

Breast Cancer Inequalities in the European Union



FRANCE

French women between the ages of 50 and 74 are eligible to participate in breast cancer screening every two years, covered by national health insurance. The testing includes a mammogram and a physical breast examination. To improve accuracy, two radiologists review the results. Women with specific risk factors, such as a family history of breast cancer, may request an annual mammogram ¹

TBCT supports the extension of the age range for screening in the EU recommendations. The next European Commission and European Parliament must still do more to **ensure women over 45 have access to screening programs**

TBCT
Transforming Breast
Cancer Together

Breast cancer mortality

BREAST CANCER IS THE PRIMARY CAUSE OF CANCER DEATHS AMONGST FRENCH WOMEN, AMOUNTING TO 17.7% OF CANCER MORTALITY ²

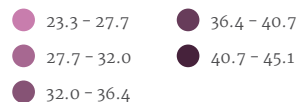
In France, it is estimated that

14,739 WOMEN DIED FROM BREAST CANCER IN 2022

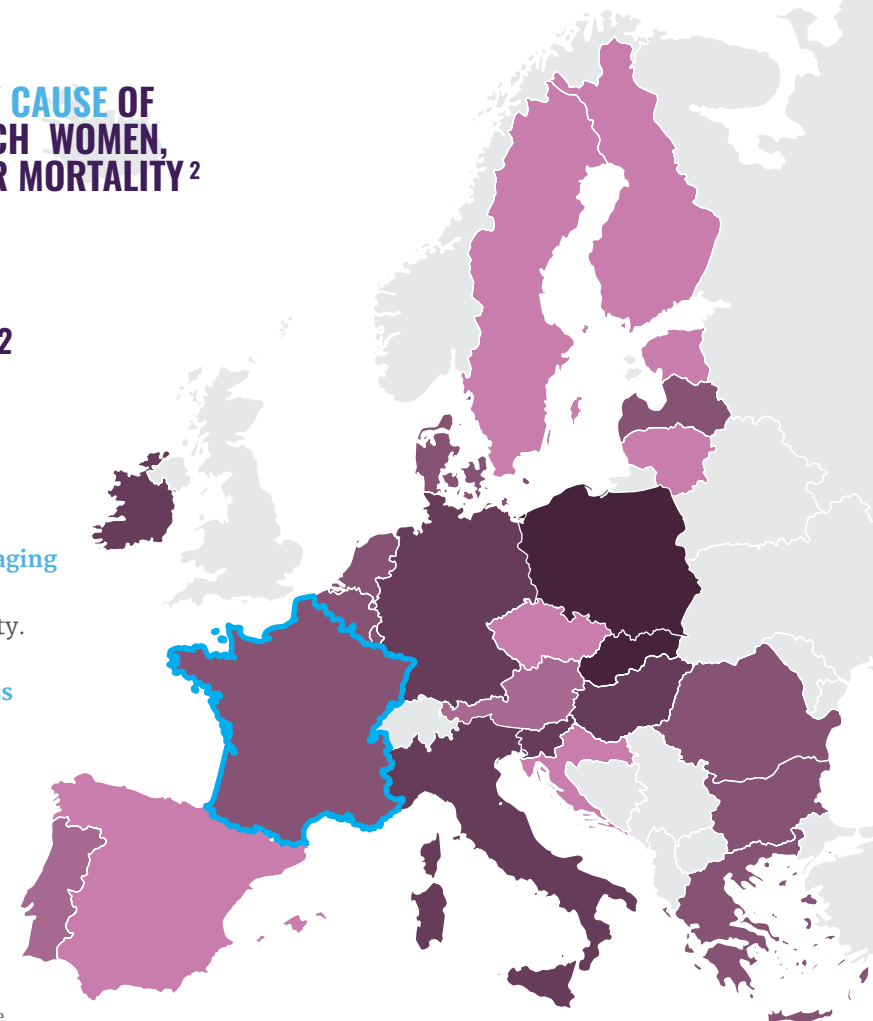
France has the **third-highest** number of breast cancer deaths in the EU ²

Treating breast cancer at an **early stage gives patients the best chance of managing the disease**, significantly reducing the burden on patients, families, and society. TBCT urges policymakers to **prioritise early detection and ensure equal access to timely and effective screening and treatment** across all Member States

Mortality
per 100,000 women



EU27, Women, Breast Cancer, All Ages, Age-Standardised Rate (European Standard Population) per 100,000 (2022) ³



Did you know?

