

# Study highlights varying cancer survival rates across Europe

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Cancer survival rates are continuing to improve in England, according to the results from a Europe-wide collaborative project.

But despite major improvements during the first decade of this century, [cancer survival](#) in England lags behind countries with the best survival rates, such as Sweden, Norway and Finland.

The analysis, published in the *Lancet Oncology*, was drawn from data of

survival for more than 10 million [cancer patients](#) from 29 countries diagnosed between 2000 and 2007 and followed up to 2008.

Sara Hiom, Cancer Research UK's director of early diagnosis, said: "This study confirms that we need to do much more to ensure more patients survive their cancer.

"It's important to remember that these figures refer to patients diagnosed up until 2007. Since then Cancer Research UK, working in partnership with others, has been at the heart of work to help more people beat cancer.

"We're working to support GPs and the public to better understand the possible symptoms of the disease, to ensure more people are diagnosed early, when treatments are likely to be more effective.

Survival in England was comparable to the European average for cancers of the breast, prostate, rectum and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

But it was lower than the European average for cancers of the kidney, ovary and bowel.

Referring to recent advances that are not accounted for in the 2007 figures, Sara Hiom said: "Cancer Research UK has helped to develop a new kind of bowel cancer screening, Bowel Scope, hailed as a genuine breakthrough and likely to prevent up to thousands of deaths a year once it has been rolled out nationally.

"We've also campaigned successfully for more [patients](#) to get state of the art radiotherapy - a key treatment in curing cancer."

Study co-leader Dr Roberta De Angelis, from the Istituto Superiore di Sanita in Rome, said: "The good news is that the number of adults

surviving for at least five years after diagnosis has risen steadily over time in all European regions, reflecting major advances in cancer management such as organised cancer screening programmes and improved treatments.

"But there continues to be big disparities between countries, and international survival differences are narrowing for only a few cancers such as breast, rectum, prostate, and melanoma of the skin."

**More information:** De Angelis, R. et al. "Cancer survival in Europe 1999—2007 by country and age: results of EURO CARE-5—a population-based study." *Lancet Oncol* [DOI: 10.1016/S1470-2045\(13\)70546-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045(13)70546-1)

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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