

# Improving access to early-stage lung cancer care in Europe

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There are stark differences between European countries when it comes to both the reimbursement of, and access to, new treatments for patients with early-stage lung cancer. There are also differences in reimbursement times and indications between the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Researchers from Amsterdam UMC Cancer Center Amsterdam analyzed the landscape, and their results are published today in *The Lancet Regional Health Europe* as part of a series on the latest developments in the treatment of this lung [cancer](#).

"Tackling inequalities in access to care must be a common European priority," says Amsterdam UMC pulmonologist Idris Bahce. In collaboration with colleagues from seven European countries, Bahce used a literature review to map out the latest developments and analyze access to these new treatments from a European perspective.

"The existing differences in health care systems and reimbursement structures between European countries threaten to exacerbate health care inequalities at both European and national levels. We therefore call for a collective European approach to reduce these inequalities," says Bahce.

He suggests measures such as more international cooperation between the EMA and other registration authorities, harmonizing cost-effectiveness procedures in European countries, a more critical evaluation of reimbursement criteria, and improving multidisciplinary collaborations around the patient.

The [standard treatment](#) for fit patients with early-stage lung cancer has always been surgery, sometimes combined with pre- or post-operative chemotherapy. Recently, the EMA has approved new treatments, such as immunotherapy, which appear to improve [survival rates](#) after surgery significantly. More approvals of innovative treatments are expected, potentially further exacerbating existing inequalities within Europe.

**More information:** Idris Bahce et al, New systemic treatment paradigms in resectable non-small cell lung cancer and variations in patient access across Europe, *The Lancet Regional Health—Europe* (2024). [DOI: 10.1016/j.lanepe.2024.100840](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lanepe.2024.100840)

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