



# EONS 2021 Activity Report

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## Content

<b>CONTENT</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>1 EONS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2 GOVERNANCE</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>3 COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>4 ADVOCACY</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>5 RESEARCH</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>6 EDUCATION</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>7 YOUNG CANCER NURSES NETWORK</b> .....	<b>11</b>

## 1 EONS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Every year, 3.5 million people in the EU are diagnosed with cancer, and 1.3 million die from it. Over 40% of cancer cases are preventable. Cancer is becoming the leading cause of death in the EU. The Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, published last year, aims to reduce the cancer burden for patients, their families and health systems. Cancer nurses in Europe can have a significant impact on achieving the goals of the cancer plan. The European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS) is a membership organisation, with largely comprising [national cancer nursing societies](#) that serve as a channel for a constructive voice informing EONS, and vice versa, dedicated to the support and development of cancer nursing. The improvement of patient safety and better clinical outcomes for people affected by cancer and their families is central to our work: EONS' mission is to ensure that all people affected by cancer benefit from the care of highly educated, well-informed and competent cancer nurses. Through our individual members and our national societies, we engage every year in projects to help cancer nurses develop their skills, network with each other and raise the profile and professional status of cancer nursing across Europe.

EONS exists to strengthen the cancer nursing voice by creating an enabling environment for cancer nurses; develop the healthcare sector; serve the needs of stakeholders such as cancer organisations, ministries of health; advocate on behalf of cancer nurses and people affected by cancer; and influence public health policy.

**EONS strategy for 2018-2023** <https://cancernurse.eu/about-eons/strategy/>

**EONS' mission** – It is to ensure that all people affected by cancer benefit from the care of highly educated, well-informed and competent cancer nurses. EONS' vision is that cancer nursing will be recognised by the cancer community, national and European-level policy makers, as a profession with specialised training and qualifications available across the continent. Working conditions for cancer nurses will be optimal, providing a commensurate financial income as well as protecting and promoting individual well-being. We anticipate that this will produce a relatable improvement in the health and clinical outcomes for people affected by cancer. Finally, we envisage that all our members will become confident and empowered cancer nurses operating as leaders in research, practice and education within multi-professional teams.

**EONS' Values** – The core strength of EONS comes from our members. We recognise the diverse aspects of nursing across Europe and strive for equality for all cancer nurses regardless of gender, religion race, sexual orientation or disability. The improvement of patient safety and better clinical outcomes for cancer patients and their families is central to our work. The Society firmly believes in working in partnerships across sectors and professions who share our goals and values.

EONS delivers strategic goals and projects via four working groups "CARE" (Communication, Advocacy, Research, Education) and the Young Cancer Nurses network and their expert members. Each of the working groups and Young Cancer Nurses network has action plans to implement the strategic goals of EONS.

