

THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF WOMEN'S HEALTH

# Women's Health Matters



September 2009

## Launch of the European Partnership for Action against Cancer

The European Commission is launching the **European Partnership for Action against Cancer** on 29 September 2009 in Brussels. This high-profile event will be opened by the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso and hosted by Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou.

**The European Institute of Women's Health** welcomes the Commission's initiative to launch an ambitious programme to combat cancer across the EU and its member states. Cancer is on the increase largely due to the progressive ageing of the European population. This trend will continue - if not accelerate - in the absence of robust prevention measures. The Cancer Partnership is a timely initiative for protecting family health and women's health. Women share a large part of the cancer burden, not only because of their own specific cancers, but also as carers of family members and children with cancer. Women on average outlive men by 5 years and make up a larger proportion of the older population. Cancer causes a quarter of the deaths in European women and is the second main cause of death in older women after heart disease.

Some cancers such as **breast, cervical and ovarian** have a particular impact on women. We now have the knowledge to address cervical and breast cancer through robust public health measures for prevention, screening and early detection. While in the case of ovarian cancer, still one of the most intractable diseases that attack women, more medical research and European collaboration is badly needed.

*"Prevention and screening of cervical and early detection of breast cancer can save many women's lives and healthcare resources. This is why we need Europe-wide screening programmes targeted a women",* says Peggy Maguire, Director General of the EIWH.

The "**Communication Action Against Cancer: European Partnership**" broadly sets out the objectives for the initiative in which all relevant stakeholders are invited to join.

The overarching aim is to encourage and support EU member states in their efforts to tackle cancer by providing a framework. This is needed to identify and share information, capacity and expertise in cancer prevention and control. With an ambitious target to **reduce new cancer cases by 15% by 2020**, we are hopeful that the initiative receives wide ranging commitment and support that will save many patients' lives.

*"We are grateful that Commission has taken such an innovative Partnership approach to tackle cancer more forcefully across all countries of the European Union. Given this unique opportunity to reduce the burden of cancer, our organization calls on our government, politicians, policymakers and all stakeholders and sectors of society to participate and work together as partners",* says Hildrun Sundseth, EIWH Board member.

The EIWH stands ready to contribute our part to help reduce the burden of cancer across the EU once the Partnership develops its actions.

For more information about the Cancer Partnership and the Communication in all EU languages

See [http://ec.europa.eu/health/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/index_en.htm)  
[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_information/dissemination/diseases/cancer\\_partnership\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_information/dissemination/diseases/cancer_partnership_en.htm)

## **About the European Institute of Women's Health**

Founded in 1996, the European Institute of Women's Health, EIWH, has a track record in promoting gender equity in health, research and social policies across Europe. The EIWH continues to work to improve women's and family health and promote equity in access to treatment and care.

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