

# N O V E

## EUROPE'S BEATING CANCER PLAN

FEBRUARY 2021

### INTRODUCTION

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On February 3, 2021, the European Commission unveiled its Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, outlining the Union's new approach to cancer prevention, treatment and care featuring new technologies, research, and innovation as the starting point.

The Plan commits to tackle the entire disease pathway, from prevention to quality of life of cancer patients and survivors, focusing on actions where the EU can add the most value.

Europe's Beating Cancer Plan will be supported by actions spanning across policy areas from employment, education, social policy, and equality, through marketing, agriculture, energy, the environment, and climate, to transport, cohesion policy, and taxation.

### Key action areas

The Cancer Plan is structured around four key action areas with 10 flagship initiatives and multiple supporting actions. It will be implemented using the whole range of Commission funding instruments, with a total of €4 billion being earmarked for actions addressing cancer.

- I. Prevention through actions addressing key risk factors such as tobacco (with the aim to ensure that less than 5% of the population uses tobacco by 2040), harmful alcohol consumption, environmental pollution, and hazardous substances. Additionally, a "HealthyLifestyle4All" campaign will promote healthy diets and physical activity. To prevent cancers caused by infections, the Cancer Plan's objective is to vaccinate at least 90% of the EU target population of girls and to significantly increase the vaccination of boys by 2030.
- II. Early detection of cancer by improving access, quality and diagnostics and support Member States ensuring that 90% of the EU population who qualify for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screenings are offered screening by 2025. To support achieving this, a new EU-supported Cancer Screening Scheme will be put forward.
- III. Diagnosis and treatment through actions to ensure better integrated and comprehensive cancer care and addressing unequal access to quality care and medicines. By 2030, 90% of eligible patients should have access to National Comprehensive Cancer Centres linked through a new EU Network. In addition, a new 'Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment for All' initiative will be launched by the end of 2021 to help improve access to innovative cancer diagnosis and treatments and a European Initiative to Understand Cancer (UNCAN.eu) will help identify individuals at high risk from common cancers.
- IV. Improve quality of life of cancer patients and survivors, including rehabilitation, potential tumour recurrence, metastatic disease, and measures to support social integration and re-integration in the workplace. A 'Better Life for Cancer Patients Initiative' will be launched, focusing on follow-up care.

In addition, to support new technologies, research and innovation, a new Knowledge Centre on Cancer will be launched to help coordinate scientific and technical cancer-related initiatives at EU level. A European Cancer Imaging Initiative will be set up to support the development of new computer-aided tools to improve personalized medicine and innovative solutions.

A particular focus will be paid to paediatric cancers, through the launch of the “Helping Children with Cancer Initiative” to ensure that children have access to rapid and optimal detection, diagnosis, treatment, and care. Finally, to identify trends, disparities and inequalities between Member States and regions, a Cancer Inequalities Registry will be established in 2021.

## ANALYSIS

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### **A modern approach to Cancer: new technologies, research, and innovation**

As mentioned above, the Plan outlines a new approach to cancer prevention, treatment and care based on new technologies, research, and innovation. It proposes two main frameworks to foster innovative research and development in the sector, namely: Horizon Europe and the EU Digital Strategy.

#### Horizon Europe

The Commission’s document specifies that a dedicated Mission on Cancer, foreseen under Horizon Europe, will be a major component of the EU’s investment in cancer research and innovation. It will draw on research and innovation, public health, and policy development, to inform many of the Cancer Plan’s key actions and deliver solutions for patients, including those with comorbidities. Moreover, the Program will fund research infrastructures, cloud computing and European Innovation Council actions – especially through the creation of two European partnerships:

- **Innovative Health Initiative** – aimed at creating an EU-wide research and innovation ecosystem in close cooperation with the health industry, academia, and other stakeholders.
- **Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems** – aimed at bringing together health and care authorities, regions, patients, and healthcare professionals to provide insights into how to better take up research and innovation opportunities.