## **EONS' Strategic goals**

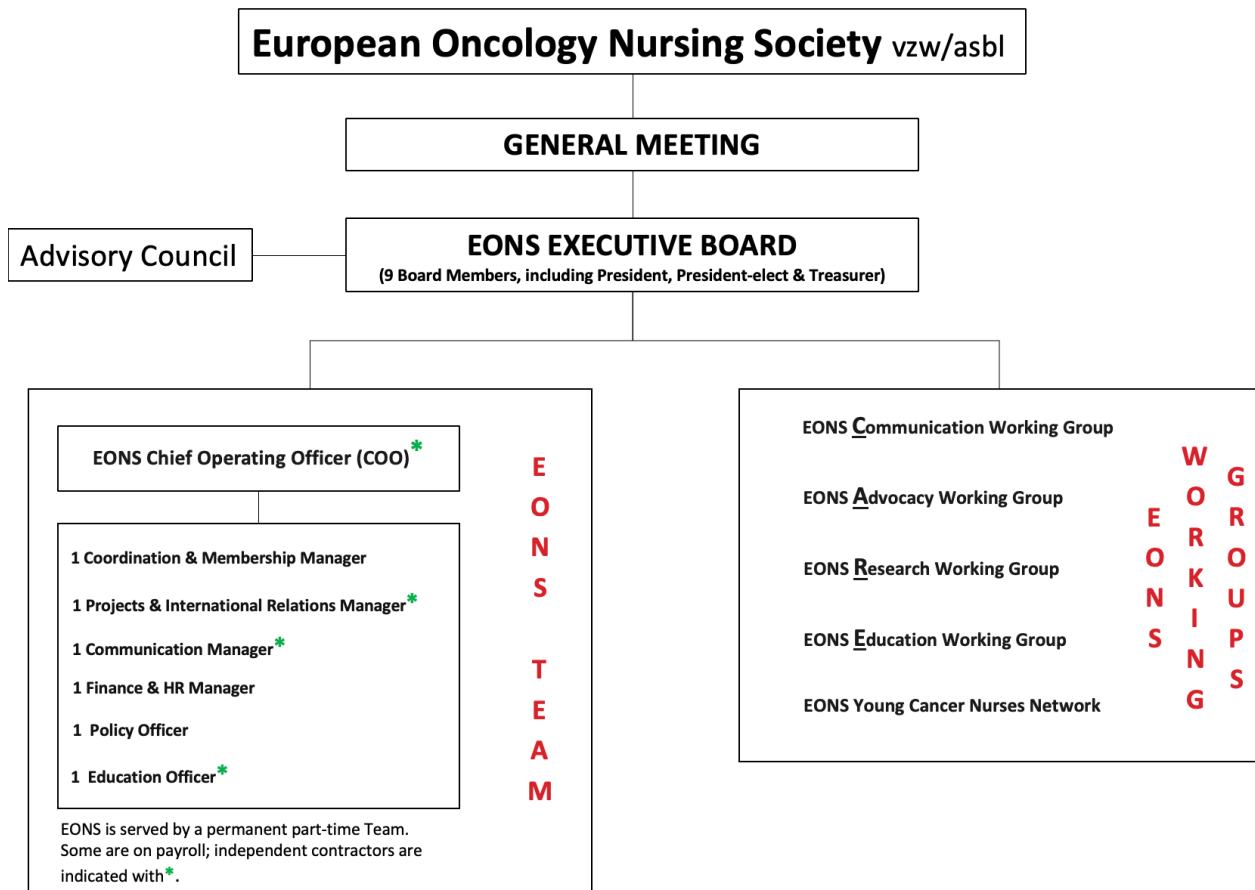
- Cancer nursing is recognised across Europe for its positive impact on the lives of people affected by cancer through C.A.R.E. – Communication, Advocacy, Research and Education
- All cancer nurses have access to specialised education that is aligned with the EONS Cancer Nursing Education Framework
- All cancer nurses gain official recognition, reward and respect as a result of the RECaN and advocacy campaigns
- All cancer nurses are connected in order to exchange and share information and support for their work
- EONS facilitates, leads and promotes collaborative cancer nursing research across Europe
- EONS leads EU-wide advocacy initiatives at EU policy level
- EONS provides evidence-based advice to people and organisations affected by cancer on healthy lifestyles and cancer prevention

## **EONS' Organisational goals**

- Achieve financial sustainability
- Establish a collaborative system for each working group to be engaged in helping to achieve EONS' strategic and organisational goals
- Integrate the Young Cancer Nurses network fully into all EONS' work
- Engage all our members to work on our mission
- Provide support for all nurses caring for people affected by cancer through working towards our strategic goals.

## **2 GOVERNANCE**

**EONS Structure** – An Executive Board, Advisory Council, General Meeting, EONS team and EONS working groups make up the organisational structure of the European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS). These bodies collaborate to execute the identified goals and strategies of the Society and to implement activities which support the mission of EONS. The EONS Structure is captured in the below diagram.



