

## European Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month 2026

### Background & Rationale

In 2022, Europe saw approximately 361,986 new cases of colorectal cancer, representing 13% of all new cancer diagnoses, and around 161,182 deaths, which accounted for 12% of cancer-related fatalities. Colorectal cancer made up 9.6% of the total estimated economic costs associated with all cancers in the EU.

Many of these deaths could be prevented through early detection. The Beating Cancer Plan aimed to address gaps in screening participation and to demonstrate that population-based programmes save both lives and money; however, many of its targets remain unmet.

That said, there have also been some improvements and declines in colorectal cancer mortality due to better risk factor and disease management, and organised screening.

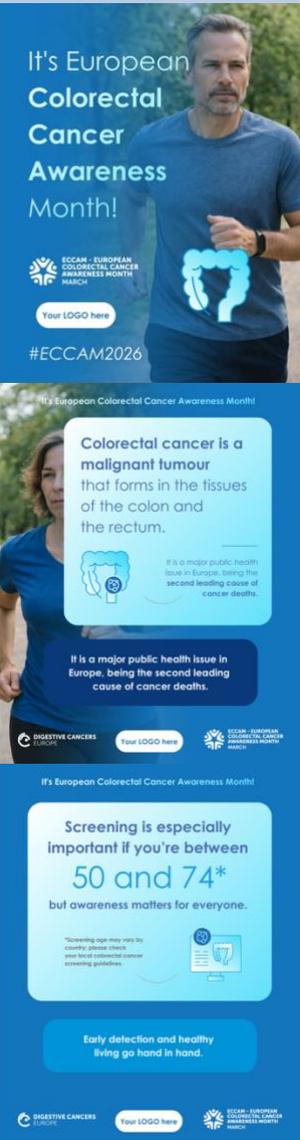
The current challenges include uneven and inconsistent implementation of screening recommendations in Europe, lack of funding and political support to implement these programmes, wide differences in how screening is organised and delivered, low public participation, workforce shortages across key roles, weak data systems and monitoring, and persistent access barriers that leave many people out.

### Objectives

- **Encourage Generation X (especially those in the screening age)** to participate in national colorectal cancer screening programmes.
- **Explain** how home-based **FIT kits** and follow-up **colonoscopy, in case needed**, work, highlighting convenience and effectiveness.
- **Provide clear preparation tips for colonoscopy** and reassure people that the screening process is manageable and worthwhile.
- **Make the content accessible** by tailoring it to diverse audiences, ensuring it is easy to digest, and normalising screening through personal stories.
- **Inspire to adopt healthy habits.** Explain how starting as soon as possible to take care of our health, as well as the importance of acting promptly on symptoms and undergoing regular screening, contribute to healthy ageing

Find below the **social media calendar** and the link to the Canva templates. Please, when posting, don't forget to use the **relevant hashtags**: #ECCAM2026 #HealthyAgeing #ScreeningSavesLives. **Finally, don't forget to always tag DiCE when posting.**

## ECCAM 2026 - Social Media Calendar

Date	Theme	Copy	Visual suggestion
1 Mar	Kick-off & awareness	<p>It's European Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month!</p> <p>Colorectal cancer is a malignant tumour that forms in the tissues of the colon and the rectum. It is a major public health issue in Europe, being the second leading cause of cancer deaths.</p> <p>Many of these deaths could be avoided through preventive practices and organised screening programmes.</p> <p>Screening is especially important if you're between 50 and 74, but awareness matters for everyone. Early detection and healthy living go hand in hand.</p> <p>This year help us raise awareness by using our custom-made image generator tool, personalise your message and share your commitment to screening and healthy ageing.</p>	 <p>The visual suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A full-page post featuring a man in a blue t-shirt with a glowing blue outline of a human colon overlaid on his torso. Text includes: "It's European Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month!", "ECCAM - EUROPEAN COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH MARCH", "Your LOGO here", and "#ECCAM2026".</li> <li>A carousel post featuring a woman in a blue t-shirt. The first slide says: "It's European Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month!". The second slide says: "Colorectal cancer is a malignant tumour that forms in the tissues of the colon and the rectum." and "It is a major public health issue in Europe, being the second leading cause of cancer deaths." The third slide says: "It is a major public health issue in Europe, being the second leading cause of cancer deaths." Logos for Digestive Cancers Europe and ECCAM are at the bottom.</li> <li>A carousel post featuring a woman in a blue t-shirt. The first slide says: "It's European Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month!". The second slide says: "Screening is especially important if you're between 50 and 74* but awareness matters for everyone." and includes a small graphic of a person and a calendar. The third slide says: "Early detection and healthy living go hand in hand." Logos for Digestive Cancers Europe and ECCAM are at the bottom.</li> </ul>

			 <p>It's European Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month!</p> <p>This year help us raise awareness by using our custom-made image generator tool, personalise your message and share your commitment to screening and healthy ageing.</p> <p> </p> <p>Your iGGD here</p>
			<p>CANVA link (template)</p>

4 Mar

Why screening matters

**Screening helps detect colorectal cancer when treatment is most effective and ultimately save lives.**

When colorectal cancer is found early, survival rates are significantly higher.

