
EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR MEDICAL ONCOLOGY

— **Oncology in the EU and globally:
The role of ESMO at a glance**

ESMO'S KEY VISION FOR THE 2019 - 2024 EU MANDATE

Creating European policies that make the most of Europe's unique ability to tackle cross-border healthcare challenges

Fostering a European Union that supports Member States to deliver the best possible cancer care

Facilitating equal access to optimal cancer care to all patients and continuing to tackle cancer's evolving challenges

OUR PRIORITIES



1. ONE ONCOLOGY COMMUNITY

Cancer professionals grow together in a community that fosters inclusion across disciplines and geographical borders to cater to their diverse needs.



2. EDUCATION FOR LIFE

Oncologists everywhere are supported in their development through continuous education that helps them keep up with standards of cancer care and advances in the field.



3. ACCESSIBLE CANCER CARE:

People around the world benefit equally from reliable cancer care built on a concerted global effort to create sustainable models of prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR MEDICAL ONCOLOGY

ESMO is the leading professional organisation for medical oncology. Comprising over **25,000 oncology professionals** from over **160 countries**, ESMO is the society of reference for oncology education and information at European and global levels.

ESMO MISSION

- Improve the **quality of prevention**, diagnosis, treatment, supportive and **palliative care**, as well as the follow-up of patients with malignant diseases
- Advance the art, science, **recognition**, and **practice of oncology**
- **Disseminate knowledge** to cancer patients and the public
- **Educate** and train people involved in clinical cancer care and research
- Ensure a high standard of **qualification of medical oncologists** within the **multidisciplinary team**
- Promote **equal access to optimal cancer care** for all cancer patients

KEY ESMO INITIATIVES IN PUBLIC POLICY

MEDICINES SHORTAGES

- **Shortages of inexpensive essential medicines** are a growing public health emergency that requires a concerted and collaborative action at EU level.
- Given that cancer is highly affected by shortages of these inexpensive medicines, ESMO decided to prioritise the issue and published a report on **Cancer Medicines Shortages** as well as 5 Country profiles on Germany, Bulgaria, Romania, Belgium and Finland, in collaboration with the Economist Intelligence Unit.
- In April 2019, ESMO launched a **Call to Action**, supported by 20 MEPs and 16 stakeholders, calling for political commitments to tackle inexpensive essential medicines shortages at EU level.
- ESMO highlighted the need to address shortages in its responses to consultations on the EU Pharmaceutical Strategy.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/Policy/Inexpensive-Essential-Cancer-Medicines-Shortages

CLINICAL GUIDELINES

- Clinical practice guidelines are crucial for oncologists to deliver the highest standard of care to their patients.
- The **ESMO Clinical Practice Guidelines** are intended to provide oncology professionals with a set of recommendations for the best standards of cancer care, based on the findings of **evidence-based medicine**.
- ESMO prepares robust guidelines including information on the incidence of the malignancy, diagnostic criteria, staging of disease and risk assessment, treatment plans and follow-up designed to help oncologists deliver an appropriate **quality of care** to their patients.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/Guidelines

CLINICAL TRIALS

- Robust clinical trial frameworks are fundamental for developing new, effective and sustainable treatments for all diseases.
- The **Clinical Trials Regulation (CTR)** is an important legislation that paves the way for creating a suitable environment to **facilitate effective clinical cancer research** in Europe.
- ESMO, along with the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer and the European Association of Cancer Research, has created a forum to discuss the implementation of the CTR and its effect on academic clinical studies (non-commercial research): **Clinical Academic Cancer Research Forum (CAREFOR)**.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/Policy/Political-Initiatives/Clinical-Trials-Regulation

RARE CANCERS

- With **24% of all new cancer diagnoses being rare**, ESMO established Rare Cancers Europe (RCE), a multistakeholder partnership to advocate for better policies on rare cancers, in 2008.
- A **39 partner-strong multistakeholder partnership** bringing together scientific societies, patient and research organisations, healthcare and education providers, and the industry.
- RCE works to overcome the **unique challenges faced by the rare cancer community**, to place the issue of rare cancers firmly on the European policy agenda, to identify and promote appropriate solutions and to **exchange best practices**.
- RCE will work towards the implementation of the Rare Cancer Agenda 2030: Ten Recommendations from the **EU Joint Action on Rare Cancers**.
- For more information: www.rarecancerseurope.org/

