



Institut
National du
Cancer

LUXEMBOURG

Annual Report

2024

LET'S ACT
today for tomorrow's
healthcare!

Preface by the
President and the
Director of the Institut
National du Cancer

THE YEAR 2024

The year 2024 was a pivotal moment for cancer control in Luxembourg and for the Institut National du Cancer (INC). The official recognition of the INC as a non-profit organisation of public utility has strengthened our mandate as a neutral, trusted partner to public authorities, healthcare providers, researchers and patient organisations. It confirms our mission: to serve all people affected by cancer in Luxembourg through better coordination, higher quality of care and a stronger link between practice, research and innovation.

This Activity Report highlights three major dynamics. First, the consolidation of national governance of cancer care: support to the implementation of the second National Cancer Plan (PNC2), the development of national guidelines and patient pathways, and the growing role of national multidisciplinary tumour boards, particularly for rare, complex and poor-prognosis cancers. Second, the structuring of key infrastructures and collaborations: the Framework Collaboration Agreement signed with our main clinical, diagnostic, research and rehabilitation partners, and the progress made towards a national cancer collection and more robust digital tools. Third, the deeper integration of Luxembourg into the European cancer policy landscape, through active participation in joint actions and projects under Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and the EU Mission on Cancer.

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At the heart of these developments lies a clear ambition: to place patients and their families at the centre of decisions, from diagnosis to survivorship and palliative care. We are committed to ensuring that every patient, wherever they are treated, can benefit from coordinated, transparent and equitable care.

We would like to thank the Ministry of Health and Social Security, our hospital and research partners, rehabilitation and diagnostic centres, professional societies, cancer foundations, patient organisations and all members of our boards and working groups. Our gratitude also goes to the INC staff for their professionalism and dedication.

Together, we will continue to build a comprehensive, resilient and patient-centred cancer system for Luxembourg.

Dr. Guy Berchem
President

Dr. Nikolai Goncharenko
Director

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The Institut National du Cancer

We are a Luxembourg non-profit association, recognized as a public utility, founded on June 25, 2015. The INC is mandated by the Ministry of Health and whose ambition is to federate and animate the actors of cancerology, but also to frame and structure all the fields of prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and end-of-life care.

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We act as a committed and determined pivotal force in the fight against cancer and in support care.

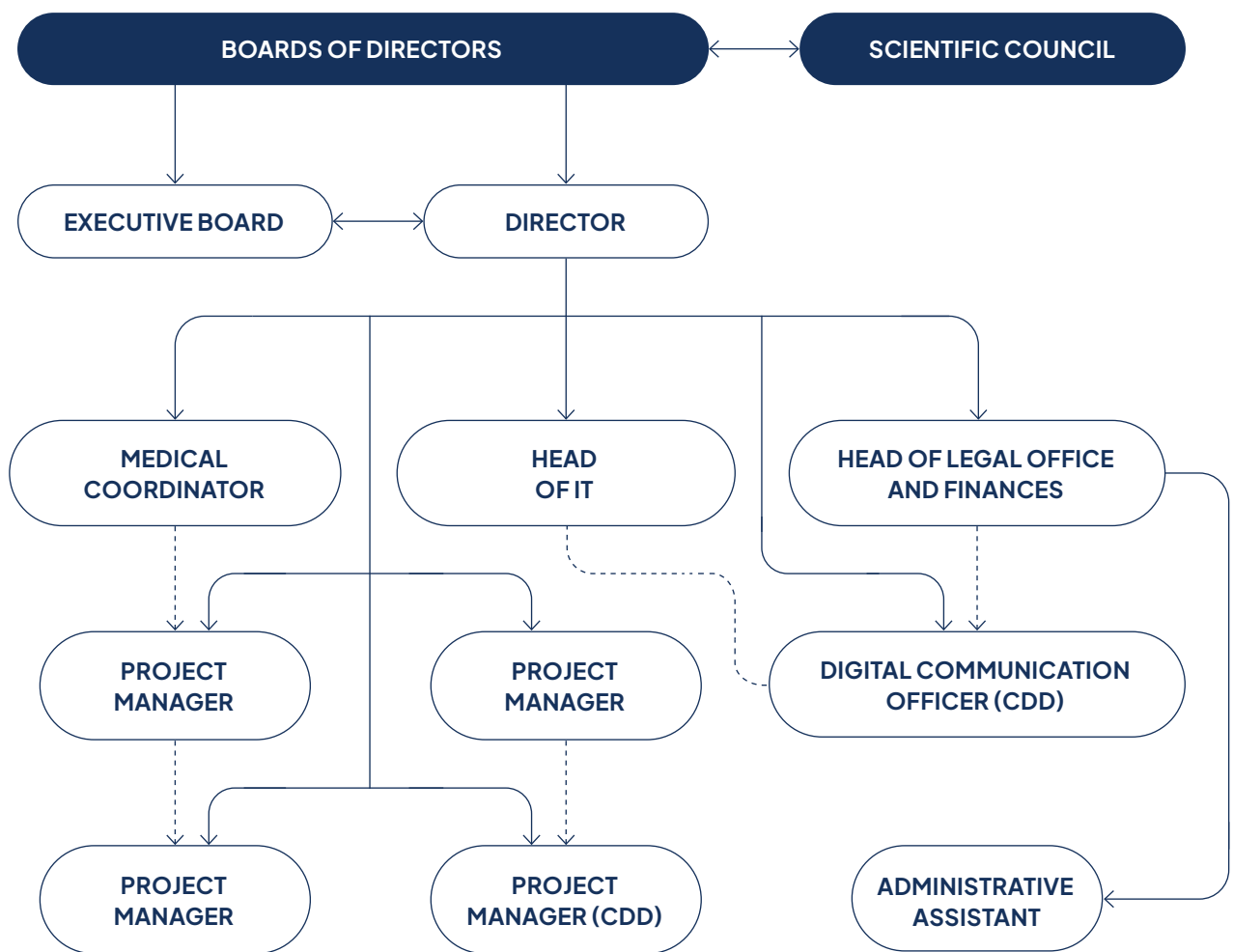
We work with integrity and neutrality to bring together healthcare professionals, label care providers and disseminate our recommendations for the benefit of patients, to harmonize best practice.

As a vehicle for humanist values, we encourage research with the overall aim of opening up, collaborating and sharing knowledge at national and international level.

INC organization chart

The INC's management bodies include the Board of Directors, the Scientific Council and the Executive Board.

At the end of 2024, the operational team in charge of project management and administrative tasks consisted of 9 people (including 6 full-time permanent positions and 3 fixed-term positions, 2 of which were half-time).



Our missions

PROMOTE

outcome-based evaluation of cancer care

SUPPORT

the introduction of “personalised medicine” (new approaches to diagnosis and treatment)

