



Next Level Prostate Cancer Screening

POLICY REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN
PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS DAY 2025



Contents

Organising Partners	3
What is European Prostate Cancer Awareness Day and Why It Matters	4
The Patient Voice on Prostate Cancer Policy-making and the Need for Screening	5
Prostate Cancer Implementation Responses Across Europe	7
Case Studies – The Lithuanian Pilot and Applying the PRAISE-U Algorithm to National Policy	8
Case Studies – The Organised Prostate Cancer Testing (OPT) Experience from Swedish Regions	9
Future Initiatives at the European Level on Prostate Cancer	10
Global Policy-making on Prostate Cancer “Time for a new global initiative”	11

Organising Partners



What is European Prostate Cancer Awareness Day and Why It Matters

On 3 September 2025, the **European Prostate Cancer Awareness Day (EPAD)** took place at the European Parliament. Organised by the **European Association of Urology (EAU)**, the **European Cancer Organisation (ECO)**, **Europa Uomo**, and **Global Action on Men's Health (GAMH)**, the event gathered leading experts, policymakers, and patient advocates. This year, panellists explored how risk stratified prostate cancer screening, developed by the EU4Health co-funded PRAISE-U

project, has the potential for transforming outcomes for men in the EU to address uneven access to lifesaving early detection tools, and how policymakers can reinvigorate European action against prostate cancer.

The event was hosted by **Giorgos Georgiou MEP** and **Michalis Hadjipantela MEP** and was organised in the framework of the **European Parliament Intergroup on Cancer and Rare Diseases**.



"Our goal is to tackle all inequalities that exist among patients. Progress against prostate cancer will only be achieved if policymakers, healthcare professionals and patients representative work together to ensure health as a public and social good for all. We will continue the collective struggle to ensure equal access to screening, treatments and outcomes across Europe."

– Giorgos Georgiou MEP

"Early detection of prostate cancer is improving thanks to advances in science and research – but political willingness is also needed to turn pilot projects into real change for all men across Europe. I am committed to keeping this issue high on the agenda and to ensuring the necessary investment in the next Multiannual Financial Framework, as well as its implementation at the national level."



– Michalis Hadjipantela MEP



"We urged policymakers to secure dedicated funding for public health in the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework, to ensure that Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and the Screening Recommendations are fully implemented. Initiatives like PRAISE-U are clear: We need investment in more targeted screening that will lead to men living longer, happier, and more productive lives and this is not an expense".

– **Vytienis Andriukaitis MEP**
Former European Commissioner

The Patient Voice on Prostate Cancer Policy-making and the Need for Screening

"From the patient perspective, what men want above all is a cure; and if cure is not possible, then control of their disease with good quality of life and dignity at the end of life."

– Dr. Erik Briers, Chair of Europa Uomo



While prostate cancer means accepting that life might not return to how it was for many men, **with effective treatment and supportive care, men can still live well with the disease.** Prostate cancer is the **most prevalent cancer in men in Europe**, representing **23.2% of all new cancer cases in men** and accounting for **9.9% of all male cancer deaths** in 2020. It is the **third leading cause of cancer death**, following lung and colorectal cancers.

Unlike other major cancers, there are **no preventive measures** we know of. Localised disease is typically asymptomatic, meaning **diagnosis often comes too late**. For this reason, Dr. Briers argued, **population-based screening programmes will make a real difference.** Unorganised opportunistic screening, which remains common practice, is much less effective: It can be costly, inconsistent, and does not do as well to mitigate the harms associated with screening and to reduce mortality.

The objective of organised screening is to *"detect cancer at a curable stage, to reduce the number of metastatic diagnoses, and to lower prostate cancer mortality"*, Dr. Briers said.

PRAISE-U, an EU-funded project under the **EU4Health programme**, aims to find the best way to detect and diagnose prostate cancer early, through customised and risk-based screening programmes across Member States. It aims to enable the collection and use of relevant data to reduce prostate cancer morbidity and mortality rates in Europe. By combining PSA testing, MRI scanning, and biopsies into risk stratification tools that support shared decision-making, PRAISE-U offers a modern pathway that balances early detection with reducing overdiagnosis of prostate cancer in the wider population.

