

NEW IARC INITIATIVES

IARC RESEARCH TEAMS

The concept of IARC Research Teams was developed to tackle a perceived silo mentality within the existing IARC Research Branches and to facilitate scientific work across the Branches and introduce more flexible scientific collaboration and coordination on closely related research. The Research Teams are informal organizational units created across Branches. The added value of these Teams is to catalyse completion of projects through a cross-Agency research approach, by gathering people with complementary expertise in traditional and molecular epidemiology, exposure assessment, biostatistics and data science, database management, and project management. Teams are made up of staff scientists, early career scientists, and support personnel; their composition ensures capacity and flexibility, with a strong focus on mentorship and training.

During the 2022–2023 biennium, 19 IARC Research Teams were established (<https://www.iarc.who.int/research-teams/>), including the first international Team: the Population-Based Long-Term Surveillance Team, with Team members from IARC and the National Cancer Center Japan. The Research Teams explore a broad range of topics, with two overarching goals: (i) to inform primary prevention by advancing the understanding of cancer etiology, and (ii) to inform secondary prevention by optimizing early detection strategies. The main topics addressed by the Teams include nutritional, metabolic, lifestyle, infection, and occupational cancer epidemiology; molecular characteristics of rare cancers; discovery of biomarkers for early detection; cancer risk prediction; public health decision modelling; and dissemination and communication. IARC's

emerging priorities, such as *cancer inequalities*, *health economics*, and *implementation research*, as defined in the IARC Medium-Term Strategy 2021–2025, are considered from the perspective of cross-Agency Teams. In addition, IARC Research Teams related to the WHO Global Initiatives on breast cancer, cervical cancer, and childhood cancer were established, with the objectives of improving information sharing and knowledge that relates to the WHO Global Initiatives and improving dialogue and coordination with the WHO Cancer Team.

IARC EQUITY AND DIVERSITY ADVISORY GROUP (EDAG)

The IARC Equity and Diversity Advisory Group (EDAG) actively promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion at IARC. This is achieved through initiatives to foster an inclusive culture, ensure fair treatment, enable development of all personnel, and promote equal access to opportunities for learning and career advancement.

In June 2022, the EDAG launched the IARC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy establishes a strong foundation for sustainable and transformative progress in the realm of EDI at IARC. The Action Plan complements the Strategy by detailing the current EDI policies and proposing concrete actions to address gaps in these policies. This dual approach ensures a comprehensive and systematic plan to promote a diverse, inclusive, and equitable work environment.

A significant achievement of the EDAG during the 2022–2023 biennium was the launch of the IARC Award for Women in Cancer Research during 2022. This

award recognizes and honours outstanding contributions in the field of cancer prevention research globally by scientists who identify as women. The inaugural recipient of the award, Dr Cristina Stefan, presented her work during an online event on 19 May 2022. The 2023 awardee is Dr Neerja Bhatla, who presented her work during a ceremony in the new IARC headquarters building on 13 October 2023.

Other activities of the EDAG in 2022 included a survey on disability – the first ever in WHO – to gain insights into staff needs, knowledge about the issue, and perceptions of IARC services and resources related to this topic. As a result of this survey, a Working Group on Disability was formed and an IARC Open Forum on Disability was planned.

As part of the Pride Month celebrations in 2023, an LGBTQ+ After-Work Social event was held. It was a success, and future events are envisioned. Talks are under way with Interpol (another international organization with its headquarters in Lyon) about the possibility of hosting joint activities, and the EDAG has also met with UN-GLOBE (<https://www.unglobe.org/>).

Overall, the EDAG has demonstrated its commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive culture at IARC, making significant strides in achieving its mission.

EUROPEAN CODE AGAINST CANCER, 5TH EDITION (ECAC5)

First published in 1987, the European Code Against Cancer (ECAC) has become a cornerstone of cancer prevention actions across Europe. Under the World Code Against Cancer Framework established by IARC, the ECAC 5th edition (ECAC5) project aims to

build on previous editions by incorporating the latest scientific developments in cancer prevention and expanding the scope of the ECAC to include policy recommendations.