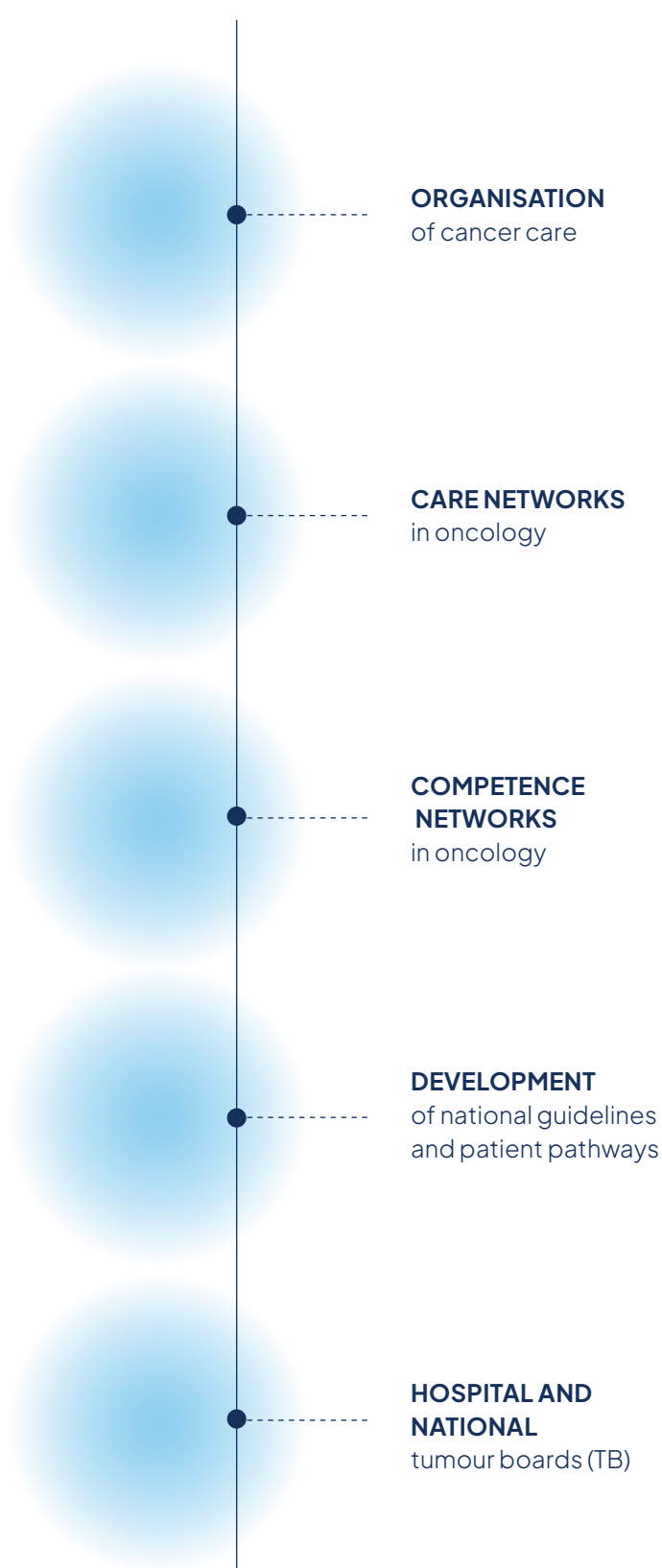
FEDERATE

inform and provide scientific leadership for the actors in the field of oncology and cancer care

SUPPORT

the certification of healthcare providers in oncology

COORDINATE



Main activities 2024

GRANTING

of public utility status to the INC

PARTICIPATION

in the PNC2 working groups

EVOLUTION

of the INC's IT environment

NEW

brand design for communications

REDESIGN

of the new website with a view to its launch in 2025

DEVELOPMENT

of national Tomour boards for rare cancers, cancers with a poor prognosis and complex situations

ELABORATION

and updating of national guidelines and patient pathways

LAUNCHING

of a project to improve cancer diagnosis in Luxembourg

SETTING UP

a "Lung Cancer Network" as part of the European CraNE initiative

COORDINATION

of hospital cancer service accreditation activities

COORDINATION

of the implementation of the National Cancer Collection (NCC)

COORDINATION

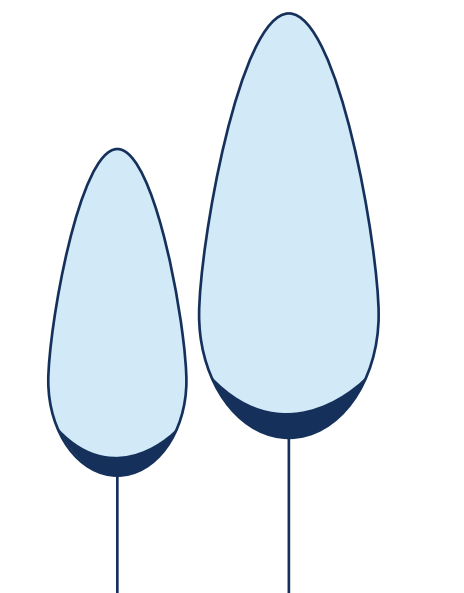
of WGs relating to the publication of the next national report

DEVELOPMENT

of collaborations and participation in European projects

ORGANIZATION

of and participation in conferences, events and round tables



INC obtains public utility status

UPDATE ON INC'S LEGAL STATUS, ROLE AND COMPETENCIES

This year, redefining INC's status, roles and missions remains an important milestone. Ongoing work on the INC's legal framework and associated terms and conditions has followed on from the 2023 activities of the second National Cancer Plan 2020–2026 (NCP2), and more specifically those developed within Axis 1 - Governance, Resources, Monitoring and Reporting. A specialized law firm has been engaged for this work.

On July 27, 2024, by means of a Grand Ducal decree, the not-for-profit organization was already granted the status of non-profit organization of public utility by the Ministry of Justice, which is a first significant step in strengthening the recognition, role and competencies of the INC.

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National Cancer Plan (PNC2)

PARTICIPATION IN PNC2 WORKING GROUPS

Luxembourg's PNC2 is structured around several strategic axes aimed at improving the fight against cancer. In 2024, the INC played a central role in implementing the PNC2, coordinating actions, developing guidelines and ensuring the quality of oncology care in Luxembourg. The INC has taken an active role in all the working groups (WG), particularly in the activities and progress of the following projects:

- The INC continues to coordinate and moderate the activities of Axis 1 of the PNC2.

- The "Carnet Oncologique Partagé" project (Axis 2 - eMedicine) is a highly promising initiative aimed at improving the management of medical records for cancer patients in Luxembourg. By completely dematerializing the oncology file, this project ensures the portability of medical information across all the country's healthcare establishments. With the patient's consent, authorized practitioners will be able to access up-to-date, secure medical information in real time. This will greatly optimize patient care, facilitating care coordination and ensuring continuity of treatment. The specifications for this project are currently being finalized and will be sent to partners in 2025.

- Coordination of the “Announcing a Cancer Diagnosis” project in Luxembourg, in collaboration with the partners of Axis 3 - Patient Rights, Information & Training. In 2025, this project will be interconnected with the other major initiative of this axis: the Luxembourg Cancer Information Platform. These actions illustrate the PNC2’s commitment to placing patients at the heart of the healthcare system, by guaranteeing their rights, facilitating access to transparent information and encouraging their active participation in decisions concerning their health.
- The “National Cancer Collection” project as part of Axis 8 (see dedicated section below).

In 2025, the advances made by the PNC2 will reinforce a more connected, accessible and patient-centric approach to oncology care. Professionals will now have tools to optimize continuity of care and access to reliable information. Support for patients and their families is improving, guaranteeing greater transparency and support. Research and innovation are progressing, contributing to a better understanding and management of cancer. These consolidated efforts place the patient at the heart of the Luxembourg healthcare system.

Digital modernization

EVOLUTION OF INC’S IT ENVIRONMENT AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The INC has considerably strengthened its IT security thanks to LuxITH’s expertise. All sensitive files are now stored on encrypted servers, guaranteeing maximum data protection. In line with IT security standards

for healthcare establishments in Luxembourg, the INC ensures a high level of compliance and security. In addition, its infrastructure is now capable of hosting sensitive applications in the future. A web platform has also been set up, offering a dynamic website with transactional functionalities.

Communications strategy

In 2024, the INC deployed its communications strategy, developed in 2023, aimed at strengthening its brand image and visibility. This strategy is based on a multidimensional approach, integrating digital tools, as well as targeted communication with healthcare professionals and the general public. This initiative began with the overhaul of its graphic charter, modernizing its visual identity to better reflect its central role in the fight against cancer.

UPDATING THE INC'S BRAND DESIGN

As part of the implementation of its new communications strategy, in 2024 the INC undertook a redesign of its brand identity, including an update of the logo and colors. This work was carried out taking into account the specificities of its different target audiences - patients, healthcare professionals, researchers, etc. - while respecting the graphic codes of the industry. - while respecting the graphic codes of the medical and healthcare sector. The aim was to create a modern and coherent visual identity, reflecting the INC's values and missions. The update was also intended to prepare for the redesign of the website and information platform on cancer in Luxembourg, ensuring an optimal user experience and enhancing the accessibility of information.

REDESIGN OF THE INC WEBSITE AND CREATION OF THE INFORMATION PLATFORM FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

In 2024, the INC launched the redesign of its website, in line with its communication strategy drawn up in 2023 and with a view to providing comprehensive information on the INC's cancer activities (and those of its partners) to its various target audiences.

This redesign is a step towards the creation, in 2025, of a dedicated cancer information platform for patients and their families in Luxembourg. The updated website aims to improve access to information, with a modernized and more intuitive interface. It will form the basis for the development of the platform, which will eventually offer comprehensive, up-to-date resources to support patients throughout their care journey. This platform project is part of the INC's commitment to making information more accessible and providing better support for people affected by cancer.

