

## THE CHALLENGE

### Cancer inequalities persist across Europe

# 2.8 M

**new cancer cases reported every year across EU+2 countries**

Cancer remains one of the most significant public health challenges in Europe. Despite major advances in prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship, inequalities continue to persist across regions, socio-economic groups, rural and urban populations, and vulnerable communities.

These disparities are shaped not only by unequal access to healthcare, but by unequal levels of cancer literacy

## JOIN THE MOVEMENT

### Be part of the first Cancer Literacy Day

Cancer Literacy Day is an open, collaborative European initiative. Whoever you are, there is a way to take part.

#### I'M AN INDIVIDUAL

Share the day on social media, display a poster at work or school, and start a conversation with someone you know.

#### I'M A PATIENT OR CARER

Share your experience, ask better questions in clinical settings, and point others to reliable information.

#### I'M A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

Use plain-language resources with patients, and host or support a local Cancer Literacy Day activity.

#### REPRESENT AN ORGANISATION

Host an event, become a partner, and help embed cancer literacy into your institution's culture.

#### WORK IN POLICY

Endorse Cancer Literacy Day and help

[cancerliteracyday.eu](https://cancerliteracyday.eu)

#CancerLiteracyDay  
#UnderstandCancer



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# CANCER LITERACY DAY

**14 OCTOBER 2026**

**A manifesto for  
equitable access to  
cancer knowledge for  
every citizen,  
everywhere in Europe.**

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## What is Cancer Literacy?

Cancer literacy is the ability to find, understand, evaluate, and use cancer-related information to make informed health decisions. It empowers people to participate confidently in decisions about prevention, screening, and treatment.

Low cancer literacy limits people's ability to engage in prevention, participate in screening, understand a diagnosis, and make informed treatment decisions — compounding existing inequalities across the entire continuum of care.

***“Cancer Literacy Day is not just a date on the calendar. It is the beginning of a permanent European commitment. By making cancer knowledge accessible, understandable, and culturally appropriate for every citizen, we take a decisive step toward a more equitable future for cancer care in Europe.”***

**Dr. Marius Geantă,**  
Coordinator of the CURTAIN Project

## OUR MANIFESTO

### We believe

We believe cancer literacy is a determinant of health equity. It is not a privilege, but a right for every citizen.

We believe access to reliable, evidence-based cancer information must be within everyone's reach, wherever they live.

We believe informed people make better decisions about prevention, screening, and their own care. We believe misinformation costs lives, and that countering it is a shared European responsibility.

We believe change happens through dialogue between policymakers, health professionals, researchers, patients, and citizens.

We believe cancer literacy must be written into the policies that shape health systems across Europe.

### Our long-term vision

Cancer Literacy Day is envisioned as a permanent European movement for equitable access to cancer knowledge, sustaining momentum well beyond any single project or funding cycle.

## WHY A DEDICATED DAY

### From a single date to a permanent movement

Cancer literacy remains insufficiently recognised as a public health priority, despite its strong influence on prevention, healthcare access, treatment understanding, patient empowerment, and quality of care.

A dedicated annual Cancer Literacy Day responds to the growing need for a coordinated European platform that:

**Elevates cancer literacy within health and policy agendas**

**Promotes dialogue between sectors and disciplines**

**Encourages collaboration between institutions, healthcare systems, and communities**

**Supports awareness and education initiatives across Europe**

**Creates a shared moment to reflect on inequalities and identify actionable solutions**

Cancer Literacy Day is an implementation pillar of the EU4Health-funded project CURTAIN (Beating Cancer Inequalities through Literacy in Europe), fully aligned with Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and the EU Cancer Mission.