Triple-negative breast cancer is particularly challenging to treat, affecting around 15% of breast cancer patients in France in 2023, with 40% diagnosed under 40. After being recognised as a research priority in the France Cancer Plan 2021-2020, the Institut Curie, with support from industrial partners and the French National Agency, launched an innovative clinical research program to develop new therapies and methods for assessing metastase ⁴

TBCT calls for **increased research into innovative diagnostics and therapies for both early and metastatic breast cancer**. Continued support from the European Commission, through EU4Health funding and the Mission Cancer, is essential

The care journey



OF 200,635 NEW CANCERS
DIAGNOSED IN WOMEN (2022),

32,7%

65,608 - 32,7% 200,635 (2022)

ARE BREAST CANCER DETECTED BOTH IN
THE EARLY AND ADVANCED STAGES¹

The journey to better outcomes for patients begins by ensuring that healthcare providers, policymakers, and the broader medical community have a **clear understanding of the diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment options for breast cancer at every stage**



France's National Cancer Plan, launched in 2021, promotes multidisciplinary care for breast cancer. Institutions like the Institut Curie in Paris exemplify this approach, offering integrated care through tumour boards where specialists from various disciplines collaborate to tailor treatment plans for patients⁵

While staffing Comprehensive Cancer Centres (CCCs) across the EU is crucial, TBCT emphasises that these centres must be equipped with **sufficient, well-trained, and multi-disciplinary teams**. It is particularly important that CCCs adhere to **established quality standards and guidelines** to effectively address the unique needs of breast cancer patients, including those with advanced and metastatic breast cancer

Inequalities in breast cancer screening

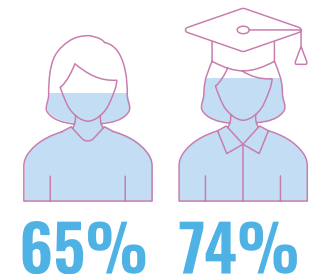


ONLY 46,9%

OF ELIGIBLE WOMEN IN
FRANCE HAD A MAMMOGRAM
IN THE PRECEDING TWO
YEARS (2021)⁶

Implementing Europe's Beating Cancer Plan initiatives across all Member States is essential, including the European Union Cancer Screening Scheme's goal of providing **screening across all Member States to 90% of eligible EU citizens** by 2025

France showed a **gap in screening coverage**, with 74% of higher-educated women undergoing screenings compared to 65% of women who did not attend university⁷



To address the inequalities in breast cancer screening, implementation of prevention strategies, and testing across the EU, TBCT strongly advocates for **policies that guarantee every patient access to high-quality care, regardless of location or socio-economic background**. It is crucial to implement measures that ensure equitable healthcare access, enabling all women to benefit from **early detection and effective treatment**

Use of biomarker technologies in breast cancer



TWO TYPES OF GENE BIOMARKER TESTING ARE USED IN BREAST CANCER: GENETIC & GENOMIC

GENETIC

Genetic testing allows the identification of specific gene alterations and, therefore, informs patients of their high risk of developing breast cancer or their treatment options

TBCT calls for the launch of a **European Commission initiative** (e.g. a Communication) **on a comprehensive genetic & genomic testing strategy**

GENOMIC

Genomic biomarker testing is performed to determine the type of cancer and guide possible personalised treatments

To ensure that each breast cancer patient receives the right treatment at the right time, it is essential to **improve awareness, healthcare workforce understanding, infrastructure, funding and reimbursement of biomarker testing**. This is particularly critical for those living with metastatic disease