#### EU Digital Strategy

The Plan highlights how new digital technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and High-Performance Computing, could greatly benefit the healthcare sector in general, and cancer diagnostic and treatment in particular. It notes the potential of electronic health records, reconfirming the relevant role that the European Health Data Space (EHDS) will play in regulating and facilitating health data access across the EU. It finally announces the Commission’s proposal to establish, in 2022, a “**European Cancer Imaging Initiative**”. The initiative will create an EU “atlas” of cancer-related imaging, meant to make anonymized images accessible to a wide range of stakeholders across the ecosystem of hospitals, researchers, and innovators.

### **Sustainable Cancer prevention**

One of the Plan’s four pillars hones in on measures to support the prevention of cancer, with initiatives largely focusing on means of educating and empowering citizens to make better lifestyle choices in order to maximize prevention efforts. Proposed initiatives under this Pillar include:

- The **improvement of the health literacy** of the population is proposed to be facilitated through an update to the European Code against Cancer, with the goal of making at least 80% of the population aware of the Code by 2025.
- A project on **Health Literacy for Cancer Prevention and Care** will be launched between 2021 – 2025 with a focus on disadvantaged groups.
- As regards the **reduction of harmful consumption**, the Plan already envisages the first actions to achieve a Tobacco-Free Generation in 2021, with the goal of having less than 5% of the population consuming tobacco by 2040.

- Similar measures are proposed as regards harmful **alcohol consumption**, with the legislation of the taxation of alcohol and cross-border purchases thereof put forward for review.
- The **empowerment of citizens** to lead healthier lifestyles is facilitated by the intention to review the 2014-2020 Action Plan on Childhood Obesity, and revise the EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme in 2023 in order to maximize the availability of health foodstuffs for children. In accordance with the initiatives set out under the Farm to Fork Strategy, future mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling is foreseen as further encouraging the selection of healthy and sustainable food choices.
- **Environmental exposure to hazardous properties** is addressed through the intention to revise the EU's air quality standards in 2022, and to update the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive to protect workers from occupational exposure alongside a new Occupational Safety and Health Strategic Framework 2021-2027.
- Finally, a **flagship initiative to facilitate the prevention of cancers** caused by infections foresees the vaccination of at least 90% of the target population of girls and increase the vaccination of boys against human papillomaviruses (HPV) by 2030.

## Early detection

In recognition of the impact that earlier detection can have on patient outcomes, the Plan foresees the leveraging of the proposed **EU Cancer Screening Scheme** and the enhanced **European Cancer Information System** to address existing inequalities as regards screening rates country-to-country.

As one of the Plan's flagship initiatives, the **EU Cancer Screening Scheme** will work to ensure that 90% of the EU population who are eligible for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screenings are offered this by 2025.

The evidence on the latest developments in cancer screening technologies to be prepared by the Commission's Group of Chief Scientific Advisors will also feed into the **Knowledge Centre on Cancer**, which will develop new guidelines and quality assurance schemes on screening, diagnosis, and follow-up.

The EU Cancer Screening Scheme will also feed into the new **European Cancer Imaging Initiative**, through increasing the available data on screening and promoting the use of AI to improve the quality and speed of screening. The envisaged **Mission on Cancer** is intended to strengthen the new EU Cancer Screening Scheme by exploring means of optimising screening programmes and developing novel approaches.

## Standards in Cancer care

The Plan acknowledges the disparities in standards of cancer care across the EU's regions. To address this issue, and the corresponding differences in survival rates, the flagship initiative of an **EU Network of National Comprehensive Care Centres** is proposed to be set up by 2025 to assure the provision of and access to high-quality diagnosis and treatment for patients. This Network will be supported by the existing rare cancer-focused **European Reference Networks** (ERNs) alongside new ones to be established. The Network is intended to be accessible to 90% of eligible patients by 2030.

