Follow-up to the European Parliament non-legislative resolution on World Cancer Day

1. **Resolution tabled pursuant to Rules 167(2) and 136(4) of the European Parliament's Rules of procedure**

2. **References:** 2026/2586(RSP) / B10-0112/2026 / P10_TA(2026)0052

3. **Date of adoption of the resolution:** 12 February 2026

4. **Competent Parliamentary Committee:** N/A

5. **Brief analysis/ assessment of the resolution and requests made in it:**

The resolution calls on the Commission and Member States to renew their commitment to fully implement Europe's Beating Cancer Plan (the Cancer Plan)[1] across the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) (**paragraph 2**) and recognise health and cancer care as social investment objectives (**paragraph 4**).

Furthermore, the resolution calls on the Commission and Member States to strengthen EU-level cooperation and funding in paediatric oncology research, data sharing and clinical trials, to boost drug development and access to innovation, to strengthen paediatric and adolescent cancer networks and infrastructure, and to ensure timely cross-border referral through European Reference Networks (**paragraph 6**). It also calls on the Commission, in cooperation with Member States, to facilitate voluntary joint procurement, to promote price transparency, to support earlier market entry and to address allegedly unjustified delays between authorisation by the European Medicines Agency and patient access to cancer drugs and innovative therapies (**paragraph 10**).

Moreover, it calls on the Commission to support Member States in implementing the Council recommendations on cancer screening and vaccine-preventable cancers[2] (**paragraph 11**) and to ensure alignment of and complementarity between the Cancer Plan and future European actions on other disease areas and rare diseases (**paragraph 12**). Additionally, it calls on the Commission and Member States to strengthen evidence-based public communication and support health literacy (**paragraph 14**).

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[1] Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan

[2] Council Recommendation of 9 December 2022 on strengthening prevention through early detection: A new EU approach on cancer screening replacing Council Recommendation 2003/878/EC 2022/C 473/01, Council Recommendation of 21 June 2024 on vaccine-preventable cancers

Finally, it calls on the Commission to step up its efforts to protect cancer survivors across the EU from financial discrimination, including through the effective promotion of the right to be forgotten (RTBF)), and urges the Member States to legislate to enshrine this right nationally (**paragraph 15**).

6. Response to requests and overview of actions taken, or intended to be taken, by the Commission:

The Cancer Plan (adopted in 2021) outlines the work of the Commission in the area of cancer, with its actions spanning across the whole disease cycle (prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment as well as quality of life), while working in tandem with the research-oriented EU Cancer Mission.[3] More than 90% of the Cancer Plan's actions are either ongoing or concluded and the Commission remains dedicated to the Cancer Plan's continued implementation.

Funding, monitoring and national level action

Paragraphs 2 and 4: As regards renewed political commitment to the full implementation of the Cancer Plan throughout the period of the 2028-2034 MFF, the Commission proposed a fundamental redesign of the EU budget, which would include simpler, more streamlined and harmonised Union spending programmes. The proposed European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), representing over EUR 400 billion of the EUR 2 trillion MFF budget, has a very strong focus on healthcare and health technologies. A dedicated policy window on Health, Biotechnology, Agriculture and Bioeconomy has been proposed with an indicative budget of EUR 20.4 billion. In addition to this amount, there is indicatively EUR 19.65 billion earmarked in the Horizon Europe 2028-2034 proposal for collaborative research under this ECF policy window.

The Commission, with its 2028-2034 MFF proposals furthermore aims to bring together EU funds implemented by Member States and regions under one coherent strategy. This strategy is envisaged to be implemented through National and Regional Partnership (NRP) Plans, which will be simpler and more tailored, to maximise the impact of every euro.

The Commission takes due account of Member States' best practices and experience in the implementation of the Cancer Plan and promotes structured exchanges to support the achievement of its objectives, including through the Sub-group on Cancer under the Public Health Expert Group. At the same time, a range of Joint Actions facilitate the systematic sharing of best practices among Member States, including through Networks of Expertise (NoEs) that enhance information exchange across horizontal cancer areas, mapping the current state of national policies and approaches. This has led to seven new cancer-

[3] EU Cancer Mission

related areas of cooperation, covering areas such as complex and poor-prognosis cancers, palliative care, and high-tech medical resources. Furthermore, the newly launched EU Network of Comprehensive Cancer Centres fosters exchange of knowledge, best practices, and research outcomes between these centres.

