



EUROPEAN UNION



# EU MISSIONS

CANCER



July 2025

## EU MISSION: CANCER

### WHAT ARE THE EU MISSIONS?

EU Missions are large-scale initiatives under Horizon Europe designed to tackle major global challenges, such as climate change, cancer, soil health, ocean restoration, and the development of climate-neutral and smart cities. They set clear, time-bound goals and bring together research, policy, and stakeholders to drive innovation and deliver concrete solutions for societal benefit.

### MISSION CANCER

Why an EU Mission on cancer? Because cancer affects us all, creating a ripple effect that burdens families, societies, and economies. Every year the EU sees:

- **2.7 million new cancer diagnoses;**
- **1.3 million lives lost;**
- **€200 billion economic toll.**

What's more, the annual number of diagnoses in Europe is expected to exceed 3.24 million by 2040 due to ageing population, unhealthy lifestyles, unequal access to screening and care.

To reverse this trend, the EU Cancer Mission has set the goal to "improve the lives of more than 3 million people by 2030, through prevention, cure and for those affected by cancer including their families, to live longer and better". It will do this by breaking down barriers to involve a wide range of stakeholders, including patients, and pooling resources to work towards the common goal of fighting cancer.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The Mission ensures that new research and innovation developments are effectively translated into concrete solutions to improve cancer control, by:

- increasing understanding of cancer development, and contributing to preventing cancers, by strengthening research into **risk factors**, by promoting **behavioural changes** and supporting the implementation of **population-based screening**.
- enabling the development of more **effective diagnostics** and treatments, including through a large array of **highly innovative multinational, clinical trials**, increasing overall survival;

- improving patients' lives during and after treatment through monitoring programmes and by providing concrete solutions to a wide range of **physical and psycho-social long-term effects**;
- empowering citizens and patients to contribute to shaping the EU R&I agenda on cancer, through initiatives such as the **EU Cancer Mission Bus Roadshow**, the **dialogue with young cancer survivors** or the establishment of a **pan-European network of National Cancer Mission Hubs**.

## SUCCESS STORY

Starting in January 2023, young cancer survivors from all over Europe have been gathered through thematic workshops and a conference, to better understand the challenges they face during and after treatment. The dialogue steers the work of the EU Cancer Mission, enabling young cancer patients and survivors to co-create initiatives to address specific needs, such as mental health, follow-up care or continuity in education, through research or policy actions.

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"Being part of the dialogue launched by the Cancer Mission felt like a big hug from the EU. The hug that tells you that you are no longer alone. For the first time I felt I was not only a patient, a number, but I got a name and a voice, which I can use for the better. It was one of my best experiences."

**Ajda CVELBAR**

*A three-time young cancer survivor and speaker at the 2024 R&I Days*

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The dialogue has led to many concrete outcomes, including a research topic in the EU Cancer Mission 2024 work programme on late effects of cancer treatments as well as a study on provision of Adolescent and Young Adult care in Europe under the 2024 EU4Health work programme. The dialogue has also been instrumental for the inclusion of a flagship initiative in the EU Comprehensive approach to mental health, to develop a platform to boost mental health of young cancer survivors.



## ALIGNED AMBITIONS AND SYNERGIES



- **EU political priorities:** The EU Cancer Mission puts strong emphasis on synergies with other parts of Horizon Europe, other EU programmes and initiatives. With the **Europe's Beating Cancer Plan**, the Mission shares common objectives, concrete initiatives (such as the digital flagship initiatives UNCAN, eu data platform and European Cancer Patient Digital Centre) and a joint governance, underscoring their full integration.
- **Sustainable development goals:** The EU Cancer Mission drives SDG3 "Good health and Well-being" by advancing cancer prevention and care through research, for healthier lives.

## MORE INFO AND CONTACT

**Learn more:** [EU Mission: Cancer - European Commission](#)

**Get in touch:** [RTD-SANTE-CANCER-MISSION@ec.europa.eu](mailto:RTD-SANTE-CANCER-MISSION@ec.europa.eu)

**Sign up** to the Mission's [newsletter](#)

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