

The story behind the event

A football pitch can bring together people who might never meet in a conference room.

In Lereşti, Romania, football has become a place where generations meet, neighbours participate and conversations about cancer prevention enter everyday life.

At the heart of Champions of Prevention is a 15-minute documentary following Bogdan, a former footballer involved in Lereşti Living Lab, developed within the 4P-CAN research and innovation project. Through his story, the film brings a European research project into human focus: the people who participate, the relationships that make engagement possible and the community in which prevention takes shape.

Football combines participation, shared experience and an opportunity to communicate. Physical activity has established physical and mental health benefits, while sport can provide a platform for health information and community engagement. The event explores how these roles can reinforce one another in cancer prevention.

The walking football tournament organised in Lereşti offers a concrete example: women and men, people of different ages and participants who had never played football before joined the game. Their experience invites a practical discussion about making prevention welcoming, understandable and relevant to more people.

On Cancer Literacy Day, this community story meets European perspectives on public health, football, research and documentary storytelling. The film opens a conversation about what other communities can learn from Lereşti, what evidence is needed to assess impact and what partnerships can sustain similar approaches.

The ambition is to leave participants with a memorable story, a clearer understanding of community-based prevention and practical ideas for collaboration.

Programme

14 OCTOBER 2026 | 10:00–12:00

WHO Representation Office to the European Union, Brussels

All times are local to Brussels.

TIME	SESSION
10:00–10:05 5 min	**Welcome** **Bringing prevention closer to people** **Oxana Domenti** WHO Representative to the European Union Opening remarks.
10:05–10:15 10 min	**The story behind the film** **From European research to community life** **Marius Geantă** President, InoMed; Coordinator of 4P-CAN, CURTAIN and Lereşti Living Lab Introducing Bogdan's story, the living lab and the purpose of the conversation.
10:15–10:30 15 min	**Film screening** **Champions of Prevention** A community's story, told through football and the people who bring prevention to life.
10:30–11:20 50 min	**Panel discussion** **From a local pitch to a European conversation** **Lars Grote** — Shift Videoproductions; film director **Magni Mohr** — University of the Faroe Islands; Football is Medicine **Teodora Pletosu** — UEFA **Matteo Zacchetti** — DG EAC, European Commission Moderated by Marius Geantă, InoMed Storytelling, evidence on football and health, inclusive participation and opportunities for collaboration.
11:20–11:50 30 min	**Open conversation with the audience** **What can we take into our own communities?** **All speakers and participants** Moderated by Marius Geantă Questions, reflections and experiences from the audience, in dialogue with the panel.
11:50–12:00 10 min	**Closing reflections** **Taking the story forward** **Marius Geantă and the panellists** One brief takeaway from each panellist, followed by conclusions and next steps from the moderator.

Come for the film. Be part of the team.

Organised by InoMed and WHO European Region

Speakers and conversation

The film is our shared starting point. The conversation connects what happens on a local football pitch with research, public health and opportunities across Europe.

Marius Geantă MODERATOR

President, Center for Innovation in Medicine (InoMed)
Coordinator of 4P-CAN, CURTAIN and Lereşti Living Lab

Introducing the community's story and connecting the discussion with practical next steps.

Oxana Domenti WELCOME

WHO Representative to the European Union

Opening remarks on bringing cancer prevention closer to people and communities.

Lars Grote PANELLIST

Documentary Filmmaker and Founder, Shift Videoproductions
Director of Champions of Prevention

What becomes visible when we spend time with the people behind a research project?

Magni Mohr PANELLIST

Professor in Exercise Physiology and Pro-Rector for Research
University of the Faroe Islands; Football is Medicine research platform

How does the evidence on football and health help us understand what we have seen, and what should we measure next?

Teodora Pletosu PANELLIST

UEFA GROW
Public Affairs and National Associations Strategic Development

What would help football associations and local clubs make experiences like this part of their regular community work?

Matteo Zacchetti PANELLIST

Policy Officer, Sport Unit
DG EAC, European Commission

How can European sport policy help local clubs bring more people into the game?

Your voice in the conversation

Which moment in the film stayed with you, and why?

The audience conversation invites questions, local experiences and ideas for collaboration. We close by identifying what each of us can take into our own community or organisation.