



EUROPEAN UNION



# EU MISSIONS

## CANCER

EU Cancer Mission Info day 2026  
20 January 2026

#EUmissions #HorizonEU #MissionCancer



## Agenda

**13:00** Welcome & Introduction - Jan-Willem van de Loo, Senior Expert, Cancer Mission Secretariat, Unit D1 Combatting Diseases, DG RTD

**13:05** Introduction to Europe's Beating Cancer Plan - Philippe Roux, Head of Unit, SANTE.B1, Health in all Policies, DG SANTE

**13:10** EU Cancer Mission update - Kay Duggan Walls, Cancer Mission Secretariat, DG RTD

**13:15** HaDEA update – Ioannis Vouldis, HaDEA

**13:20** Presentation of Work Programme 2026 - Angelo Solimini, Gianpaolo Suriano, Dirk Hadrich, Jan-Willem van de Loo, Cancer Mission Secretariat, DG RTD

**14:10** Q&A on Work Programme 2026 – Angelo Solimini, Gianpaolo Suriano, Dirk Hadrich and Jan-Willem van de Loo

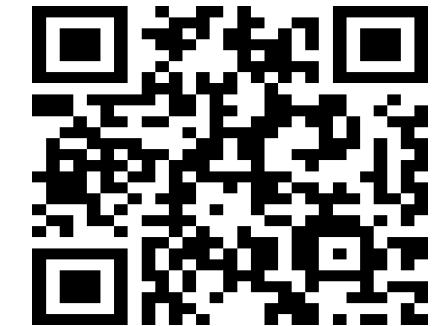
**14:55** Closing remarks – Jan-Willem van de Loo

**15:00** End

**Please identify your organisation when asking questions**



# Welcome and Introduction



**Jan-Willem van de Loo**  
**Senior Expert, Cancer Mission Secretariat, Unit D1 Combatting  
Diseases, DG RTD**

**Philippe Roux**  
**Head of Unit, Unit B1 Cancer, Health in all Policies,  
DG SANTE**

# Any questions?

To ask a question, please use **Sli.do**:

- go to [www.sli.do](http://www.sli.do)
- insert **#EUMISSIONSINFODAYS** to join the event, and
- then select the 'room' of '**Cancer Mission**'
- or you can also simply scan the QR Code and select the appropriate room.
- When you ask a question, **label it with topic number**.
- **Upvote** the most interesting questions (please avoid repeating them).



**#EUMISSIONSINFODAYS**



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# Cancer Mission Update

## Kay Duggan-Walls

Policy Officer, Cancer Mission Secretariat, DG RTD



# EU Cancer Mission

## Challenges

- Population: 2.7 million people diagnosed, 1.3 million die from cancer in the EU each year
- Cost of cancer in Europe in 2018: €199 billion
- Impact of COVID-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine

## Four Mission objectives

1. Understanding cancer
2. Prevention & early detection
3. Diagnosis and treatment
4. Quality of life

## 19 R&I priority areas, 5 transversal priorities:

equity, innovation, childhood cancer, personalised medicine, citizen engagement

Timeline: 2021-2030

GOAL

*Improve the lives of more than 3 million people by 2030, through prevention, cure and for those affected by cancer including their families, to live longer and better*  
(jointly with the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan\*)

## Concrete actions

- Governance with Europe's Beating Cancer Plan
- **UNCAN.eu data platform\*** – blueprint, use cases started
- **European Cancer Prevention Centre** – **concept rejected**
- **Network of Comprehensive Cancer Infrastructures\*** - started
- **Cancer Patient Digital Centre\*** – blueprint, information portal started
- R&I and coordination support
- Synergies – at EU, national, regional, and local level



# EU Cancer Mission – other activities

## Dialogue with Member States at EU level

- ✓ SPC-cancer working group: discussion on Mission Work Programme 2027
- ✓ PHEG Cancer Subgroup: implementation Cancer Mission and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan
- ✓ eCancer Group: national implementation of digital platforms (final meeting: 25/11/2025)

**National Cancer Mission Hubs (ECHoS):**  
creation of hubs in each MS/AC & building of network

**Monitoring:** preparation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Implementation Report of Missions (publication Q2 2026)

## Stakeholder and citizen engagement

- ✓ Mission cluster work: enhance synergies among projects, policy webinars (next: 02 March 2026)
- ✓ Outreach: Mission conferences during EU Presidencies (Q2 2026) & Mission newsletters
- ✓ Info Days WP2026-2027
- ✓ Dialogue with young cancer survivors: next workshop 02 March 2026
- ✓ Mission Bus Roadshow: 2026-2027

## Cancer Mission Board

- ✓ Mission Ambassadors: national engagement
- ✓ Stakeholders working on rare cancers - “Rare Cancer Forum”

## Boosting R&I actions at EU level & enhancing national research capacities

- ✓ Investing **EUR 480 million** into **61 innovative R&I projects** across Mission objectives, with strong focus on rare/refractory cancers, incl. paediatric cancer (WP2021-2024)
- ✓ Supporting **cancer research across Horizon Europe** with overall ~2.5 billion EUR (synergies with Innovative Health Initiative, European Innovation Council, other EU missions)
- ✓ Creating digital **UNCAN.eu platform** to boost availability, use and re-use of research data, integrated in EU infrastructures and aligned with future European Health Data Space
- ✓ Increasing **research activities of Comprehensive Cancer Infrastructures (CCIs)** in synergies the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and engaging with **European Investment Bank** to support countries without or with limited CCIs.

