



MS48

Membership Rules of the Interim Governance of the EU Network of CCCs (March 2026-September 2027)

WP7 – Governance, Membership and Engagement of the EUnetCCC

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6.0	25/07/2025	Version 6
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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACC: Alleanza Contro il Cancro

AE: Affiliated Entity

CA: Competent Authority

CCC: Comprehensive Cancer Centre

CC: Cancer Centre

DAC: Designation and Admission Committee

DKH: Deutsche Krebshilfe (German Cancer Aid)

EBCP: Europe's Beating Cancer Plan

EU: European Union

EUnetCCC: European Network of Comprehensive Cancer Centres

IMC: Interim Membership Committee

JA: Joint Action

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

MRC: Membership Review Committee

OECI: Organisation of European Cancer Institutes

WP: Work Package

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Executive Summary

The European Network of Comprehensive Cancer Centres (EUnetCCC), launched under Flagship 5 of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan (EBCP), aims to improve cancer care and research across Europe by connecting Comprehensive Cancer Centres (CCCs) and centres working toward certification.

The governance of the Network will be implemented through a step-wise approach, evolving across multiple phases during the Joint Action (2024–2028), and culminating in the full governance structure by the end of the project.

This document outlines the **membership policy for the interim phase of the Network** (March 2026 – September 2027) and establishes the basic operating structure **of the interim governance**. It defines:

- a) **Membership eligibility criteria, and roles**, including the criteria for centres to join during the interim phase—such as those certified or in certification with EUCCC, OECI, or DKH; WP4 pilot centres; and Competent Authorities from unrepresented countries and their respective roles, rights, and responsibilities.
- b) **Key benefits** of participation, including involvement in governance, thematic working groups, visibility at EU level, and access to capacity-building and peer learning activities;
- c) **Procedures** for application, admission, retention, withdrawal, and exclusion;

Developed by Work Package 7 on Governance, Membership and Engagement, this membership policy reflects a broad consultation process involving project partners, Competent Authorities, and stakeholders across the Joint Action. It offers a practical framework to support fair, transparent, and inclusive membership during the Network's setup phase, and will serve as the basis for further discussion and finalisation of the Interim Membership Policy.

1. Background

1.1. Rationale

The European Network of Comprehensive Cancer Centres, as set out in Flagship 5 of the EBCP¹, is designed to foster collaboration, share knowledge, and drive continuous improvement in cancer research and care across Europe. Its ultimate goal is to help ensure that 90% of eligible cancer patients have access to a CCC by 2030 and can receive the highest-quality care close to home.

The Network will bring together a wide range of institutions — including certified CCCs and centres progressing toward certification — alongside national authorities and other key stakeholders (patient organisations, research institutes, etc.). Through cross-border collaboration, knowledge exchange, and shared strategic direction, the EUnetCCC will strengthen the quality and consistency of cancer care throughout the EU.

To support this vision, a resilient and scalable governance structure is required to coordinate a growing and diverse network of institutions across Europe. The Network is being developed under the framework of the EUnetCCC Joint Action (2024–2028) and led by Work Package 7 (Governance, Membership and Engagement). Its governance model is designed not only to ensure inclusive and transparent participation, but also to evolve over time based on experience, needs, and strategic direction. To this end, throughout the project, the governance will be implemented in two phases:

- **Interim Governance (M18–M36: March 2026–Sept 2027)**
- **Fully-Fledged Governance (M37–M48: Oct 2027–Sept 2028)**

This step-wise approach allows the Network to test, adapt, and refine its governance through real-world experience during the interim period. It begins with a simplified structure and gradually introduces additional governance bodies to support growing responsibilities and strategic direction. This phased development enables meaningful member engagement and ensures the governance model is both functional and sustainable. By the end of the fully-fledged phase, the complete Network structure is expected to be in place, laying the groundwork for long-term continuity beyond the Joint Action.