**Executive Board meetings** – The Executive Board acts in the capacity of trustees and conducts the affairs of the European Oncology Society (EONS) in accordance with the policies determined by the Members and the Advisory Council within the laws governing Belgian not-for-profit associations. In 2021, full-day Board meetings took place on 3 February, 19 May, 15 September and 19 November. Short board meetings, taking place in the evening, were held on 21 January, 10 March, 14 April, 28 June, 13 July, 10 August, 12 October, and 13 December 2021. All these meetings took place online, due to the Covid-19 restrictions, except for the November Board meeting, which was organized as a hybrid event in Brussels, Belgium.

**Advisory Council** – The Advisory Council is composed of representatives of EONS national society members and is invited on an annual basis to advise on the strategic development of the Society. The 2021 EONS Advisory Council meeting took place online on Wednesday 8 December from 19.00 to 20.00 PM CET.

**General Meeting** – Both national society members and individual members are invited once a year to approve the audited accounts of the previous year and, in an election year, to vote in the EONS Executive Board and Presidential elections.

Two online General Meetings took place in 2021: an extraordinary General Meeting took place in February in order to approve election results and a change in the EONS Constitution.

1. On Tuesday 16 February from 17.30-18.30 CET, online. Johan de Munter welcomed the participants as the new EONS President. Participants approved the EONS election results and a proposed change in the EONS Constitution. (All EONS members received the proposed update of the Statutes in advance of the meeting by email. This addressed the need for a change in the Society's Statutes to allow for occasional flexibility in Presidential terms in cases where Presidents remove themselves from post.)
2. On Tuesday 8 June from 18.00-19.40 PM CET, online. Johan de Munter welcomed those present. Participants approved the EONS election results and the 2020 Audited Accounts.

The minutes and presentations of these meetings are available at <https://cancernurse.eu/about-eons/governance/general-meeting/>

### **EONS Operations**

The EONS Chief Operating Officer (COO) left the post effective 24 September 2021. A call for a new COO was open from October 18 – December 9, 2021. Interviews with identified candidates took place in January 2022.

Cancer Nursing Fund (CNF), established in 2020 and managed by the King Baudouin Foundation, provides a unique opportunity to support the work that cancer nurses do and advance the profession of cancer nursing in Europe. The Fund is a separate entity from EONS. In 2021, CNF provided 19 grants to cancer nurses to attend the virtual EONS14 annual conference (total amount of €1,350).

## **3 COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

EONS communicated regularly with its members (national societies and individual members) throughout 2021 via three main communications platforms: website, newsletter and social media (see more below); and also by bulk emailing when required. Public relations were promoted by the same platforms, and also via press release, media articles and partner organisations' social media where appropriate. The Covid-19 pandemic meant that all communication, meetings and events took place online during 2021. EONS is proud to have continued high functioning and visibility in 2021 despite the pandemic.

**Website** – A resource hub for the latest cancer nursing education and research information, plus updates on EONS' advocacy work and other activities. Hosts webcasts and other opportunities for online professional development. Recently redesigned and relaunched. Average monthly page views in 2021 - 19,000.

**E-Newsletter** – emailed monthly; contains news on EONS activities, policy and events; calls to members to get involved, advertises learning and development opportunities within and outside EONS. 11 issues in 2021 (July/August joint issue) circulated via a distribution database expanded significantly in 2021, to 12,111 contacts.

**Social Media** – Used for active participation and involvement of EONS membership in the organisation's work and campaigns, and for cancer nurse networking and information sharing.

Twitter (4067 followers), Facebook (5085 followers), LinkedIn (1370 followers), Instagram (1079 followers), YouTube (114 subscribers) as of December 2021.

**Communications Working Group** – The [EONS Communication Working Group](#) commits to pursuing activities that contribute towards the achievement of the EONS Strategic Goals as outlined in the 2018 to 2023 Strategy. During 2021, the group held 4 meetings. The minutes of these are stored on the EONS website and can be accessed by those with login credentials. In addition to its regular work supporting and expanding EONS' profile by helping to plan events (by means of targeted task groups (TG), such as the ECND21 TG) and promoting activity on social media, the group created a [Short Guide to Running a Successful Campaign](#).

