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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(2.5.2025)

The Commission remains committed to addressing cancer. Europe's Beating Cancer Plan¹, launched in 2021, aims to reduce cancer burden through prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, and improving the quality of life of patients and survivors.

An assessment of implementation of the Cancer Plan published on 4 February 2025² confirms that it is a successful and highly relevant health-in-all-policies-based initiative. It also highlights that achieving the Cancer Plan's aims requires a major focus on continuing to implement ongoing actions.

Most actions have been initiated and are ongoing. Prevention is the focus of 45% of the Plan's sub-actions. Key achievements in this area include the adoption of the Council Recommendations on vaccine-preventable cancers³ and on smoke- and aerosol-free environments⁴ in 2024. Flagships such as the European Cancer Imaging Initiative and the EU Network of Youth Cancer Survivors are now operational. The Commission is working to improve early detection of cancer through the EU Cancer Screening Scheme, promoting 90% coverage of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination among girls and increasing HPV vaccination rates among boys.

Furthermore, two key initiatives are planned to be launched in 2025. The fifth Edition of the European Code against Cancer aims to raise public awareness on cancer risk factors, providing people with the information and tools to make healthier choices. The EU Network of Comprehensive Cancer Centres will link national cancer care structures to ensure access to high-quality care for EU citizens.

¹ https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/eu_cancer-plan_en_0.pdf

² https://health.ec.europa.eu/latest-updates/review-europes-beating-cancer-plan-2025-02-04_en

³ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C_202404259

⁴ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C_202407425