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Press Release

Opening knowledge, closing gaps: CURTAIN project launches to beat cancer inequalities by improving cancer literacy.



The CURTAIN project, acronym of beating **Cancer ineqUalities thRough liTerAcY IN** Europe, has officially held its **kick-off meeting** in Câmpulung and Lerești, Romania, on 9-11 September 2025.

Co-funded under the EU4Health programme, CURTAIN is a 3-year project coordinated by the Centre for Innovation in Medicine - INOMED, Romania, and bringing together a consortium of **15 partners from 9 countries** (6 EU and 3 non-EU). The consortium represents a diverse group of stakeholders: national health institutes, consultancies, universities, NGOs, medical centers, associations.

The project aligns with Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and the Cancer Mission to **reduce cancer inequalities** between Eastern and Western Europe, urban and rural areas, and vulnerable socio-economic groups. By focusing on cancer prevention, early detection, treatment, and quality of life, CURTAIN will prioritise **improving cancer health literacy** as a key element in reducing inequalities and enhancing access to **quality cancer prevention and care**. By adopting the acronym CURTAIN, the project highlights the



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persistent cancer inequalities between Eastern and Western Europe, which are visible today through the lens of the former Iron Curtain.

For the CURTAIN Project, health literacy is the ability of individuals to access, understand, and use information to make informed health decisions, making it crucial for effective cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment. It also **empowers** patients to navigate healthcare systems, understand treatment options, and actively participate in their care decisions

The kick-off meeting marked the first in-person gathering of the consortium, offering an important opportunity to align on immediate goals, coordinate ongoing work, and set the roadmap for the first months.

After welcoming words from **Marius Geantă**, Coordinator of the project, **Tomas Kniukšta**, project officer of the Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) presented to the project partners the key principles of project management in EU Co-Funded projects. This was followed by presentations outlining the objectives and action points of each working group.

On the second day, the consortium gathered in the rural town of Lerești where they **engaged with local and regional authorities**, raising awareness on the project's objectives and laying the groundwork for ongoing collaboration and strategic alignments in the implementation of both Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and the Cancer Mission at local (Lerești village, Argeș county) and regional level (South Muntenia Region)

Following stakeholder engagement, the partners visited Lerești Living Lab, which hosted the art exhibition *The Art of Networks*, organised by Centre for Innovation in Medicine, coordinator of both 4P-CAN and CURTAIN projects. The exhibition showcased stories of the local community through artworks created from collected data. The meeting concluded with a friendly walking football match, symbolising future **collaborations** and **synergies** with the **sister project 4P-CAN**.



The members of the CURTAIN consortium thus shared a similar experience to that of the citizens of Lerești, who took part in a local walking football tournament organised within the **sister project 4P-CAN** in the last 2 years. Walking football is a sport recommended for people living with various comorbidities, as it promotes physical activity at any age and in diverse medical circumstances. At the same time, it fosters **social connection** and delivers significant **benefits for mental health**. The event was a great occasion to discuss key items and laid a solid foundation for collaboration.

"It is a great honour to launch the CURTAIN project here, in Câmpulung and Lerești, a place with deep historical meaning for Romania and for Europe.

More than five centuries ago, from Câmpulung came Neacșu's Letter, the first preserved text in the Romanian language. That letter was not only a milestone for our culture, but also a vital warning – an act of communication that aimed to protect a community from an imminent danger.

Today, we are here to continue that legacy, in a different context but with the same purpose: protection of our people. If in 1521 the threat was an invading army, today the threat is cancer – an invisible enemy that still takes too many lives and deepens inequalities across Europe.

Together with citizens, local authorities, healthcare professionals, the 15 European partners from CURTAIN will co-create new tools and knowledge to ensure that every person has the right information to prevent cancer, to detect it early, and to access quality care.

From Câmpulung, the birthplace of Romanian written communication, we now send out a new type of message to Europe: that cancer literacy is essential for equality, for resilience, and for saving lives.

Together, we can make sure that the story which started here more than 500 years ago – the story of words that protect communities – continues in the fight against cancer."

Dr Marius Geantă, Project Coordinator, Centre for Innovation in Medicine, INOMED.

"CURTAIN has a clear vision of how to make impact on increasing health literacy on cancer in local communities in numerous countries. This vision is supported by a detailed and well-developed work plan. During the kick-off meeting it was evident that consortium members aim at establishing connections with local and regional authorities which facilitate access to local communities and contributes to the impact and sustainability of the project.

The fact that CURTAIN Coordinator and many consortium members have experience in another project of similar nature, gives confidence that CURTAIN is fully capable to achieve their ambitious goals.

I am looking forward to following the progress of CURTAIN and supporting them with any questions or issues related to its implementation."

Tomas Kniukšta, Project Officer, Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA).

Stay tuned and follow us on LinkedIn: @curtain-project

To learn more about the project and how to get engaged, contact:

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List of project partners

[INOMED](#)



[Montenegrin Association of Medical Oncologists](#)



[European Network for Smoking Prevention](#)



[Dnipro State Medical University](#)



[SHINE 2Europe](#)



[Jean Monnet Center for Excellence at Paisii Hilendarski University](#)



[National Health Institute Dr. Ricardo Jorge](#)



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