- 12 R&I projects on understanding of cancer development
- 18 R&I projects to test innovative approaches to prevention & screening
- 17 international pragmatic clinical trials for diagnostics & therapies





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# HaDEA Update

**Dr Ioannis VOULDIS**

**Programme Manager – Horizon Europe Cancer Mission, HaDEA**



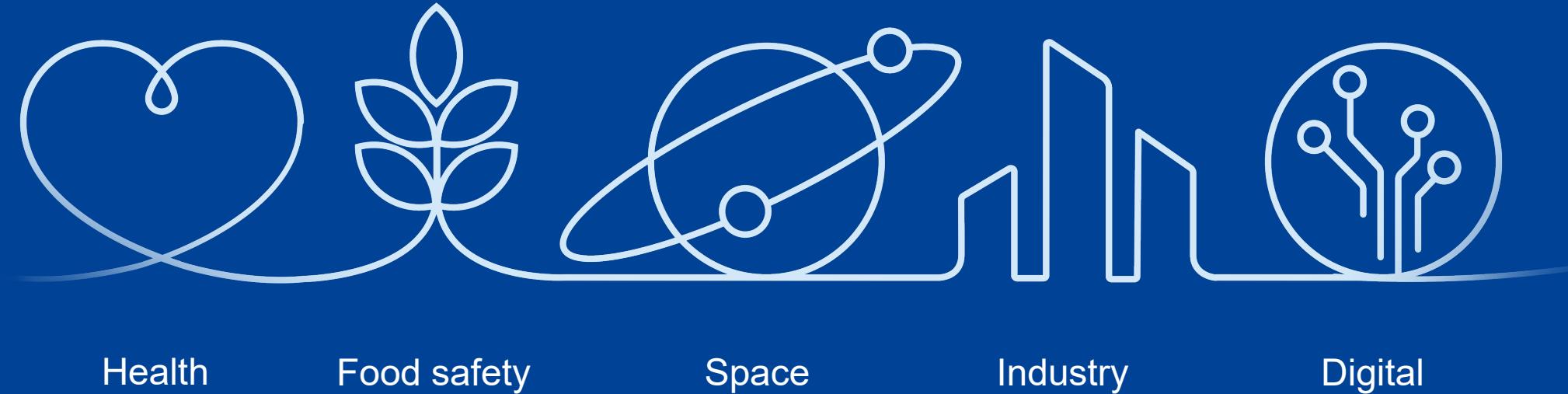
# HaDEA — The European Health and Digital Executive Agency