Multidisciplinary tumour boards

DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL TUMOUR BOARDS FOR RARE CANCERS, CANCERS WITH A POOR PROGNOSIS AND COMPLEX SITUATIONS

In 2024, INC continued to play a central role in structuring and coordinating national tumour boards, consolidating and expanding its initiatives.

Following on from the preparatory work carried out in 2023, the national RCP for pancreatic cancers and complex cancers of the hepatobiliary system was launched on January 9, 2024. This tumour board benefits from the expertise of a specialist in hepatobiliary surgery and abdominal organ transplantation from CHU de Liège, who collaborates with the INC. In addition, a rotation system for moderators from the various participating hospitals has been set up.

Coordination activities for the national lung tumour board were launched as part of the establishment of the national lung cancer network. The first session was held on April 17, 2024, establishing a weekly rhythm with a rotation of responsibilities between the hospitals involved.

In the early months of 2024, the INC finalized preparations for the launch of the national tumour board for neuroendocrine tumors, including the appointment of an expert

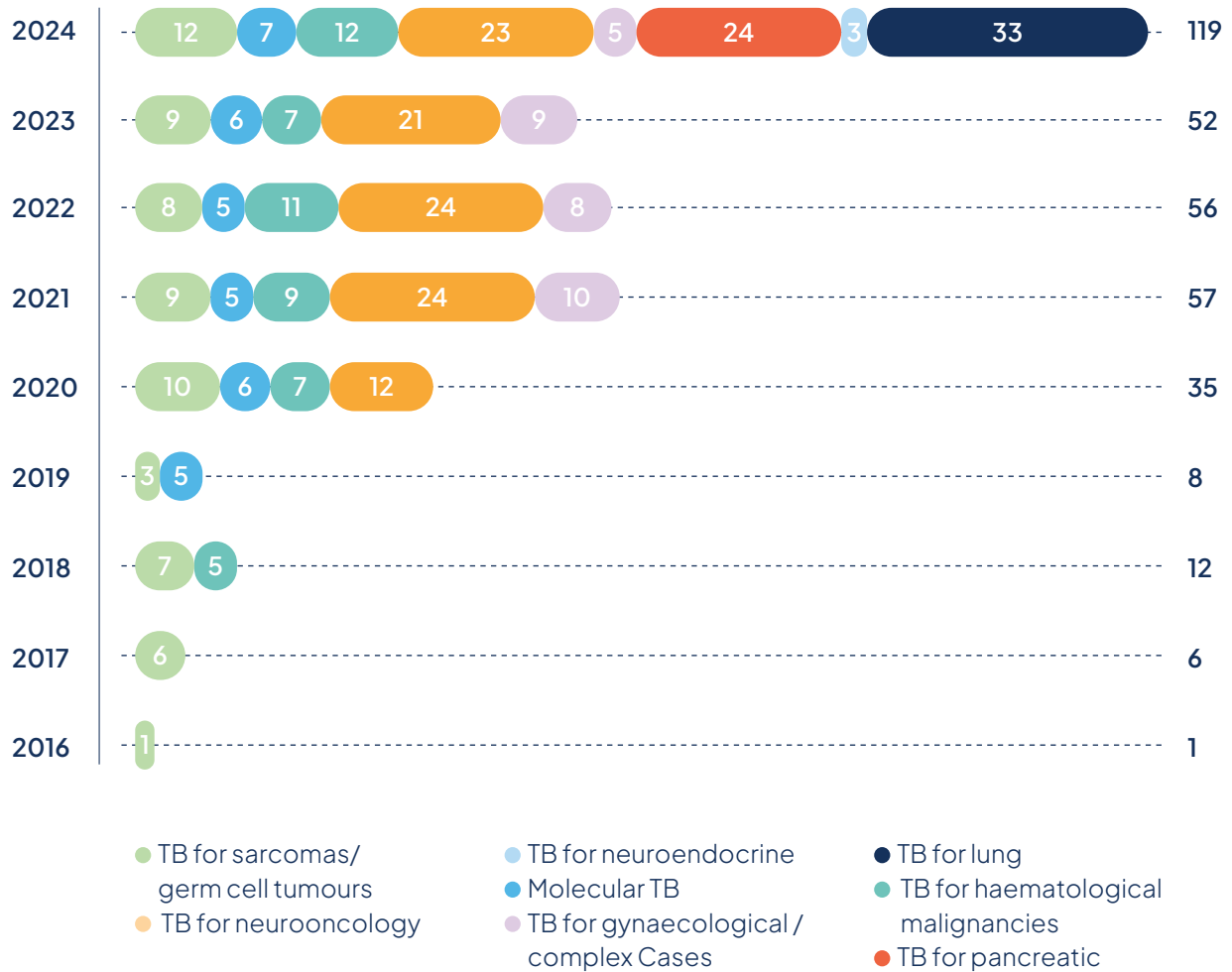
(specialist in general medicine-endocrinology from the National Institute and Kapodistrian from the University of Athens; EKPA-LAIKO ENETS Center of Excellence). The first session took place on July 8, 2024.

This year, INC organized a total of 119 national tumour board sessions, in line with the requirements of the “Concept National Réunion de Concertation Pluridisciplinaire en Cancérologie”, drawn up as part of the first National Cancer Plan:

- **12 sessions** – Tumour board for sarcomas and germ cell tumors
- **7 sessions** – Molecular Tumour board
- **12 sessions** – Tumour board for heavy haematology
- **23 sessions** – Tumour board for neuro-oncology
- **5 sessions** – Tumour board for rare gynecological cancers / complex situations
- **24 sessions** – Tumour board for pancreatic cancers and complex cancers of the hepatobiliary system
- **3 sessions** – Tumour board for neuroendocrine tumors
- **33 sessions** – Tumour board lung

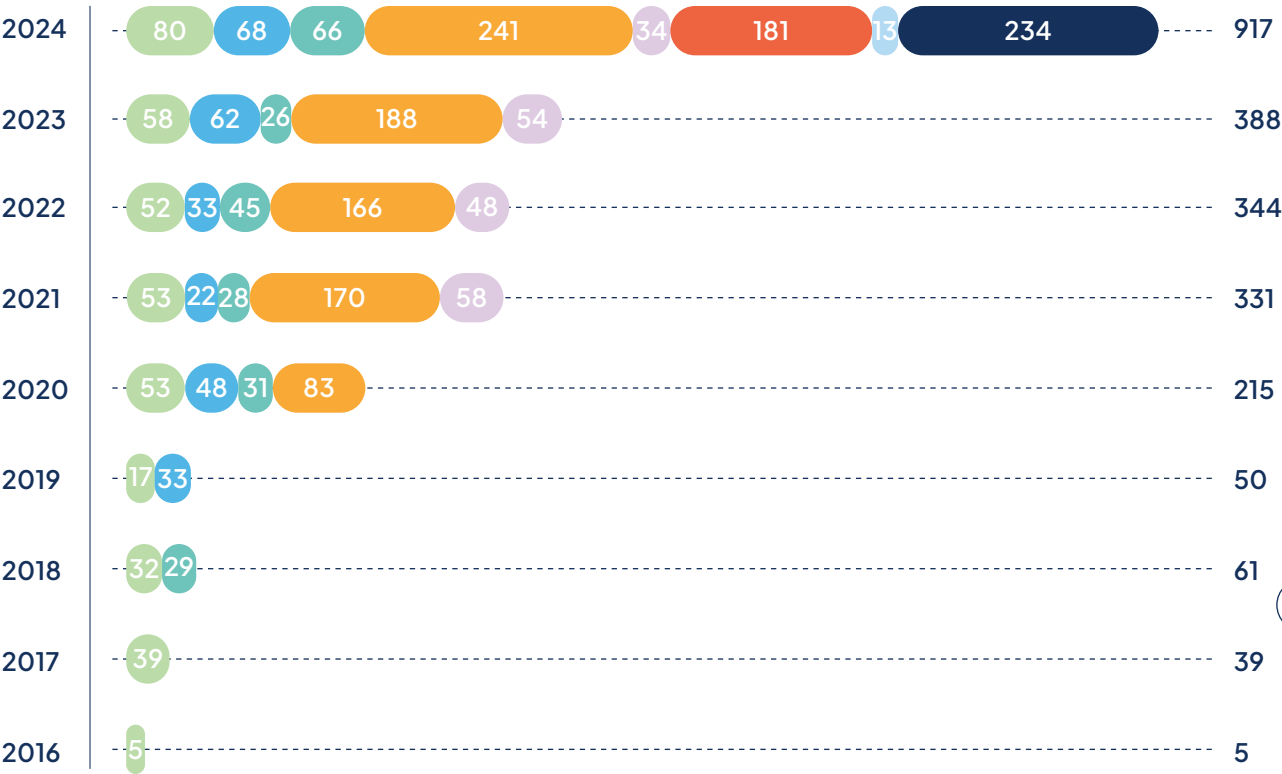
A TOTAL OF 119 TB SESSIONS WERE HELD IN 2024

