

COST ACTION BM1204 EUPANCREAS - AN INTEGRATED EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR PANCREAS CANCER RESEARCH

Pancreatic cancer (PC) is the eighth most common cancer among men in the Western world (ninth in women) and has the lowest survival rate of any cancer. Moreover, death rates from PC are rising across Europe while those from all other cancers continue to fall. There is no option to control PC incidence/mortality from primary and secondary (screening) prevention angles and only minor advances have been done recently in tertiary prevention under the umbrella of personalized treatment. However, its impact on PC overall mortality is null. While PC research is urgently needed, it poses several challenges requiring sustained multidisciplinary collaborative efforts. The application of the rapidly evolving omics technologies in cancer research has demonstrated that large-scale international collaboration is essential to decipher relevant information in the context of massive-scale interrogations. This is even more important for rare and dreadful diseases like PC. To gain knowledge on PC and to lower the burden on society, it was deemed necessary to develop a comprehensive pancreatic research community, to provide the tools and resources needed in order to make scientific breakthroughs.

The **EUPancreas COST Action (BM1204)** represents a unique European platform that facilitates the collaboration of a broad range of European and international PC multidisciplinary research groups. It brings together a group of young

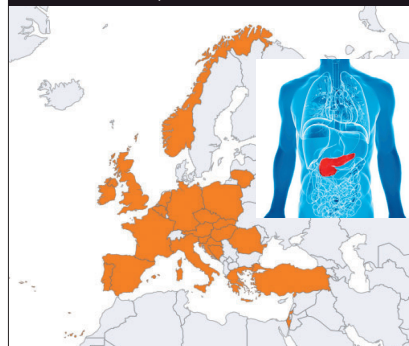
researchers across a range of disciplines in collaboration with more experienced researchers and allows Europe to actively participate in the international scenario of PC research. Overall, the Action involves 185 multidisciplinary members from 22 EU countries.

The main objective of EUPancreas is to capitalise on emerging scientific and technological developments in the field of PC, in order to integrate knowledge and experience in a multidisciplinary way "from cell to society". This objective is pursued through the promotion and application of uniform study tools and protocols, fostering their optimal use by early-stage researchers, enhancing the mobility and training of researchers (through Short-Term Scientific Missions, training schools, workshops, etc.), and disseminating the results produced by the Action to the broader society. EUPancreas builds together with other international initiatives to increase public and health policy-maker awareness about PC research needs and impacts.

EUPancreas is itself divided into 4 Working Groups, each of which leads a thematic area: 1) *Harmonization of research tools*, with regard to standardization of PC definitions and development of protocols for the collection of biological samples and epidemiological/clinical information; 2) *Integration of omics data within and between studies*, by evaluating existing omics data and establishing approaches for data deposit; 3) *Translation of findings*

into clinical practice, through the design of optimal studies to address clinical research questions and biomarkers research in PC; and 4) *Pancreatic cancer patient management*, aimed at developing evidence-based PC-best practice guidelines and to translate them into healthcare systems in Europe.

Joining efforts to fight pancreatic cancer. EUPancreas brings together 185 multidisciplinary members from 22 European countries



EUPancreas is thereby developing novel interdisciplinary utensils and methods to improve our understanding of PC and its control by answering questions related to its aetiology, early detection, and evidence-based personalized treatment to enhance primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention, as well as on health management.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Núria Malats, MD, MPH, PhD
EUPancreas COST Action Chair
Spanish National Cancer Research Center (CNIO)
Melchor Fernández Almagro, 3
28029-Madrid, Spain
Phone +34 912246900
E-mail: nmalats@cnio.es



BM1204 COST Action
www.eupancreas.com
@EUPancreas

The EUPancreas kick-off meeting in June 2013. Putting in place collaborative action plans for the network



COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a pan-European intergovernmental framework. Its mission is to enable breakthrough scientific and technological developments leading to new concepts and products, and thereby contribute to strengthening Europe's research and innovation capacities.

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