¹ European Commission (2021). *Europe's Beating Cancer Plan*. Brussels: European Commission. Available at: https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/eu_cancer-plan_en_0.pdf

To ensure consistent and fair access to the Network and its activities, a clear membership policy is required. This document sets out the framework for the **Interim Governance phase**, defining who is eligible to join and the roles and responsibilities expected of members. The policy will apply for a 19-month period, after which a fully-fledged model will take effect. It is intended to serve as a practical guide for managing Network membership during this formative stage.

1.2. Process

This membership policy was developed by WP7 of the EUnetCCC Joint Action through a structured, phased process, combining collaborative drafting with wide consultation across project partners, Competent Authorities (CAs), and other key stakeholders. It draws on previous work conducted in the CraNE Joint Action (2022-2024), particularly the preliminary admission process outlined in Deliverable D5.1 on the membership of CCCs to the EU Network².

Phase 1 – Initial Exchange and Framing (January 2025)

The process began with a dedicated membership workshop held in January 2025, bringing together participants in person and online. This event offered an open forum to reflect on the scope and purpose of the Network and to gather perspectives on eligibility and the foundational principles of membership.

Phase 2 – Drafting and Preliminary Consultation (February–March 2025)

Based on the workshop outcomes, WP7 produced a first proposal. This preliminary version was discussed with WP Leaders and members of Task 7.1 during several meetings, leading to structured feedback and the development of multiple options and scenarios for further consideration.

Phase 3 – Second Round of Consultation (April–May 2025)

A second consultation round was launched to validate and refine the membership options and scenarios. WP7 contacted 25 additional Competent Authorities not involved in the first round, with

² CraNE, Work Package 5 (2024). *Deliverable D5.1: Process of Admission to the EU Network of CCCs*. Available at: <https://crane4health.eu/wp5-the-eu-network-of-comprehensive-cancer-centres-composition-governance-joining-process-and-functioning/>

15 providing feedback. Membership was also discussed during a Task 7.1 meeting and with other Joint Action partners, resulting in input from a total of 22 organisations. This phase was designed to ensure a balanced and representative dialogue, capturing both national-level perspectives and institutional insights — particularly from countries with established CCCs, those with Cancer Centres (CCs), and those with neither.

Phase 4 – Final Draft Validation and Submission (June-September 2025)

An updated version, which incorporated inputs from CAs and JA partners, was shared with the Coordination Team and WP leaders in early June. It was presented at the Work Package Leaders Seminar in Paris on June 19th-20th, 2025, where it received positive feedback. During July and August, the Coordination Team highlighted the need for further alignment, culminating in an in-person meeting held in Rome on September 4th, 2025, with representatives from the leadership of WP4, WP5, WP6, WP7, WP8, and WP9. The inputs from these consultation rounds were analysed, thematically organised, and synthesised to inform the revised draft presented here.

2. Membership Rules and Procedures in the Interim Governance

2.1. Interim Governance of the EU Network of CCCs

The Interim Governance of EUnetCCC is expected to be established during the JA from March 2026 until September 2027. In this period three bodies will exist: Interim Network Assembly (INA), the Secretariat, and the Interim Membership Committee (IMC). The composition, role and functions of these Interim Network bodies are described in the Governance Framework of the EU Network of CCCs (D7.1).

During the Interim phase, these membership rules will apply. At the transition to the Fully-Fledged Governance phase (from October 2027), the rules may either be continued or revised, depending on the membership model adopted.

2.2. Membership Eligibility and Retention

During the Interim Governance phase, to be eligible for membership, applicant centres must meet one of the following criteria, which determine the duration and retention conditions:

Must be part of the JA and:

a) Hold a valid CCC certification obtained through one of the following schemes:

- European Union of Comprehensive Cancer Centres (EUCCC)
- Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI)
- Deutsche Krebshilfe (DKH) Comprehensive Cancer Centre certification programme

Duration: Until the end of the Interim period in September 2027.