Number of sessions by type of tb and by year



917 patient cases were presented and discussed. This represents a significant increase in both the **number of sessions (2.3 times more)** and the **number of cases discussed (2.4 times more)** compared with the previous year:

Number of sessions by type of tb and by year



- TB for sarcomas/
germ cell tumours
- TB for neuroendocrine
- TB for lung
- TB for neurooncology
- Molecular TB
- TB for haematological malignancies
- TB for gynaecological/
complex Cases
- TB for pancreatic

Guidelines and patient pathways

Guidelines are concise documents designed to facilitate decision-making. Coordinated by the INC, they are created by multidisciplinary working groups of healthcare professionals. Their aim is to define the principles of cancer screening, symptom treatment and management.

Patient pathways are designed to structure and optimize patient follow-up in Luxembourg's healthcare establishments. They play a key role in improving the quality of care and the efficiency of the healthcare system.

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In 2024, the INC continued to integrate patient representatives into all the WGs responsible for developing referentials and patient pathways. This approach aims not only to reinforce the quality of these guidelines, but also to foster the emergence of a community of informed and committed patients, experts in their own cancer journey.

GUIDELINES

At the beginning of 2024, INC completed its work on the National Referential in Pulmonary Oncology, which was published by the Scientific Council in the Health Sector (CSDS). INC finalized work on the revision of two additional repositories:

- Risk-based guidelines for breast cancer screening¹;
- National guidelines for prostate cancer screening².

In response to a request from the French Department of Health (DiSa), the national guidelines for breast cancer screening will incorporate national recommendations in this area.



The INC has also completed work on a new set of guidelines:

- National repository for breast cancer management³.

The completion of these guidelines, followed by their eventual approval and distribution by the CSDS, will continue in 2025.

⁽¹⁾ As an update to the previous guideline for breast cancer, entitled "Référentiel pour le dépistage du cancer du sein en fonction du risque".

⁽²⁾ As an update to the previous guideline for prostate cancer, entitled "Référentiels pour le cancer de la prostate".

⁽³⁾ As an update to the previous guideline for breast cancer, entitled "Référentiels en oncologie sénologique".

PATIENT PATHWAYS

In 2024, the European lung cancer pathway was developed through collaboration between the European JA CraNE project, the University of Dresden and the INC. The national pathway has been transposed according to this European JA CraNE model, taking into account national referentials, and has been reviewed by the relevant professional bodies & societies.

The pathway will subsequently be sent to the CSDS for validation and distribution in the first quarter of 2025.

As for the pathways for breast cancer and prostate cancer, they have been developed and adapted according to the European Joint Action model (European JA iPAAC), with completion scheduled for 2025

National coordination of the accreditation

OF HOSPITAL CANCER DEPARTMENTS

The INC plays an active role in adapting labeling criteria to the national context. In particular, it has contributed to the development of equivalence tables for medical and paramedical professions, in collaboration with members of the labellisation working group. These criteria, validated by the “European Cancer Centres” (ECC) program of the German Cancer Society (“Deutsche Krebsgesellschaft”, DKG), will be applied in Luxembourg. A revision of these tables is scheduled for 2025.

In addition, the prioritization table of tumor entities to be labeled in hospitals will be re-evaluated by the Labeling WG. Discussions are also underway on the networking of labeling projects for specific pathologies.

These discussions will continue within the INC Board of Directors, the relevant NCP2 WGs and with the Fédération des Hôpitaux Luxembourgeois (FHL).

Finally, the Labellisation WG addressed the question of the financial and human resources required to implement and maintain oncology labellisations. Within this framework, the INC, in consultation with the members of the Certification WG, will propose a “white paper” detailing the needs of establishments (hospitals, CFB, LNS and INC) in order to solicit funding from the relevant bodies.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://ecc-cert.org>



Projects coordinated by INC

As part of its mission to coordinate and steer actions in the fight against cancer, INC plays a key role in a number of strategic projects. Whether at national level, as part of the second PNC2, or at European level, through collaborative initiatives, these projects aim to improve prevention, screening and oncology care.

Thanks to the commitment of the INC and the mobilization of its partners, these initiatives enable us to innovate, strengthen synergies between players and guarantee a concrete impact for patients and healthcare professionals. This chapter highlights the projects in which the INC plays an active role, illustrating its commitment to more effective care and continued progress in the fight against cancer.

SIGNING OF A FRAMEWORK COLLABORATION AGREEMENT

In 2024, INC coordinated the preparation of a collaborative framework agreement between 10 major institutions in the fight against cancer, bringing together players in research, care, diagnosis and education.

The agreement was signed in May by INC, LIH, Uni.lu, CHL, HRS, CHdN, CHEM, CFB, LNS and the Ministry of Health and Social Security. Subsequently, two institutions signed a deed of adherence to this agreement: the Fondation Emile Mayrisch, representing the Centre de Réhabilitation du Château de Colpach, and the LNDS.

The institutions that have signed this agreement have thus demonstrated their willingness to coordinate their efforts in the fight against cancer, with each contributing according to its area of expertise to enhance the overall impact of the actions undertaken.

The aim of this joint commitment is to lay the foundations for future cooperation, both nationally and internationally, by promoting the complementarity of collaborative projects. In particular, the agreement aims to connect their infrastructures through specific partnerships, facilitating the development of joint initiatives in key areas such as prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, follow-up, rehabilitation and care delivery. In addition, this cooperation encompasses the integration of innovative approaches, the reinforcement of training for healthcare professionals, communication with the general public, and the development of research and clinical trials in oncology, with the aim of improving practices and optimizing patient care.

This agreement marks an important milestone in the implementation of an integrated, cross-functional approach to improving patient care, developing innovative solutions and promoting the education and continuing training of healthcare professionals.

DIAGNOSIS ANNOUNCEMENT

In 2024, the “ Announcement of a cancer Diagnosis ” project began in Luxembourg. This patient-focused initiative is part of the second National Cancer Plan, and will run until 2025 and beyond. Spearheaded by the INC in collaboration with its partners - the Ministry of Health and Social Security, the Luxembourg Institute of Health (LIH), the Federation of Luxembourg Hospitals (FHL), the Cancer Foundation, Europa Donna, Patiente Vertriebung and ArtSquare Lab (ASL) - it is based on a pragmatic and innovative approach, defined on the basis of Design Thinking.

The following project-related activities took place in 2024:

- **March 20, 2024** - Afternoon of exchange with patients and their loved ones: The first stage of this project took place on March 20, 2024. We met with patients and their families. The aim was to gain an initial insight into their feelings, based on their own experience, of what it's like to be diagnosed with cancer in Luxembourg.
- **May and June 2024** - Individual interviews with patients and their relatives: Individual interviews were conducted with patients and some of their relatives to gather their testimonies and understand their personal experiences.
- **June and July** - Interviews with healthcare professionals in Luxembourg: In parallel, we organized interviews with healthcare professionals, such as oncologists, psychologists, surgeons, gynecologists, general practitioners, medical specialists, etc., to gather their views and expertise on the announcement of a cancer diagnosis.
- **October 11, 2024** - Collective meeting: Finally, the healthcare professionals, patients and relatives interviewed came together for a collective meeting. This was an opportunity for both parties to exchange ideas, share their respective perspectives and work together on concrete solutions to improve the announcement of a cancer diagnosis.