BIOSIMILARS

- **Biosimilars** are medicinal products containing a similar version of the active substance of their biological originator or reference product and are derived from living organisms.
- With many **expensive cancer medicines** coming off patent, ESMO believes that biosimilars present a necessary and timely opportunity as they can positively impact the financial sustainability of healthcare systems while improving access to medicines for patients. This view has been laid down in ESMO's Position Paper on Biosimilars.
- In order to raise awareness about biosimilars and build confidence among the community, ESMO launched a **Biosimilars Portal**, containing information on the science, regulation, education and resources for patients (including an infographic) on biosimilars.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/policy/biosimilarsportal

PRECISION MEDICINE

- **Precision medicine** is an integral part of cancer care.
- To contribute to its development, ESMO created the **ESMO Scale for Clinical Actionability of molecular Targets (ESCAT)**.
- ESCAT aims to optimise patient care by making it easier to identify patients with cancer who are likely to respond to precision medicines, and help make treatment more **cost effective**.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/policy/esmo-scale-for-clinical-actionability-of-molecular-targets-escat

EDUCATION

- **Specialised education** is one of ESMO's priorities. With the aim of supporting oncologists in a fast-changing professional environment, ESMO organises world-leading oncology conferences, where the best and most relevant research is presented.
- Within Europe and globally, ESMO provides **tailored educational programmes for all**, ranging from medical student courses to advanced courses for specialised oncologists and specific regional programmes.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/meetings

PATIENT SUPPORT

- Patients are the driving force and inspiration behind all ESMO's activities.
- ESMO created the **ESMO Patient Advocates Working Group (PAWG)** to ensure that the voice of cancer patients is appropriately incorporated into ESMO's activities. The working group serves as a platform and connector to the wider Cancer Patient Advocacy community.
- Each year ESMO, together with the PAWG, organises the **ESMO Patient Advocacy Track**: a full educational track that addresses topics which are particularly relevant to the Cancer Advocacy Community.
- ESMO also publishes the **ESMO Patient Guides** which are specifically designed to assist patients to better understand the nature of different types of cancer and evaluate the best available treatment choices.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/for-patients

HIGH QUALITY MEDICINES



- ESMO created the **ESMO-Magnitude of Clinical Benefit Scale (ESMO-MCBS)**.
- This is a tool that helps to assess the value of cancer care and prioritise medicines and also address the challenges of the appropriate use of limited resources to **deliver cost-effective and affordable cancer care**.
- This tool is being used by various countries across the world, to assess new cancer medicines.
- ESMO is working towards the development of a **geographically-adapted value-based reimbursement model**.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/Policy/ESMO-MCBS
- For more information: <https://www.esmo.org/policy/accessibility-and-availability-of-medicines>

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION



- Data protection regulations must support **patient privacy**, while also allowing medical advancements through retrospective research.
- ESMO stresses the need for **harmonisation across countries** and is committed to helping EU institutions and individual Member States protect the future of health research.
- ESMO contributed throughout the adoption of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), advocating for the inclusion of a **withdrawable 'one-time consent'** from patients, subject to strict safeguards, allowing their data and tissues to be used for future retrospective clinical research.
- For more information: www.esmo.org/Policy/Political-Initiatives/EU-General-Data-Protection-Regulation

KEY ESMO INITIATIVES IN PUBLIC POLICY - CONTINUED

PUBLIC POLICY WEBINARS

The ESMO Public Policy Webinars were launched in 2021 and provide timely information on important topics in European and global public health policy that impact the oncology community.

For more information: <https://www.esmo.org/policy/esmo-public-policy-webinars>

CANCER PREVENTION INITIATIVES

Cancer prevention is the most cost-effective long-term strategy to reduce the cancer burden. ESMO resources and collaborative initiatives with other organisations include:

- **ESMO Cancer Prevention Portal** with resources on science, education, policy and regulation, and patient information.
- ESMO is supporting the International Agency for Research in its development of the, **IARC World Cancer Report Updates'** learning platform.
- ESMO supports and promotes WHO's annual **World No Tobacco Day**.