The Plan recognises that a high-quality healthcare workforce is essential for the improvement of standards in cancer care, and therefore intends to launch an 'Inter-specialty cancer training programme' in 2021, based on cross-border training and information-sharing to optimise collaboration among cancer specialists.

Finally, as regards the optimisation of advancements in digital health for better cancer patient outcomes, the Plan recognises the obstacle of legal and ethical standards, specifically in terms of leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) and high-performance computing in healthcare. The Plan references the role of electronic health records and the development of a **European Health Data Space** in complementarity to the flagship initiative of a European Cancer Imaging Initiative as key actions to drive forward the mainstreaming of digital cancer care; the latter of which will be set up in 2022 to act as a standardised guide for cancer-related images.

## Social Policy

The improvement of the quality of life of cancer patients and survivors is one of the Plan's central pillars. To this end, another flagship initiative presented is the '**Better Life for Cancer Patients Initiative**', which seeks to establish a **Cancer Survivor Smart-Card** by 2022 to facilitate follow-up care via improved communication with healthcare professionals.

The personalised Smart Card system will be supported by a **European Cancer Patient Digital Centre** under Horizon Europe's Mission on Cancer to standardise monitoring and follow-up. The Plan places emphasis on actions to ensure that survivors live fulfilling lives, including the eradication of discrimination in cancer patients' experiences of accessing financial and insurance services via a code of conduct for these businesses.

The European Pillar of Social Rights also features as regards the importance placed on the implementation of the [Work-Life Balance Directive](#) in view of providing support to informal carers, whose essential role in the care of cancer patients is recognised in the Plan. The inequalities observed in cancer care across different Member States as regards access to screening programmes and care is deemed unacceptable by the Plan, with the flagship initiative of the **Cancer Inequalities Registry** proposed as an instrument to map and hone in on these inequalities.

Another flagship initiative will complement the Network in the form of the '**Helping Children with Cancer Initiative**', intended to be launched in 2021. This initiative will specifically focus on the improvement in standards of care for children with cancer, to ensure their access to rapid detection, diagnosis, and treatment. The proposed **EU Network of Youth Cancer Survivors** specifically addresses the assurance of a high quality of life for survivors of paediatric cancer by connecting these with others and strengthening long-term follow-up.

Finally, the role of telemedicine is hailed as an opportunity to improve access to cancer care, with the Plan's intention to strengthen telehealth and promote virtual consultations outlined.

## International cooperation and Governance

### International cooperation

The Plan reaffirms the EU's long-standing collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as regards health issues and commits to sustaining this through the framework of collaboration on non-communicable diseases<sup>1</sup> which includes a focus on cancer. The Plan also notes the intention to bolster work with the WHO's **International Agency for Research on Cancer** and the **European Network of Cancer Registries** to facilitate collaboration. The Plan further commits to international cooperation in the context of Horizon Europe to ensure access to talent and knowledge around the world to pool expertise.

### Governance

The alignment of actions and policies stemming from the Plan across the institutions will be overseen by the soon-to-be-established **EU Cancer Plan Implementation Group**, for whom the **Cancer Mission Board** will function as a scientific advisory group. The Plan foresees regular interactions of at least twice per annum with a stakeholder contact group to be established under the Commission's Health Policy Platform to facilitate interactions with patient groups in particular. The implementation of the Plan's proposed initiatives will be monitored via an implementation roadmap and progress indicators, to be regularly reviewed by the aforementioned Implementation Group. The expanded European Cancer Information System will allow for the systematic collection of relevant data to support this monitoring, which will also feed into the Cancer Inequalities Registry. A review of the Plan is already envisaged within the Communication for the end of 2024 to take stock of the Plan's impact thus far.

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<sup>1</sup> Joint Statement of the European Commission and the WHO Regional Office for Europe "[A deeper and result oriented partnership for health in Europe](#)" of 14 September 2020.