A single expenditure and performance monitoring system is proposed for all relevant programmes under the new MFF, which will allow for a comprehensive overview of where EU funds are allocated and what they deliver. The Cancer Plan already has a specific annual reporting system in place. The Implementation Roadmap serves as a tool to monitor progress of the Plan, placing its actions on a timeline with deliverables and milestones. The Staff Working Document on the Review of the Cancer Plan published in February 2025 provides a more in-depth analysis of the Plan's implementation. In addition, the Commission will establish a monitoring framework to assess the progress in achieving the Cancer Plan's objectives by the end of 2027.

Paediatric cancer

Paragraph 6: Childhood cancer continues to be top priority for the Commission both under the Cancer Plan, addressing this issue as an overarching theme, and the EU Cancer Mission. The focus includes paediatric oncology research, data sharing and clinical trials, to boost drug development and access to innovation for children and adolescents with cancer, but also to strengthen paediatric and adolescent cancer networks and infrastructure.

Under the Cancer Plan's flagship European Cancer Inequalities Registry (ECIR),[4] the Commission focuses on inequalities inter alia in paediatric cancers within EU Member States, Norway and Iceland. The European Cancer Inequalities Registry helps Member States to direct investments and interventions at national, regional and EU level and includes two indicators on essential medicines and oncology trials for childhood cancers as well as a factsheet on childhood cancers.

The development of medicines targeting paediatric cancers is supported by modernising Regulation (EU) No 1901/2006 (the Paediatric Medicines Regulation)[5] through the new general pharmaceutical legislation[6]. This Regulation requires companies to research new medicines for potential uses in children via paediatric investigation plans agreed with the European Medicines Agency. Under the revised

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4 European Cancer Inequalities Registry

5 Regulation (EC) No 1901/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on medicinal products for paediatric use and amending Regulation (EEC) No 1768/92, Directive 2001/20/EC, Directive 2001/83/EC and Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 (Text with EEA relevance)

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legislation, if scientific evidence indicates that an adult medicine's mechanism of action might be efficacious against a different paediatric disease, the company now must explore this, without exception, as part of the paediatric investigation plan.

Furthermore, the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 536/2014 (Clinical Trials Regulation)[7] through the Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)[8] has strengthened multinational clinical research in the EU by harmonising assessment procedures, improving cooperation between Member States, and increasing transparency. The mandatory publication of trial results, including the dedicated lay summary recommendations with shorter mandatory publication timelines for paediatric clinical trials ensures that results are communicated clearly and promptly to both families and the research community. The implementation of the Clinical Trial Regulation, and its revision through the proposed European Biotech Act[9], will positively impact paediatric cancer research.

The proposed amendments under the European Biotech Act proposal aim to further simplify and accelerate cross-border trials by shortening timelines, enabling parallel assessments, and harmonising data protection rules. The introduction of a single assessment procedure for combined studies - where a clinical trial of a medicine runs alongside an investigation of a medical device or an in vitro diagnostic tool - would support more personalised treatment approaches. Importantly, the reinforced risk-proportionate approach and the introduction of minimal intervention clinical trials, would facilitate treatment optimisation trials.

Furthermore, between 2021–2025, the Cancer Mission has devoted approximately 25% of its budget to children, adolescent and young adults age group. For example, in 2025, EUR 25 million has been committed to support investigator initiated multinational clinical trials for innovative treatments for children and adolescents with cancer.

In addition, EUR 30 million has been earmarked to improve the understanding of how environmental, genetic, epigenetic, and omics factors influence cancer onset, progression, and health outcomes in children, adolescents, and young adults. The UNCAN.eu platform,[10] a flagship initiative of the Cancer Mission and the Cancer Plan, is designed to unlock the full potential of clinical and research data,

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[7] Regulation (EU) No 536/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on clinical trials on medicinal products for human use, and repealing Directive 2001/20/EC

[8] Clinical Trials Information System

[9] Proposal for a Regulation to establish measures to strengthen the Union's biotechnology and biomanufacturing sectors (European Biotech Act)

[10] UNCAN.eu

enabling breakthroughs in understanding cancer initiation and progression. Engagement with children, adolescent and young adult patients, survivors, and caregivers has directly shaped research priorities of the Cancer Mission. To ensure access to innovative and age-appropriate treatments and diagnostics for paediatric cancer, the Commission will furthermore continue supporting the European Reference Network on Paediatric Cancer (ERN PaedCan),[11] which is represented in 27 Member States and Norway.