For more information: <https://www.esmo.org/policy/cancer-prevention2>

For more information: <https://www.esmo.org/policy/cancerpreventionportal-iarc-world-cancer-report-updates-learning-platform>

DECIDE - HEALTH DECISION HUB

Decide – Health Decision Hub is hosted by the World Health Organization. It is the **global health network** that supports **evidence-based decision making** in health to secure **value for money** across health systems through collaborative ventures.

ESMO is a member of the Decide Steering Group, which also includes the World Health Organization, the European Healthcare and Hospital Federation (HOPE), the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), the International Network of HTA Agencies (INAHTA), and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).

For more information: <https://decidehealth.world/>



ESMO CALL TO ACTION ON COVID-19 VACCINATIONS AND PATIENTS WITH CANCER: VACCINATE. MONITOR. EDUCATE.

On 8 January 2021, ESMO launched a Call to Action to underscore the importance of vaccinating early all patients with cancer, especially those on active anticancer treatment. Supported by over 50 organisations, the Call reflects the oncology community's unified voice towards early vaccinations.

THE ESMO CALL TO ACTION REQUESTS MEMBER STATES TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- 1 VACCINATE ALL CANCER PATIENTS**
in line with the WHO principles and objectives aiming to reduce deaths and disease burden. Patients with active disease or receiving anticancer treatment deserve an additional priority in case of limitations only.
- 2 DILIGENTLY COLLECT DATA**
via suitable studies and registries to monitor the effects of vaccines in the vulnerable population, including patients with cancer and their immune response.
- 3 EDUCATE AND INSTIL CONFIDENCE**
among the public and patients in receiving the vaccines and provide them with up-to date information in lay language.