The aim of this collaborative “Diagnosis Announcement” project is to implement concrete tools to improve the process of announcing a cancer diagnosis in Luxembourg. It owes its origins to PNC2, and in particular to Axis 3 dedicated to Patients' Rights, Information & Training.

The following activities are planned for the coming years:

- **January and February 2025** - Drafting of two reports: A first report including recommendations following the interviews will be drawn up and distributed at the end of November.

A second report with the prototype tools devised during the co-creation session between patients, relatives and healthcare professionals will also be drafted and circulated early in the first quarter of 2025.

- **2025** - Implementation: In 2025, all PNC2 partners will be working to implement these tools, which are designed to improve the way cancer diagnosis is announced in Luxembourg.
- **Annually from 2026** - Evaluation: Starting in 2026, we intend to set up a system for evaluating the tools implemented. The aim is to concretely measure its effectiveness and, if necessary, adapt it to changes in society.

LUNG CANCER NETWORK

Following on from the activities initiated in 2023, the INC is continuing the gradual establishment of a national network dedicated to the management of lung cancer in Luxembourg. This initiative, carried out in close collaboration with the country's four hospitals (CHL, CHdN, CHEM, HRS), the Centre François Baclesse (CFB) and the Laboratoire National de Santé (LNS), is part of the European CraNE Joint Action, with the support of the Ministry of Health and Social Security and the Directorate of Health as part of Luxembourg's PNC2.

After the preliminary audit in December 2023, several working group meetings were held to develop and harmonize common procedures between the various institutions. These efforts led to a significant improvement in the quality of care for lung cancer patients.

At the interim audit in June 2024, the work accomplished was praised by the auditors, who gave a positive assessment to the certification committee. As a result, the committee voted to give the national network a letter of recognition, marking a decisive step towards the final certification scheduled for 2025. This letter was presented to INC representatives at the CraNE partners' meeting in Warsaw in July, on behalf of all national network members.

Thanks to this structuring initiative, patient care in Luxembourg will be more homogeneous and optimized, guaranteeing a significant improvement in the quality of care.

Competence center in oncology in 2025:
Discussions concerning the development of oncology competence center in Luxembourg

were pursued within the framework of the lung cancer care network. The activities linked to this development have been reassessed by the partners in order to define the actions to be undertaken for the year 2025.

European initiatives and projects

In 2024, INC continued to participate in the various European initiatives that support the national priorities set out in the PNC2 (see Appendix 1).

COLLABORATION BETWEEN EUROPEAN “SMALL MEMBER STATES”

As part of its participation in the “Cancer Subgroup” of the European Commission’s (EC) “Public Health Expert Group”, the INC consolidated its cooperation with several other small European Member States (MS) in 2023. This collaboration intensified in 2024 with the organization, in September, of a meeting at the offices of the Estonian Permanent Representation in Brussels.

At this meeting, the small MS represented (Cyprus, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg and Malta) deepened their exchanges on common challenges and concerns relating to oncology care management and cancer research. The aim was to draw up a list of priorities for joint action in this field

A key point of this meeting was the approval of an invitation to other small MS, such as Lithuania and Slovenia, to extend these collaborative efforts. Following this decision, each MS received a formal mandate from its competent national authority to continue these discussions and strengthen Europe-wide cooperation.

These efforts will continue in 2025, with regular consultations between members to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of these joint actions.

CRANE PROJECT (JOINT ACTION, JA)

In 2024, INC actively contributed to the activities carried out as part of the European Joint Action (JA) “Network of Comprehensive Cancer Centres : Preparatory activities on creation of national comprehensive cancer centres and EU networking (JA CraNE)”, financed by the EC in response to Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan (EBCP), in close collaboration with the Luxembourg Institute of Health (LIH), an affiliated entity.

The INC continued to coordinate the implementation of the lung cancer network following the preliminary audit in December 2023 (cf [Lung Cancer Network - p.20](#)).

In February, the INC and several representatives of the lung cancer network took part in a knowledge exchange workshop with their Polish counterparts at the Lower Silesian Oncology Pulmonology and Hematology Center in Wrocław, which is also a pilot site for the implementation of a dedicated lung cancer network. The workshop, held in Warsaw and moderated by Poland's National Institute of Public Health National Institute of Hygiene - National Research Institute (NIZP PZH-PIB) and Deutsche Krebsgesellschaft (DKG), provided an opportunity for in-depth discussion of the challenges and opportunities faced by each pilot site as they move towards certification of such a care network. In particular, participants had the opportunity to discuss the respective roles of case managers and the organization of Tumour boards.

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In March, the INC coordinated a national test of a tool developed by the Wrocław University of Economics and Management and the Department of Economic and Systems Analysis of the National Institute of Public Health - National Research Institute (Poland). The aim was to assess the level of maturity of future Comprehensive Cancer Centres (CCCs) or those under development. With the support of the LIH and the Health Directorate's Cancer Screening Program Coordination Center, the INC completed a number of surveys covering areas such as governance, prevention, treatment and care.

In April, INC and LIH organized and moderated a workshop with patients to gather their feedback on the patient pathway developed for lung cancer by the Technical University of Dresden, Germany. The workshop brought together 11 patients in two sessions, held in French and English. It provided valuable feedback on the need to offer more information to patients at every stage of their journey. The exchanges also highlighted the crucial importance of a centralized information platform, making it easier for patients to access and understand data. This collaborative work has fuelled a number of initiatives, such as the

JA CraNE, the national adaptation of the lung cancer patient pathway, and the development of a patient platform under the umbrella of the PNC2 ([cf. Redesign of the INC website and creation of the information platform for patients and their families - p.12](#)).

In July, INC took part in the WP6 partners' meeting in Warsaw, where it presented the progress made in setting up the lung cancer network, as well as the results of the workshop conducted with patients. At this meeting, INC representatives were also presented with the interim certification of the national lung cancer network, in recognition of the efforts made by network partners.

Finally, in September, INC took part in the JA CraNE closing conference in Brussels, where all the consortium's activities over the past two years were presented and summarized.

EUNETCCC PROJECT (JOINT ACTION, JA)

Since October 1, 2024, the INC has been the competent authority representing Luxembourg in the "EU Network of Comprehensive Cancer Centres (JA EUNetCCC)" joint action financed by the EC in response to the EBCCP. Within this framework, the INC has surrounded itself with a strong national consortium, bringing together players in prevention (Direction de la Santé), diagnosis (LNS), care (HRS, CHL, CHEM, CHdN, CFB, Centre de réhabilitation du Château de Colpach), research (LIH, Uni.lu) and education (Uni.lu).



“Bringing stakeholders together and strengthening synergies, from Luxembourg to Europe, to support the fight against cancer.”

This ambitious initiative brings together 163 partners from 27 EU member states and 4 associated countries, with substantial funding from the EC, amounting to 90 million euros, plus 20 million euros in individual partner contributions.

The aim of this action is to establish 100 CCCs in Europe by 2028, in order to meet the EBCP's expectation of enabling 90% of eligible patients to be treated in such centers by 2030.

The EUNetCCC action marks the implementation phase of the concepts developed during the CraNE action, in particular with regard to the development and certification of CCCs and CCCNs, as well as their integration into the European CCC network.

In 2024, INC was involved in a number of administrative tasks following validation of the project by the EC, including the signing of the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement.

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As soon as the action was officially launched on October 1, INC took an active part in the various launch meetings organized by the working groups.

The INC took part in the general launch meeting organized by the action's coordinators, the Institut National du Cancer (INCa) in France, via videoconference.

INC presented Luxembourg's objectives in terms of implementing care networks for the management of different tumor entities at an exchange involving the various pilot sites, organized in November by DKG and NIZP PZH-PIB, co-leaders of WP 9.

As a leading member of WP 8 on the activities of the European CCC network, and more specifically, as co-leader of the task relating to the governance, organization and management of CCCs, the INC notably took part in the launch meeting of this WP organized in Stockholm in November. This meeting enabled all the partners involved to draw up a roadmap of the activities to be carried out in each task by 2025.

As the Luxembourg consortium's involvement in this action is particularly significant, numerous initiatives will be undertaken in 2025, at both European and national levels.