Dr Ioannis VOULDIS

Programme Manager – HE Cancer Mission

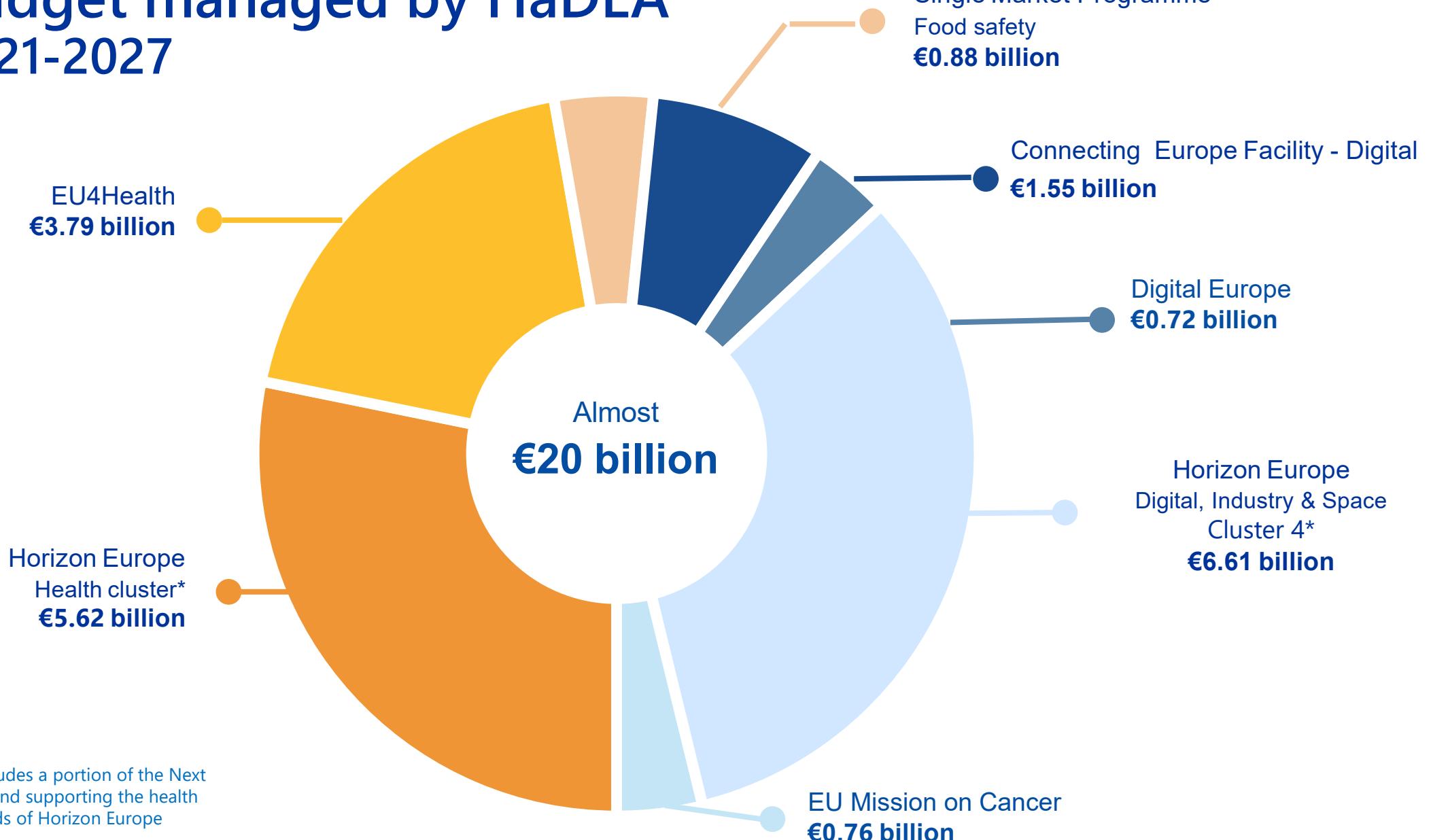
Unit HADEA A.3- Health Research

# The Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA)



HaDEA – boosting Europe by building, from earth to space,  
a healthy society, a digital economy and a competitive industry.

# Budget managed by HaDEA 2021-2027



# HaDEA's beneficiaries



Industry



Research institutes



Academia



International organisations



National, regional  
and local authorities



Representatives  
of civil society



NGOs

# Roles and responsibilities

## European Commission

Defines policy

- Defines strategy, objectives and priority areas/work programmes
- Makes programme decisions
- Selects projects for (co-)funding
- Evaluates the programme implementation and the Agency's performance



## HaDEA

Turns policy into action

- Manages the project lifecycle:
  - Organises calls for proposals and external evaluations
  - Monitors the implementation of projects
- Supports communication activities (Info Days, publications, etc.)
- Provides feedback to policy making



Develop new methods and technologies for screening and early detection - HORIZON-MISS-2021-CANCER-02-01

Improving and upscaling primary prevention of cancer through implementation research - HORIZON-MISS-2022-CANCER-01-01

Enhance cancer prevention through behaviour change HORIZON-MISS-2023-CANCER-01-02

Early detection heritable cancers in European regions - HORIZON-MISS-2024-CANCER-01-03

Increasing walking and cycling: to reap health benefits, emission reductions and integrate active mobility and micro-mobility devices, with smart technologies and infrastructure - HORIZON-MISS-2025-06-CIT-CANCER-01

Pragmatic clinical trials to optimise treatment for cancer patients with refractory cancers - HORIZON-MISS-2022-CANCER-01-03

Strengthen research capacities of comprehensive cancer infrastructures - HORIZON-MISS-2022-CANCER-01-02

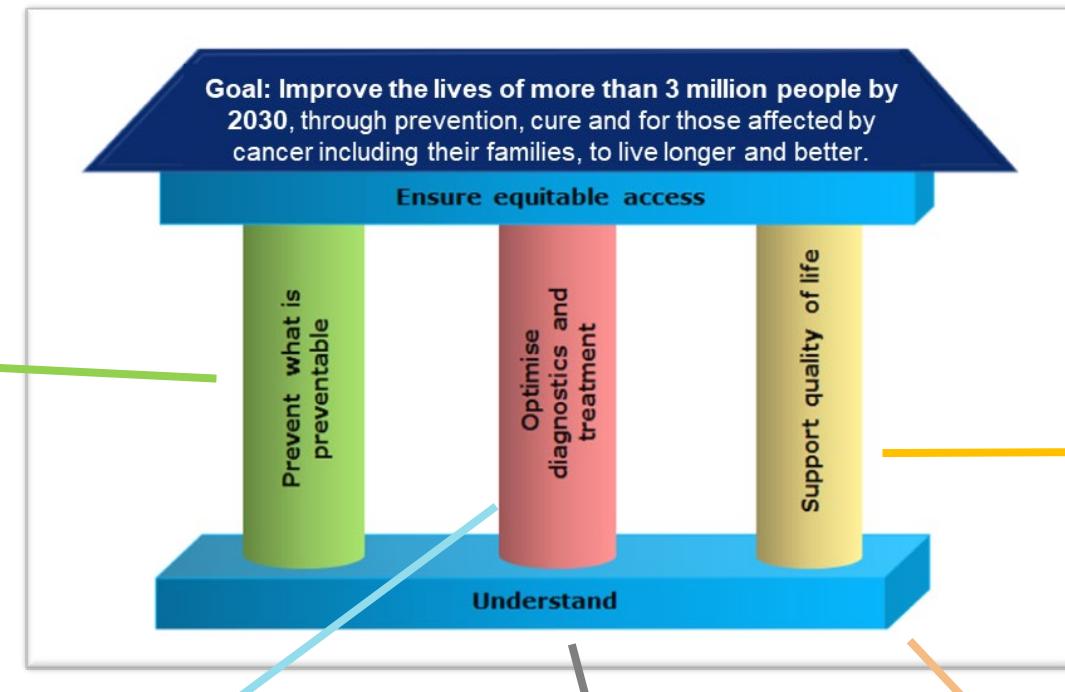
Pragmatic clinical trials minimally invasive diagnostics - HORIZON-MISS-2023-CANCER-01-03

