to unite patient and professional voices.
- High-level meetings in Kyiv with the Ministry of Health's Public Health Centre to prepare national respiratory health surveys and support further EPAP roll-out.

Communications and outreach

Effective communication remained a priority for Lungs Europe, with efforts directed towards raising awareness of respiratory health, sharing project results and supporting advocacy campaigns. Work was carried out across digital platforms, media and sharing multilingual resources to reach patients, professionals and policymakers.

510

LinkedIn
followers

26

News items
published

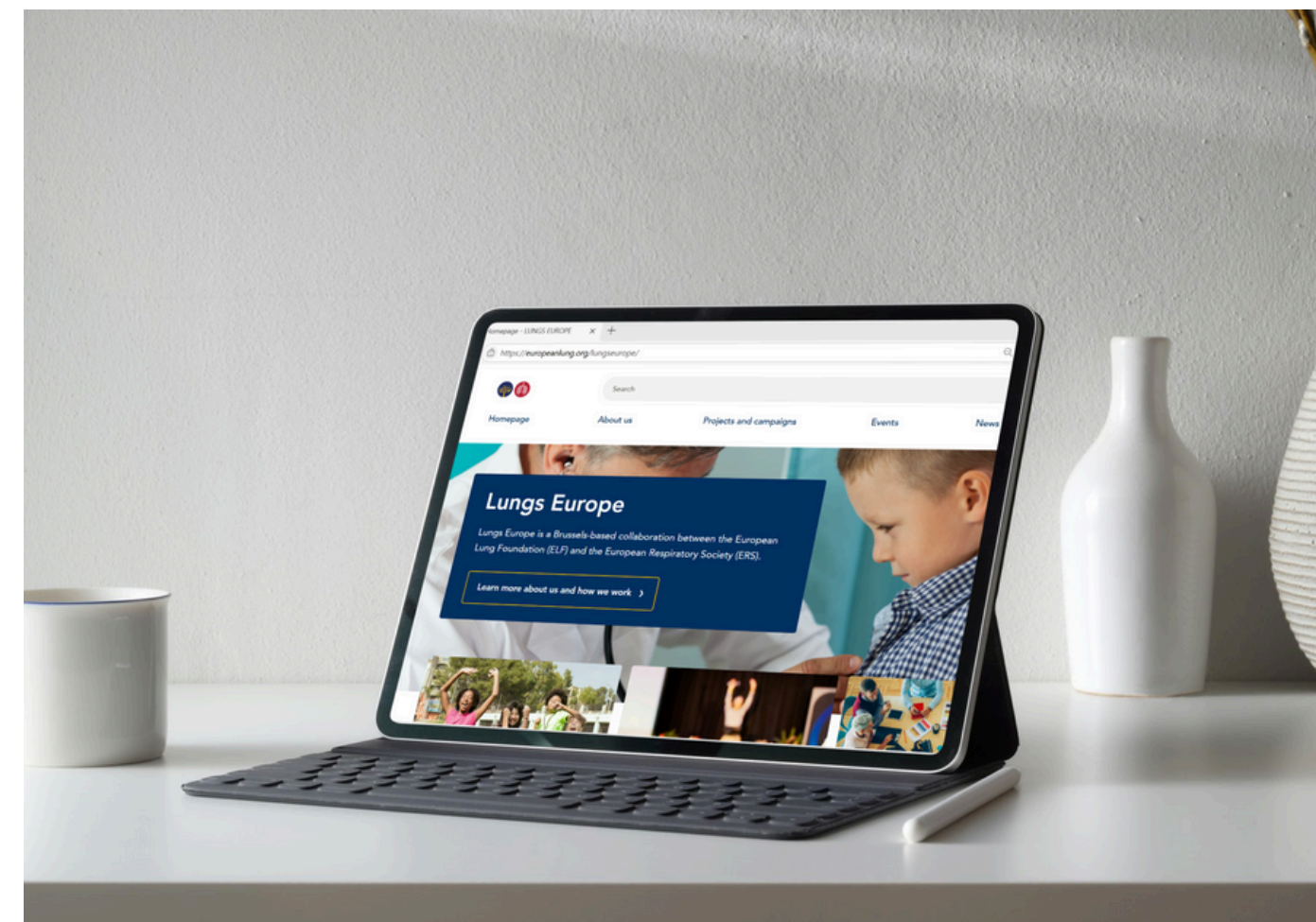
8569

Website
views

Launch of TikTok channel. A TikTok channel was launched as a platform for short, engaging videos targeting younger audiences. The channel raises awareness of lung health, highlights prevention messages, and explains key policy issues in an accessible way. It also enhances the outreach of existing ERS and ELF platforms, supporting campaigns on air quality, Healthy Lungs for Life and tobacco control.