JANE-2 PROJECT (JOINT ACTION, JA)

Since November 1, 2024, the INC has been the competent authority representing Luxembourg in the Joint Action on Networks of Expertise (JA JANE-2) funded by the EC in response to the EBCP. Within this framework, the INC has set up a strong national consortium, bringing together players in the fields of diagnostics (LNS), care (HRS, CHL, CHEM, CHdN, CFB, Centre de réhabilitation du Château de Colpach), and research (LIH).

This initiative brings together 121 partners from 27 EU member states and 2 associated countries, with funding of €40 million from the EC, plus around €10 million from individual partners.

The aim of this action is to set up networks of European experts specialized in complex and difficult areas of oncology, which would particularly benefit from cross-border cooperation within the EU, notably through networking in the healthcare field.

Luxembourg has positioned itself in several networks, including those dealing with complex cancers and poor prognosis (WP 5), survivorship (WP 7), omics technologies (WP 9) and high-tech resources (WP 10).

In December, the INC took part in the WP 9 kick-off meeting organized by Sciensano in Brussels.

INC and its national partners will continue to actively pursue these many activities in 2025.

Organization of a national kick-off meeting:

To officially launch the participation of INC's national partner institutions in the EUNetCCC and JANE-2 actions, INC welcomed representatives from each institution to a national kick-off meeting in December.

EU-CIP PROJECT (INNOVATION ACTION, IA)

In July, INC joined a European consortium coordinated by the Berlin Institute of Health at Charité (BIH Center of Digital Health) alongside its national partners, LIH and ITTM (Information Technology for Translational Medicine), to respond to a Horizon Europe call for projects for the creation of a European information portal for cancer patients.

Over the summer, INC and its partners actively contributed to the preparation of this proposal, which was submitted to the EC in September.

In anticipation of the activities planned under the auspices of PNC2 for the development of a patient information platform, INC and LIH have strategically positioned themselves in this European initiative to ensure interfacing between national and European platforms (cf. [Redesign of the INC website and creation of the information platform for patients and their families - p.12](#)).

In December, the project was validated by the EC, confirming the participation of INC and its partners in this new initiative, which should officially get underway in the summer of 2025.

ECHOS PROJECT (COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ACTION, CSA)

Since May 1, 2023, the INC has been participating in the “Establishing of Cancer Mission Hubs: Networks and synergies (CSA ECHoS)” coordination and support action funded by the European Commission under the Horizon Europe program, and coordinated by the Agencia De Investigacao Clinica E Inovacao Biomedica (AICIB), Portugal. The LIH is participating as an INC-affiliated entity in this project.

Mission Cancer’s goal is to improve the lives of more than 3 million people by 2030, through prevention, cure, and enabling people affected by cancer and their families to live better, longer lives.

As the national entity responsible for coordinating the various players in the field of oncology, the INC is designated as Luxembourg’s “National Cancer Mission Hub

(NCMH)”. In order to achieve the ultimate goal of formalizing the INC as an NCMH, it took part in several key activities in 2024, including:

- A survey detailing the levels of citizen engagement and the various activities in which they are commonly involved in Luxembourg.
- A workshop to co-create an interactive tool for identifying and engaging relevant stakeholders in the various NCMH initiatives.
- A workshop devoted to revising the NCMH concept document and its various structures.

In addition, the INC has continued its active participation and contributions to the ECHoS Liaison Committee, strengthening links and promoting synergies with other European initiatives. This committee represents the project to European institutions, enabling NCMHs to participate in, contribute to and influence major policy discussions.

CCI4EU PROJECT (COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ACTION, CSA)

Since May 1, 2023, INC has been participating in the “Comprehensive Cancer Infrastructures in Europe (CSA CCI4EU)” coordination and support action funded by the European Commission under the Horizon Europe program. This project is coordinated by the Organization of European Cancer Institutes (OECI). In this project, the INC is the affiliated entity of the Luxembourg Institute of Health (LIH).

Following on from the activities begun in 2023, the INC continued to contribute to the various tasks of this project, in particular by completing a series of surveys aimed at assessing the level of maturity of the cancer infrastructure in Luxembourg. These surveys exhaustively covered areas such as infrastructure structure, interfaces between different institutions, research (fundamental, translational, clinical, etc.), prevention and screening, and patient pathways.

The INC also took part in a number of meetings with consortium partners, to exchange views on the specific context of Luxembourg, which is essential for the organization of oncology and oncology research.

Finally, in May, the INC attended the Annual General Meeting held in Milan. At this important meeting, the INC was able to take stock of the progress made by the various working groups.

INTERCEPTOR PROJECT (COST⁵ ACTION)

INC is involved in COST actions such as the “Interception of Oral Cancer Development” (INTERCEPTOR) project. The mission of this project is to support the development of a European network aimed at developing a new multidisciplinary and holistic approach to prevent the transformation of potentially malignant oral diseases (OPMD) into squamous cell carcinoma of the oral cavity (OSCCC). The aim of participating in this project is to promote the exchange of skills and best practices, and to support the development of collaborative research projects between Luxembourg and other European countries.

This COST Action began on November 14, 2022 and will run for 4 years. It is coordinated by the Centre Léon Bérard (Department of Medical Oncology and Translational Medicine, Lyon Cancer Research Center) in France.

FUTURE PROJECTS

In July 2024, the Ministry of Health and Social Security appointed the INC as the competent authority to represent Luxembourg in the new European “Joint action on Personalised Cancer Medicine” (PCM).

To this end, the INC involved the national consortium set up in 2023, bringing together institutions in charge of prevention (Direction de la Santé), diagnosis (LNS), care (HRS, CHL, CHEM, CHdN, CFB, Centre de réhabilitation du Château de Colpach), and research (LIH). The INC also involved the Luxembourg National Data Service (LNDS) in this action.

Since mid-October, the INC has been actively involved in all the preparatory meetings for these major European actions, in order to establish the position of Luxembourg institutions in the various activities.

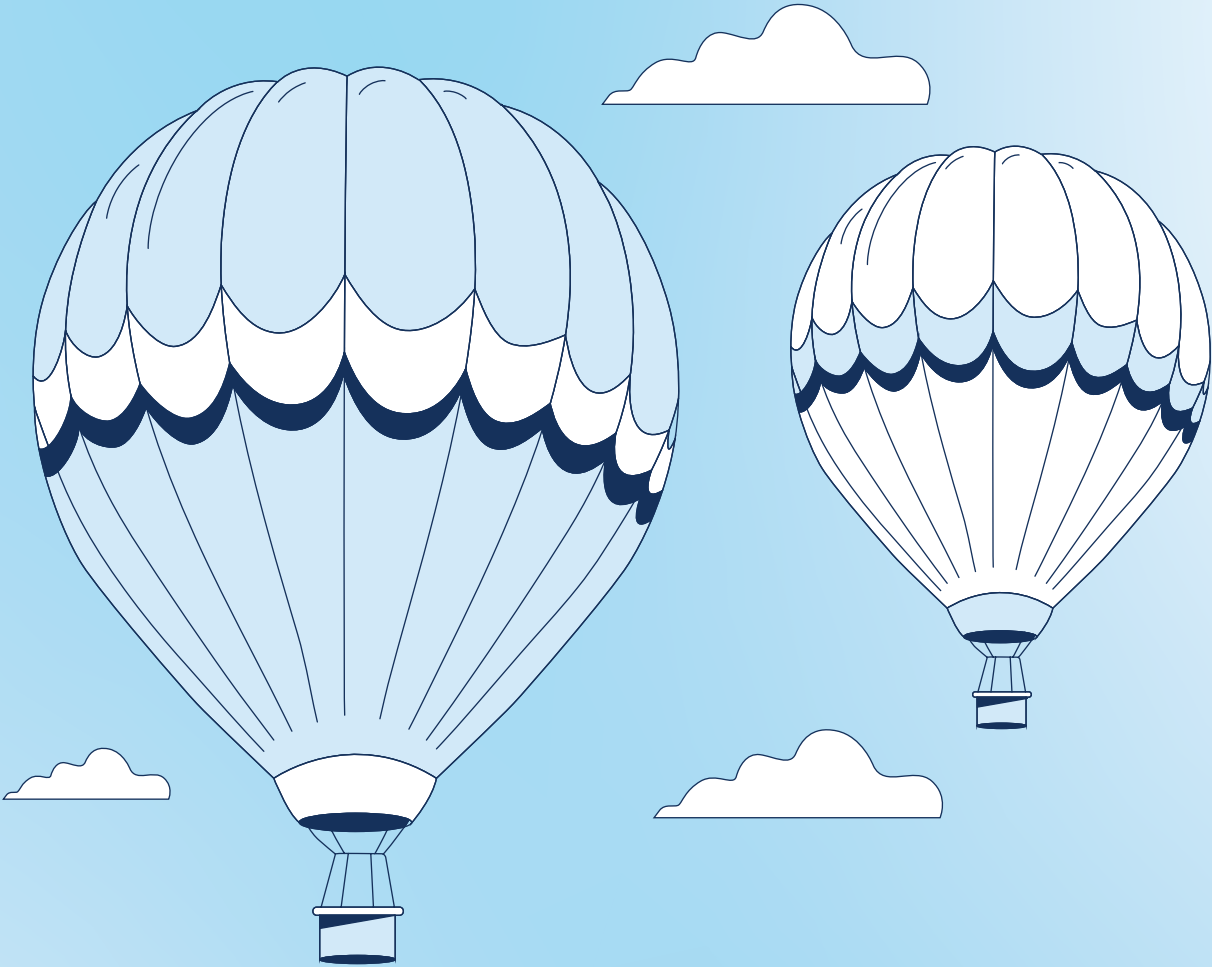
The submission of this project by the coordinators, as well as its review and validation by the European Commission, will take place in 2025.