## Next steps

The Plan will now be subject to analysis and review by the two co-legislating bodies of the EU, i.e., the European Parliament and the Council of the EU (gathering EU Member states). In 2020, the European Parliament established a “**Special Committee on Beating Cancer**” (BECA) for a period of 1 year, with a view to proposing a concrete set of recommendations for Member States and the EU institutions. Both co-legislators will react to the Plan pending formal proposals from the Commission on the first series of initiatives in 2021, following the proposed timeline outlined in the Communication. The European Commission has specified that the Plan will be examined by the Member States at a Health Ministers’ meeting scheduled to take place during the Portuguese Presidency of the EU. Each initiative (especially legislative ones) will then follow its own timeline for adoption.

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DISCUSSION OF THE BEATING CANCER PLAN

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On 4 February, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, **Stella Kyriakides**, presented the Plan to the European Parliament, highlighting its important relevance in the establishment of a new EU Health Union. **Commissioner Kyriakides** then participated in an exchange of views with the European Parliament’s **Special Committee on Beating Cancer** (BECA) also on 4 February, demonstrating the need for the Plan to concretely address issues of inequalities across the EU as regards accessing cancer treatments and high-quality care.

Most MEPs welcomed the Plan, and its emphasis on tackling inequalities and the prevention of cancer through lifestyle choices and awareness. Several MEPs stressed the holistic approach required, including the role of the Plan in the construction of a European Health Union, and the importance of cross-border initiatives such as the development of an EU Network of National Comprehensive Cancer Centres and cross-border clinical trials for orphan drugs to treat more rare cancers.

The Parliament also raised the issue of strengthening the EU’s research capacity in the field of cancer, and the need for harmonised standards for quality healthcare to further reduce geographical disparities in access. Further concerns raised included the need to address the high costs of cancer treatments which itself impacts on the accessibility of cancer care, and the need to look at environmental factors which result in exposure to hazardous substances.

### EPP Group

BECA Committee Chair **Bartosz Arłukowicz** (Poland) highlighted the importance of cancer on the Parliament’s agenda, evidenced by the creation of the Committee he is at the helm of. He stressed that cancer patients should not be forgotten amid the COVID-19 pandemic. He cited shared knowledge, databases, and the co-financing of HPV vaccinations as well as collaborative screening programmes as the means to sufficiently work together to take on the challenge presented by cancer.

### S&D Group

S&D welcomed the publication of the Plan, noting the impact that reinforced research capacity and overall coordination would have on the provision of high-quality care for patients.

S&D BECA Committee Coordinator, **Alessandra Moretti** (Italy), recalled her group’s prioritisation of a European Health Union, and welcomed the concrete actions proposed within the plan in order to tangibly map inequalities to single out areas for targeted action i.e., via the creation of an EU Network of National Comprehensive Cancer Centres and an EU Cancer Screening Scheme. However, she highlighted that greater ambition was still needed as regards the full implementation of the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive and the setting of minimum standards for quality healthcare irrespective of what Member State a patient lives in.

S&D ENVI Committee Coordinator, **Jytte Guteland** (Sweden), contextualised the Plan alongside the November 2020 Pharmaceutical Strategy in the construction of a true European Health Union. She particularly welcomed the focus within the Plan on addressing the 40% of cancer cases which are preventable through the empowerment of citizens to make better lifestyle choices; and singled out the proposal for mandatory labelling of ingredients and calorie content.

### **Renew Group**

**BECA Rapporteur Véronique Trillet-Lenoir** (France) recalled the social injustices that came with the fight against cancer, owing to inequalities in prevention, access to quality care, environmental protections, education and protection from disinformation. She also lamented that not all survivors were sufficiently supported in their reintegration into the workforce. She therefore welcomed the creation of a Cancer Inequalities Registry to map these inequalities to facilitate targeted action. She noted the initiatives proposed to prevent the cancers which are preventable through healthier lifestyle choices and the reduction of environmental pollution.

### **Greens/EFA Group**

The Greens/EFA group highlighted the intention of the Plan to reduce the burden of cancer as it applies to patients, their families and their carer; as well as the integration of the priority to break down inequalities in all initiatives proposed.

