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IARC and partners launch new EU-funded project to strengthen cancer screening data collection across Europe

Lyon, France, 16 September 2022 – The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and partners today launched a new research project funded by the European Union (EU) to strengthen cancer screening data collection across Europe. Coordinated by IARC, the CanScreen-ECIS project aims to update the existing European Cancer Information System (ECIS) and improve the quality and coverage of cancer screening programmes in Europe.

“This project will improve access to quality-assured population-based cancer screening programmes for breast cancer, cervical cancer, and colorectal cancer,” says Dr Partha Basu of the Early Detection, Prevention, and Infections Branch at IARC. “These data are particularly important to better monitor the effectiveness of cancer screening programmes across Europe.”

CanScreen-ECIS aims to develop and pilot a new cancer screening data management system to be integrated into ECIS. The project is a collaboration with European experts involved in two other key projects on cancer screening data collection: the second European Screening Report ([EUSR](#)) and [EU-TOPIA](#) projects, which include European cancer leagues as collaborators.

Performance indicators defined and used by EUSR and EU-TOPIA will be reviewed, and new additional indicators will be proposed especially to cover new screening approaches and potential new cancer sites for the future. Aggregated data collection tools for the screening programmes for various cancer sites will be designed to compute the new indicators. A data warehouse will be created for providers of screening data to access data collection tools and submit aggregated data. A web application will automatically analyse the data and display validated data as interactive graphs, tables, and charts, to provide a visual and user-friendly tool to monitor the screening indicators and to support decision-making.

“CanScreen-ECIS is a very important project for cancer leagues, because it will provide understandable and easy-to-access data about cancer screening across Europe,” says Dr David Ritchie, the Cancer Prevention Manager at the Association of European Cancer Leagues ([ECL](#)). “Knowing how cancer screening programmes are performing will ultimately help us all work together better to drive up the quality of screening. Cancer leagues already play a key role in communicating to the public about cancer screening, and they look forward to spreading the word about the results of CanScreen-ECIS.”



The CanScreen-ECIS project will lead to several key innovations. It will enable the collection of cancer screening performance data from all EU Member States in a harmonized, comparable manner, which will help programme managers to benchmark their performance. It will also provide revised indicators and expand ECIS functionalities for the collection of cancer screening data in addition to data from cancer registries in the European countries.

A pilot test will generate information to perform a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the entire data management system based on feedback from all the users and stakeholders.

Finally, the project will create a freely accessible online learning package, covering the new system for data collection and submission as well as the overall concept of quality improvement of cancer screening programmes through systematic data collection and performance monitoring.

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The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is part of the World Health Organization. Its mission is to coordinate and conduct research on the causes of human cancer, the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, and to develop scientific strategies for cancer control. The Agency is involved in both epidemiological and laboratory research and disseminates scientific information through publications, meetings, courses, and fellowships. If you wish your name to be removed from our press release emailing list, please write to com@iarc.fr.