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

In 2024, INC renewed its membership of the OECI (Organization of European Cancer Institutes) as an associate member. On this occasion, INC took part in the annual “OEI Oncology Days” conference held in Paris in June.

INC also joined the European Cancer Organisation (ECO) as an associate member. INC also took part in the European Cancer Summit held in Brussels in November.

⁽⁵⁾ European Cooperation in Science and Technology



Coordinating the implementation

OF THE NATIONAL CANCER COLLECTION

The “National Cancer Collection” (NCC) project is a priority of Axe 8 (Clinical and Translational Research) of the National Cancer Plan 2020–2026 (NCP2). Coordination of the project has been entrusted to the Institut National du Cancer (INC). Initially planned to establish a vast collection of biological samples (tissue, blood, etc.) in Luxembourg for cancer research, the project has evolved following work carried out between 2022 and 2024 with various health and research players, including hospitals, the Laboratoire National de Santé (LNS), the Luxembourg Institute of Health (LIH) and its Integrated Biobank of Luxembourg (IBBL), as well as the University of Luxembourg (UniLu). These players provided crucial expertise that helped redefine the project’s objectives to better meet the needs of researchers and patients alike.

The current objective is to create a composite platform to harmonize, standardize and simplify the collection of biological samples in the field of cancer. This platform will be made available to research teams wishing to set up thematic collections of biological samples, together with the associated clinical and pre-analytical data, thus offering a robust, secure and sustainable environment. The importance of this platform lies in its ability to provide high-quality samples and data, which is essential for cancer research. Scientists will benefit from a structured framework enabling them to concentrate on their core business - research.

This platform aims to integrate all the necessary operational, organizational, legal and technological components. These components include :

- The management of patients’ informed consents via an electronic system (eConsent), guaranteeing their

understanding and informed agreement to the collection of their samples, as well as the long-term follow-up of these consents.

- The de-identification of patient data via a robust electronic pseudonymization or anonymization system, ensuring the protection of their personal information while enabling optimal use of the data for scientific research.
- The operational processes required to collect, transport, process and distribute samples, ensuring their optimal preservation at the IBBL before being made available to research teams.

At this stage of the project, in addition to the advances mentioned above, the aim remains to collect the first samples in 2025. The long-term viability of the platform, from 2026 onwards, will depend on sustainable funding from the relevant ministries and strong involvement of the various partners. This funding will ensure continuity in the development of the platform and associated processes, while guaranteeing their ability to evolve to meet the future needs of cancer research.

Coordination of working groups

IN PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT LUXEMBOURG CANCER REPORT

The various working groups (WGs) were set up at the beginning of 2024, in consultation with the moderators and co-moderators appointed by the INC. Each WG met several times during the year, inviting the various experts to contribute to the design of the thematic chapters and to share the writing work. The year 2024 also marked the start of data collection by INC, in particular hospital cancer activity data, in partnership with the IGSS.

At the same time, consultations were held throughout the year with various partners and institutions, in order to exchange information

and provide input for the report. In particular, meetings were held with representatives of the Plateforme Nationale Cancer, the Registre National du Cancer, the Direction de la Santé, the LIH, the Observatoire de la Santé and UniLu; and with associations such as the Fondation Cancer, Europa Donna, Think Pink, FLASS, Mäi Wëllen Mäi Wee and Haus Oméga.

A first draft of the report is expected in September 2025, followed by internal proofreading and review by external experts, before the layout of the paper and digital versions, scheduled for publication in February 2026.

INC presence and involvement

IN NATIONAL EVENTS

Throughout the year, the INC actively participated in national events dedicated to the fight against cancer and the improvement of the healthcare system in Luxembourg. These ranged from conferences bringing together healthcare players, to forums for exchange with professionals, to events organized by patient associations.

These meetings were an opportunity to strengthen collaborations, share the results of ongoing projects and listen to the expectations of the various players, particularly those of patients and their families. By actively participating in these initiatives, the INC is reaffirming its commitment to supporting a collaborative approach and encouraging the emergence of innovative solutions for better cancer care in Luxembourg.

INC PARTICIPATION IN HEALTHCARE WEEK

As part of its commitment to strengthening synergies between healthcare players, the INC took part in HealthCare Week 2024, a major event organized by the Fédération des Hôpitaux Luxembourgeois (FHL). On this occasion, the INC set up a stand where it was able to exchange views with numerous professionals from the sector, present its actions and initiatives, and raise awareness of the challenges involved in the fight against cancer.

This participation is in line with INC's commitment to actively collaborate with all players in the healthcare field, in order to foster innovation, improved practices and better care coordination.

INC TAKES PART IN THE LET'Z GO GOLD EVENT

The INC once again affirmed its commitment to the fight against pediatric cancer by taking part in the Let'z Go Gold 2024, a solidarity event organized by Fondatioun Kriibskrank Kanner. This charity race, dedicated to research and support for children with cancer, brought together numerous participants mobilized for this essential cause.

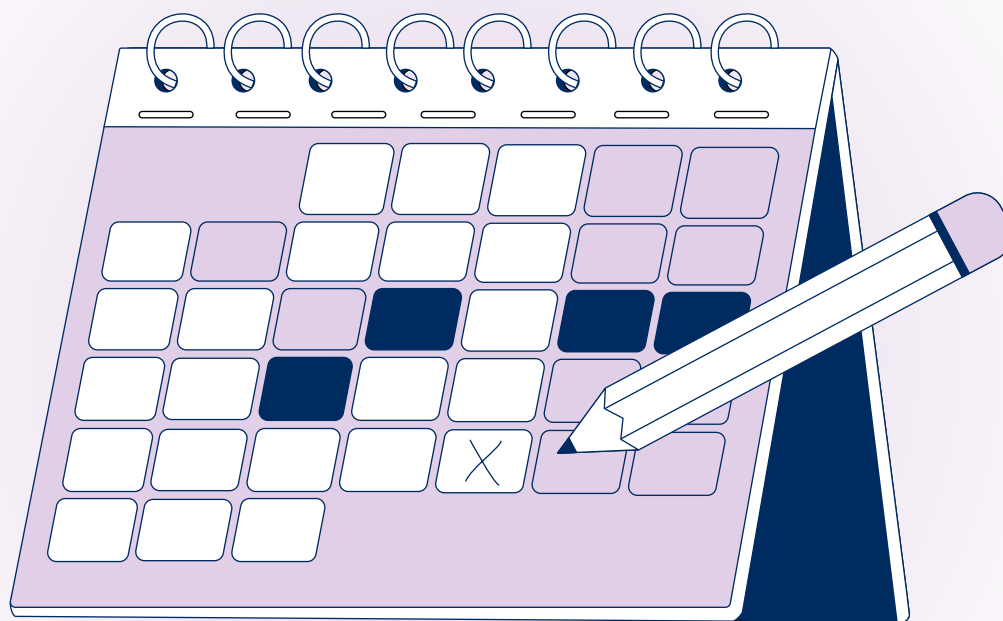
By joining this initiative, INC and its employees not only ran to show their solidarity, but also helped raise funds to improve the care and quality of life of young patients and their families.