**ECND21 campaign** – [European Cancer Nursing Day \(ECND21\)](#) on 18 May 2021, focused on the impact that cancer nurses have on preventing cancer. Cancer nurses across Europe joined in a widespread social media ECND21 campaign about cancer prevention with the hashtag #ECND21Go4Prevention. ECND21 was promoted across all communications platforms especially by means of a regularly updated bespoke [ECND21 web page](#) featuring a toolkit for local campaign involvement. A competition invited cancer nurses to make a prevention video. Two high-profile articles in well-regarded magazines (Cancer World and The Parliament Magazine) extended the reach of the ECND21 messages. For full ECND communications outcomes, see the [ECND21 Evaluation](#). A live online event on 18 May was attended by 58 Working Group members.

**EONS14 Conference** – The annual cancer nursing conference, EONS14, took place online on 22 September 2021 (alongside ESMO 2021 Congress) attended by cancer nurses across Europe. The conference theme was Cancer Nursing: Towards a New Era in Cancer Care, and presented the latest advances in cancer nursing practice and research. The conference was promoted across all communications platforms and especially by means of a regularly updated bespoke EONS15 web page, where all the sessions were available to watch online for six months following the event. For full details see [web page](#) and 'Research' section below.

**EONS Social Media performance** – EONS records its social media platforms' impact by assessing the number of followers at the beginning of each month. In 2021, EONS increased followers on all platforms: Twitter + 457 followers, Facebook +257, LinkedIn +448, Instagram +189, YouTube +70 subscribers. (Metrics calculated from January – December 2021.)

**EONS Twitter Chats #EONSChat** – EONS Twitter Chats are used by EONS Working Groups to engage with members and the public via Twitter with the hashtag #EONSChat. EONS organised 2 Twitter Chats in 2021:

- EONS Young Cancer Nurses network Twitter Chat, live on 8 September: "Standing up against bullying in workplaces".
- EONS Education Working Group Twitter Chat, live on 10 June: "Strengthening cancer nursing in adolescent & young adult cancer care".

**EONS Cancer Calendar** – EONS Cancer Calendar is a campaign to support cancer awareness days and months. In 2021, EONS marked Pain Awareness Month and Blood Cancer Awareness Month in September, World No Tobacco Day on May 31 and World Day for Safety and Health at Work on April 28.

## 4 ADVOCACY

The EONS Advocacy Working Group organised seven meetings in 2021 (19/1, 9/3, 6/4, 10/5, 10/6, 26/8, and 4/11). The following work packages were allocated to defined one-off task groups:

**EONS Accreditation for European Cancer Units** aims to develop a Framework for Cancer Nursing Standards to be used as an instrument to promote safety, equality and quality through European Cancer Nursing, to lead to multi-agency co-operation for standards development and promote constant improvement of cancer nursing, through application and audit. The first meeting took place on 23 January, 2021.

**EONS Advocacy toolkit** aims to create a guide to influencing decisions that improve cancer nursing status and recognition in Europe. The first meeting took place on 10 January, 2021.

**EONS Safety Webinars 2021** – a free of charge education programme designed for clinical cancer nurses at all stages of their career covering different aspects of patient and occupational safety in cancer care. The recordings of the [Safety Webinars](#) are available on the EONS website and YouTube Channel for the following six months. After watching the webinars, nurses can take an online test to request a certificate and ask their university for recommended credits.

**EONS Cancer Nursing Index (ECNI)** was developed by the [EONS Advocacy Working Group](#) to illustrate the development and status of this profession in Europe. The plan is to update the [ECNI in 2022](#). The ECNI task group had a first online meeting on 21 October, 2021.