MEP **Tilly Metz** (Luxembourg) welcomed the Plan's emphasis on means of improving access and reduce corresponding inequalities, though she raised concerns for a perceived lack of sufficient measures to address high prices of cancer treatments which had a knock-on effect on the accessibility of these treatments. She called for stronger action here, citing the revision of Intellectual Property rights in order to better facilitate cross-border clinical trials to develop orphan drugs. MEP Metz also specifically singled out **informal carers**, and the need to recognise their often-invisible work which forms an essential part of cancer care.

## STAKEHOLDERS' REACTIONS

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### **European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) and European Cancer Organisation (ECO)**

EFPIA issued a press release in conjunction with the **European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC)** and the **European Cancer Organisation (ECO)** to strongly welcome the Plan, with particular emphasis on the proposed Cancer Inequalities Registry, and the enhancement of the European Cancer Information System. All three stakeholders reminded of their collective call for the timely and rapid implementation of the provisions put forward, in accordance with the principles of the European Cancer Dashboard for which they also seek the input of the European Parliament's Special Committee on Beating Cancer as regards agreement on core indicators for measurable targets to prevent and treat cancer. The Dashboard principles are recalled as being: user-friendliness; collaboration with the most relevant political, industrial and academic stakeholders; reinforcement of existing initiatives; the importance of scientific evidence; and a holistic approach to the central components of cancer care. All stakeholders are eager to participate in the creation of a monitoring tool to support the implementation of the Plan.

### **European Society of Cardiology (ESC); European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC)**

The ESC and the ECPC issued a joint statement welcoming the Plan and its proposed flagship initiatives and highlighting the need to address cardiovascular toxicity as a complication that can be suffered by cancer patients and survivors, constituting the second leading cause of death for cancer patients.

### **European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC) and European Randomized Study of Screening for Prostate Cancer (ERSPC)**

The stakeholders strongly welcomed the Plan, specifically as regards its intended initiatives in earlier detection. The intention to update the European Council's Recommendation on cancer screening by 2022 is perceived as offering an opportunity to address increasing mortality rates and late diagnoses as regards prostate cancer. The stakeholders regret the inefficacy of 'opportunistic testing', and pledge their availability to work with the Commission as regards the scientific evidence behind the need for a more strategic approach. The envisaged EU Network of National Comprehensive Cancer Centres and inter-specialty training programmes are heralded as the required actions for holistic diagnostics and treatment for patients across the EU.

The EAU's academic consortium of the IMI's Big Data for Better Outcomes programme on prostate cancer, is noted as having the potential for impactful input into the proposed Knowledge Centre on Cancer, the European Initiative to Understand Cancer (UNCAN.eu), the European Cancer Imaging Initiative, and the European Health Data Space.

### **European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)**

EPHA welcomed the comprehensiveness of the Plan, and its inclination towards a multi-stakeholder and multi-faceted approach. The Alliance heralds the Plan as a flagship example of the EU's commitment to a strong health agenda on the behalf of citizens. The Plan's synergies with the fight against other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are welcomed, particularly as regards risk factors and prevention tactics, which EPHA hopes will feature in future health policymaking.

Sascha Marschang, EPHA Acting Secretary General, affirmed EPHA's commitment to the implementation of the Plan, through a targeted evaluation of where it could add the most values. He wanted to see the Plan applied holistically, and in such a way that it would not be reduced to a one-off initiative. EPHA views the Plan as the first step of many in concretely addressing Europeans' healthcare burdens.

### **EuropaBio**

EuropaBio welcomes the Plan and its corresponding pillars. The organisation supports the bringing of novel treatments to patients in a timely manner, and thereby highlights the Plan's emphasis on access to and uptake of innovative therapies. EuropaBio welcomes the preventive measures outlined in the Plan, and also provides input on the treatment stage for cancer patients, citing the role of Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs) as new personalised approaches e.g. CAR-T cell therapy. Accordingly, EuropaBio calls for collaboration between the Commission and the European Medicines Agency to create a receptive regulatory framework for ATMPs which facilitates research and development. In this regard, EuropaBio highlights the need for the reduction of red tape via measures to streamline approval processes.