POLICY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE PATIENT PERSPECTIVE INCLUDE

- **Adopt structured, risk-based screening:** Ensure every man has access to organised, risk-based programmes across Europe.
- **Ensure smarter screening pathways:** Combine PSA, MRI and biopsies to detect cancers early while avoiding overtreatment of low-risk cases.
- **Prioritise patients' quality of life:** Screening and treatment strategies must focus not only on survival but also on preserving dignity, reducing suffering, and ensuring effective psychosocial support, guided by shared decision-making.

A central element presented by Dr. Arunah Chandran, representing the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC/WHO) is the forthcoming 3rd European Cancer Screening Report. The report will provide country profiles and EU-wide comparisons, highlighting coverage, quality, and inequalities in cancer screening. Importantly, it will assess readiness for the introduction of new programmes, including for prostate cancer, and will monitor how Member States are implementing the Council Recommendation on Cancer Screening, such as through piloting.

The new report will show the current state of prostate cancer screening across Europe and propose strengthening quality indicators and monitoring systems. It aims to build a vital bridge between research, policy, and implementation, ensuring that lessons learned from EU-funded pilots such as PRAISE-U can inform sustainable, national-level programmes. Dr Chandran's key message was clear: "Prostate cancer screening is not about *if*, but *how* it can be implemented fairly, safely, and effectively across the EU".

KEY INSIGHTS FROM IARC ON THE 3RD EUROPEAN CANCER SCREENING REPORT

- The **3rd European Cancer Screening Report** will provide country profiles and EU comparisons on **coverage, quality, and inequalities**, including for prostate cancer.
- It will assess **readiness for new programmes** (prostate, lung, gastric), helping Member States move from pilots to national roll-out.
- The report will be a key resource for **establishing a new baseline for prostate cancer screening** in the EU.



From left to right: Sarah Collen (European Association of Urology), Vytenis Andriukaitis MEP, Dr. Erik Briens (Europa Uomo), Giorgos Georgiou MEP, Michalis Hadjipantela MEP, Prof. Hein Van Poppel (European Association of Urology), Dr. Arunah Chandran (International Agency for Research on Cancer – IARC/WHO)

Prostate Cancer Implementation Responses Across Europe

PRAISE-U (Prostate Cancer Awareness and Initiative for Screening in the EU), is the flagship initiative to implement early detection and diagnosis of prostate cancer through customised and risk-based screening programmes, supported by the **EU4Health Programme**. It aims to find effective ways to align protocols and guidelines across Member States and enable the collection and distribution of relevant data to reduce prostate cancer morbidity and mortality rates in Europe.

Professor Hein Van Poppel of the EAU presented the progress and opportunities arising from the PRAISE-U pilot sites, including the development of a suite of resources which equips pilot sites and collaborators with practical tools: Protocols, informed consent templates, educational materials, and a codebook of key performance indicators (KPIs). However, he noted that while a lot of progress has been made, dedicated funding for initiatives like PRAISE-U to continue must be set aside.

Sarah Collen, on behalf of Professor Monique Roobol from the Cancer Institute of the Erasmus Medical

Centre, showed how pilot sites are adapting the screening algorithm to make it work most effectively for their national healthcare structures. Importantly, the PRAISE-U registry and data from the pilot sites will enable Europe-wide comparisons and evidence-building for future roll-out.

Five pilot sites in Spain (Galicia and Manresa), Lithuania, Poland, and Ireland were also presented. Each is testing different approaches to invitations, risk stratification, and diagnostic pathways (combining PSA testing, MRI, and biopsies).

Early findings show that results are in line with expectations from randomised trials, confirming the consistency of the findings with the knowledge already gleaned in controlled research settings. Pilots are also generating valuable insights into participation rates, response to different invitation methods, and challenges in reaching men who are “healthcare adverse.”