Support a pragmatic clinical trial programme by cancer charities - HORIZON-MISS-2024-CANCER-01-04

Innovative surgery as the cornerstone of affordable multi-modal therapeutic interventions benefiting cancer patients with locally advanced or metastatic disease - HORIZON-MISS-2025-02-CANCER-03

Investigator-initiated multinational early-stage innovative clinical trials for paediatric cancer - HORIZON-MISS-2025-02-CANCER-04

# EU Cancer Mission: WP2021-2025



Develop and validate a set of quality-of-life measures for cancer patients and survivors - HORIZON-MISS-2021-CANCER-02-02

Improve quality of life for survivors of childhood cancer (best practices and tools) - HORIZON-MISS-2023-CANCER-01-04

Improving the understanding and management of late-effects in adolescents and young adults - HORIZON-MISS-2024-CANCER-01-05

An information portal for the European Cancer Patient Digital Centre - HORIZON-MISS-2024-CANCER-01-06

Pragmatic clinical trials to enhance the quality of life of older cancer patients (65 years and older) through nutrition - HORIZON-MISS-2025-02-CANCER-05

UNCAN.eu, a European initiative to understand cancer - HORIZON-MISS-2021-UNCAN-01-01

Better understand healthy versus cancer cells at individual and population level - HORIZON-MISS-2021-CANCER-02-03

Better understand tumour-host interactions in cancer patients - HORIZON-MISS-2023-CANCER-01-01

Use cases for the UNCAN.eu research data platform - HORIZON-MISS-2024-CANCER-01-01

Sustained collaboration of national and regional cancer funders to support the Cancer Mission through translational research - HORIZON-MISS-2025-02-CANCER-01

Understanding the effects of environmental exposure on the risk of pediatric, adolescent and young adult cancers - HORIZON-MISS-2025-02-CANCER-02

# Mission project clusters - update

1 - Cluster Understanding (risk factors & determinants)	- <i>launched Sept. 2022</i>
1 - Cluster Understanding (tumour-host interactions)	- <i>launched Sept. 2023</i>
2 - Cluster Prevention & early detection (screening)	- <i>launched Sept. 2022</i>
2 - Cluster Prevention & early detection (implementation research)	- <i>launched Jan. 2023</i>
2 - Cluster Prevention & early detection (behavioural change)	- <i>launched Sept. 2023</i>
2 - Cluster Prevention & early detection (heritable cancers)	- <i>launched Jan. 2025</i>
3 - Cluster Diagnosis and Treatment (refractory cancers)	- <i>launched Jan. 2023</i>
3 - Cluster Diagnosis & treatment (diagnostics)	- <i>launched Sept. 2023</i>
4 - Quality of Life	- <i>launched Sept. 2023</i>
4 - Quality of Life (AYA)	- <i>launched Jan. 2025</i>

# Lump Sum funding: video for applicants



[Lump Sum Funding in Horizon Europe: How does it work? How to write a proposal? \(27 March 2025\) | EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)

# Proposal submission – get prepared

1

## **Study the call documentation**

Choose your topic, and then read carefully the related documents and standard templates that are available on the Topic page

2

## **Select your partners for the project**

Most calls require several participants in the proposal; see call conditions on the Topic page

3

## **Plan your project and prepare the Technical Description (Part B)**

- ✓ Planning of the work (work packages, deliverables, milestones)
- ✓ Budget
- ✓ Annexes and supporting documents



# Evaluation (award) criteria

## Three evaluation criteria

‘Excellence’, ‘Impact’ and ‘Quality and efficiency of the implementation’.

- Evaluation criteria are **adapted** to each **type of action**, as specified in the WP
- Each criterion includes the ‘**aspects to be taken into account**’. The same aspect is not included in different criteria, so it is not assessed twice.
- **Open Science** practices are assessed as part of the scientific methodology in the excellence criterion.



**WORLD CANCER DAY**  
**4 FEBRUARY 2025**

# HaDEA PROJECT SHOWCASE

Fostering synergies to  
beat cancer: The impact  
of EU-funded projects

# Stay in touch

## HaDEA

 [hadea.ec.europa.eu](http://hadea.ec.europa.eu)

 [@EU\\_HaDEA](https://twitter.com/EU_HaDEA)

 [European Health and Digital Executive Agency](https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-health-and-digital-executive-agency/)

## European Commission

 [ec.europa.eu](http://ec.europa.eu)

 [@EU\\_Commission](https://twitter.com/EU_Commission)

 [European Commission](https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-commission/)

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 [EUTube](https://www.youtube.com/EUTube)

 [EuropeanCommission](https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanCommission)

 [EU Spotify](https://open.spotify.com/user/europeancommission)