Strong intellectual property incentives are posited as essential for EuropaBio in the facilitation of research and development, following which, resilient healthcare systems should be empowered to promote the access to and uptake of new therapies. On the cusp of revolutionary prospects to treat cancer, EuropaBio wants to see EU-level and national-level collaboration to ensure optimal access and the appropriate usage of innovative diagnosis tools and therapies. EuropaBio highlights the need for real-world data to satisfactorily address the gaps in cancer care, and heralds the opportunity presented by the advent of personalised medicine and the creation of a European Health Data Space. EuropaBio emphasises the need for standardised electronic health records and registries to reduce evidence gaps and result in better innovation and decision-making.

### **Eurocare, and European Cancer Leagues (ECL)**

The stakeholders welcomed the Plan for its emphasis on harms caused by alcohol consumption, and therefore support the initiatives to reduce this such as the review of EU legislation on the taxation of alcohol and on cross-border purchases. As regards prevention, the stakeholders reference the usefulness of exchanging best practices, and of reducing the exposure of younger people to advertisements for alcoholic beverages.

The stakeholders welcome the proposal for mandatory labelling of ingredients and nutritional declarations by the end of 2022, and for the subsequent inclusion of health warnings on alcoholic beverages. They emphasise the need for greater public awareness thereof. The stakeholders will be relaunching their <https://www.alcoholandcancer.eu/> website to help increase this awareness.

### **Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU)**

PGEU welcomes the Plan, and pledges the support of community pharmacists in implementing its objectives for primary care and access to healthcare services. Pharmaceutical care is of the essence when it comes to the earlier offsetting of side-effects from treatments, thereby justifying the need for their systematic involvement.

PGEU President, Alain Delgutte, supported the Plan's holistic approach, and emphasised the role that community pharmacies can play in providing services corresponding to the Plan's objectives of improving cancer prevention, early detection, treatment, and the improvement of people's quality of life, owing to their accessibility for local communities. He particularly welcomed the focus of the Plan on preventing cancer by infections, citing the informational role that community pharmacists offer for patients as regards their vaccination needs. He heralded the Plan's focus on assuring equal access to medicines and leveraging digital advancements, whereby the future European Health Data Space would allow for big data and artificial intelligence (AI) to support healthcare professionals and thereby improve the provision of personalised care. He highlighted the need for electronic access to patients' health records and digital communication tools, which should all comply with data protection and privacy requirements.

## **Eurocarers**

Eurocarers welcomed the Plan, particularly for its clear recognition of the essential role of informal carers in supporting cancer patients, and the negative impact this has on carers' work-life balance, well-being and income. In its reaction to the Plan, Eurocarers draws attention to the need for compliance with and full implementation of the Work-Life Balance Directive from Member States, and recalls its ten-step strategy for carer-friendly societies.

## **European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA)**

ECDA welcomes the Plan as a strong foundation for work to improve the control of cancer and other chronic diseases. It favours the prioritisation of prevention, and outlines its support for the targets set out, including the ambition of achieving a tobacco-free generation, and committing to appropriate labelling of foodstuffs and alcohol.

ECDA highlights the need for an inclusive approach and sustained monitoring to ascertain the tangible impact of measures taken. As regards the prevention element which is of utmost importance to ECDA in the fight to curb the prevalence of chronic disease in the EU, the Alliance emphasises its support for a 'Health in All Policies' multi-stakeholder approach for optimal impact. It further welcomes the actions proposed to improve Europeans' health literacy on risk factors, and particularly the Plan's specific tailoring to the needs of children as regards the need to reduce the promotion of unhealthy foods through advertising. ECDA supports the proposed "HealthyLifestyle4All" initiative but seeks clear commitments from all participants to maximise impact. ECDA particularly supports the goal of achieving a "tobacco-free generation" via stricter rules on tobacco products.