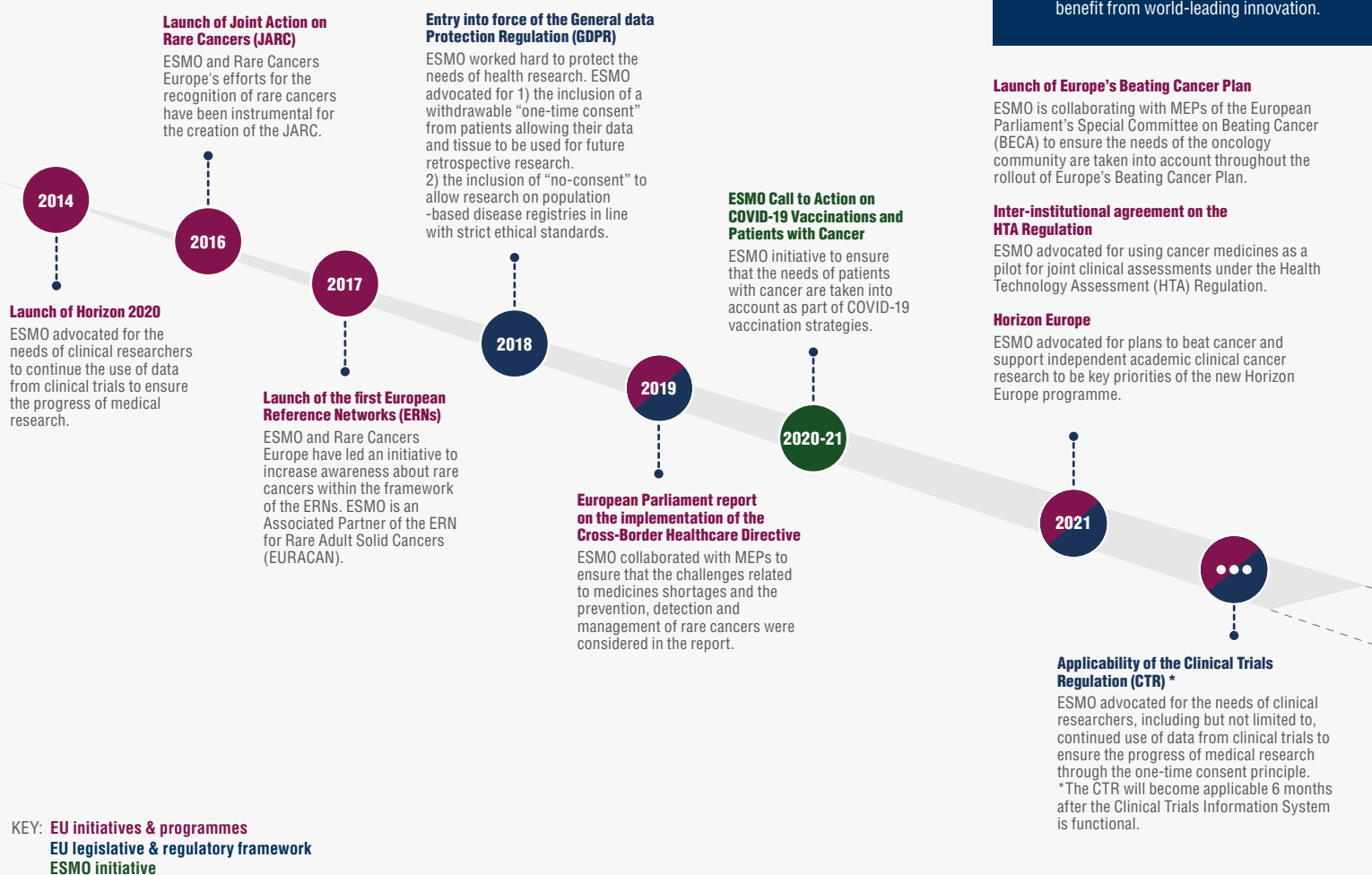


To date, the Call to Action has been endorsed by 53 organisations, including healthcare professional and patient organisations, and it has been instrumental in shaping national vaccination strategies, thus benefitting patients with cancer

For more information: <https://www.esmo.org/policy/esmo-call-to-action-on-covid-19-vaccinations-and-patients-with-cancer-vaccinate-monitor-educate>

ESMO CONTRIBUTED TO THE MOST RECENT KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CANCER COMMUNITY

ESMO collaborates on a regular basis with key bodies and stakeholders such as the European Medicines Agency (EMA), European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA) and World Health Organization (WHO) to advance cancer research and ensure appropriate access to cancer treatment.



A FEW RELEVANT HEALTH INITIATIVES FOR THE 2019-2024 EU MANDATE

Revision of Orphan Medicinal Products Regulation & Paediatric Regulation.
 The review of these two pieces of legislation will be of paramount importance for the future of cancer patients and it is crucial that all oncology stakeholders are involved in the development of policies that will ensure patients continue to benefit from world-leading innovation.

Proposal for Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Regulation
 Unifying HTA across Europe requires a common approach on the clinical effectiveness of medicines. Amongst many other initiatives, ESMO has developed the ESMO-Magnitude of Clinical Benefit Scale (ESMO-MCBS) that prioritises medicines, to deliver cost-effective and affordable cancer care.

Horizon Europe & European Joint Programme on Rare Diseases

The allocation of funds to areas of key unmet need will be a defining moment in the EU's research legacy. The research efforts must be done in collaboration with stakeholders across the healthcare spectrum to improve the lives of rare disease patients.

Cancer Mission under Horizon Europe

Under the Horizon Europe framework, a specific cancer mission will set common goals to improve cancer prevention, early diagnosis and quality of life during and after treatment.

Europe's Beating Cancer Plan

The launch of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan in 2021 will support EU Member States in tackling the entire disease pathway, from prevention and early detection to treatment and quality of life of cancer patients and survivors.

European medicines agencies network strategy to 2025

The European medicines agencies network strategy to 2025 sets the goals and challenges of the EMA and HMA (Heads of Medicines Agencies). From improving access to medicines to overcoming supply chain challenges, this is a crucial document for all stakeholders in healthcare, including the oncology community.

Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe

The Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe aims to provide people across the EU with equal access to safe, state-of-the-art and affordable therapies through the creation of a system promoting patient access to medicines and innovation in areas of unmet needs.

