

Training and mobility: a priority for the Organisation of the European Cancer Institutes. How a national mobility initiative could enhance EU cooperation in cancer research contributing to the development of an European Research Area: the example of the Italian Comprehensive Cancer Centers' Network "Alleanza Contro il Cancro"

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ABSTRACT

It is widely recognized that productivity gains, sustained economic growth and employment are largely determined by technological progress, innovation and human capital. The 2000 Lisbon strategy to make Europe a competitive knowledge-based economy by 2010 and, more specifically, the Barcelona objectives agreed upon in 2002 to increase R&D investment in the EU to approach 3% of GDP, ensuring that there are sufficient human resources for research, are a preliminary step in this direction. If we want to reach this goal we have to succeed in retaining the best researchers, creating the right environment where they can perform their activities and develop their careers.

To this aim the Organization of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) has set up a working group on Education and Training with the mandate to encourage continuing education in cancer research and applications and to verify the feasibility to promote mobility programs inside the network and in association with industries.

Until now only few OECI training programs have been launched and a full mobility program has not been developed yet due to limited budget resources.

The Italian Network of Comprehensive Cancer Centers, Alleanza Contro il Cancro, has planned the launch of a mobility program awarding 70 annual fellowships over a period of 36 months. This program, which will be open to the world research community, could represent a first interaction through mobility among the members of the OECI network also involving industries. The program is a tangible approach to sustain the translational process needed for the development of an European Research Area in the field of cancer and its related biomedical disciplines, thus providing a practical answer to the 2005 renewed Lisbon Strategy.

Key words: cancer, training, mobility, ERA, comprehensiveness.

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