## **Medicines for Europe (MFE)**

MFE welcomed the Plan and highlighted that it should support access to generic, biosimilar and value added medicines. MFE has issued a checklist of key policies to assure equal and high-quality cancer care: ascertaining synergies and sharing best practices; promoting the uptake of off-patent medicines, via EU and national cancer strategies; removing the barriers which emerge upon the expiration of Intellectual Property provisions; and adapting the EU framework to develop value-added medicines. MFE President, Christoph Stoller, highlighted the burden of cancer and the associated inequalities as regards access to treatment and care which continue to exacerbate its impact. MFE Vice-President, James Burt, lamented the delays to cancer treatment experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and pushed for the EU to facilitate the implementation of a Plan which prioritised access in times of crisis. The MFE policy paper entitled "Filling the Gap: How off-patent medicines can improve the equity and quality of cancer care" is available here.

## **European Coordination Committee of the Radiological, Electromedical and Healthcare IT Industry (COCIR)**

COCIR welcomed the Plan and its intention to deploy multi-faceted EU resources in the fight against cancer to assure optimal added-value. COCIR Secretary General, Nicole Denjoy, heralded the milestone that the publication of the Plan marks, and anticipated the work yet to come, for which COCIR pledged its commitment to providing necessary input. COCIR particularly welcomed the inclusion of its recommendations on Enhancing Value in Cancer Prevention and Care which were integrated into the final text of the Plan, including those on prevention and earlier diagnosis, quality treatment, the various funding options available for holistic input, the tackling of inequalities, and the role of digital health in improving patient outcomes while assuring cost-effectiveness.

## **Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)**

HEAL welcomed the Plan as an important step in preventing environmental pollution, which can in itself help to prevent cancer. Executive Director, Genon Jensen, highlighted the health risks associated by carcinogenic pollutants in the environment including endocrine disruptors and air pollution. To this end, she seeks the alignment of EU air quality standards with WHO guidelines, and the full implementation for the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, which the Plan refers to as regards the reduction of citizens' exposure to hazardous chemicals. HEAL welcomes the alignment of the Plan with its four demands submitted prior to the Plan's publication, including the Commission's commitment to reducing pollution via the European Green Deal and the Zero Pollution Strategy. The aforementioned alignment of air quality standards with WHO guidelines forms another positive element and HEAL further welcomes the emphasis on tackling unhealthy diets and obesity and the intention to protect workers from exposure to carcinogens in the workplace.



## ANNEX – INITIATIVES' TIMELINE

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<b>Launch of a Knowledge Centre on Cancer</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Launch of European Initiative to Understand Cancer (UNCAN.eu)</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Establishment of Cancer Inequalities Registry</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Launch of 'Helping Children with Cancer' initiative</b>	<b>2021</b>
Launch of Horizon Europe Partnerships	2021
Revision of 2013 Urban Mobility Package	2021
Launch of "HealthyLifestyle4All" campaign	2021
Launch of the Horizon Europe Partnership on Assessment of Risks from Chemicals	2021
Launch of EU platform to improve access to cancer medicines	2021
Launch of inter-specialty cancer training programme	2021
Launch by Innovative Medicines Initiative of projects on the use of AI in healthcare settings	2021
Adoption of the proposal for a Regulation on Health Technology Assessment	2021
Initial actions for a 'Tobacco-Free Generation'	2021
<b>Launch of new 'Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment for All' initiative</b>	<b>By 2021</b>
Application of new legal framework for clinical trials	By 2021
Revision of the Industrial Emissions Directive	By 2021
Launch a study addressing issues related to the return to work	2021 - 2022
Address in the Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 the rights of cancer patients and survivors considered as persons with a disability	2021 - 2022
Ensuring the full implementation of the <u>Work-Life Balance Directive</u>	2021 - 2022