Furthermore, several actions have been introduced to support the Cancer Plan's flagship 'Helping Children with Cancer Initiative'. These include a Joint Action focusing on paediatric palliative care,[12] along with two initiatives aimed at providing psychosocial support and rehabilitation for children and their families within paediatric oncology clinics. Additionally, the Commission is supporting a follow-up initiative to further expand the EU Network of Youth Cancer Survivors and improve the quality of life for young people affected by cancer.[13]

Access to cancer drugs and innovative therapies

Paragraph 10: The Commission is working on ensuring fair, timely and affordable access to cancer drugs and innovative therapies across the EU. The new general pharmaceutical legislation[14] , on which co-legislators have reached a political agreement in December 2025, furthermore, introduces new mechanisms to support access to medicines in all Member States. This includes a mechanism to allow Member States to signal directly to companies their interest to have supply of a specific new medicinal product and to initiate a process to achieve this result to cover the needs of patients in a specific Member State.

The proposed Critical Medicines Act[15] provides for voluntary collaborative procurement of critical medicines and other medicines of

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[11] European Reference Networks

[12] HOPE4Kids

[13] European Youth Cancer Network

[14] Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL laying down Union procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human use and establishing rules governing the European Medicines Agency, amending Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 536/2014 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 726/2004, Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 and Regulation (EC) No 1901/2006, Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the Union code relating to medicinal products for human use, and repealing Directive 2001/83/EC and Directive 2009/35/EC

15 Proposal for a Critical Medicines Act

common interest, which could include innovative cancer treatments, subject to certain thresholds and criteria.

Respecting national competences, the Commission supports and encourages cooperation between Member States on pricing, reimbursement and procurement policies in the group of National Competent Authorities on Pricing and Reimbursement and Public Healthcare Payers (NCAPR), based on mutual learning and best-practice exchange, to improve the affordability and cost-effectiveness of medicines and health system's sustainability. The Commission is also funding through the EU4Health Programme several activities which aim to foster price transparency and help Member States take better informed pricing and reimbursements decisions. This includes grants for the European Integrated Price Information Database (EURIPID),[16] where Member States voluntarily share information on medicine prices, sales volumes, and the existence of Managed Entry Agreements.

Cancer prevention and early detection

Paragraphs 11 and 14: The Commission aims to ensure a comprehensive approach to health promotion and disease prevention across the life course. Cancer prevention, as well as early detection are key priorities. Part of that is promoting scientifically sound information and ensure that citizens are empowered to make informed health decisions, while fully respecting freedom of expression.

The Commission has made available the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Knowledge Gateway.[17] This online resource provides reliable, independent and up-to date information on key topics related to the promotion of health and the prevention of non-communicable diseases including cancer.

The recent update of the European Code Against Cancer (ECAC)[18] provides a robust framework for tackling misconceptions about cancer and promoting evidence-based public communication. The latest, fifth edition of the Code consists of 14 scientific evidence-based recommendations, on personal behavioural factors, environmental factors, and medical interventions, specific to the general population in the EU. These recommendations cover key areas to reduce cancer risks, including vaccination, cancer screening, and environmental factors such as air pollution.

On top of this, the Commission has taken concrete steps to further support health literacy by funding five projects with an overall EU4Health Programme contribution of over EUR 5 million. These

16 European Integrated Price Information Database

17 Health Promotion Knowledge Gateway

18 European Code Against Cancer

projects aim to increase cancer health literacy by focusing on general health literacy in cancer prevention and care, creating educational content, and developing a cancer-specific literacy tool to guide health literacy campaigns, as well as targeting specific cancers, namely bladder, breast and prostate cancer.

The Commission further focuses on supporting countries in strengthening cancer prevention and early detection efforts. The Commission is providing substantial support to Member States and other stakeholders to implement the 2022 Council Recommendation on cancer screening. The main instrument is the Joint Action EUCanScreen,[19] bringing together 29 countries (25 EU Member States, Iceland, Moldova, Norway and Ukraine), funded with EUR 31 million from the EU4Health Programme. Through the Joint Action, countries are working on improving access to and quality of breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening programmes, and on exploring the introduction of new lung, prostate and gastric cancer screening programmes.

