

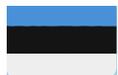


# EU MISSIONS CANCER



**“Conquering cancer – mission possible: coordination of actions in Baltic States”**  
December 16, 2021; 13.00-15.00 CET (14.00 – 16.00 EET)

### Event moderator:



**Nemee Raud** who is Estonian journalist, news anchor and international correspondent with 30+ years of experience in the US, Russia, and Estonia. He holds Master of Foreign Affairs degree from Columbia University, New York and B.A degree (Summa Cum Laude) in Organizational Behavior and Communications from New York University.

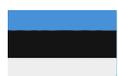


### Guest from European Commission:

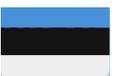
**Annika Nowak**, Head of Sector Cancer Mission secretariat, EC DG Research & Innovation

After studying law at the Humboldt University in Berlin, Annika Nowak began her professional career as a parliamentary assistant in the European Parliament in 2001, focussing on food safety and health policies. In 2004, she joined the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) of the European Commission and worked primarily in the field of health systems and pharmaceutical law. In 2019, Ms. Nowak moved to the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) to work in the area of health research. Since July 2021, she is the Head of Sector of the Cancer Mission secretariat in DG RTD Unit D1 ‘Combating Diseases’.

### Distinguished speakers who will present The Mission coordination actions at the national level:



**Kaire Innos**, Head of Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics of National Institute for Health Development that is a government established research and development body collecting, connecting and providing reliable national information from a multitude of sources, related to the health of the Estonian population. Its mission is to establish and share health related knowledge as well as to influence health behavior and determinants of health so as to increase the well-being of the people in Estonia and help them live longer and healthier lives. This institute engage in public health related research and health promotion as well as development and implementation of disease prevention programmes and activities.



**Prof. Vahur Valvere** is one of the founders and developers of cancer chemotherapy and the Estonian Cancer Society in Estonia (next year we will celebrate the 30-year jubilee) and in North Estonia Medical Centre a founder of the Clinic of Oncology and Hematology. Internationally he has been active in European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) for about 10 years. On September 13, 2019 together with Estonian Prime Minister Mr Jüri Ratas and UICC Managing Director Mr Cary Adams he signed on behalf of the Estonian Cancer Society the Estonia’s joining with World Cancer Declaration. He also contributed to the completion of the Estonian Cancer Control Plan.



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 **Prof. Mārcis Leja** is a Professor of Medicine, Director of the Institute of Clinical and Preventive Medicine, University of Latvia, Head of the Dept. of Research, Riga East University hospital, and a consulting gastroenterologist at the Digestive Diseases Centre. He has served as a member of the European Cancer Mission Board from 2019 to 2021 and is a member of Research Committee member of the United European Gastroenterology (UEG) as well as the European Helicobacter and Microbiota Study Group (EHMSG). His special interest lies in the prevention and early detection of gastrointestinal cancer. He is the principal investigator of the population-based gastric cancer prevention study [GISTAR](#). The other areas of research interest is related to the use of volatile organic marker (VOC) diagnostic concept in gastrointestinal cancer detection as well as for other conditions, the role of microbiota in health and disease as well as the use of large data for prevention and early detection.

 **Inga Cechanovičienė** is the head of the Specialized Care Division of the Ministry of Health. One of the main strategic goals of The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania is assurance of public health care by strengthening the health of the population, prevention and control of diseases. Improvement of public health care activities in compliance with the requirements of EU legal acts. Assurance of effective prevention of diseases, reduction of the morbidity and mortality of the population, giving special attention to the health care of pregnant women and infants, health preservation and improvement of children and youth. Reduction of morbidity from communicable and non-communicable diseases by removing them causing factors as well as reducing consequences that occur due to traumatic events and accidents.