# **Mission Work Programme 2026**

**Opening date:  
10 February 2026**

**Closing date for applications:  
16 September 2026**



## Cancer Mission – portfolio, project clusters, citizen engagement, and end-user involvement

- Proposals will be evaluated on scientific merits - see Horizon Europe evaluation criteria, **portfolio approach**, overall **threshold 12**:
- Mission topics consistently aim at involving **other** disciplines and sectors, beyond business-as-usual.
- Applicants should budget for networking activities whenever relevant; details to be added during grant preparation => work in **project clusters**.
- **Citizen (including patients and caregivers) engagement**: civil society, patient and caregiver organisations and communities should be consistently addressed. Avoid focus on a limited number of patient advocacy organisations.
- Mission topics will include **end-user** engagement. Examples of end-user engagement using participative research models and services in various MS:
  - Living lab services Kuopio University Hospital (FI): <https://www.psshp.fi/web/en/organisation/living-lab>
  - Living Labs at INCa (FR): <https://gnius.esante.gouv.fr/en/players/player-profiles/living-lab-institut-national-du-cancer>
  - Living Lab at IrsiCaixa AIDS Research Institute (ES): <https://www.scishops.eu/case-study-living-lab-for-health-spain/>
  - European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL): <https://enoll.org/>
- **End-users**: citizens, cancer centres, national and regional health authorities and services, local communities (e.g. schools, cities).
- **Lump sum** funding
- **Opening Date: 10 February 2026 - Closing date: 16 September 2026**

## Mission Work Programme 2026 topics

2026	Draft Topic Title	Indicative Budget	ToA	
	<b>HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-01:</b> Virtual Human Twin (VHT) models for cancer research	€35 m (€8-9 m)	RIA	
	<b>HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-02:</b> Microbiome for early cancer prediction before the onset of disease	€15 m (€15 m)	RIA	Lump Sum
	<b>HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-03:</b> Pragmatic clinical trials to optimise immunotherapeutic interventions for patients with refractory cancers	€22.2 m (€7-8 m)	RIA	Lump Sum
	<b>HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-04:</b> Earlier and more precise palliative care	€15 m (€5 m)	RIA	Lump Sum
	<b>HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-05:</b> Boosting mental health of young cancer survivors through the European Cancer Patient Digital Centre (ECPDC)	€7 m (€7 m)	IA	Lump Sum
	<b>HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-06:</b> Development of a research capacity building programme on cancer with and for Ukraine	€5 m (€5 m)	CSA	Lump Sum
	<b>HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-07:</b> Improve the Quality of Life of older cancer patients	€25 m (€5-6 m)	RIA	
<b>Total</b>		<b>€124.2</b>		

## HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-01: Virtual Human Twin (VHT) Models for Cancer Research

- Type of Action: **Research and Innovation Actions**
- Budget (EUR million): **35**
- Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million): **8-9**
- Indicative number of projects expected to be funded: **4**
- Legal/financial set up of grant agreements:

**Virtual human twins (VHTs)** are digital representations and in-silico models of an individual's health and disease at different levels of the human anatomy (e.g. cells, tissues, organs or organ systems).

This topic will contribute to the EU Cancer Mission objectives by improving the accuracy of **dynamic and multiscale** VHTs to better understand cancer onset, predict progression and develop personalized treatments.

Of **particular interest for this topic** are cancers with limited treatment options or unclear biological mechanisms, refractory cancers, rare cancers, early-onset cancers, cancer types with low five-year survival rates, or paediatric and adolescent cancers.



## Expected outcome

Proposals under this topic should aim to deliver results that are directed and tailored towards and contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Researchers of different disciplines use advanced multiscale Virtual Human Twins (VHTs) to expand the knowledge and understanding of cancer onset and progression
- Healthcare professionals and researchers have access to advanced VHT-based solutions that model cancer onset and progression over time, contributing to improve personalised treatments
- Researchers, healthcare professionals, innovators and citizens have access to cancer VHTs through the UNCAN.eu and the advanced Virtual Human Twin platforms



## Scope

The applicants should address **all of the following** activities:

- To develop innovative, dynamic multiscale VHTs for advancing the **mechanistic knowledge** and understanding of cancer onset and progression and develop or improve innovative personalised treatments. VHTs should **integrate AI tools** for the analysis of large volumes of FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) multimodal data, increasing their predictive capability and, when appropriate, utilise IT solutions for model visualisation via Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality.
- To **update and validate** VHTs with longitudinal newly collected or existing **FAIR patient data** and generate evidence that VHT models can deliver clinically meaningful observations to improve treatment of the studied cancer type, demonstrating VHT accessibility and usability for clinical uptake. The use of data and services provided by **ESFRI research infrastructures** in the life science domain should be considered when appropriate.
- To enrich and **make available data and model assets in the UNCAN.eu** research platform and in the Advanced VHT Platform following the principles of open science. Newly collected patient datasets must be described with metadata records in the EU dataset catalogue of the European Health Data Space
- Collaboration among different scientific disciplines, including **healthcare professionals and patients** throughout all stages of VHTs development is envisaged

## HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-02: Microbiome for early cancer prediction before the onset of disease

- Type of Action: **Research and Innovation Actions**
- Budget (EUR million): **15**
- Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million): **15**
- Indicative number of projects expected to be funded: **1**
- Legal/financial set up of grant agreements: **lump sum**

Build on resources made available by the Knowledge Centre on Cancer (KCC) to foster EU alignment and coordination.

Join the 'Prevention and Early Detection' project cluster of the EU Cancer Mission and include a budget for networking, attendance at meetings and joint activities. The Commission will facilitate coordination of these activities.



## Scope

Cancer often develops over several years and progresses silently before symptoms appear. Some cancers are diagnosed at a very late stage, when the disease is nearly incurable. Early and sensitive biomarkers are beneficial for preventive strategies and the survival of patients especially when tests are minimally invasive and simple to perform. The human microbiome is correlated with this process of oncogenesis and tumour progression.