Supporting multilingual patient resources. Multilingual patient resources were promoted and disseminated to enhance engagement in research and policy. A key example is the **European Patient Ambassador Programme training platform**, which includes modules on supporting research and development, influencing policy, and international health research projects.

Supporting project visibility. Lungs Europe activities were promoted through tailored press releases, newsletters and articles. These communications reached a wide audience via ELF and ERS channels and included coverage of key events, campaigns, and project updates that amplified the organisation's work across Europe.



Campaigns and public engagement

Public engagement activities in the reporting year were anchored by the **Healthy Lungs for Life** campaign, which continued to expand its reach in Europe and beyond. Alongside this flagship initiative, Lungs Europe supported community projects through small grants and awareness-raising on issues including clean air, smoking cessation, physical activity and nutrition.

July 2024 – Community grants

Awarded 10 small grants to support local Healthy Lungs for Life activities. Most grant-supported projects were held around World Lung Day in September 2024, focusing on clean air, vaccination, smoking cessation, and physical activity.

August 2024 – Stockholm

Hosted an HLfL event in partnership with C40, the Swedish Asthma and Allergy Association, and the City of Stockholm. The event provided free spirometry testing, raised awareness about clean air and lung health, and engaged the public with interactive activities, helping extend the campaign’s international reach.

September 2024 – Vienna, Austria

Delivered a flagship event in Vienna during the ERS Congress, with more than 1400 spirometry tests, double the number from the previous year. The event featured WHO participation, a walk and run with over 500 participants, school-based spirometry pilots, and activities led by local ambassadors.



December 2024 – 10-year HLfL report

Supported the launch of a report summarising a decade of HLfL activity and learning, highlighting key achievements, lessons learned, and the impact of the campaign across Europe and beyond.

March 2025 – Cartagena, Colombia

Organised a public event in Cartagena as part of the Healthy Lungs and Heart for Life campaign, in collaboration with the World Heart Federation. The event aimed to raise awareness about the links between lung and heart health, particularly in the context of air pollution. Activities included free spirometry testing, health screenings, and educational sessions for the local community, contributing to the campaign's international reach.

Early 2025 – Nutrition theme

Introduced nutrition as a new campaign focus to broaden prevention messaging, supporting lung health alongside existing themes such as clean air, vaccination, and physical activity.



EU projects and collaborative research initiatives

Lungs Europe contributed to several EU-funded projects during 2024/25, bringing expertise in project management, dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and patient involvement. Its role focused on ensuring that research and policy outputs translated into impact for healthcare systems, communities, and EU policy discussions.



LungHealth4Life combines lung function testing, health promotion, and disease prevention in schools, aiming to improve respiratory health among children and adolescents. Lungs Europe has coordinated the consortium of six partners, ensuring smooth governance, facilitating communication across stakeholders, and supporting sustainability planning. The organisation has led communications, creating engaging website and social media resources for educators, health professionals, and the public. It developed a detailed protocol for classroom-based spirometry interventions, scheduled for the 2025–2026 school year, and established a Community of Practice (CoP) to share insights and co-create practical tools for schools. Pilot activities in Poland, Portugal, and Hungary will trial school-based lung health checks to assess feasibility and impact, contributing to evidence-based best practices for lung health promotion in schools.



COCOS-IPF aims to co-design a Core Outcome Set for patients with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF), standardising outcomes and measures for care across Europe. Lungs Europe has focused on ensuring that project results are communicated effectively to patients, healthcare professionals, and the wider public. This includes reviewing participant communications for clarity, supporting the final Consensus Workshop in February 2025, and facilitating stakeholder engagement throughout the Delphi process. Lungs Europe has helped ensure that the Core Outcome Set reflects the priorities of patients, clinicians, and researchers, providing a strong foundation for improved IPF care and research alignment.