Retention: To retain membership, centres must hold a valid CCC certification under one of the recognised schemes. If certification expires during the interim period, the centre must submit proof that re-certification has been initiated within 12 months from certification expiry date.

b) Be formally engaged in a CCC certification process through EUCCC, OECI, or DKH schemes defined as:

- **For EUCCC:** The centre must have been formally designated as a candidate CCC by its national authority, in line with the *Framework for the Designation and Integration of CCC's* under the EUnetCCC Joint Action. In addition, its application must have been accepted by the Designation and Admission Committee of the JA (DAC) and submit a Letter of Intent signed by the legal representative committing to begin certification by the end of Q4 2027.
- **For OECI and DKH:** The centre must have submitted an application that has been formally accepted by the relevant certification body under their respective schemes (OECI, DKH), along with a letter of intent signed by the legal representative to begin the certification process under these schemes within 12 months.

Duration: Until the end of the Interim period in September 2027.

c) Be a centre that is not currently certified as a CCC nor undergoing a certification process, but that has been selected and is actively participating in pilot activities under the Joint Action's WP4 pilot programme.

Duration: Until the end of the Interim period in September 2027.

Retention: These centres will maintain their membership during the interim period on the condition that they remain actively engaged in WP4 pilot activities and, once these activities conclude, apply for certification within 12 months of the pilot's end.

d) Be a Competent Authority (CA) from a country participating in the Joint Action that currently has no eligible centre meeting the above criteria. The CA may nominate an official representative to participate in the Interim Network Assembly; it is recommended that such representatives have relevant experience in public health and/or oncology.

Duration: Until the end of the Interim period in September 2027.

³ EUnetCCC, Work Package 1 (2025). *Framework for the Designation and Integration of Comprehensive Cancer Centres in the EUnetCCC Network*. Draft document in progress, prepared by Work Package 1 of the EUnetCCC Joint Action (2024–2028).

Retention: CAs in this category will maintain membership as long as they do not have an eligible centre. If a centre in the country becomes eligible, the CA must notify the Secretariat within 2 months; the eligible centre may then apply.

Figure 1 serves as a practical guide to check if a centre meets the eligibility requirements to join the Network:

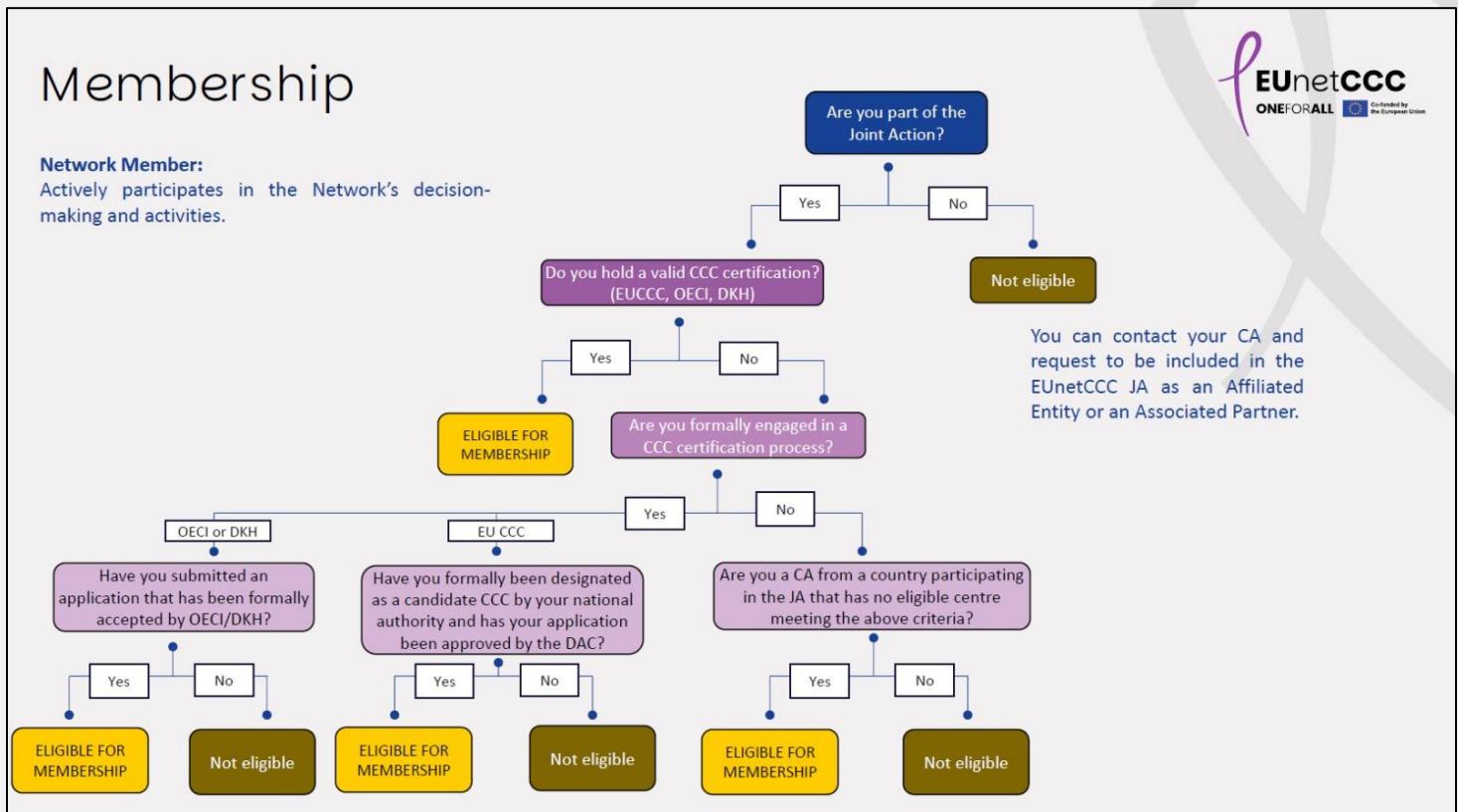


Figure 1 - Membership Eligibility

A summary of all eligibility criteria, membership duration and retention conditions is provided in the table below:

Membership Eligibility, Duration and Retention			
Type	Eligibility	Membership Duration	Retention
Certified CCCs part of the JA	Valid certification from DKH, EUCCC or OECI	Until September 30 th 2027	Must retain valid certification or submit proof that recertification has started within 12 months from expiry date
Centres in the EUCCC certification process	Accepted application by the DAC + Letter of Intent to start certification by the end of Q4 2027	Until September 30 th 2027	Must start certification by the end of Q4 2027 months from admission
Centres in the OECI or DKH CCC certification process part of the JA	Accepted application by relevant body	12 months	Must start certification within 12 months from admission
Centres in the WP4 Pilot Programme	Not certified as CCCs (DKH, OECI, EUCCC) or in the process of certification; involvement in WP4 pilot	Until September 30 th 2027	Must apply for certification within 12 months after pilot ends
Competent Authorities in the JA	CA without any eligible centre in their country	Until September 30 th 2027	Must notify Secretariat if a centre becomes eligible within 2 months

Table 1 Membership Eligibility, Duration and Retention

2.3. Members Responsibilities and Benefits

Shared Commitments of Network Members

All Network members are expected to uphold the following shared commitments, which reflect the values and purpose of the EUnetCCC:

- **Contribute to the governance and activities** of the Network, including participation in assemblies, networking activities, and consultations
- **Demonstrate a continuous commitment to improving** the quality of cancer care and research, in line with evolving best practices and the shared goals of the Network
- **Promote cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange** within the Network

Members' Role, Responsibilities and Benefits

The main responsibilities and benefits of Network members are listed below:

