

Scientific Opinion on

Cancer screening in the European Union



ISSUE

Cancer is the primary cause of death for Europeans under 65. The impact of cancer on families and society as a whole is devastating in multiple ways, affecting quality of life by reducing individual well-being and emotional stability, but also carrying important financial aspects.

CHALLENGE

Population-based screening programmes have not been fully implemented by Member States, and inequalities persist in access to screening and care.

Research on new and innovative screening techniques is constantly ongoing, but guidelines and policies must be kept up-to-date with these findings.

Without conclusive action, by 2035 cancer cases are estimated to **increase by almost 25%**, potentially making it the **leading cause of death in the EU**.

GOAL:

Saving lives by improving, extending, and optimizing cancer screening programmes

Recommendations



Improve people's participation in breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening programmes, **considering individual risk factors**.



Extend population-based screening programs to **lung and prostate cancer**, and ensure preparedness for the introduction of new methods.



Support the **harmonisation of protocols** and quality assurance, and the establishment of biobanks.

Impact

Revision of the 2003 Council Recommendations on cancer screening programmes for breast, colorectal and cervical cancer, along with other principles of best practice in their early detection.

This is a summary of a scientific opinion by the **Group of Chief Scientific Advisors**,

Independent expert group providing high-quality and timely scientific advice to the European Commission, to inform European Union policies and legislation, and informed by [SAPEA evidence review reports](#).

Read the full report [here](#).

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