

## **Dr. Adela Maghear – European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC)**

**Title:** “Inequalities in oncology health care – the patients’ perspective”

Disparities result from evident inequalities in cancer care that exist not only across European Member States but also within countries shaping thereby the cancer journeys of European citizens.

From variability in cancer diagnosis, screening services and unequal access to quality care and treatment options (radiation, medication, surgery) to inadequately implemented National Cancer Control Plans or lack thereof and disparities in survival and patient rehabilitation, the realities of cancer patients in Europe differ at their core. These disparities also apply to after-cancer care and include issues as the return to work and general quality of life, which usually depend on where the patient lives. At the same time, inequalities are also a reality within countries. Healthcare professionals not seldom have to make suggestions based not only on scientific evidence but also on social and health policy realities (i.e., health coverage). Whilst these inequalities exist, the cancer burden continues to grow at ever-increasing rates, placing tremendous physical, psychological, and financial strain on patients and their families.

The EU Cancer Plan flagship initiative “Cancer Inequalities Registry” launched in 2022 is aimed at identifying disparities and inequalities in cancer care between Member States and regions.