



# BELGIAN EBCP MIRROR GROUP CONCEPT NOTE

## Introduction

Cancer is one of the five major societal challenges the European Commission identified. Current projection is that, without strong action, the incidence will increase by a fifth by 2040, representing up to 5.323.141 cancer cases in Europe.<sup>1</sup> Across Europe, the possibility of receiving a timely cancer diagnosis and of surviving the disease differs considerably because of inequalities in preventive policies, access to state-of-the art diagnostics and treatments, and experienced care.

The European Commission (EC) wants to tackle cancer through two major initiatives: 1) **Europe's Beating Cancer Plan (EBCP)** and 2) the **Mission on Cancer**. The goal is to save 3.000.000 cancer lives by 2030.

- 1) The **EBCP** is a policy-driven initiative that sets out actions to support, coordinate or supplement Member States' efforts at every stage of the disease: from prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, to an improved quality of life for cancer patients and survivors.

The EBCP launched in 2021 will be implemented using the whole range of Commission funding instruments, with a total of €4 billion being earmarked for actions addressing cancer, including €1.25 billion from the EU4Health programme, plus financial support through the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and the Digital Europe programme.

- 2) Along with the EBCP, the **Mission on Cancer** is a research-driven initiative outlined with the input of citizens, patients and Member States' stakeholders. The Mission on Cancer aims through research, to improve the survival and quality of life of cancer patients and substantially reduce the cancer burden in the EU. The Mission on Cancer formulated 13 recommendations<sup>2</sup>.

➤ Given the current breadth of EU calls in the cancer field, there is a need for a coordinated response from Belgium bringing the relevant stakeholders to work together and share experience. Efficient implementation of the EBCP aims to bring large benefits to EU-MS health care systems and cancer patients.

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<sup>1</sup> IARC, Cancer Tomorrow

<sup>2</sup> Berns A, Ringborg U, Celis JE, Heitor M, Aaronson NK, Abou Zeid N, et al. Towards a cancer mission in Horizon Europe: recommendations *Mol Oncol*, Published online 4 August 2020; <https://doi.org/10.1002/1878-0261.12763>

# EBCP Implementation in Belgium

## GOVERNANCE:

The Belgian Cancer Centre (CC) of Sciensano was created in 2008 to pursue three principal objectives: to provide monitoring and evaluation of the policy relating to cancer in Belgium, to draw up new measures for cancer control and, to act as a consultative scientific body in the field of cancer control. Furthermore, the CC participated in the three previous EU 'Joint Actions' on cancer, from a scientific and managerial standpoint with recognised results, many of which are reflected in the EBCP and forthcoming activities.

The Federal Minister of Health - Minister Frank Vandenbroucke has appointed the CC to coordinate the implementation of the EBCP in Belgium. This will be done in close collaboration with his services - the Cabinet, the FPS Health, and the National Insurance and Health Disabilities Institute (RIZIV-INAMI).

## MAIN TASKS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE BE-EBCP MIRROR GROUP:

The initiative referred to as the Be-EBCP Mirror Group will involve Belgian representatives of federal/regional health agencies, universities, professional societies, patient/citizen organisations and industry in the:

- Mapping of EC funding opportunities mainly within the EBCP, and also within the Mission on Cancer and other relevant calls
- Prioritization of needs in consultation with Belgian policy organisations, professional groups, patient associations and scientific researchers.
- Participation in EC cancer calls and implementation across key cancer domains (see below)

As coordinator, the CC will develop content, consult with Belgian partners and authorities, provide support and link to other initiatives within Belgium and internationally. A standardized workflow will be deployed starting with the launch of Thematic Working Groups (TWGs). The following TWGs have been proposed:

1. Prevention, Early detection and Screening
2. Diagnosis and Treatment
3. Care and Care organisation (including palliative and psycho-social care)
4. Rehabilitation and socio-professional integration
5. Citizen and patient engagement
6. Quality of life
7. Children, adolescents and young adults with cancer
8. Artificial Intelligence
9. Research

TWGs serve in an advisory capacity by identifying the EC's proposals most relevant to address cancer needs and challenges in Belgium, and also by proposing relevant topics to include in future EU calls. Whereas some calls will be more a prerogative at federal level (i.e. Joint Actions are direct grants to EU-MS national competent authorities), others will be more relevant for research centres and agencies that concentrate expertise in specific domains (i.e. Action grants). The TWGs will work with 'one-pagers' to summarize information on the calls (see Annex), and a set of key performance indicators will be developed. Several stakeholders have expressed interest in joining the aforementioned TWGs. The launch of TWG activities is planned in the beginning of 2022.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Better alignment of Belgium's cancer policy aims, and field activities with EBCP
- Systematic identification of funding opportunities for cancer research, care and control
- Optimized allocation of resources in a competitive and complex tendering environment
- Uptake of interventions that reduce the cancer burden, and improve the care, survival, and quality of life of patients in Belgium.
- Strengthened collaborations amongst national cancer stakeholders and EU counterparts

The activities will be monitored by a steering group chaired by the Cancer Centre, with representatives from the Federal Ministry of Health, the RIZIV-INAMI and the services of the Federal Minister of Health. We also foresee the development of a digital platform to facilitate communication and to report more broadly on the Belgian EBCP activities and outputs.

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## ANNEX – Be-EBCP Mirror Group One Pager for evaluating the relevance and feasibility of Belgian participation in EU call

### EU CALL TITLE

### TYPE & STATUS

- Work programme & Type of action: Horizon Europe, Cancer Mission, ...
- Submission status: Open/Closing dates;
- Evaluation model: single stage, ?..
- EC Funding: Total amount, 100%, co-funding, ...
- Project duration: x years

### OBJECTIVE & RATIONALE

- Domain/Area: Prevention, screening, diagnostics, care, rehabilitation, ...
- EBCP flagship(s) addressed by the call: Flagship n° and title
- Link to Cancer Mission? Yes/No, reference
- Main objectives of the call:
- Target group(s): healthcare system, care providers, patients by age, gender, tumour type...

### RELEVANCE and FEASIBILITY

- Link to current BE (legal) frameworks, programmes, and/or policy? Yes/No. If yes, reference
- Link to current research projects? Yes/No. If yes, contact person
- Stakeholders to involve by type (and level of involvement):  
Federal, regional, hospitals, academia, patient/professional society (as Coordinator, Partner, WP lead, ...)
- Relevant datasources:

**Main Contact:** Cancer centre responsible

**KEYWORDS:** ex. survivorship and rehabilitation, right to be forgotten, cancer patients, ..

### RELEVANT REFERENCES & DOCUMENTATION

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