The ECAC5 project was initiated in 2022 and will last for 4 years. It is funded by the European Commission. The project aims to revise and update the existing ECAC using a rigorous scientific methodology that integrates insights from behavioural science and modern communication strategies to enhance health literacy. ECAC5 is structured into three distinct levels of information, or outputs. Level 1 provides evidence-based recommendations to the general public and is supported by complementary recommendations to policy-makers. Level 2 offers supplementary Knowledge Translation Outputs in the form of fact sheets and policy briefs to contextualize the ECAC5 recommendations, serving as a valuable resource for increasing awareness and education on cancer prevention. Level 3 targets the scientific community through a series of articles for publication, which delve into the scientific justification behind each of the recommendations in ECAC5.

As the coordinator of this project, IARC brings together several multidisciplinary working groups of 60 experts from 19 countries to scrutinize the evidence and propose draft recommendations

for inclusion in ECAC5. A Scientific Committee consisting of representatives from leading cancer and public health institutions in 12 European Union Member States, plus a representative of WHO, will review and ultimately adopt the recommendations ahead of the anticipated launch of ECAC5 in 2025. Thereafter, a period of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the ECAC is foreseen.

IARC CROSS-CUTTING WORKING GROUP ON CANCER PREVENTION KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION AND TRANSFER (KTT WG)

The IARC Cross-Cutting Working Group on Cancer Prevention Knowledge Translation and Transfer (KTT WG) was created in 2020 to translate the evidence on cancer prevention produced by IARC and its collaborators and disseminate it to specific audiences and stakeholders involved in decision-making (i.e. policy-making, implementation, advocacy, and also research).

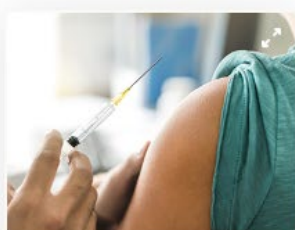
So far, the KTT WG has published four IARC Evidence Summary Briefs: on breast cancer outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa, the science behind the Nutri-Score nutrition label, early detection and clinical management of bladder cancer, and protection from a single dose of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. The fifth IARC Evidence Summary Brief

is currently being developed and will be launched at the end of 2023. These Evidence Summary Briefs may assist in accelerating the adoption and implementation of evidence-based strategies, while creating new opportunities for capacity-building and research.

In early 2023, the IARC Scientific Council approved the constitution of an Editorial Board, composed of two members of the IARC Scientific Council, the WHO Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) Department focal point, and some IARC members. In addition, the KTT WG developed an internal survey for the identification and eligibility of new topics for future Evidence Summary Briefs. The submitted topics will be brought to the Editorial Board at the end of each year, in order to select the right scientific topics to be showcased in the Evidence Summary Briefs during the next year.

During the 2022–2023 biennium, the KTT WG organized two internal events, to increase the visibility of the initiative within the Agency and to encourage IARC personnel to participate by submitting their suggestions for research topics and/or by joining the KTT WG. The KTT WG is also working on a dissemination and evaluation strategy to maximize the impact of the Evidence Summary Briefs.

The dedicated webpage of the IARC Evidence Summary Briefs series (<https://www.iarc.who.int/evidence-summary-briefs-series/>) shows the four Briefs launched to date.



IARC EVIDENCE SUMMARY BRIEF NO. 4

PROTECTION FROM A SINGLE DOSE OF HPV VACCINE

READ REPORT

READ MORE



IARC EVIDENCE SUMMARY BRIEF NO. 3

IMPROVING EARLY DETECTION AND CLINICAL MANAGEMENT OF BLADDER CANCER

READ REPORT

READ MORE



IARC EVIDENCE SUMMARY BRIEF NO. 2

THE NUTRI-SCORE: A SCIENCE-BASED FRONT-OF-PACK NUTRITION LABEL

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IARC EVIDENCE SUMMARY BRIEF NO. 1

BREAST CANCER OUTCOMES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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