PRAISE-U is laying the foundation for the first organised, risk-stratified prostate cancer screening programmes in Europe. **Extended EU4Health support would allow the project to continue to refine its algorithm, generate evidence, and understand effective implementation strategies in different Member States.**

MAIN TAKEAWAYS INCLUDE

- **Securing sustainable EU and national funding is necessary** to extend and expand PRAISE-U pilots into long-term screening programmes across the EU.
- **The PRAISE-U algorithm can be used as the basis for future EU level guidance on prostate cancer screening.**
- **The sustainable data framework** of PRAISE-U provides a point of reference and model for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing on risk-stratified prostate cancer screening across Member States.
- **Increased efforts to boost participation rates are needed**, with targeted strategies to engage men less likely to access healthcare.

Alongside with SOLACE and TOGAS, these three EU funded projects aim to implement new cancer screenings included in the EU Council Recommendations of 2022 (prostate, lung and gastric cancers) in the Member States. The

European Cancer Organisation participates in both projects, facilitates cooperation between the three initiatives and brings together experts and coordinators to regularly discuss synergies and lessons learned.

Case Studies – The Lithuanian Pilot and Applying the PRAISE–U Algorithm to National Policy

Dr. Ausvydas Patasius (Vilnius University) presented Lithuania's experience with prostate cancer screening, which spans more than a decade through a national PSA-based early detection programme.

Governed by the Ministry of Health and financed through the National Health Insurance Fund, the programme is embedded within the public health system and overseen by a steering committee including clinicians, epidemiologists, patient representatives, and policymakers.

Recent efforts have focused on alignment with the national plans to implement electronic health records. This has provided an opportunity for digitalising the screening pathway and transitioning from an older algorithm towards the risk stratified PRAISE–U model, which promises to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of screening in Lithuania. This shift is ensuring

stronger quality control, integration, and patient-centred approaches.

Dr. Patasius underlined the tangible, positive impact that EU-supported projects like PRAISE–U are having on national health policy. This shows up in support on aligning digital infrastructure, governance, and integrating evidence from their peers across the EU, enabling Lithuania to create a more robust framework for early detection. Financial assurance, professional leadership, and the engagement of patients and national societies have been critical to building momentum. Lithuania demonstrates that structured, evidence-based screening can be scaled to national level, provided there is political will, funding, and community support. Dr. Patasius highlighted that continued support for national prostate cancer screening coordination centres, which is the next implementation step for Lithuania, will be highly valued.



*Prof. Hein Van Poppel
(European Association of Urology)*

*Dr. Ausvydas Patasius
(Vilnius University)*

Case Studies – The Organised Prostate Cancer Testing (OPT) Experience from Swedish Regions

Dr. Rebecka Arnsrud Godtman (University of Gothenburg) presented the Swedish experience with Organised Prostate Cancer Testing (OPT). These programmes are delivered by the regional public healthcare system, with a highly automated IT backbone.

The model relies on risk-based PSA screening intervals, automatic follow-up with MRI for elevated results, strict biopsy criteria, and seamless reintegration into the programme for men with negative results. By 2024, 17 of Sweden's 21 regions

had adopted OPT, with 250,000 men invited, a 44% participation rate, and strong compliance rates and results: 96% follow-up for high PSA and 63% prostate cancer detection among biopsies.

Dr. Godtman emphasised that OPT shows how organised, IT-driven programmes can combine efficiency with patient-centred care. However, she cautioned that communication with men is often a key challenge for clinical decision-making. Participation and understanding depend heavily on trust and clarity.

CALL TO ACTION FROM THE CASE STUDIES

- **Leverage EU projects to drive national change:** PRAISE-U pilots demonstrate how testing different approaches in local contexts is both improving screening now and generating evidence needed to build long-term, nationally funded programmes.
- **Coordination between regions and centres is necessary** to apply evidence-based screening programmes and European cooperation can facilitate knowledge sharing and in building capacity of coordination teams.
- **Make use of robust digital and IT infrastructure:** Automation, registries, and data frameworks are critical to scaling screening and ensuring quality assurance.
- **Prioritise communication and participation:** Policymakers should invest in tailored awareness strategies to reach men effectively and build trust in organised screening.