## Scope

Proposals should address all of the following:

- Development of microbiome tools for earlier, better and personalised prediction and prevention of cancer before the onset of the disease; if possible **2 years before** the onset of the disease. Proposals should deal with several types of cancer if possible.
- Assessments of predispositions, AI risk modelling approaches and organ/body simulations.
- Collaboration with large cohorts/registries from different communities, usage of existing microbiome and clinical data in combination with and generation of new data. These data could include other predictive signs such as sensations of fatigue, unusual pain, weight loss or other body changes.
- Citizen engagement could be included with data and sample collections as well as educational programmes.
- Comparison with other minimally invasive liquid biopsy and other tests concerning their predictive power, simplicity, cost-benefits and potential for commercialisation.
- Validation of the tests in an independent cohort. Development of guidelines that help to manage risk factors such as lifestyle or diet. The outcome and expertise of ongoing EU and International initiatives and the International Cancer Microbiome Consortium could be considered for the reliability of the tests and guidelines to be developed. Age, sex and gender differences should be duly considered.

## Expected outcome

Proposals under this topic should aim to deliver results that are directed and tailored towards and contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Healthy people and in particular people at risk will benefit from microbiome tests and programmes that can discover and predict their transition to cancer **before** the onset of disease.
- People will have a better understanding of risks and will be enabled to address risks early by following treatments or adapting their lifestyles, including nutrition and other interventions.
- Physicians will be able to start cancer treatments earlier with a higher success rate.
- Policy makers and authorities will be enabled to develop and implement advanced and strategic programmes addressing cancer prevention.



## **HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-03: Pragmatic clinical trials to optimise immuno-therapeutic interventions for patients with refractory cancers**

- Type of Action: **Research and Innovation Actions**
- Budget (EUR million): **22.19**
- Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million): **7-8**
- Indicative number of projects expected to be funded: **3**
- Legal/financial set up of grant agreements: **lump sum**

**Pragmatic clinical trials** focus on choosing between care options. Pragmatic trials evaluate effectiveness of interventions in settings that more closely resemble routine, real-world settings, aiming to produce evidence directly applicable to clinical practice.

What are **academic investigator-initiated trials**? Clinical trials in which a health technology (e.g. a medicinal product, a medical device, an in-vitro diagnostic medical device, a surgical or other medical intervention) is tested in humans, **independently from commercial interest and for public health benefits**.

This topic will contribute to the achievement of Mission objective Diagnosis and Treatment.

## Expected outcome

Proposals under this topic should aim to deliver results that are directed and tailored towards and contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Patients with refractory cancers and their caregivers/families will have access to optimised, tailored and affordable **immunotherapeutic interventions** that increase their quality of life, across European regions, EU Member States and Associated Countries;
- Healthcare professionals and academia will have access to clinical evidence, on **effectiveness of immunotherapeutic interventions**, to deploy evidence-based treatment interventions with improved patient selection that improve outcomes in real life, i.e. in routine healthcare, for patients with **refractory cancers** who often present with **co-morbidities**;
- National healthcare providers, policymakers and authorities in European regions, EU Member States and Associated Countries will have the **evidence to implement and reimburse optimised and affordable immunotherapeutic interventions in their healthcare systems**, including in everyday medical practice.



## Scope

The applicants should address **all of the following** activities:

- Conduct randomised or cluster-randomised academic investigator-initiated pragmatic clinical trials that benefit patients with refractory cancers - at any stage of the disease, for **any cancer subtype, in any age group or part of society** - to deliver effective, affordable and tailored immunotherapeutic interventions for implementation by healthcare systems at the level of local communities, European regions, EU Member States and Associated Countries.
- All data should be disaggregated by sex, gender, age and other relevant variables, such as by measures of socio-economic status or ethnicity. **Translational research is limited to supporting biomarker-informed patient stratification and the conduct and analyses of the proposed clinical trial(s).**
- The primary and secondary endpoints of the pragmatic clinical trials should target overall survival, patient-reported outcomes and quality of life issues considered important by and for cancer patients and their caregivers/families. Such endpoints should be defined together with patients and their caregivers/families through research that stimulates social innovation and supports end-user engagement using participative research models.
- The chosen treatment intervention(s) should be **adapted to the particular needs of the target population and to the specificities of the provision of care at local, regional, or national level**, duly **reflecting the diversity** across EU Member States and Associated Countries. Furthermore, **affordability and accessibility** should be taken into account.
- Applicants should include an appropriate **mix of stakeholders** from various disciplines, sectors and regional as well as national health authorities, and provide **details of the clinical study(ies)** in the dedicated annex using the template provided in the submission system.

## HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-04: Earlier and more precise palliative care

- Type of Action: **Research and Innovation Actions**
- Budget (EUR million): **15**
- Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million): **5**
- Indicative number of projects expected to be funded: **3**
- Legal/financial set up of grant agreements: **lump sum**

Join the 'Quality of Life' project cluster of the EU Cancer Mission and include a budget for networking, attendance at meetings and joint activities. The Commission will facilitate coordination of these activities.

Applicants should provide details of the clinical studies in the dedicated annex using the template provided in the submission system.



## Scope

According to an EU conference on innovative palliative care for people with cancer on 8 October 2024, palliative care has **big potential** but such interventions come much **too late** and are often **imprecise**.