The Joint Action also includes a work package on addressing barriers and facilitators in cancer screening, including also awareness at individual level, of the general population and of more vulnerable groups such as immigrants or people with intellectual disabilities. On top of this, to raise awareness, the Commission supported an EU-wide campaign on the benefits of breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening, running from 2023 to 2025.

The Commission is moreover developing European Guidelines and Quality Assurance Schemes for Cancer Screening, Diagnosis and Care to provide evidence-based guidelines for cancer screening and diagnosis, reflecting the latest scientific developments, together with associated quality assurance schemes for implementation in healthcare settings. The first official version of the European quality assurance scheme for breast cancer services is already available for implementation by breast cancer services.

The Commission also supports Member States in implementing the Council Recommendation on vaccine-preventable cancers. Under the EU4Health Programme, the Commission has committed nearly EUR 20 million to the Joint Action SHIELD (Strategies for Health Interventions to Eliminate Infection related Cancers),[20] which brings together 25 countries (21 EU Member States, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Norway and Ukraine),, supporting them in increasing human papillomavirus (HPV) and hepatitis B (HBV) vaccination coverage, enhancing monitoring systems, and developing comprehensive biomedical prevention programmes targeting HPV, HBV, hepatitis C,

19 EUCanScreen

20 SHIELD-JA

HIV and tuberculosis. Through the Joint Action, the Commission is assisting countries in identifying and addressing structural and individual barriers to vaccination, reducing stigma and discrimination, and strengthening the capacity of health professionals to deliver culturally competent and tailored services, particularly for vulnerable groups.

Communication is also central to EU action on vaccination. The Commission supports access to reliable, science-based and multilingual information through the European Vaccination Information Portal[21] and targeted campaigns such as #UnitedInProtection.[22] In addition, EU agencies - notably the European Medicines Agency and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control - play a key role by ensuring transparent communication on vaccine authorisation, safety and monitoring. These efforts are fully aligned with the Council Recommendation on vaccine-preventable cancers.

Building on this framework, the Commission supported the development of a Communication Model for Building Awareness and Countering Misinformation and Disinformation on HPV and HBV Vaccination,[23] published in February 2026, which provides practical guidance to Member States for evidence-based public communication. Through the Joint Action SHIELD, this model will be translated into concrete awareness-raising campaigns promoting HPV and HBV vaccination as effective cancer prevention tools.

Alignment of and complementarity with European actions

Paragraph 12: To maximise impact of its actions, the Commission is focused on ensuring strong alignment of and complementarity between the Cancer Plan and EU actions on disease areas, including on cardiovascular diseases and on rare diseases. For example, learnings from the European Reference Networks (ERNs) on cancer were integrated into the governance and functioning of the new Networks of Expertise under the Cancer Plan. European Reference Networks furthermore participate in the Networks of Expertise to ensure coordination. Furthermore, the Safe Hearts Plan builds on actions linked to non-communicable diseases, including the Cancer Plan and its actions on prevention, screening, integrated care pathways and on health inequalities. Concrete examples include the 5th update of the European Code Against Cancer and the EU cardiovascular health inequalities dashboard modelled on the European Cancer Inequalities Registry**.**

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[21] European Vaccination Information Portal

[22] #UnitedInProtection

[23] Communication Model for Building Awareness and Countering Misinformation and Disinformation on HPV and HBV Vaccination

Right to be forgotten

Paragraph 15: The Cancer Plan has played a crucial role in placing the right to be forgotten high on the agenda. It brought cancer organisations, the medical community and the insurance sector together to engage in dialogue on a code of conduct on cancer patients' fair access to financial services. Furthermore, the new Consumer Credit Directive[24] in 2023 marked the first integration of the right to be forgotten in EU legislation by prohibiting the use of a person's cancer history for insurance policies related to consumer credit agreements after a maximum period, calculated from the end of medical treatment. Member States must begin applying this measure from 20 November 2026.

In 2026, the Commission intends to present guidance to financial undertakings on offering cancer patients' fair access to financial services.[25] Work on developing this guidance will build on the work already carried out by cancer survivor organisations, medical organisations and the insurance industry representatives. Finally, the Commission will carefully assess how the Consumer Credit Directive is implemented in all Member States and draw lessons from its implementation.

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[24] Directive (EU) 2023/2225 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 on credit agreements for consumers and repealing Directive 2008/48/EC

[25] Joint statement by Commissioners Várhelyi and Albuquerque on World Cancer Day and the 'right to be forgotten'