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work ([EU-OSHA Healthy Workplaces Lighten the Load campaign \(2020-2022\)](#)) focuses on work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). EONS became a campaign partner in June 2021 to raise awareness of this issue and to promote EONS activities within this dynamic network.

**Protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work Directive (CMD4)** reached a political agreement by introducing binding occupational limit values for 11 substances in the annex to the directive and broadened its scope into CMRD with the inclusion of reprotoxic substances. In January 2020, EONS organised an event in the European Parliament with the support of the European Cancer Organisation (ECO) and European Society of Oncology Pharmacy (ESOP) calling for cross sectoral cooperation to protect cancer nurses, pharmacists and patients from exposure to hazardous drugs. This work continued through 2021. EONS' Open Letter in collaboration with the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) who joined forces in supporting this call, [here](#).

**Integrated Nutrition Cancer Care Thematic network: A joint approach to policy and practice** – The EU Health Policy Platform thematic network "*Integrated Nutrition Cancer Care*" is led by the European Nutrition Health Alliance and various stakeholders. The network aims to shape the policy agenda by making the case for integrating nutrition in National Cancer Care Plans and European Policies. In June 2021, EONS endorsed the application, and joined the network in September 2021. EONS is represented by President Elect Virpi Sulosaari.



**EU Health Policy Platform** – The Stakeholder Contact Group on Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan is a network of healthcare professionals that contributes to the implementation of the EU Cancer Plan. EONS has been a member of this network since June 2021.

## 5 RESEARCH

**EONS annual conference** – EONS organises a nursing track alongside the ESMO (European Society for Medical Oncology) annual Congress since 2018. In 2021, the conference took place in an online format. There were 76 submitted abstracts in the cancer nursing categories. The total number of registered participants was 96. More information [here](#).

**Research Workshops (2 online workshops)** – EONS organised its 3<sup>rd</sup> PhD Research Workshop as an online event during three consecutive Fridays (on July 2, 9 and 16) attended by 10 participants. This workshop is designed for European cancer nurses who are at any stage of their doctoral studies and who would like to network with other PhD students and improve their knowledge, confidence, and expertise in oncology nursing research, as applied to their PhD.

The 7<sup>th</sup> EONS Research Proposal Workshop took place as an online event during 3 consecutive Fridays, on June 15, 22 and 29, attended by nine participants. This three-day event is specifically designed for oncology nurses with an interest in and aptitude for research, who would like to develop their confidence and skills in drafting a research proposal to address a contemporary clinical issue.

More information about the Research Workshops at <https://cancernurse.eu/research/about-the-research-workshops/>

\*EONS members are active contributors to research papers. A number were published in 2021 and these are referenced on the EONS [website](#).

## 6 EDUCATION

**Education WG** – The EONS Education Working Group identifies learning, career development and mentorship opportunities for cancer nurses who are working with people affected by cancer across Europe, based on EONS Cancer Nursing Education Framework. The Education Working Group organised six meetings in 2021 (12/1, 23/3, 18/5, 24/9, 6/10, 7/12).

**Masterclasses** – Due to the Covid -19 situation in Europe, EONS/ESO cancelled the 13<sup>th</sup> ESO-EONS Masterclass in Oncology Nursing, scheduled to take place from 7-11 July in Tallinn, Estonia. (A call for the 2022 Masterclass will be launched in 2022.)

The 2nd ESO-EONS-EEBR Masterclass took place in Belgrade, Serbia, from 1-3 September 2021. The Eastern European Balkan region Masterclasses programme is designed for Eastern European cancer nurses as a multi-professional joint event. In total, 27 nurses from eight Eastern European countries attended this event.

More information available at <https://cancernurse.eu/education/eso-eons-masterclasses-and-eso-e-sessions/>.

**EONS Endorsement** – EONS endorses cancer nursing educational events, which may include conferences, study days, webinars, short courses, modules, and programmes of study. An overview of endorsed activities is available at <https://cancernurse.eu/education/eons-endorsement/>.

