

## **A new European consortium, funded with 6 million Euros, will create a network of support for EU Mission on Cancer**

- The project *Establishing of Cancer Mission Hubs: Networks and Synergies (ECHO S)* aims to coordinate R&I and Healthcare actions on cancer with policy-making processes, towards people-centric healthcare and research systems.
- The consortium brings together the leading expertise of more than 50 governmental, healthcare, academic, and nonprofit organizations from 28 countries.
- National Cancer Mission Hubs (NCMHs) will be created in each country to engage a broad range of stakeholders from both public and private sectors in collaborative initiatives and policy dialogues on cancer, at national, regional and local levels.

**Luxembourg, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Cancer represents a global health challenge. It can affect anyone regardless of gender, age or social status and is a significant burden for patients, their families and friends, and for society as a whole. According to the [European Cancer Information System](#), the incidence and mortality of cancer in Europe by 2040 are expected to increase by 20.96% and 31.76%, respectively. This means that if no further actions are taken, around 3.24 million people will be diagnosed with cancer in Europe, and 1.66 million people will succumb to it. In Luxembourg alone, over 4600 new cases per year are expected by 2040. Therefore, there is a pressing need for joint action.

The driving force behind the Horizon Europe [Mission on Cancer](#) initiative is the ambitious goal to “*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*”. This is also the driving force behind the project ECHO S, *Establishing of Cancer Mission Hubs: Networks and Synergies*.

ECHO S, a new, three-year European consortium supported by [Mission on Cancer](#), will play a vital role in supporting the ambitious goals defined by this European initiative. Bringing together the expertise of 58 leading organisations, from the governmental, healthcare, research, academic and non-profit sectors, this key consortium will ultimately provide member states and associated countries (MS/AC) with the capacity to gradually create National Cancer Mission Hubs (NCMHs). These NCMHs, operating at national, regional, and local levels, will have a vital role in involving all relevant stakeholders, including citizens, in cancer-related policy dialogues.

*“The fight against cancer can no longer be an isolated endeavour. Currently, research, innovation and healthcare initiatives are largely siloed within specific communities and the engagement of citizens is either poor or nonexistent,”* said Dr. Anabela Isidro, member of the AICIB (Agency for Clinical Research and Biomedical Innovation in Portugal) board. *“Supported*



*by the European Beating Cancer Plan and the EU Mission on Cancer, cancer occupies a central place within the European political agenda. At the conclusion of the Conference on the Future of Europe, political leaders championed pan-European cooperation towards a Health in All Policies approach, and a data-informed, citizen-focused, research-driven agenda. The time to act is now.” she concluded.*

Luxembourg is represented by the National Institute of Cancer (INC) and the Luxembourg Institute of Health (LIH), which will collaborate closely with the consortium coordinators (AICIB) and leading experts across Europe, to establish a NCMH in the country. This combined effort will coordinate R&I and Healthcare actions on cancer with policy-making processes, towards people-centric healthcare and research systems in ways that cannot be achieved through individual efforts and fragmented initiatives.

*“Representing the second smallest member state in the European Union today, we fully recognize the need to establish networks and synergies in our fight against cancer – not only within but also beyond our national context. We now have the chance to actively contribute to a project that will connect and promote this notion at the national and European level.”* said Dr Nikolai Goncharenko, Director of the INC and national coordinator of the ECHO S project. Creating a National Cancer Mission Hub in Luxembourg represents a key step towards strengthening the voice of national stakeholders in cancer policies in Europe. It will foster national and international collaboration, promote inclusivity, and drive innovation in cancer care. *“We expect ECHO S to contribute to accelerating cancer research in our country. This is an opportunity to tailor our cancer landscape to the precise needs of our patients and society”*, he adds.

The recent COVID-19 emergency exposed the fragilities in health systems, putting infrastructures, supply chains, government preparedness and human resources under unprecedented stress. Nevertheless, it also highlighted countries’ ability to create functional synergies in health, policy, and research, successfully impacting the health scenario. With the kick-off meeting occurring on Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023, ECHO S will set the foundations for a strong and cohesive network of NCMHs among MS/AC aligned with [Mission on Cancer](#). ECHO S will redefine the boundaries of traditional research and health systems, reaching from individual citizens to European Institutions, Civil Society, Social Sector, Academia, Public and Private Sectors, thereby improving the current landscape and setting a brighter future in cancer care.

#### **About AICIB - Agency for Clinical Research and Biomedical Innovation**

AICIB is the Portuguese Agency for Clinical Research and Biomedical Innovation. Our mission is to promote, coordinate and support activities in the areas of clinical and translational research (CI&T) and biomedical innovation, contributing to the optimization of Portugal’s clinical, scientific, and technological potential. AICIB activities are structured around 5 main pillars (i) Foster Translational Clinical Research and Biomedical Innovation, (ii) Support the development of Clinical Academic Centres, (iii) Promote Clinical Trials, (iv) Support Digital Transformation in Health and (v) Foster the internationalization of Portuguese Health Research. For more information visit <http://www.aicib.pt>.



### **About INC**

The INC is an association without lucrative purpose and the national coordinating actor in the areas of oncology and cancer care in Luxembourg. Its activities cover the overall organization of oncology, the development of cancer care pathways, the promotion of the centres of competence, the development of treatment guidelines, the implementation of multidisciplinary tumour boards, and the collaborations with partner institutions abroad. Several actions of the National Cancer Plan 2020-2024 in Luxembourg have been devoted to the INC. Its contacts include the government, the medical and paramedical sector, foundations, professional medical societies, the private sector etc. Its missions strongly align with those of the Horizon Europe programme and with the Mission on Cancer.

For more information visit <https://institutnationalducancer.lu/>

### **About LIH**

The Luxembourg Institute of Health (LIH) is a public biomedical research organization focused on precision health and invested in becoming a leading reference in Europe for the translation of scientific excellence into meaningful benefits for patients. LIH places the patient at the heart of all its activities, driven by a collective obligation towards society to use knowledge and technology arising from research on patient derived data to have a direct impact on people's health. Its dedicated teams of multidisciplinary researchers strive for excellence, generating relevant knowledge linked to immune related diseases and cancer. The institute embraces collaborations, disruptive technology and process innovation as unique opportunities to improve the application of diagnostics and therapeutics with the long-term goal of preventing disease..

For more information visit <https://www.lih.lu/>

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## Partners



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