



GOLD SEPTEMBER 2025

## Meet the Speakers



**MEP Vlad Voiculescu**

**Co-Host, Member of the European Parliament (RE, RO)**

Former Minister of Health of Romania, now serving as a Member of the SANT Committee in the European Parliament. Patient advocate and founder of MagiCAMP, an impactful non-profit organization that offers supportive therapies and financial aid to children diagnosed with cancer and their families. . Co-Chair of the European Parliament Intergroup on Cancer & Rare Diseases.



**MEP Romana Jerković**

**Co-Host, Member of the European Parliament (S&D, HR)**

Medical doctor and PhD in Biomedical Sciences, Vice-Chair of the SANT Committee in the European Parliament and member of ENVI. . She is actively involved in EU health policy through both her parliamentary work and engagement with civil society, and actively promotes evidence-based health policy and digital transformation in healthcare.



**Uta Dirksen**

**President, SIOP Europe; University Hospital Essen, DE**

Paediatric oncologist and Vice-Chair of the Department of Pediatrics III at the University Hospital Essen, founder of the AYA (Adolescents & Young Adults) unit. She leads European collaborative efforts to advance sarcoma research and improve survivorship and quality of life.



**Anita Kienesberger**

**Chair, CCI Europe Committee**

Long-time patient advocate and former CEO of the Austrian Childhood Cancer Organisation. A paediatric nurse by training, she has championed international collaboration to ensure children and survivors' voices inform EU cancer policies.



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**Maja Beck-Popovic**

**Moderator: SIOPE Board Member**

Paediatric haematologist-oncologist and former long-standing SPOG Board Member, recently appointed Chair of the WHO-SIOP Committee. She has led national and international studies and scientific programs to advance childhood cancer care.



**Ruth Ladenstein**

**SIOPE Board Member; ERN PaedCan Coordinator; ERN TRIO Chair St. Anna Children's Hospital & CCRI, Austria**

Professor of Paediatrics and Head of the SIRP Clinical Trials Unit at the Children's Cancer Research Institute. Former member of the EU Cancer Mission Board and former SIOPE President. As the current Chair of the European Reference Network Coordinators Group, she is a leading expert in European childhood cancer care and clinical research infrastructures.



**Matthias Schuppe**

**Deputy Head of Unit, Cancer & Health in All Policies, DG SANTE, European Commission**

Coordinates EU actions on cancer, including Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, in the European Commission (DG SANTE). He has overseen joint actions such as JANE (Joint Action on Networks of Expertise), which includes a focus on adolescents and young adults with cancer, to strengthen cancer care and collaboration across Member States.



**Carina Schneider**

**Managing Director, CCI Europe; Patient Advocate**

Patient advocate, she helped launch the pan-European survivors' network within CCI Europe and later joined the CCI Europe Committee. A psychology graduate, Carina has worked as a project manager with the Austrian Childhood Cancer Organisation, and later as a research coordinator in the psychosocial team of the Paediatric Neuro-Oncology Department at the Medical University of Vienna. Since January 2022, she has served as Managing Director of CCI Europe.



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**Annika Nowak**

**Head of Sector, EU Cancer Mission, DG RTD, European Commission**

Head of Sector for the EU Cancer Mission in the European Commission (DG RTD), a flagship program under Horizon Europe aimed at improving cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment across Member States. Previously, she has worked extensively on the Cross Border Healthcare Directive. As a member of the cabinet of former Health and Food Safety Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis, she helped shape the ERNs.



**Gilles Vassal**

**SIOPE Board Member & Policy Lead; Gustave Roussy, FR**

Paediatric Oncologist working at Gustave Roussy Comprehensive Cancer Centre in Paris. He has dedicated his career in research, clinical and training activity to the development of new drugs for children and adolescents with cancer. Current Scientific Steering Committee Chair of ACCELERATE – a multi-stakeholder international platform to accelerate innovation for children and adolescents with cancer. Past President of the EU Academic Consortium Innovative Therapies for Children and Adolescents with Cancer and past President of SIOPE and current SIOPE Policy lead.



**Delphine Heenen**

**Founder, KickCancer; CCI Europe Committee Member**

Previously a successful lawyer and consultant, she is now an active patient advocate and the founder of KickCancer, which has been active with other European paediatric cancer organisations with the aim of improving the cure rate and reduce the long-term side effects of the treatments for children with cancer, by advocating for more research and access to innovative treatments. She became a member of the CCI-Europe Regional Committee in 2020 and is carrying out her European activities in this capacity.



**Enrique Terol**

**Health Counsellor, Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU**

Medical doctor (MD, MSc, PhD in Public Health) and former Senior Policy Officer at DG SANTE, where he led work on the European Reference Networks. He now represents Spain on health at EU level, with a focus on rare diseases and health systems.