*Dr. Rebecka Arnsrud Godtman
(University of Gothenburg)*

Future Initiatives at the European Level on Prostate Cancer

Domenico Fiorenza Glanzmann (DG SANTE) and Agnieszka Kinsner-Ovaskainen (JRC) stressed how the European Commission embeds prostate cancer screening in the broader framework of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan.

As part of the European Commission's wider commitment, the following steps were identified:

- Upcoming work on the 3rd EU European Cancer Screening Monitoring Report, which for the first time will include data from prostate cancer screening pilots.
- Looking ahead, the recently adopted EU4Health 2025 Work Programme includes funding opportunities to ensure new pilot projects and the roll-out of screening programmes. These initiatives are designed to build directly on the results of **PRAISE-U**, and are expected to collaborate closely with the Joint Action **EUCanScreen**, partner projects, and the JRC to ensure coherent implementation research.

The Council of the EU recommended that Member States implement quality-ensured, organised and population-based screening programmes for breast, colorectal and cervical cancer, extended in



*Domenico Fiorenza Glanzmann
(Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety
– DG SANTE)*



*Agnieszka Kinsner-Ovaskainen
(Joint Research Centre – JRC)*

2022 to include gastric, lung and prostate cancer. The European Commission Initiatives on Cancer Screening and Care were established to address the need to improve the quality of cancer care across Europe, from screening and diagnosis to treatment and palliative care.

This is achieved through developing and providing:

1. Evidence-based guidelines for primary prevention, screening and diagnosis of cancer.
2. European quality assurance schemes for cancer services covering the entire care pathway from primary prevention, screening, diagnosis, follow-up to end-of-life care.

Following the European Commission Initiatives on Breast, Colorectal and Cervical Cancer, the Commission is now preparing to launch the initiative on prostate cancer, with the objective to develop guidelines for prostate cancer screening and diagnosis and the associated quality assurance scheme. A call for experts will be issued soon, with the initiative set to start in 2026.

Global Policy-making on Prostate Cancer *“Time for a new global initiative”*

“Prostate cancer is both a men’s health issue and a global equity challenge. A WHO-led initiative would mobilise governments, practitioners, and communities to close gaps in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment”.

– Peter Baker, Chief Executive of Global Action on Men’s Health (GAMH)



Peter Baker, Chief Executive of Global Action on Men’s Health (GAMH), underlined that prostate cancer is now a growing global health crisis and one that requires urgent international action.

Prostate cancer is already the most frequently diagnosed cancer in men in 112 countries and the leading cause of cancer death in 48 countries. The number of cases is expected to double to almost three million annually by 2040, with mortality rising by 85%. These alarming figures highlight the need for a decisive and strategic intervention in place of currently inadequate global and national cancer policies.

GAHM’s new policy report, Prostate Cancer: Time for a New Global Initiative, calls on the World Health Organization (WHO) to lead a Global Prostate Cancer Initiative covering every stage of

the care pathway, from prevention to palliative care. Baker highlighted that too many men remain ill-informed, diagnosis often comes too late, and access to effective treatments and psychosocial support is uneven, particularly for men at highest risk such as Black men, men with a family history of the disease, and those with lower socio-economic status.

The report outlines 10 priority areas for action, including the introduction of national prostate cancer policies with clear targets, the development of education and awareness campaigns to overcome stigma, and the rollout of organised screening programmes using modern tools such as PSA testing combined with MRI.

Full Report and Recommendations is available for download [here](#).



As the not-for-profit federation of member organisations working in cancer at a European level, the European Cancer Organisation convenes oncology professionals and patients to agree policy, advocate for positive change and speak up for the European cancer community.

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