

## **The ESR welcomes the new Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA)**

The European Society of Radiology (ESR), representing the radiology profession across Europe, welcomes the creation of the new European Parliament Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA). The ESR supports the Committee's ambition to influence the future Europe's Beating Cancer Plan to reduce the incidence of cancer, help patients live a longer and better life, and reduce health inequalities in Europe.

On 23 September 2020, the special committee began its work. They will evaluate opportunities for concrete action, identify legislation and measures to help prevent and fight cancer, and investigate the best ways to support research, among others. The ESR was delighted to hear the rapporteur, MEP Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, highlight the importance of prevention, screening and telemedicine to foster best practice exchanges between doctors, in the first exchange of views between members on the 12 October 2020.

The European Society of Radiology later welcomed the Special Committee's [Working Document](#), published on 27 October 2020, that lays out the specific methodology and possible domains of action. We were pleased to find an emphasis on building upon European initiatives developed by the cancer community and on indicating the current missing data to be addressed in the context of the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, the EU Cancer Mission and the EU4Health programme. The ESR was also glad to see areas of action such as patients, prevention, screening and early detection, and the recognition of research and innovation as well as exchanges of knowledge between Member States as possible tools.

The European Society of Radiology has long pushed for the investigation of existing and new potential screening programmes for which evidence is available, such as for [lung cancer screening](#), to update the 2003 Council Recommendation on Cancer Screening.

Furthermore, the ESR agrees with the Committee's consideration to involve different public and private stakeholders. We strongly believe in the importance of exchanges with patient organisations and professional societies, such as the European Society of Radiology, that drive and disseminate the latest scientific breakthroughs in medicine to benefit quality healthcare in Europe. Also, patients should have an active role in any decision-making in healthcare and the ESR has recognised this by setting up a Patient Advisory Group in 2013 to positively influence advances in the field of medical imaging to the benefit of patients in Europe.

The new Special Committee's ambition for common training programmes ties in with the ESR's continuing call for EU-funded actions to train cancer professionals. The EU4Health programme can also be an opportunity to foster active contributions by medical organisations and support training and education of healthcare professionals, particularly in the areas of AI and digital health.

The European Society of Radiology further supports the identification of underrepresented areas in cancer that require EU-funded research for patient-centred and innovative solutions.

However, the ESR regrets that the Committee has not defined any action regarding telemedicine. The COVID19 pandemic has unfolded new ways of working and delivering services. Teleradiology has shown to bridge inequality gaps in healthcare by providing services to populations living in isolation or medical

deserts. We believe there should be an EU effort to investigate telemedicine and formulate recommendations on how to safely embed it in clinical practice, addressing education and diverging regulatory frameworks in Europe.

Medical imaging is a strong driver to improve cancer prevention, detection, treatment and the digital transformation of care in each Member State. The Europe's Beating Cancer Plan should be developed in alignment with the recommendations of the Cancer Mission of the Research framework Horizon Europe, to pool expertise and identify priority areas which require EU-wide action and cooperation.

The ESR is eager to support and work together with the European Parliament Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA) to establish a common standard to fight cancer and reduce health inequalities in cancer care, screening and early detection.