

Foreword

Over the past half a century, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has advocated for the critical importance of population-based cancer registries in providing the evidence base to inform cancer control and cancer research. Since the publication of the first volume of *Cancer Incidence in Five Continents* (CI5), by Sir Richard Doll and colleagues, in 1966, each new volume represents a unique resource for cancer researchers worldwide. In providing comparable quinquennial data on incident cancers from high-quality registries, the publication remains invaluable in documenting the evolving magnitude and profile of cancer in different locations of the world.

With CI5 Volume XI, we continue to see an expansion of international registry coverage, with 343 cancer registries in 65 countries contributing incidence data on cancers diagnosed during the period from 2008 to 2012. Although both the call for data and the editorial processes used in compiling this volume were similar to those for previous volumes, some practical changes to the book format were inevitably required. With an ever-expanding number of registries worldwide submitting data to CI5 – almost 500 registries submitted data to Volume XI – the publication has been somewhat abridged compared with previous volumes, with several of the extensive tables now available online. A renewed focus has been placed on the development of web-based data visualization tools that seek to showcase the wealth of data that the CI5 volumes bring to descriptive epidemiological research.

CI5 is a major resource for understanding patterns and trends of cancers worldwide, and fortunately an increasing number of registries are submitting data from low- and middle-income countries. However, much work still remains to be done to ensure that comparable incidence data are available in all corners of the world. The strict evaluation of data quality that is needed to ensure comparability of incidence rates can impede some registries in resource-constrained settings in meeting the high standards of operations and data output necessary to be included in a volume of CI5. IARC is committed to supporting and strengthening cancer registries in low- and middle-income countries via the Global Initiative for Cancer Registry Development (GICR), a multi-organization partnership that seeks to address this gap while ensuring that national cancer control plans are monitored and evaluated on the basis of reliable data recorded locally.

Finally, a looming issue has been the safeguarding of data confidentiality. Unfortunately, some long-standing, high-quality registries were not able to submit their data to CI5 Volume XI because of national data protection regulations. IARC is exploring long-term solutions that will facilitate the sharing of these precious data. Direct liaison with registries through the International Association of Cancer Registries (IACR), and the support of and collaboration with registries worldwide has been a cornerstone activity of the Agency, and every effort will be made to preserve and cultivate this vital link with registries throughout the world over the next 50 years.

I take this opportunity to warmly thank all registries that submitted their data to this volume. I thank you for your enduring collaborations with IARC – long may they continue!

Dr Elisabete Weiderpass
Director, IARC