A European-wide Cancer Mission
How to make it a success?

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Cancer in Europe: The problem

• Steady increase in cancer incidence (due to an aging population) with still a large fraction of patients dying from cancer.
  • EU 28 2018: 3.0 mio cases 1.41 mio deaths. 30% increase by 2040.

• Steep growth of number of patients living with cancer requiring monitoring/treatment/dealing with side-effects (health, socio-economic aspects).

• Increasing demand on personnel; skyrocketing costs of cancer medicines.
  • Even rich European countries cannot afford this.

• Inequalities in access to cancer care among and within countries.
Define reachable goals for the Cancer Mission

• Patients diagnosed in 2030:
  75% of cancer patients survive 10 years or longer with a good quality of life (in countries with well-developed healthcare system).

• Research
  • Identify individuals at risk (genetics, exposure, lifestyle, socio-economics).
  • Effective primary prevention (mitigate risks, vaccination, chemoprevention).
  • Improved early detection and treatments (less side effects).
  • Implementation leading to swift and equal access to these treatment.
  • Patient in central position with prominent attention to survivorship (quality of life, rehabilitation, psychosocial and socio-economic aspects).
  • Outcomes research to assess benefits for patients and healthcare systems.

• Infrastructures
  • A range of defined structures of sufficient critical mass to provide a stimulating environment for investigators to address the research questions.
Preventable cancers

Europe

New cancer cases (Year 2018)
4.23 million

Total from/to
About 100 million

New cancer cases (Year 2040)
5.21 million

... would have been preventable through primary prevention on ...

- Tobacco
- Obesity/Inactivity
- Diet
- Alcohol
- Infections
- Radiations
- Occupation & Environment
- Not preventable
- Unknown
The infrastructural building blocks for improvement

- Comprehensive Cancer Centres (CCCs): high-quality expertise and critical mass bridging the basic, translational and clinical research continuum. OECI accredited.

- CCC of Excellence (CCCoE): with unique, internationally-leading expertise. EACS designated.

- Clinical Centres with high quality service provisions for cancer patients. OECI accredited.

- Cancer research Institutes (CRIs): innovative research in interaction with clinical sites.

- Entities with focus on Prevention research.

- Entities with focus on Outcomes research.

- PI-led research groups embedded in these infrastructures.

- Societies/associations of professionals, patient organisations, funding agents, charities.
Collaboration between clusters of CCCs and twinning

- Independent clusters
  - CCC
  - CCCoE
  - CRI

- EU-wide Patient records databases biobanks
- National screening
- CC(C) clusters in regions with unmet need

- Twinning

- Independent cluster with own unique expertises:
  - Prevention
  - Epidemiology
  - Outcomes

Formal collaborating networks should be kept limited in size to secure manageability.
Specific Initiatives

• Assure that the continuum of cancer research and care is adequately covered.
  • Funding incentives for all aspects of the research continuum.
  • Attention for specific areas such as paediatric and geriatric oncology.
  • High profile expert board to advise on legal measures (exposure reduction, socio-economics).

• Incentivise cancer centres to acquire critical mass and to commit to quality standards.
  • Promote accreditation (CCC and CCCoE) and creation of sustainable networks between such centres.
  • Specific assistance for centres in areas with unmet need and their “twinning” with expert centres.
  • Encourage outreach to other stakeholders (pharma, hospitals, patient organisations).
  • Involve societies and associations of experts, patients and charities (education, training, capacity building).

• Since real breakthroughs primarily come from creative investigators, install a program to support innovative PI-led projects (ERC and SynergyERC like).
EACS as feeder for the Mission

• Prominent membership representing all academic disciplines acting in the cancer research and cancer care continuum.

• Its fellows are often leading members of the societies acting in the cancer field.

• Well-positioned: Initiator (with Cancer Core, Prevention Core and Patient Organisations) of an EU-wide discussion how to meet the challenge posed by the increasing number of cancer patients and its consequences for society at large (white paper).

• Platform to provide expert advise to the EU integrating the specific expertises of all stakeholders to create a balanced action plan for the Mission.
Towards a Cancer Mission in Horizon Europe

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Thank you!
Comprehensive Cancer Centre of Excellence

• State-of-the-art treatment and follow-up, patient engagement and QoL studies.

• Stimulating environment for basic and translational cancer research.

• Capabilities to design and execute innovative, practice changing clinical trials.

• Attractive to top-talent. Training of next generation cancer researchers and clinicians.

• Focal points for (inter)national collaboration and scientific exchange.

• Attractive environment for start-ups and collaboration with pharma.

• Valuable hands-on expertise useful for EU policy makers.