- 1) Participate in the Interim Network Assembly
- 2) Nominate and elect President
- 3) Define the list of Thematic Groups and appoints Chairs
- 4) Define Interim Network Assembly meeting calendar
- 5) Revise and approve interim procedures manual
- 6) Define and update plan of activities (every 6 months)
- 7) Define roadmap to prepare the Network Statute
- 8) Draft the Strategic Agenda for the Fully-Fledged phase
- 9) Publish Second Call for Interest
- 10) Revise and approve the Fully-fledged governance model if necessary
- 11) Appoints the members of the financial sustainability team together with the JA Coordination team
- 12) Drafts the Code of Conduct to be approved in the Fully-Fledged phase
- 13) Formal Acknowledgment and Use of Membership Designation
- 14) Featured in Network communications and dissemination

2.4. Application Pathway and Admission

Applications to join the EUnetCCC are managed through a series of Calls for Interest. During the Joint Action, the First Call will be prepared by ACC and Task 7.1, with the Secretariat responsible for collecting and managing applications, which will then be reviewed and approved by the Interim Membership Committee (IMC), as outlined below.

Timeline and Dissemination of the First Call for Interest

The first Call for Interest will be launched on 30th November 2025 and close on 28th February 2025.

It will be published on the Joint Action website and other official channels. Competent Authorities in participating countries will be responsible for disseminating the Call among their Affiliated Entities and relevant institutions within the Joint Action.

Application Review Bodies: Roles and Responsibilities

Applications Collection and Management

Secretariat

The Secretariat oversees the administrative and procedural management of the application process, including checking the completeness of submitted documents, coordinating with applicants, and forwarding complete applications to the IMC. In addition, the Secretariat collaborates with the JA (e.g. WP4, Designation and Admission Committee) and recognised certification schemes to simplify admission for centres, thus ensuring the process is as clear and efficient as possible. WP4 and the DAC will provide the Network Secretariat with the updated list of the centres partaking into their respective processes, as well as the relevant documentation. The Network Secretariat will contact OECI and DKH if further verification is needed.

Applications Review and Approval

Interim Membership Committee (IMC)

A body composed of all Work Package Leaders of the Joint Action, chaired by the WP7 Leader. The Committee reviews applications submitted by the Secretariat throughout the Interim phase and formally approves membership status based on the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 2.2.

Application Pathway

Institutions applying for membership in response to the **First Call for Interest** follow the steps below:

- 1. Self-Verify Eligibility:** Review the admission criteria published in the Call for Interest and confirm internally that the applicant institution meets all eligibility requirements. No formal verification is required at this stage.
- 2. Complete the Interest Form:** Fill out the official Interest Form provided in the Call via the instructions.
- 3. First Screening by the Secretariat:** The Secretariat screens the Interest forms. If the centre has *declared* in the form to meet the minimum requirements, the Secretariat creates an account via the online Governance Tool to allow applicants to move on to the next step. The user-manual for the Governance Tool is contained in the Interim Policies and Procedures Manual (D7.2).

4. **Submit Supporting Documentation:** Upon notification, applicants upload all required supporting documents via the Governance Tool.
5. **Second Screening by the Secretariat:** The Secretariat reviews all submitted documentation for completeness and may request clarifications or additional information if needed. After the Call closes, applications that are incomplete or do not meet the eligibility criteria will be deemed ineligible and the applicants will be duly notified.
6. **Secretariat Shares Eligible Applications with IMC:** The Secretariat compiles a list of complete applications that meet both eligibility and documentation requirements and shares it with the Interim Membership Committee (IMC) in two phases:
 - January 15th 2026
 - Immediately after the Call closes on February 28th 2026
7. **IMC Reviews and Decides on Applications:** The IMC reviews all eligible applications. Decisions are made by simple consensus where possible. If consensus is not reached, a simple majority vote determines the outcome.
8. **Receive Outcome Notification:** The Secretariat formally notifies all applicants of the decision and membership category and outlines the next steps for successful candidates via the tool.

Application Documents

All applicants to the EUnetCCC must submit a complete application package in response to the first Call for Interest.

