

PRESS RELEASE



European Leaders Will Gather in Brussels to Accelerate Cancer Screening and Early Detection across the EU

Brussels, Friday, 13 February 2026 – Across Europe, one of the most effective tools to reduce cancer deaths remains woefully underused: screening.

Screening and early diagnosis save lives, reduce suffering, and make better use of health system resources. Yet the OECD's recent report *Delivering High-Value Cancer Care* shows that up to 60% of cancers are diagnosed at a late stage in some European countries, significantly increasing mortality for affected patients and costs for the individual health system.

In response, the European Union set out an ambitious agenda to save lives through earlier detection, and expanded the screening recommendations to include prostate, lung and gastric cancers.

The EU4Health projects [PRAISE-U](#), [SOLACE](#) & [TOGAS](#) have developed protocols and conducted pilots for these new cancer screening programmes across EU Member States, laying the groundwork for wider national roll-outs.

But how did they do it? What did they learn? How can countries implement these pilot programmes efficiently and effectively?

That's the focus of the...

European Cancer Screening and Early Detection Policy Summit

17 and 18 February

Cardo Brussels Hotel and online

Join policymakers, clinicians, researchers and patient advocates to discuss results from these pioneer projects and next steps for better cancer screening in Europe.

Speakers include:

- **Skirmantas Krunkaitis**, Vice Health Minister of Lithuania
- **Liga Āboliņa**, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Health of Latvia
- **Vlastimil Válek**, Former Health Minister and current Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic

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- **Stella Kyriakides**, former European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety
- **David Collingridge**, Editor-in-Chief of *The Lancet Oncology*

'Early detection must become a cornerstone of every national cancer strategy. In Lithuania, we are moving forward with implementing organised prostate cancer screening because we know that diagnosing cancer earlier means more treatment options, better outcomes, and fewer families affected by avoidable loss. EU initiatives such as PRAISE-U are critical to guide these efforts.'

Skirmantas Krunkaitis, Vice Health Minister of Lithuania

'Europe's Beating Cancer Plan is a great opportunity to advance national cancer strategies. In Latvia, we are proud to lead two EU flagship initiatives in this field, TOGAS and EUCanScreen, and we are building upon them to strengthen our country's approaches to early cancer detection. For us, cancer screening is an example of how EU initiatives make a true difference for citizens. Now is the time for all EU Member States to translate evidence into nationwide programmes.'

Liga Āboliņa, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Health of Latvia

'Every day in the clinic, I see the difference screening can make. When we find cancer sooner, treatments are less aggressive, recovery is faster, and survival improves dramatically. Screening is not just policy; it is about sparing patients and families unnecessary suffering. We have the responsibility to make early detection accessible to everyone.'

Isabel Rubio, President of the European Cancer Organisation and breast surgeon

About the European Cancer Organisation

The [European Cancer Organisation](#) (ECO) is the largest non-profit, multi-professional federation in the European cancer community. It brings together hundreds of different professional societies and patient groups to advocate for more effective, efficient, and equitable cancer care. More information is available [here](#).

For more information or to arrange an interview with any of the speakers, please contact:

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