ESMO CONTRIBUTED TO KEY GLOBAL RESOLUTIONS, STRATEGIES, AND REPORTS RELATED TO CANCER

Since receiving “official relations status” with WHO in 2013, ESMO collaborates on WHO projects to facilitate implementation of the WHO Cancer Resolution to reduce the burden of cancer worldwide. Ongoing projects include scaling up national cancer control plans, optimising the cancer workforce, increasing access to cancer medicines, improving patient outcomes, promoting cancer prevention and healthy lifestyles, and raising awareness of WHO norms and guidance to ESMO members and partners worldwide. Through ESMO’s “special consultative status” with the United Nation’s Economic and Social Council, ESMO participates in the work and meetings of the United Nations.

WHO Official Relations Status

ESMO has “official relations status” with WHO, a privilege that the WHO Executive Board grants to organisations that continually support the WHO and its mission.

2013

2014

WHO Resolution on Palliative Care

ESMO advocated to ensure the provision of evidence-based, cost-effective, and equitable palliative care services, including medicines for legitimate medical use to relieve unnecessary suffering worldwide.

2017

WHO Cancer Resolution

ESMO strongly supported the Cancer Resolution and its recommended actions to reduce cancer deaths by 25% by 2025 and 33% by 2030, as well as work towards universal health coverage by 2030.

2018

WHO Technical Report

The WHO Report references the ESMO-MCBS as a tool to facilitate the benefit assessment process of cancer medicines to be considered for the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines. It cites ESMO surveys as representing “the most comprehensive assessment on the availability of cancer medicines globally”.

WHO Report on Addressing the Global Shortage of, and Access to, Medicines and Vaccines

ESMO raised awareness with WHO Members States of the ESMO recommendations on how to prevent and manage shortages of cancer medicines.

UN Political Declaration on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs)

ESMO’s public statement to the UN supported the successful inclusion in the UN Political Declaration on NCDs of government actions necessary to reduce the burden of cancer.

2019

WHO Model List of Essential Medicines

ESMO successfully recommended cancer medicines and biosimilars which were added to the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines.

WHO Roadmap for Access to Medicines, Vaccines and other Health Products, 2019-2023

ESMO requested governments to ensure access to essential medicines for primary and secondary levels of health care where cancer patients are treated, and for palliative care services to be available to everyone who needs them.

UN Political Declaration on Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

ESMO called on governments to guarantee that UHC benefits include a core set of comprehensive services for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and palliative care of cancer, delivered by an adequate and well-trained workforce.

2020

WHO COVID-19 Response Resolution

ESMO urged governments to secure the availability of essential cancer and palliative services during COVID-19, and to protect healthcare professionals and people with pre-existing conditions such as cancer.

WHO Cervical Cancer Elimination Resolution

ESMO contributed to the WHO Global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem with technical input for the management of invasive cervical cancer.

ESMO “Special Consultative Status” with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Special Consultative Status was granted to ESMO and allows ESMO to participate in and support the work of the United Nations.

WHO Report on Cancer

The WHO Report on Cancer acknowledges WHO-ESMO collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Kazakhstan to review the country’s cancer treatment standards, which resulted in optimising treatment protocols, linking them to the national essential medicines list, and supporting the country’s UHC programme.

2021

WHO Resolution on Protecting, Safeguarding and Investing in the Health and Care Workforce

ESMO called on governments to protect and invest in the health workforce and supported WHO’s 2021 International Year of Health and Care Workers.

WHO Resolution on Social Determinants of Health

ESMO urged governments to address the social determinants of health in national policies. ESMO supported the IARC webinar on “Socioeconomic Disparities and Cancer” to highlight their impact.

For more information:

www.esmo.org/policy/world-health-organization-united-nations

GET IN TOUCH WITH US

Who Are We?

Founded in 1975, ESMO is the leading professional organisation for medical oncology. Comprising over 25,000 oncology professionals from over 160 countries, we are the society of reference for oncology education and information at European and global levels.

Questions?

Please feel free to get in touch should you have any questions concerning ESMO, oncology in the European Union or any of the files mentioned in this brochure.

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