The cancer burden in the European Union and the European Region: the current situation and a way forward

Presented by

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Added value of the European Union (EU) in cancer control

The EU has experience in promoting joint initiatives; renewed leadership could give it the impulse needed really to make a difference in citizens’ lives.
Epidemiological situation of cancer in Europe

Summary of main trends

- Cancer mortality accounts for nearly 20% of all deaths in the WHO European Region.
- After cardiovascular diseases (CVD), cancer is the second leading cause of death overall.
- Cancer is becoming the leading cause of premature death (before age 65) in many European countries (28 of the 53 in the Region).
- Although effective interventions exist, mortality from some forms of cancer is either increasing or remaining stable.
Lung cancer is the main cause of cancer deaths overall, followed by colon cancer, but breast cancer mortality is important among women.

There is concern about rising trends in lung cancer mortality in EU-12 countries (those belonging to the EU before May 2004) and among women in the EU as a whole.

Lung cancer mortality rates at regional level in the EU are higher in poorest areas (NUTS2 level – nomenclature of territorial units for statistics level 2).
Epidemiological situation of cancer in Europe: incidence and survival

- An estimated 2.45 million new cancer cases occur in the EU every year.
- Incidence is increasing with ageing of the population.
- Increasing trends are particularly high in EU-12 countries, but data tend to be sparse.
- Five-year survival for breast, colon and cervical cancer is high (over 50%), and has improved, in contrast with that for lung cancer, which has remained low (around 10%).
Mortality from cancer by sex and age groups in the European Region, around 2007

- Age group (years): 0-14, 15-29, 30-44, 45-59, 60-74, 75+
- Standardized rate (deaths per 100,000 population)
- Total, Male, Female

Graph showing mortality rates per 100,000 population by age group for males and females.


Note. CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States.
Cancer incidence per 100 000 population

Mortality from main types of cancer by European subregion, around 2007

SDR, malignant neoplasm of trachea, bronchus and lung per 100000


Lung cancer mortality rates in the EU and neighbouring countries around 2005–2007

Trachea, bronchus and lung cancer incidence per 100 000

Lung cancer incidence and deaths


* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
SDR, females, malignant neoplasm of breast, per 100 000

Female breast cancer incidence and deaths


* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
SDR, females, malignant neoplasm of cervix uteri, per 100 000


Female cervical cancer incidence and deaths


* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
Integrated action plan on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)

Population-wide health promotion to tackle the main NCD risk factors:

- Tobacco
- Poor diet
- Excessive alcohol intake
- Physical inactivity
Early detection

- Mammography
- Cervical cancer screening
- Colorectal cancer

... already introduced in all countries, although target populations and recommended frequency vary considerably.

... screening introduced in only a few countries in the European Region.
Cancer research across Europe

- Need for coordinated and comprehensive cancer registries across the EU, covering (a representative sample of) all populations

- Latest data on EU-wide cancer incidence and mortality are incomplete and outdated

- Thorough review of European directives on research and data protection
Regional leadership, technical excellence and synergistic collaboration among partners

With political leadership from the EU and Member States, and technical leadership from WHO, cancer control can make real progress in the coming years.
Thank you…
Merci beaucoup…
Dank u wel…