EU PAL-COPD integrates palliative care into routine treatment for people with advanced COPD. Lungs Europe has coordinated a Patient Advisory Group (PAG) to ensure patient perspectives shape the project's direction and implementation. The organisation has facilitated patient involvement in the development and review of tools, including focus groups to refine interventions and palliative care assessment methods. Lungs Europe has supported dissemination of project outputs to healthcare professionals and patient communities, produced engagement content such as blog posts and videos highlighting patient and carer perspectives, and ensured governance input by involving a PAG member in the trial steering committee. The organisation has also contributed to planning a multi-country clinical trial across 18 hospitals in six countries, ensuring patient-centred policies are integrated into the project.



SOLACE seeks to create practical guidelines for implementing national lung cancer screening programmes. Lungs Europe has led dissemination and outreach, ensuring that project outcomes are shared widely with policymakers, healthcare providers, and the public. It has produced educational materials addressing common myths about lung cancer screening, developed patient stories, and created checklists to support awareness of screening eligibility. Lungs Europe has coordinated country-level engagement in Poland, Ireland, Germany, Estonia, France, and Hungary, including collaboration with primary care services and mobile screening units. The organisation has also participated in European Commission consultations and international conferences to advance screening policy, integrating patient perspectives and personal journeys into project communications to ensure patient-centred messaging.



FRESHAIR4Life is a four-year implementation science programme working across Greece, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Romania, and Uganda to tackle the impact of air pollution and tobacco on disadvantaged adolescents. The project develops context-specific interventions to reduce exposure, while also building dual capacity through youth advocacy and professional leadership. Lungs Europe has contributed to building capacity for youth advocacy, offering support to local teams to implement interventions tailored to their communities. The organisation has supported communication and dissemination activities to ensure project findings and tools reach youth, educators, healthcare professionals and policymakers.



EUREST-RISE fosters collaboration between 18 academic and non-academic partners across Europe to strengthen tobacco regulatory science and bridge research with public health impact. Lungs Europe has contributed expertise in public health policy and stakeholder engagement, hosting three secondees who received hands-on training in tobacco control advocacy. The organisation has supported the development of key reports, including Tobacco Endgame: Using lessons from the UK and Tobacco Endgame Policies in the European Union: Mapping Support and Progress, and coordinated the production of a public advocacy toolkit translating evidence into accessible resources for stakeholders and policymakers. Lungs Europe has also supported dissemination of project findings to advance policy and practice across Europe, helping researchers connect scientific evidence with effective public health interventions.

Organisational growth and governance

Lungs Europe strengthened its internal structures to support the effective delivery of an expanding programme of work. New staff appointments enhanced capacity across policy, communications and project management, while governance processes were maintained to ensure a balance between accountability and operational flexibility. To achieve this, Lungs Europe...

...collected systematic participant feedback from events and training sessions through evaluation questionnaires, using the results to inform continuous improvement.

...maintained ongoing governance procedures to guide decision-making while retaining responsiveness to new opportunities beyond the workplan.

...recruited additional staff to support the growing scope of EU-funded projects and advocacy activities.

...launched an independent evaluation process via a public call for proposals, providing external oversight and transparency.



Future and funding strategy

Lungs Europe is focused on ensuring its long-term sustainability in a challenging environment for health NGOs. Building on the momentum of 2024/25, the organisation will continue to expand partnerships, diversify funding sources, and develop innovative approaches to secure its role in shaping EU health policy. Planned priorities include:



Deepening collaborations with organisations and institutions that share objectives in health, research, and public engagement.

Seeking new opportunities from EU funding programmes, grant-making foundations, and carefully selected private sector partners.

Developing sustainable initiatives such as Healthy Lungs for Life in the workplace to broaden income streams.

Continuing to strengthen internal systems to adapt to an evolving policy and funding landscape.

These measures will provide a foundation for continued advocacy, engagement and project delivery, ensuring that lung health remains a priority across Europe in the years ahead.

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