

ERO NEWS



ERO-FDI highlights
the next generation of European dentistry through the
ERO–EDSA AWARDS



EUROPEAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION
OF THE FEDERATION DENTAIRE INTERNATIONALE **FDI**

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European dental leadership and student engagement come together to support young professionals in shaping the future of oral healthcare

The European Regional Organisation of the FDI World Dental Federation (ERO-FDI) continues to strengthen its commitment to the next generation of dental professionals through its cooperation with the European Dental Students' Association (EDSA) and the ERO–EDSA Awards.

The initiative promotes scientific excellence, critical thinking and the active participation of dental students in addressing some of the most important challenges facing contemporary oral healthcare.

At the centre of this cooperation is Prof. Dr. Paula Perlea, President-Elect of ERO-FDI, who has strongly supported closer links between ERO and the future generation of dentists, on behalf of ERO-President, dr Edoardo Cavalle.

Giving the next generation a voice

The partnership between ERO-FDI and EDSA creates an important bridge between established professional leadership and Europe's dental students.

The ERO–EDSA Awards reflect a simple but important principle: students should not only be prepared to enter the profession in the future; they should already be encouraged to contribute to the discussions shaping dentistry today.

The competition invites students to explore issues extending beyond traditional clinical dentistry and to consider the dentist's wider responsibilities in prevention, public health and the relationship between oral and general health.

The 2026 competition focused particularly on tobacco and nicotine use and the role of dentists in prevention and cessation.

Dentists are uniquely positioned to identify the effects of tobacco and nicotine use, communicate health risks and encourage behavioural change. This role illustrates the evolution of dentistry towards a more comprehensive model in which oral healthcare professionals contribute actively to prevention and overall health.



Prof. Dr. Paula Perlea President-Elect of European Regional Organisation of the World Dental Federation (ERO-FDI) with EDSA Board Members

The 2026 ERO–EDSA Award winners



Following the evaluation of the submitted essays by the students, the reviewers selected contributions demonstrating scientific quality, originality and relevance to contemporary dental practice.

First Place was awarded to Kryštof Rozkošný from the Czech Republic, a student at Palacký University Olomouc, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, for his essay: “The Dentist as a Sentinel: Integrating Tobacco Cessation into Modern Oral Healthcare.”

His work highlights the dentist’s potential role as a “sentinel” – a healthcare professional capable of recognising risk factors and incorporating tobacco cessation into routine oral healthcare.



Second Place was awarded to Riccardo Conci from Italy for his essay:

“Beyond the Mouth: The Dentist’s Role in Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Tobacco Cessation Counselling.”

The paper addresses the expanding responsibility of dentists in prevention and emphasises an approach to healthcare that extends beyond the treatment of the oral cavity.

This year, the evaluation committee decided that the third place should be shared by two excellent submissions. The first Co–Third Place goes to Piotr Niekra, from Poland, a third-year dentistry student at the Medical University of Gdansk, for his essay “From Oral Assessment to Behavioural Change: The Dentist’s Role in Tobacco Cessation” and the second Co–Third Place goes to Chen Ruo Qiu, from Italy, a fifth-year student at the Department of Medicine and Surgery, University of Milano-Bicocca, for the essay “Circular Gerodontology: Harmonising Silver Health and Green Policies for a Sustainable European Future.”

It is particularly interesting that our two Third Place awards recognize work addressing both major themes of this year’s competition—tobacco cessation and oral health in an ageing society.

The essays were evaluated by an international review group comprising Prof. Dr. Paula Perlea, Dr. Ana Minca, Dr. Alexandru Dabu and Dr. Antonio Roma Torres.

Connecting generations in European dentistry

For Dr Edoardo Cavalle and Prof Paula Perlea, the significance of the ERO–EDSA Awards goes beyond recognising the best scientific essays. The initiative provides an opportunity to bring students directly into the European professional dialogue.

Before announcing the winners, Prof Perlea held a conference about ERO-FDI, explaining to the young audience what is FDI, ERO and why it is important to build a bridge between generations.



“ERO brings together the organised dental profession across the WHO European Region, while EDSA represents the students who will become the clinicians, academics, researchers and professional leaders of tomorrow. We strongly believe that dental students should not simply observe the evolution of our profession. You should participate in shaping it. This philosophy is at the heart of the ERO–EDSA Scientific Award. Through the cooperation between ERO and EDSA, we want to give students a real voice, encourage scientific curiosity and create a professional environment in which generations learn from one another”
- said Prof. Perlea.



Prof. Dr. Paula Perlea, ERO-FDI President-Elect, during her presentation on ERO-FDI history, vision, mission, strategy, principles, core values and key workstreams.



She also emphasised the changing responsibilities of oral healthcare professionals:

“Modern dentistry goes far beyond the treatment of teeth. Oral health is inseparable from general health, and prevention must become an increasingly important part of our professional responsibility. Preparing the next generation for this broader role is essential for the future of our profession.

Dentistry can no longer be considered in isolation from general health. Dentists and dental teams have an important role in prevention and health promotion. Tobacco cessation is an excellent example: through our regular contact with patients, we are in a privileged position to identify risk, educate patients and encourage behavioral change.

At the same time, Europe's ageing population makes the preservation of oral health in elderly patients an increasingly important professional and public-health responsibility. These two topics therefore invited our students not only to examine the scientific evidence, but also to think about how the dentist of the future can contribute to healthier individuals and healthier societies.”



ERO president elect with the EDSA president and EDSA research officer in Budapest

Budapest – bringing together education and professional leadership

The presentation of the ERO–EDSA Awards in Budapest in August 2026 is particularly relevant in the context of the ADEE Annual Meeting 2026, hosted by the Faculty of Dentistry of Semmelweis University. The meeting brings together dental educators, academic leaders, students and professional stakeholders from across Europe.

Its theme, “Evidence and Empathy as the focus in Oral Health Professionals’ Education,” closely reflects the philosophy behind the ERO–EDSA cooperation: scientific excellence must be accompanied by communication, empathy, ethical responsibility and a patient-centred understanding of healthcare.

Bringing the ERO–EDSA Awards into this educational environment further strengthens the connection between dental education, student organisations and European professional leadership.

Building the future of European dentistry together

ERO-FDI occupies an important position as the European Regional Organisation of the FDI World Dental Federation, providing a platform for national dental associations to cooperate on the major professional, educational and public-health issues affecting dentistry. Under the leadership of ERO-FDI President Dr. Edoardo Cavallé, with Prof. Dr. Paula Perlea as President-Elect, particular attention has been given to dialogue, cooperation and engagement with the younger generation.

The ERO-EDSA award is therefore more than an individual competition. It represents an investment in the continuity and future leadership of the dental profession.

The future of European dentistry should not only be built for the next generation – it should be built together with them!

Prof. Dr. Paula Perlea
President-Elect
on behalf of ERO BOARD