In France, although biomarker testing methods such as IHC and FISH **are available occasionally in routine clinical practice**, other genomic testing such as PCR, liquid biopsies and NGS small, **have a medium availability**, limiting patient access to the correct treatment ⁸

Access to treatment - rate of availability of oncology treatment



... is the time that patients in France **must wait** after the central EU marketing authorisation to access an innovative oncology treatment.⁹ **The European Union's average is 526 days**

As of January 2023, **of the 46 drugs approved by the European Medicines Agency, only 32 are fully publicly available** (listed in the reimbursement list)¹⁰

TBCT supports cutting red tape to **streamline the approval and adoption of new therapies to ensure equal patient access**

AVAILABILITY OF BIOMARKER TECHNIQUES ACROSS COUNTRIES ⁸

		Always	Usually	Occasionally	Research	Never
		IHC*	FISH** Lung_breast_ Gastric	PCR***	NGS**** Small	Liquid Biopsies
Western European Countries	Austria					
	Belgium					
	Cyprus					
	Denmark					
	Finland					
	France					
	Germany					
	Greece					
	Ireland					
	Italy					
	Luxembourg					
	Malta					
	Netherlands					
	Norway					
Portugal						
Spain						
Sweden						
Eastern European Countries	Bulgaria					
	Croatia					
	Czech Republic					
	Estonia					
	Hungary					
	Latvia					
	Lithuania					
	Poland					
	Romania					
	Slovakia					
Slovenia						

* IHC: Immunohistochemistry

*** PCR: polymerase chain reaction

** FISH: Fluorescence in situ hybridization

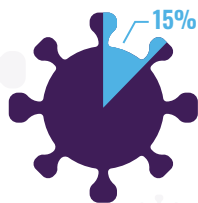
**** NGS: next-generation sequencing

Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC)



Metastatic Breast Cancer refers to an advanced stage of breast cancer where the disease spreads to another part of the body.

According to the latest available data between 30% and 50% of patients diagnosed with breast cancer will develop metastases during the course of their disease ¹¹



IT IS ESTIMATED THAT **15% OF BREAST CANCER IN FRANCE ARE METASTATIC**



NO STRUCTURED MBC DATA IS AVAILABLE FOR FRANCE



Why does it matter? Registries are crucial for MBC patients as they provide vital data on treatments, outcomes, and survival rates, enabling a better understanding of the disease and guiding treatment decisions to improve patient care and outcomes

TBCT calls on every Member State to have **harmonised breast cancer data collection, which includes metastatic and advanced breast cancer data as well as relapse**, across the European Union to facilitate research and improve knowledge and care



WOMEN IN THE EU-27 WILL DEVELOP BREAST CANCER BEFORE THE AGE OF 74 ¹²

Transforming Breast Cancer Together (TBCT) is a unique multi-stakeholder group representing patient and healthcare professional organisations, experts, and industry whose mission is to place the needs of those living with breast cancer at the heart of European policymaking. Together we can improve outcomes for breast cancer patients, survivors, and their families

Breast cancer **has an impact on everyone**

www.tbct.eu

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Transforming Breast Cancer Together

References:

¹ OECD - EU Country Cancer Profile: France (2023) - p.09 / ² European Cancer Information System (2022) / ³ European Commission, Breast Cancer in the EU (2023) - factsheet / ⁴ Press release - World Triple Negative Breast Cancer Day: Innovation to cure more women, Institut Curie (2024) / ⁵ France National Cancer Plan (2021) / ⁶ Preventive cancer screenings - programme data (Eurostat) / ⁷ OECD - Beating Cancer Inequalities in the EU (2024) - p.36 / ⁸ ESMO study on the availability and accessibility of biomolecular technologies in oncology in Europe - p.938 / ⁹ EFPIA WAIT Patient Indicator - p.20 & 22 / ¹⁰ National registers authorised medicines / ¹¹ Institut du sein Henry Hartmann, Le cancer du sein métastatique (2021) / ¹² Data from Europa Donna