

EONS Cancer Nursing Index 2020©

National profile: Spain

Introduction

In the [RECaN project](#) EONS highlighted important differences in cancer nursing across Europe. The EONS Cancer Nursing Index 2020 (ECNI) was developed by the [EONS Advocacy Working Group](#) to illustrate the development and status of this profession in Europe. The index (with scores from 0-100) includes 22 items covering the following dimensions: Education and Career Development, Patient and Occupational Safety, Recognition, Working Conditions and Impact and Workforce statistics.

The Index is based on data from the following sources:

1. EONS Survey on Patient and Occupational Safety (anonymous survey, available in 9 languages) which at the time of this analysis, included over 650 responses from cancer nurses in 38 countries)
2. Interviews with leading cancer nursing experts. Nurses from 38 of 42 invited countries participated
3. Work force statistics (obtained from ec.europe.eu/Eurostat and OECD)

A scoring system was developed by the EONS Advocacy Working Group to reflect the level of development for the different Index dimensions/items. For items with a variety of responses from the same country, the most frequently reported response was used. The purpose of the Index is primarily not to rank some countries as better than others, moreover to illustrate cancer nursing profiles, differences and areas in need of development. The Index could be used to aid the development of cancer nursing in each country as well as for general European progress.

Dimension/item	Maximum score	Mean score (min-max)	Spain	Comment
Overall score	100	48 (16 -78)	45	
Education and career development (5 items presented below)	23	9 (0-18)	10	
Specialist education on university level	5		0	
EONS Framework recognized/supported by Ministry of Education/Health	5		0	
Master programs in cancer nursing	4		4	
Advanced cancer nursing roles established	4		2	'Partly implemented' To obtain the highest scores (4) for this item, advanced cancer nursing roles need to be fully implemented and recognized at a national level.
Professors in cancer nursing	4		4	
Patient and occupational safety (8 items presented below)	36	18 (3-36)	13	
Safety guidelines (cytotoxic drugs) available	5		5	
Guidelines during pregnancy (cytotoxic drugs)	5		0	To obtain the highest scores (5) for this item all responding nurses should have reported that guidelines were in place.
Pregnant and /or breastfeeding women assigned other tasks that don't involve direct contact with cytotoxic/radioactive drugs	5		0	To obtain the highest scores (5) for this item pregnant/breast feeding women should be forbidden to perform task with risks for exposure to cytotoxic/radioactive drugs at all workplaces.
Systematic testing for occupational exposure (surface swipes)	3		0	Surface swipes were not reported by the Spanish nurses. To receive highest possible scores (3) for this

				item, testing should be systematically implemented at all workplaces.
Speak-up or whistle blower policy implemented for all members of staff	3		2	'Some centers' To obtain the highest score (3) for this item, speak-up/whistle blower policies should have been reported to be implemented at all workplaces.
Access to cytotoxic spillage kit and PPE	5		5	
Formal training before administering cytotoxic drugs	5		0	To obtain the highest scores (5) for this item all responding Spanish nurses should have reported that formal training was requested at their workplaces.
Nurses not preparing cytotoxic drugs	5		1	'It happens every month' To obtain the highest score (5) for this item, the responding nurses should have reported that it never happens.
Working conditions and the impact on cancer care (4 items presented below)	20	15 (3-19)	15	
Level of adherence to European Working Time Directive (EWTD)	5		5	
Risk of negative consequences if asking for alternative duties pregnancy/breast feeding	5		0	'Yes' To obtain the highest score (5) for this item all responding nurses should have reported that there is no risk for negative consequences.
To what extent hospital beds are closed due to cancer nursing shortages	5		5	
To what extent cancer treatment delayed due to cancer nursing	5		5	
Recognition (4 items presented below)	18	8 (0-15)	7	
Does the country have a cancer nursing society?	5		5	
Does the country have a national cancer plan that includes nursing care?	3		0	
Does cancer centers in the country have Board positions dedicated for cancer nursing?	5		0	To obtain the highest score (5) for this item, the respondent nurses should have reported that this is always the case.
To what extent is nurse-led cancer care implemented in the country?	5		2	'Partly implemented' To obtain the highest score (5) for this item, nurse-led care should be fully implemented and recognized on a national level
Work force statistics (1 item)	3	1 (0-3)	0	
Number of practicing nurses/1000 citizens (www.europe.eu/Eurostat and OECD)	3		0	To obtain the highest score (3) Spain should have >8 practicing nurses/1000 habitants.

Strengths and recommendations for improvements

The total score for Spain (score 45) were slightly under total mean score (score 48) in the ECNI. Spain had the same total score as Italy. Other countries with the similar total score were North Macedonia (total score 41) and Poland (total score 44).

Spain could improve their scores in all five dimensions of the Index for the next revision of the Index in 2022. Education and career development could be improved if Spain had specialist education on university level. Patient and Occupational safety could improve if guidelines during pregnancy, formal education and exposure testing for the

management of cytotoxic drugs were systematically implemented at all workplaces. We like to raise special concerns related to the facts that responding Spanish cancer nurses reported risks for negative consequences if asking for alternative duty's during pregnancy/breast feeding and also that Spanish nurses, in contrast to most countries in Europe, report that they prepare cytotoxic drugs. In most countries these tasks are performed by pharmacy staff. Spain could also improve their scores if advanced cancer nursing roles and nurse-lead care were fully implemented and recognized at national level.

Spain also has lower number of practicing nurses compared with most countries in the Index. Despite this, cancer nurses in Spain report that hospital beds never close or that cancer treatments never are delayed due to nursing shortage.

Finally, if all cancer centers had a dedicated board nursing position and if Spain's Minister of Education/Health would support EONS Cancer Nursing Education Framework, the scores would also be higher.

EONS Advocacy Working Group, October 2020