This participation reflects INC's desire to actively support actions in favor of children affected by the disease, and to raise awareness of the challenges of pediatric cancer in Luxembourg.

INC TAKES PART IN CHL'S PINK OCTOBER EVENT

The INC is also playing a key role in coordinating the updating of breast cancer guidelines and patient pathways in Luxembourg. This commitment is part of a drive to continuously improve patient care and reinforce good medical practice.

Through this initiative, the INC is reaffirming its role in promoting prevention and its support for awareness campaigns, which are essential in the fight against breast cancer.



Aligning European initiatives with the PNC2

The table below provides a summary of INC’s activities in 2024 in the various European initiatives, which contribute to advancing the objectives of the second National Cancer Plan 2020–2026 (PNC2).

- CCCN** = Comprehensive Cancer Care Network (such as the lung cancer network)
- CCC** = Comprehensive Cancer Centre
- NoE** = Network of Expertise

EUROPEAN INITIATIVE/ACTIVITY

Overall participation in current and future European projects:

OBJ 1.2 - 1.3 - 1.8 - 1.10

- JA CraNE
- CSA ECHoS
- CSA CCI4EU
- COST INTERCEPTOR
- JA EUNetCCC
- JA JANE-2
- IA EU-CIP
- JA PCM

OBJ 1.2 - 1.3

- Setting up the lung cancer network (JA CraNE - JA EUNetCCC), and the second care network for another tumour entity (CCCN) (JA EUNetCCC);
- Implementation of a driver for Comprehensive Cancer Centre (CCC) national with all partner entities (JA EUNetCCC);

ALIGNEMENT WITH PNC2

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OBJ1.2 ●

To support hospitals and non-hospital providers in the creation of networks of expertise in oncology and other areas of collaboration.

OBJ1.3 ●

Improved coordination/collaboration between different agencies and services, first within the country and then abroad.

OBJ1.8 ●

Monitoring the quality of cancer care.

OBJ1.10 ●

Strengthening national capacities in emerging and rapidly evolving areas (“innovative therapies”).

OBJ1.3 ●

Improved coordination/collaboration between different agencies and services, first within the country and then abroad.

EUROPEAN INITIATIVE/ACTIVITY

OBJ 1.5 – 1.6

Including the following activities:

- Network structure, including human resources and competencies required;
- Operations based on guidelines and patient pathway.

OBJ 2.1 – 2.2 – 2.3 – 2.7

Implementation of CCCNs and a CCC (JA CraNE - JA EUNetCCC):

- Data exchange between institutions;
- Digital management of the national TB for lung cancer;
- Digital follow-up of quality indicators for the network certification..

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OBJ 3.1 – 3.2 – 3.5

General objectives of the JA in response to the EBCP, aiming to enable access to such centres for 90% of eligible patients;

Core activities relating to patient involvement, as well as patient education and information (JA EUNetCCC, JA JANE-2, IA EU-CIP, JA PCM, CSA ECHoS);

Interfacing the national patient information platform with the European platform (IA EU-CIP).

OBJ 4.1

Participation of the Health Directorate in activities related to screening and prevention (JA EUNetCCC);

Implementation of a national Comprehensive Cancer Centre (CCC) pilot programme with all partner entities (JA EUNetCCC), with the CCC providing primary, secondary and tertiary prevention activities.

ALIGNEMENT WITH PNC2

OBJ1.5 ●

Development and recognition of professional specialties in oncology in Luxembourg, in particular to ensure the interface between research and clinical practice.

OBJ1.6 ●

Development and implementation of a system for the development and maintenance of professional skills in oncology.

OBJ2.1 ●

Improving the exchange of information between health professionals.

OBJ2.2 ●

Harmonisation of computer programs (hospital, laboratory, etc.).

OBJ2.3 ●

Digitalisation of cancer care pathways.

OBJ2.7 ●

Provision of information necessary for the evaluation and certification / labelling of oncology care.

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OBJ3.1 ●

Reducing inequalities in opportunities for people who have or have had cancer.

OBJ3.2 ●

Provision of training opportunities for the general public.

OBJ3.5 ●

Encourage and support health democracy by promoting an individual approach to patients as active participants in their own care and by prioritising patient engagement at a collective level.

OBJ4.1 ●

Integration of cancer prevention into all public policies and better protection of the population from exposure to known risks through the implementation of general measures.

EUROPEAN INITIATIVE/ACTIVITY

OBJ 1.5 - 1.6

Involvement of the national consortium, supported by the INC, in Networks of Expertise (NoE) on -omics techniques and high-tech resources (JA JANE-2);

Implementation of a national Comprehensive Cancer Centre (CCC) pilot with all partner entities (JA EUNetCCC), enabling effective integration of research and care;

Positioning of national consortium partners in future activities related to personalised medicine against cancer (JA PCM).

OBJ 6.1 - 6.4

Implementation of CCCNs and a CCC (JA CraNE - JA EUNetCCC), enabling, among other things:

- Coverage of the entire patient pathway;
- Strengthen the organisation of TB ;
- Operation according to standard interdisciplinary and interinstitutional procedures.

Involvement of the national consortium, supported by the INC, in Networks of Expertise (NoE) on complex cancers with poor prognosis, and on survival (JA JANE-2).

OBJ 8.1 - 8.2

Implementation of CCCNs and a CCC (JA CraNE - JA EUNetCCC), enabling, among other things:

- Facilitating patient access to clinical trials;
- Promote research at all levels;
- Promoting the integration of research and care.

Involvement of the national consortium, supported by the INC, in Networks of Expertise (NoE) on -omics techniques and high-tech resources (JA JANE-2);

Positioning of national consortium partners in future activities related to personalised medicine against cancer (JA PCM).

ALIGNEMENT WITH PNC2

OBJ 5.3 ●

Innovation in the country introducing new genetic and molecular diagnostic methods.

OBJ 5.4 ●

Introduction of the complementary use of other diagnostic technologies in clinical routine.

OBJ 6.1 ●

Ensuring the access of the persons concerned to the multidisciplinary tumour boards.

OBJ 6.4 ●

Improving the quality of life of people with cancer through the implementation of interdisciplinary supportive care.

OBJ 8.1 ●

Developing translational research for the benefit of patients in Luxembourg.

OBJ 8.2 ●

Access to innovative treatments for patients.

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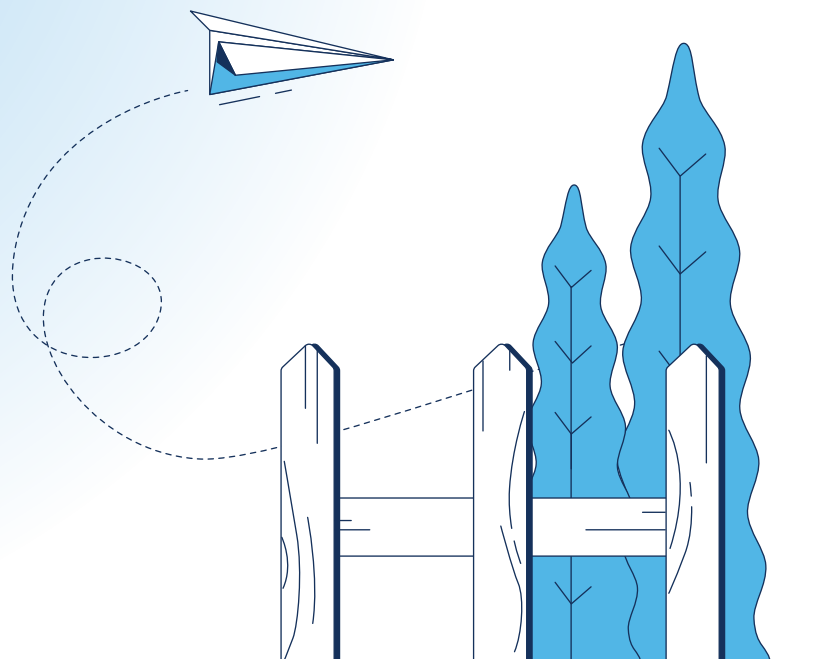
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