General Requirements

1. Completed Interest Form⁴;
2. Institutional Profile – a concise overview (maximum 3 pages) of the centre, including relevant expertise, mission, organisational structure and logo. A template will be provided by the Secretariat.

⁴ A full template of the interest form will be included in the official Call for Interest, to be published in November 2025.

Application Documents Based on Centre Certification Scheme & Status

a) Centres holding a CCC certification (DKH, EUCCC or OECI):

- **OECI:** A valid Accreditation & Designation Certificate with start and expiry dates;
- **DKH:** A letter signed by the legal representative confirming possession of a valid DKH CCC certification must be submitted. Additionally, DKH will provide the Secretariat with a list of certified centres, including the start and expiry dates of each certification, for cross-verification;
- **EUCCC:** Proof of certification issued by the appointed operator with certification start and expiry dates.

b) Aspiring CCCs in the certification process:

- **OECI or DKH:**
 - Proof of a formal application or signed agreement accepted by the relevant certifying body demonstrating the formal entering of the centre into the CCC certification process;
 - Letter of Intent signed by the legal representative committing to start the certification process with these schemes within 12 months;
 - Centres must notify the Secretariat once the certification process officially begins.
- **EUCCC:**
 - Letter of Intent signed by the legal representative committing to begin the certification process by the end of the Q4 2027, following acceptance by the DAC.
 - Centres must notify the Secretariat once the certification process officially begins.

c) Centres participating in pilot activities under the Joint Action's WP4 pilot programme.

Submit a signed declaration letter confirming participation in the **WP4 pilot programme**, including the official start and expected end dates, signed by the institution's legal representative. WP4 will provide the Secretariat with a verified and regularly updated list of participating pilot centres.

d) Competent Authorities Eligible for Membership

Eligible CAs from the JA Consortium applying for Network Membership do not need to submit additional documentation.

A summary of all documents required is provided in the table below:

All Applicants	
Documents based on Centre's Certification Scheme & Status	
Type	Documents
Certified CCCs	<u>OECL</u> : Valid Accreditation & Designation Certificate with start and expiry dates <u>DKH</u> : A letter signed by the legal representative confirming possession of a valid DKH CCC certification <u>EUCCC</u> : Proof of certification issued by the appointed operator with certification start and expiry dates.
Centres in the CCC certification process	<u>OECL or DKH</u> : Proof of a formal application or signed agreement accepted by the relevant certifying body demonstrating the formal entering of the centre into the CCC certification process; Letter of Intent signed by the legal representative committing to start the certification process with these schemes within 12 months. <u>EUCCC</u> : Letter of Intent signed by the legal representative committing to begin the certification process by the end of Q4 2027, following designation by national authority and acceptance by the JA DAC.
Centres in the WP4 Pilot Programme	Signed declaration letter confirming participation in the WP4 pilot programme, including the official start and expected end dates, signed by the institution's legal representative.
Competent Authorities	Eligible CAs within the JA Consortium applying for Network Membership do not need to submit additional documentation.

Table 2 Application Documents

2.5. Financial Provisions

During the interim period of the Network, all activities are funded through the JA budget, as agreed by the Consortium partners and in line with the Grant Agreement. No membership fees are required for participation in the Network during this phase.

Centres outside of the Joint Action wishing to apply to become members of the Network may request their Competent Authority to support their inclusion into the JA in a future Amendment to the Grant Agreement, subject to available capacity and agreement by the Consortium and European Commission. Centres may ask to be included either as Affiliated Entities or Associated Partners described in the Grant Agreement as follows:

- **Affiliated entities (AE)** — Entities affiliated to a beneficiary within the meaning of Article 187 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046 which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries (obligation to implement action tasks and right to charge costs and claim contributions).
- **Associated partners (AP)** — Entities which participate in the action, but without the right to charge costs or claim contributions.

These financial provisions apply until the end of the Joint Action. In parallel, work on a long-term sustainability and funding model for the future Network will be initiated during the JA, but the GA provisions will remain unchanged until its conclusion in September 2028