Palliative care is needed very early after cancer diagnosis with the best possible information on patient wishes and effective communication between all involved carers. Barriers also include the insufficient workforce allocation, insufficient retention and resilience of staff, incorrect transfers between care facilities, regional inequities and higher needs for home-based care.

## Scope

Proposals should address most of the following:

- Develop innovative models for earlier, more precise/personalised and integrated palliative care, including digital remote tools, to predict patients' care preferences, to assign clear roles of carers and to avoid obstacles such as insufficient or unequal access.
- Testing and validation of these models in real-world settings through implementation research and clinical trials. Age, sex and gender differences should be duly considered.
- Attention should be given to address staff training, roles and adherence of conditions.
- Usage of AI and digital remote tools (such as explanatory videos, messaging, etc.) to allow real-time communication and to predict care needs and resources.
- Adoption of guidelines for optimal referrals, efficient and sustainable workforce allocation and retention (access to & dissemination of the guidelines should be provided through the future European Cancer Patient Digital Centre).
- Collaboration with EU4Health projects to create synergies and to facilitate implementation.<sup>37</sup>

## Expected outcome

Proposals under this topic should aim to deliver results that are directed and tailored towards and contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Patients will benefit from better access to earlier, more person-centred palliative care models including digital remote tools and options for home-based care.
- Carers will benefit from real-time information tools and better communication.
- Clinicians will benefit from guidelines on optimal patient referral and care predictions.



## **HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-05: Boosting mental health of young cancer survivors through the European Cancer Patient Digital Centre (ECPDC)**

- Type of Action: **Innovation Actions**
- Budget (EUR million): **7**
- Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million): **7**
- Indicative number of projects expected to be funded: **1**
- Legal/financial set up of grant agreements: **lump sum**

This topic will contribute to the achievement of Mission objective Quality of Life.

The focus is on **adolescents and young adult** (15-39 years of age, e.g. age of first cancer diagnosis) **cancer patients and survivors**.

## Scope

To develop a digital **platform targeting AYA cancer patients and survivors to address specifically their mental health needs**, throughout their journey, at diagnosis, during and after treatment:

- The platform should be developed as a module of the **European Cancer Patient Digital Centre** (project EU-CIP). Clear contacts with EU-CIP should be established and operational solutions and sustainability developed to link the two projects.
- The platform should include a mix of innovative personalized, evidence-based, and interactive features building on state-of-the-art research to address the mental health needs of AYA patients and survivors. Both **cognitive** (thinking, reasoning, memory, perceptual etc.), **affective** (depression, anxiety, etc.), and **behaviour change** aspects should be considered.
- The innovative nature of proposed solutions should be clearly demonstrated.
- The efficacy of the proposed solutions should be demonstrated by testing and validating them by an appropriate number of end users, with different cancer types and belonging to the targeted age group.

## Scope

- Develop, test and integrate in the platform innovative tools for collection and analysis of mental health relevant **Patient Reported Outcomes Measures (PROMs)** and **Patient Reported Experiences Measures (PREMs)**. Effective mining of lived experience data should be enabled to support for example psychometric development and validation, risk modelling, and the co-creation of personalized psychological measures of mental health.
- Tools should be developed and validated in **close cooperation with end-users** including patients, survivors, healthcare professionals and researchers.
- Develop **European Health Data Space (EHDS)** aligned guidelines to report and deposit relevant patient reported data collected .
- Projects should include an **appropriate mix of stakeholders** from various disciplines and sectors, including but not limited to physicians, psychologists, nurses, academia, patients and their caregivers, patient representatives, behavioural scientists, cancer survivorship scientists, AI-experts and solutions providers, SMEs, charities and funding agencies, and research organisation



## Expected outcome

Proposals under this topic should aim to deliver results that are directed and tailored towards and contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Through the European Cancer Patient Digital Centre (ECPDC), adolescent and young cancer patients and survivors as well as their caregivers have access to **innovative tools and approaches to strengthen their mental health**;
- Healthcare professionals have access to **innovative tools to monitor and support the mental health** of cancer patients and survivors as well as their caregivers
- Researchers and healthcare professionals have access and use **reliable patient reported data** to better understand the mental health needs of cancer patients and survivors and provide effective care.

## HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-06: Development of a research capacity building programme on cancer with and for Ukraine

- Type of Action: **Coordination and Support Action**
- Budget (EUR million): **5**
- Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million): **5**
- Indicative number of projects expected to be funded: **1**
- Legal/financial set up of grant agreements: **lump sum**

This topic will contribute to the achievement of Mission objective Diagnosis and Treatment



## Scope

Proposals should address all of the following:

Set up a **research capacity-building programme** between EU MSs/ACs and Ukraine, to support Ukraine to develop R&I related capacities of future or existing Cancer Infrastructures. The programme should include the following components:

- A **joint-research training programme**, including distance-learning modules
- **Twinning research activities**, including staff-exchange for the implementation of targeted research projects and access to cutting-edge services

## Scope

The programme should cover at least the following areas:

- Enhanced involvement in quality scientific research, including development and **implementation of clinical trials and other epidemiological studies** and related training;
- Better integration of research and care to improve patient outcomes. **Particular emphasis should be given to cancer in children, adolescents and young adults;**
- Improvement of **digital capacity** to support primary and secondary use of patient data, including through improvement of data exchange capacities and development of cancer registries where needed.

