



# Childhood Cancer

Every child deserves the same chance to survive, no matter where they live



## THE BIG NUMBERS

Across Europe every year



**35,000**

children and adolescents are diagnosed with cancer



over

**6,000**

die every year



**80%**

survive in high-income European countries



Survival differs significantly between European countries and cancer types

Source: [European Society for Paediatric Oncology \(SIOPe\)](#)

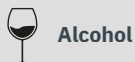
## WHAT IS PAEDIATRIC CANCER?

### UNLIKE ADULT CANCERS...

Often caused by



Smoking



Alcohol



Obesity



UV exposure

### CHILDHOOD CANCERS

Mainly caused by



Cellular malfunctions



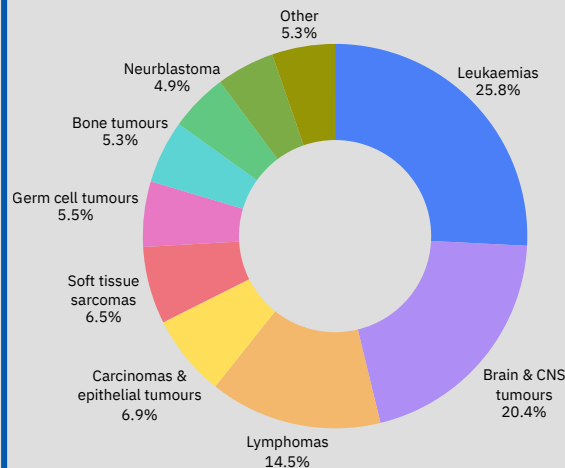
Genetic alterations



Developmental changes

**NOT caused by lifestyle.**

## MOST COMMON CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENT CANCERS (0-19 YEARS)



Source: [IARC ACCIS: International Classification of Childhood Cancer \(ICCC-3\)](#)

## THE CHILDHOOD CANCER JOURNEY



Symptoms



Diagnosis



Intensive treatment



Years of follow-up



Long-term survivorship



Late effects

This is often a long and difficult road that can last for years

## RECOGNISING THE SIGNS

Common symptoms can be easy to miss



Persistent fever



Fatigue



Headaches (especially with vomiting)



Lumps or swelling



Bruising or bleeding



Bone or joint pain

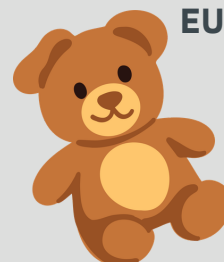
### The challenge:

Symptoms often resemble common childhood illnesses

**Earlier diagnosis improves outcomes**

## CHILDHOOD CANCER IS RARE

**BUT COLLECTIVELY IT REMAINS THE LEADING DISEASE-RELATED CAUSE OF DEATH BEYOND INFANCY IN EUROPE**



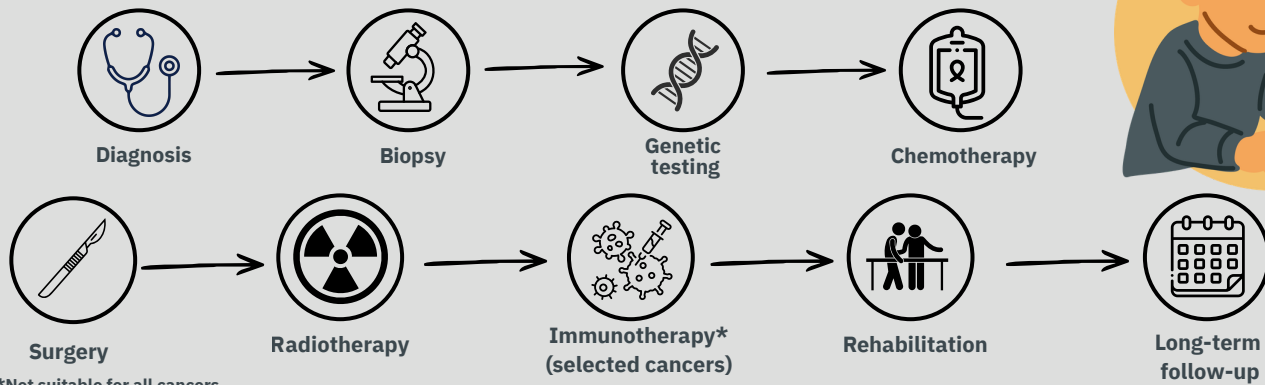
## CHILDREN ARE NOT SMALL ADULTS

They need specialised care, research and medicines designed for them

# CHILDHOOD CANCER CHANGES AN ENTIRE LIFE

## NOT ONLY A DIAGNOSIS

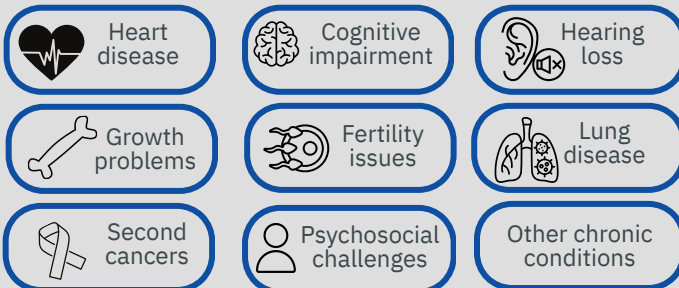
### WHAT TREATMENT MAY LOOK LIKE



### SURVIVORSHIP: CURE IS NOT THE END

Approximately ⅓ of survivors develop at least one chronic health condition related to their treatment during adulthood

#### Possible late effects

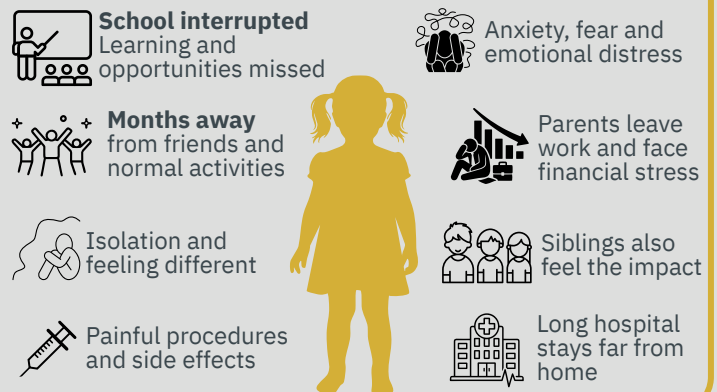


Lifelong follow-up and support are essential

Sources: [Oeffinger et al., NEJM 2006](#) and [IGHG Late Effects of Childhood Cancer Guidelines](#)

### THE CHILD EXPERIENCE

Cancer affects every part of a child's life, and their family



### EUROPEAN INITIATIVES

- European Reference Networks (ERN PAEDCan)
- SIOP Europe Strategic Plan
- EU Beating Cancer Plan
- OCEAN Project
- Cross-border collaboration

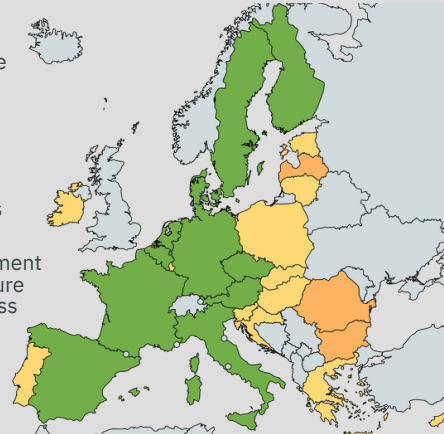


### WHERE EUROPE STANDS TODAY

Significant inequalities remain

#### Key Challenges

- Comprehensive paediatric oncology ecosystem
- Established services with important gaps
- Greater investment needed to ensure equitable access



- Unequal access to specialised centres
- Medicine shortages and delayed access
- Limited access to clinical trials
- Cross-border inequalities
- Need for structured survivorship care

Note: This map is an editorial synthesis of published OCEAN indicators and is intended to illustrate differences in paediatric oncology capacity in Europe. It is not an official ranking by SIOPe or the OCEAN Project. Sources: [OECD & European Commission \(2025\)](#)

### EUROPE CAN ENSURE EVERY CHILD HAS ACCESS TO:



BECAUSE WHERE A CHILD LIVES SHOULD NEVER DETERMINE WHETHER THEY SURVIVE CANCER.



This infographic was prepared by Victoria VALLEDOR from the Policy Department for Transformation, Innovation and Health at the request of the European Parliament's Committee on Public Health (SANT).

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