

20 million reasons to establish an EU Cancer Survivorship Day

Brussels, 6 July 2022

The EU Challenge Cancer Parliamentary Intergroup calls for European Institutions to support the establishment of the EU Cancer Survivorship Day. In a letter sent today to the Presidents of the European Parliament and European Commission and the EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, the Intergroup draws attention on the 20 million European cancer survivors, who are often faced with lifelong struggles.

A day to celebrate the lives of cancer survivors and advance their quality of life is being proposed by 63 MEPs from several political groups.

In a letter sent to the European Parliament President Roberta Metsola, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and the EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Stella Kyriakides, MEPs ask the two Institutions to endorse the establishment of an annual **EU Cancer Survivorship Day**.

MEP Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Chair of the EU Challenge Cancer Parliamentary Intergroup, says: *"The European Survivorship Day is a very Parliamentary important step to implement the targets of the EU Beating Cancer Plan. We therefore need to consider concrete measures at both an EU and national level for survivors to improve their situation in the coming years."*

The day is already being celebrated on the first Sunday of June in several countries all around the world, such as the USA, Canada, India, South Africa, and Australia.

According to some estimations, today there are 20 million cancer survivors in the EU. A number that grows every year and requires identifying former cancer patients as a specific vulnerable group with proper needs. Survivors are often daunted by the risk of potential tumour recurrence and metastatic disease. Their life depends on the availability of rehabilitation measures to support social integration and effective policies to re-integrate them into the workplace.

The formal recognition of the Cancer Survivorship Day will provide EU with a unique opportunity to engage patients, their families, and stakeholders. It will also offer a venue to discuss and advance the measures proposed in the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, unveiled by the Commission in 2021, and the new EU approach to tackle the entire disease pathway.

Francesco de Lorenzo, President of ECPC, says: *"The establishment of a European Survivorship Day is a development that the millions of European Cancer Survivors and their families will highly appreciate, as it will provide a unique opportunity to start designing policies that include the whole cancer care pathway and that emphasize the need for rehabilitation measures for cancer patients. This can only be achieved by setting up trustful relationships between all relevant stakeholders and by promoting the value of survivorship and reintegration into social life."*

Background

Given the *ad hoc* needs of cancer survivors and the persisting inequalities among EU countries, the European Cancer Patients Coalition has promoted several initiatives in support of the establishment of an EU Cancer Survivorship Day by organising targeted events, such as last year's '20 Million Reasons to Discuss Life after Cancer: establishing a European cancer survivorship day.'

About the EU Parliamentary Intergroup 'Challenge Cancer'

Established in 2020, the EU Challenge Cancer Intergroup was conceived by the ECPC to ensure continuity in the European Parliament's work on cancer during the previous and the current mandates. The Intergroup serves as a forum for MEPs from all political parties to engage in dialogue with patients, cancer survivors, carers, scientific and medical societies, research institutions, and other stakeholders.

About the European Cancer Patient Coalition

European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC) is the voice of cancer patients in Europe. With over 450 members, ECPC is Europe's largest umbrella cancer patients' association, covering all 27 EU Member States and many other European and non-European countries. ECPC represents patients affected by all types of cancers, from the rarest to the most common.

For more information

[EU Parliamentary Intergroup 'Challenge Cancer'](#)

[European Cancer Patients Coalition's website](#)

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