**Education projects** – EONS receives restricted funding from industry in support of creating specific education programmes.

The following projects have been completed during 2021:

- [Advanced breast cancer webinar](#) (ABC) with translated subtitles in French, Georgian and Spanish. Total of 232 participants viewed the webinar to date. This education webinar covers what ABC entails and how to manage various psychosocial aspects, including management of complex needs of those faced with ABC.

The following projects have been started during 2021:

- [“ABC4Nurses”](#): Quality of care improvement in advanced breast cancer. seven cancer nurse experts and two Europa Donna Turkey patient advocates. TG meets on as needed basis, on average 1x/month.
- [“PROMs in RCC and HCC”](#): Establishing a core set of patient-reported outcomes and measures to enhance supportive care for people treated with targeted therapies for advanced renal cell carcinoma or advanced hepatocellular carcinoma. The task group (TG) has five members (1x PI, 3x co-PI, 1x research assistant, RA). The full TG meets 4-5x/year, with weekly meetings between PI and RA. There is a steering group consisting of PI, RA, health care professionals and patient representatives (meets 3x/year).

**The European College of Cancer Nursing (ECCN)** is committed to enabling every nurse who cares for people of all ages affected by cancer to achieve and enhance the highest standards of cancer nursing practice and patient care.

The ECCN task group has 11 members and has met every month since its establishment in May 2021; a total of seven meetings: 24/5, 21/6, 26/7, 30/8, 27/9, 4/11, 7/12

**Cancer Nursing Education Framework update** – EONS has decided to update the [EONS Education Framework](#) published in 2018. A task group of experts, led by EONS President Elect Virpi Sulosaari, began the update process in September 2021. The task group is currently reviewing the literature/references and modules of the Framework.

**European School of Oncology (ESO) sessions** – EONS has a long-lasting collaboration with the European School of Oncology (ESO) on e-sessions that are free, educational online lectures, presented by leading cancer nursing experts. In 2021, EONS collaborated on the following e-ESO sessions:

- 14/01/2021 Social media in clinical practice

- 10/06/2021 Head and neck cancer – Living with and beyond cancer
- 29/07/2021 Children and young people with cancer
- 30/09/2021 Young people with malignant melanoma
- 28/10/2021 TITAN: Thrombocytopenia
- 18/11/2021 Physical activity across the cancer journey
- 13/12/2021 OncoAlert Colloquium 2021: GI Oncology 2021 and the EONS sessions

In 2021, the [Cancer Nursing Pathway](https://www.e-eso.net/home) was formed. More information at <https://www.e-eso.net/home>.

## 7 YOUNG CANCER NURSES NETWORK

**YCN Network** – The EONS YCN network brings the youth perspective to EONS’ core activities and supports the EONS working groups in Communication, Advocacy, Research and Education (CARE Strategy). This network aims to build capacity and provide research and educational opportunities, empowering young cancer nurses (under the age of 35 years) to pursue their professional development and become leaders in cancer nursing. The YCN network organised four meetings in 2021 (17/2, 9/3, 15/6, 22/11).

**YCNs webinars** – The [EONS Nightingale Challenge Webinars 2021](#) provided young cancer nurses with information about personal and professional development in cancer nursing. In 2021, six webinars were held on these topics:

- Webinar #1 Lifestyle & Cancer
- Webinar #2 Burn-out & Building Resilience
- Webinar #3 Standing up Against Bullying
- Webinar #4 Emergencies in the Oncology Settings
- Webinar #5 Research & Publish: How to be successful
- Webinar #6 Post-doctoral Career

The webinars are available on the EONS YouTube Channel.

**YCN blogs** – In June 2021, the Young Cancer Nurse network began producing monthly blogs. These are uploaded to the [website](#) and highlighted in the newsletter. In 2021, seven YCN blogs were produced.



Johan De Munter  
EONS President