Expansion of the European Cancer Information System	2021 - 2022
Address fair access for cancer survivors to financial services (including insurance), via a Code of Conduct and a reflection on long-term solutions	2021 - 2023
Strengthen and integrate telemedicine and remote monitoring in health and care systems; promote the virtual consultation model of the ERNs	2021 - 2023
Review EU legislation on alcohol taxation and cross-border purchases of alcohol products, and propose mandatory labelling of ingredients and nutrient content, along with health warnings on alcoholic beverages	2021 - 2023
Survey on exposure of workers to risk factors for cancer	2021 - 2024
<b>Creation of EU Network of National Comprehensive Cancer Centres</b>	<b>2021 - 2025</b>
<b>New EU-supported Cancer Screening Scheme to help Member States ensure that 90% of the EU population who qualify for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screenings are offered screening</b>	<b>2021 - 2025</b>
Improve the overall resilience, accessibility, and effectiveness of European health systems to safeguard provision of cancer care in future health crises	2021 - 2025
Mainstream equality action in other areas addressed by Europe's Beating Cancer Plan such as screening and high-quality cancer care	2021 - 2025
Launch 'Genomic for Public Health' project alongside 1+ Million Genomes Initiative	2021 - 2025
New guidelines and quality assurance schemes for screening, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, follow-up, and palliative care for colorectal and cervical cancer, including accreditation and certification programmes, while continuously updating the existing guidelines on breast cancer	2021 - 2025
Presentation of <a href="#">SAMIRA Action Plan</a> to ensure quality and safety of radiation technology and the supply of radioisotopes of medical importance for diagnostic and treatment	2021 - 2025
Updating of European Code against Cancer	2021 - 2025
EU Mobile App for Cancer Prevention	2021 - 2025
Create an EU platform to support the repurposing of existing medicines	2021 - 2025
Health Literacy for Cancer Prevention and Care Project	2021 - 2025
Assist researchers working on personalised cancer treatments through tailored support and new digital platforms	2021 - 2027

Adopt a new Occupational Safety and Health Strategic Framework to further reduce workers' exposure to chemicals	2021 - 2027
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<b>Vaccination against HPV conducted for at least 90% of the EU target population of girls; and a significant increase in the vaccination of boys</b>	<b>2021 - 2030</b>
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Propose a Council Recommendation on vaccine preventable cancers	2021 - 2030
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<b>European Cancer Imaging Initiative</b>	<b>2022</b>
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Establishment of 'EU Network of Youth Cancer Survivors'	2022
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Legislative proposal to amend the <u>Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive</u>	2022
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Launch of a new study related to the return to work of cancer survivors	2022
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Implementation report on the Audio-visual Media Service Directive	2022
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<b>Establishment of the 'Cancer Survivor Smart-Card' under the 'Better Life for Cancer Patients Initiative' and supported by the 'European Cancer Patient Digital Centre'</b>	<b>By 2022</b>
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Proposal to update the Council Recommendation on cancer screening	By 2022
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Revision of EU air quality standards	By 2022
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Proposal for mandatory indication of the list of ingredients and the nutrition declaration on alcoholic beverages	By 2022
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Revise EU limits for asbestos to further reduce workers' exposure	2022 - 2024
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Launch the Childhood cancers and cancers in adolescents and young adults' initiative to increase understanding of paediatric cancer	2022 - 2025
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Establishment of new European Reference Networks on specific cancer types	2022 - 2025
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Proposal for a revision of the EU school fruit, vegetables, and milk scheme	2023
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Setting up of new Partnership on Personalised Medicine	2023
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Updating the Council Recommendation on Smoke-Free Environments	By 2023
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Proposal for health warnings on labels of alcoholic beverages	By 2023
Development of a roadmap towards personalised prevention	2023 - 2025
Launch a new project using High-Performance Computing to rapidly test existing molecules and new drug combinations	2023 - 2025
Review of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan	By 2024
Extension of EU track and trace system to all tobacco products	By 2024