

# THE EU'S FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

Cancer is a serious health problem both in Malta and across the European continent. It is estimated that every year, 3.2 million Europeans are diagnosed with cancer - the second most common cause of death in Europe. The European Union aims to reduce such deaths by 15% by 2020. Consequently, the EU has been pushing forward a number of objectives to sustain this target:

- promoting the sharing of information and research on cancer across the EU's 27 member countries;
- reducing the vast inequalities within, as well as between, the Member States in terms of deaths caused by cancer;
- assisting Member States with cancer screening programmes;
- funding several projects to create appropriate and comparable indicators to monitor cancer.

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The Recommendation on Cancer Screening adopted by the European Council in 2003 :

- calls on EU Member States to implement effective screening programmes for breast cancer, colon cancer and cervical cancer;
- outlines best practice guidelines in early detection of these cancers;
- guides the Member States in their national effort to combat cancer.

A report issued by the European Commission in 2008 indicated that the EU as a whole is only about half way to meeting the minimum annual number of examinations that would be expected if the screening tests specified in the Recommendation were available to all EU citizens of the appropriate age.

To reinforce its long-term commitment to fight against cancer on September 29 the Commission launched "The European Partnership for Action Against Cancer". The first meeting will take place in November in Luxembourg. All EU Member States, International Organisations, experts and stakeholders have been invited to participate.



**Malta-EU Steering  
& Action Committee**

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