The programme should be tailored to the needs of the participating entities. The training module shall consist of balanced **theoretical and practical parts**, including simulations, case studies, group exercises, mutual learning exercises and on-site visits (when possible) to gather practical experience. **Safety of participating** staff/researchers should be prioritised. **Gender related aspects** should be duly taken into account



## Expected outcome

Proposals should **contribute to all of the following expected outcomes**:

- Researchers, clinicians and health care professionals will have access to **improved research capacities**, supporting better integration with care.
- Patients and citizens will have access to **improved screening, diagnostics and treatments**, while increasing their participation in clinical trials.



## **HORIZON-MISS-2026-02-CANCER-07: Improve the Quality of Life of older cancer patients**

- Type of Action: **Research and Innovation Actions**
- Budget (EUR million): **25**
- Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million): **5-6**
- Indicative number of projects expected to be funded: **5**

This topic will contribute to the achievement of Mission objective Quality of Life.

The focus is on cancer patients aged **65 years and above**



## Scope

The overall goal of this topic is to advance the understanding of older cancer patients' care needs, and develop innovative, age-sensitive care approaches and tools to boost overall quality of life:

- Building on data from existing or newly established cohorts **provide a thorough assessment of QoL needs and relevant dimensions in older patients**, taking into account aspects such as social and health determinants, including sex, gender, age, comorbidities, intrinsic and functional health status, socio-economic status, living in rural or remote areas, education, access/reachability to disease management programs (due to travel distances and abilities) etc.
- Develop, test, implement and scale up innovative, **holistic approaches and tools in real-life settings** (e.g. through the implementation of **pragmatic clinical trials or effectiveness-implementation hybrid designs**) to optimize treatment and/or follow-up regimens for older patients, aiming to reduce comorbidities, impairments and frailty, while improving overall quality of life.
- **Prehabilitation strategies** (e.g. to be delivered after diagnosis but prior to treatment) should be also considered.



## Scope

- Primary and secondary endpoints of the pragmatic clinical trial(s) should support patient-reported outcomes and quality of life. Such endpoints should be defined together with patients and their caregivers through research that stimulates social innovation and supports end-user engagement using participative research models.  
Particular attention should be given to aspects such as **pain management, cognitive and social support, mental health services** etc. Additionally, **rehabilitation** tackling common concerns such as reduced mobility, osteoporosis, cardiovascular health, neurocognitive changes, sleep disturbance, loss of independence, time and financial toxicity etc, essential for maintaining good quality of life, should also be addressed. Health literacy including digital literacy could also be considered.
- The specific needs of families and **caregivers managing older cancer patients** should also be considered.
- Provide scientific evidence to **deliver affordable and accessible treatment and follow-up care** adapted to the needs of older cancer patients and to the specificities of the provision of care at local, regional, or national level, duly reflecting the (cultural) diversity across EU Member States and Associated Countries.



## Expected outcome

Proposals under this topic should aim to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- **Improved understanding of care needs** of older patients with cancer and approaches to address them;
- Older cancer patients gain **access to innovative age-specific approaches and tools** better tailored to their care needs;
- National healthcare providers, policymakers and authorities in European regions, EU Member States and Associated Countries have the **evidence to implement tailored care for older cancer patients** that have the potential to be implemented in routine treatment and follow-up care in their healthcare systems;

# Any questions?

To ask a question, please use **Sli.do**:

- go to [www.sli.do](http://www.sli.do)
- insert **#EUMISSIONSINFODAYS** to join the event, and
- then select the 'room' of '**Cancer Mission**'
- or you can also simply scan the QR Code and select the appropriate room.
- When you ask a question, **label it with topic number**.
- **Upvote** the most interesting questions (please avoid repeating them).



**#EUMISSIONSINFODAYS**



# References

- **EU Mission on Cancer**
  - [Cancer Mission implementation \(europa.eu\)](#)
  - Horizon Europe rules apply (see information on participation of Associated and Third countries)
  - Please read the [Implementation Plan](#) before you apply:
  - [12. Missions](#) Work Programme 2026-2027 (published on 12 December 2025)
  - Mission calls for proposals and partner search tool are accessible via the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#)
  - First, contact your [national contact point](#), then contact [RTD-SANTE-CANCER-MISSION@ec.europa.eu](mailto:RTD-SANTE-CANCER-MISSION@ec.europa.eu)
- [European Health Partnerships and Innovative Health Initiative](#)
- [Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and EU4Health programme](#)
- [Digital Europe programme](#)
- [Euratom Research and Training Programme](#)
- [EIT-Health KIC](#)
- [Knowledge Centre on Cancer \(KCC\)](#)
- [HaDEA](#)

# EU Missions Brokerage Event 2026

- **28-29 January 2026** (online)
- Organised by [NCP4Missions](#), international Network of NCPs for Horizon Europe Missions
- **Plenary session** with practical information to successfully navigate the 2026 Horizon Europe Missions calls
- **Online bilateral meetings** to present expertise, project ideas, and explore collaboration opportunities
- A **long-term matchmaking** phase will follow the event and remain active until the **closure of the 2026 calls**
- More information available on the official event webpage: [link](#).





# Thank you!

For any further question visit the EU Funding & Tenders Portal to:

- Check the [FAQ](#)
- Contact the [Research Enquiry Service \(RES\)](#)
- Contact your [National Contact Points \(NCPs\)](#)

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