 **Prof. Sonata Jarmalaitė**, Professor of Genetics, Chief Researcher (Medical Biologist). Deputy Director for Research and Development acting as Director in the National cancer institute (NCI) of Lithuania. 2018 Laureate of the Lithuanian Science Prize for the cycle of works “New-generation cancer markers”, which evaluated the molecular profile of tumors in many localizations and proposed new diagnostic and prognostic markers and innovative methods for their investigation, which can be used clinically. NCI acts as the clinical cancer center, certified and accredited by the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes. In order to achieve strategic objectives, NCI cooperates with colleagues both in Lithuania and in the European research area. The diverse international level researches, related to nano-technologies, molecular biology, genetics and the most advanced immunotherapy are performed in NCI. NCI is among the first oncology centers established in Europe, NCI functions from 1st December 1931.

 **Prof. Toms Torims**, Professor at the Riga Technical University (RTU), scientific associate at the European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN), CERN Baltic Group chairman. This is a group of Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian research institutions which are involved in CERN activities. CERN has supported and continues to support ependymoma research at some of the world’s most respected cancer centers. CERN implements many collaborations for cancer therapy. Collaborations and new European projects, particle physics expertise is pushing ever further the field of cancer research.



### Cancer related NGOs:



**David Ritchie** is currently the Cancer Prevention Manager for the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL). His focus at ECL is on both primary and secondary prevention of cancer, with an emphasis on public communication of cancer prevention. He is responsible for the promotion of the 4th edition of the European Code Against Cancer via collaborative working amongst the national and regional cancer leagues. He also coordinates the ECL Prevention & Early Detection Working Group (P&EDWG). David is a member of the working group of the European Quality Assurance Scheme for breast cancer centres, which is coordinated by Joint Research Centre of the European Commission as part of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer, as well as he is also a doctoral candidate at the University of Antwerp where the focus of his research is on evaluating informed decision-making for organised cancer screening participation in Europe.



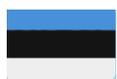
**Assoc. Prof. Tomas Lapinskas** is a cardiologist specializing in diagnosing and treating cardiac diseases at the Department of Cardiology, Hospital of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences Kauno klinikos. He has unique expertise and great interest in non-invasive cardiovascular imaging, especially cardiovascular magnetic resonance. During his studies, Assoc. Prof. Lapinskas completed several cardiovascular imaging fellowships at the University of Gent (Belgium), University Medical Center Rotterdam (The Netherlands), University Hospital of Vienna (Austria), and German Heart Center Berlin (Germany) in 2010–2012. From 2016 until 2018, he worked as a senior research fellow at MRI-Core-Lab of German Heart Center Berlin, where he supervised ongoing multicenter and institutional CMR projects. Assoc. Prof. Lapinskas is a member of the international experts' group and has been actively involved in the preparation of a position paper which comprehensively described the role of cardiovascular imaging in cancer patients receiving cardiotoxic therapies (doi: [10.1002/ejhf.1957](https://doi.org/10.1002/ejhf.1957)). By 2021 Assoc. Prof. Lapinskas is an [Advocacy Committee](#) Member of the Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance. Since 2018, Assoc. Prof. Lapinskas is acting Director for Public Health, Research and Education at the Hospital of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences Kauno klinikos and is a member of the Hospital Board of Executive Directors.



**Dr. Neringa Šeperienė** has obtained her PhD in engineering at Kaunas University of Technology and has more than 10 years' experience in coordinating international and national projects. She is a co-founder and a CEO of medtech company Albametric Holding, deep tech startup, called BranchyDOSE. The startup has successfully implemented Horizon 2020 Instrument Phase 1 for SMEs and EIT Health InnoStars Awards projects. Through these projects developed partnership with few French companies and institutions: Medicin Paris Region, Sorbonne University Hospital, In Extensio, Temesys.



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**Kaili Semm**, Chairman of the board Estonian Association of Parents of Children with Cancer (NGO) which is a on-profit organisation and was established in 1992. Our aim is to help and support children with cancer as well as families, where there is or has been a child with cancer diagnosis. The members of the association are parents, who have the experience of caring for a child with cancer and who have the knowledge, willingness to help others.



**Neringa Čiakienė** Director at Lithuanian Cancer Patient Coalition (POLA). The Association for the Assistance of Oncology Patients (POLA, NGO) is one of the largest non-governmental organizations in Lithuania, uniting an organization of 30 patients and 25 thousand of oncology patients. In its activities, POLA represents and defends the interests of oncology patients in government and in various areas of public policy-making, as well as offers various services, such as psychological or legal assistance, and the evaluation of possible treatment alternatives. The initiative to bring together the Association for Oncology Patient was launched in 2009, but became operational in 2012 to ensure that patients with oncology receive more effective treatment, psychological, emotional and social support, as well as all the information they need. Over the years, POLA has become one of the best-recognized non-governmental organizations in the country, representing the interests of oncology patients at both the political and public levels.

## Organizers:



**Dr. Živilė Ruželė, PhD**, was appointed as National Contact Point (NCP) for Health programmes of the Horizon Europe programme at the Research Council of Lithuania. She has an international experience in academic R&D field and has been working in the International Programmes Unit for the last 3 years with bilateral collaborations, such as, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, health related European co-fund programmes and other transnational initiatives. [LinkedIn](#)



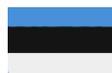
**Sigita Auvertin (Bagdonienė)** is the National Contact Point (NCP) for Health programmes of the Horizon Europe programme at the Research Council of Lithuania. Sigita has experience in European affairs, for more than a decade she was working as the policy advisor in European Parliament (ENVI, ITRE, FEMM committees) with the specialization on consumers' rights, health and health literacy. She was working in European NGO European Cervical Cancer Association (reorganized to International Cervical Cancer Association) as political communication officer. Sigita was a lector on "Interests representation in the EU" (IIRPS VU, Lithuania). As the researcher, she was involved in the project CINEFOGO, participated in the project mEducator. From 2019 volunteering as policy advisor in the patient, group NGO ELIPE (Lithuania). [LinkedIn](#)



**Dr. Brigita Serafinavičiūtė** is the head of [the Lithuanian RDI Liaison Office in Brussels LINO](#). She is leading the activities in Brussels since the establishment of this Office back in 2017. She is also the appointed Lithuanian delegate at the strategic configuration of the Horizon Europe Programme Committee. In 2018-2019 she was chairing [IGLO - an informal association of Brussels-based non-profit R&D Liaison Offices](#) and is a part of IGLO secretariat until now. In 2008-2015 she was Board Member of the Research Council of Lithuania acting as Scientific Secretary of the Council. In 2016-2017 she was the Head of Research Management Office at Vilnius University. Brigita holds a PhD in Ecology and Environmental Science. [LinkedIn](#)



**Julija Baniukevič** is the RDI Policy Analyst in [the Lithuanian RDI Liaison Office in Brussels - LINO](#), as well she is a Co-Chair of [IGLO Higher Education Working Group](#). Previously she was the Executive Director of the Lithuanian Future Foresight Institute, as well as the Head of Lithuanian “Youth Researcher” Laboratory funded by Structural Funds. The laboratory led by Julija has participated in the EC funded FP7 project “NanOpinion” on the monitoring public opinion on nanotechnology. While completing her research studies at Vilnius University, Julija was actively involved in the science-policy environment at the national and international level. In addition, Julija was the President of the Lithuanian Society of Young Researchers and was elected as the vice-president of EURODOC community. Julija has graduated in the fields of biochemistry and bioengineering (master degree with honours). [LinkedIn](#)



**Dr. Ülle Napa** is the head of the Estonian Liaison office for EU RTD in Brussels. She has been working at the Estonian Research Council since 2013 and she has been involved with very many different topic and tasks at national and EU level. Currently she is involved with supporting the implementation of EU partnerships, missions, Horizon Europe in Estonia via the Estonia Research Council’s Brussels office. Due to her work she is also in close contact with Estonian research and innovation communities back home (Estonia). She holds a PhD from University of Tartu (Physical geography). [LinkedIn](#)



**Egita Aizsilniece-Ibema**, Head of Latvian office for Innovation and Technology in Brussels. Her role includes matching Latvian companies and organizations investing in innovation with EU funded programmes in Brussels. Until April 2021 I advised Latvian and Dutch business in the Netherlands. Fields of activity included fostering export, attracting investment and introducing Latvian technology solutions as well as promoting Latvia as a tourism destination. [LinkedIn](#)