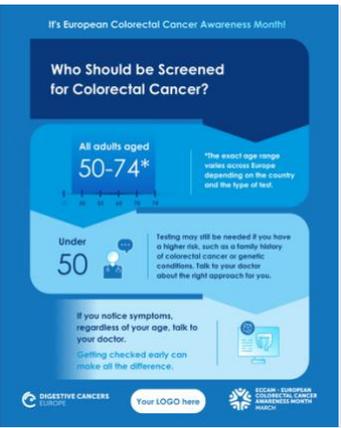
So, don't wait for symptoms to show up. If you are between 50 and 74\* get screened and take charge of your health and your future.

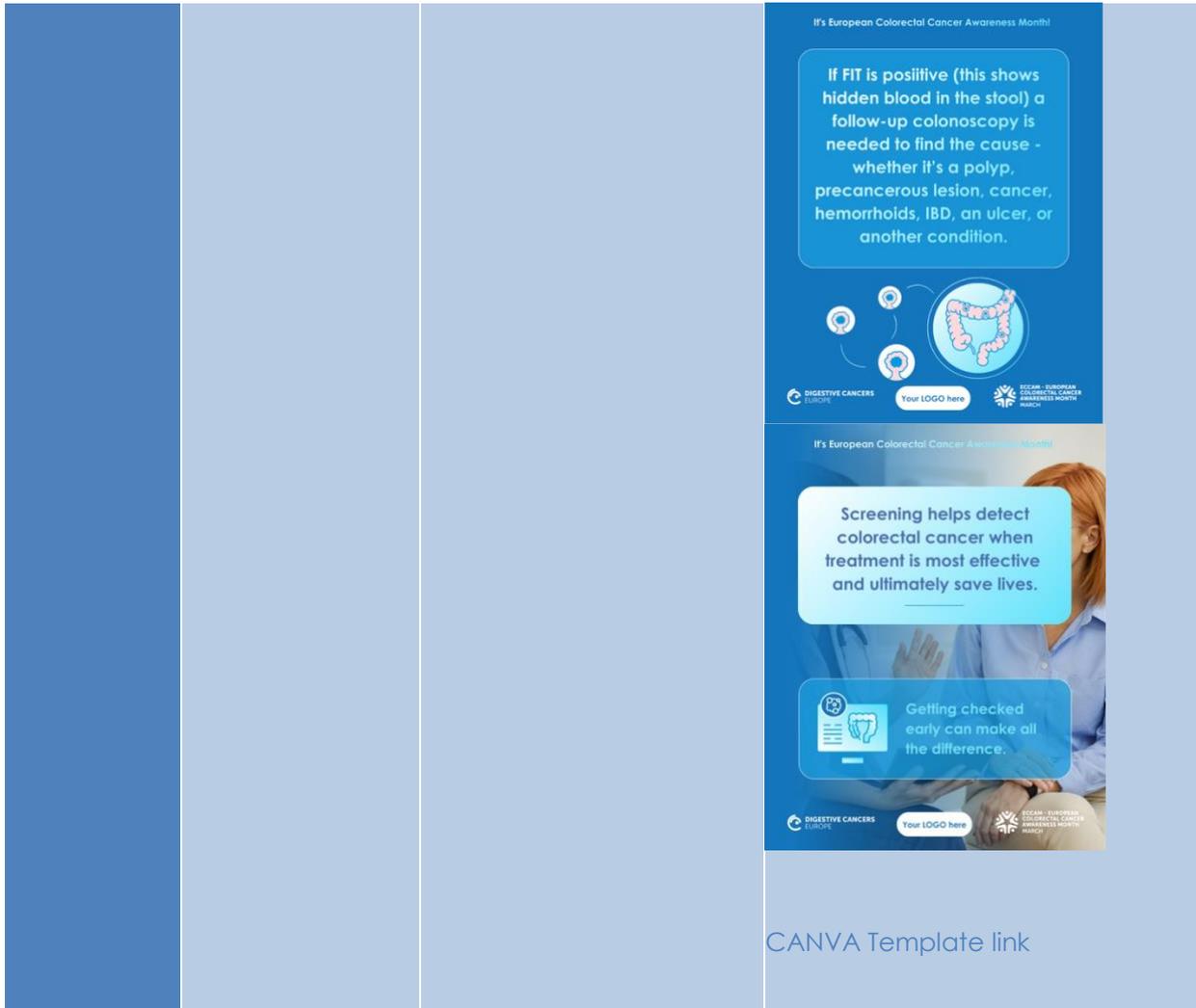
*\*In some countries screening age varies; check your local CRC screening age*



CANVA Link (template)

<p>6 Mar</p>	<p>ECCAM tool</p>	<p>Show your support for <b>European Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.</b></p> <p>Create a personalised awareness image with your logo using our image generator and help amplify the message on screening and healthy ageing.</p> <p>(link to the tool, which will be share later on)</p>	 <p>CANVA Template link</p>
<p>10 Mar</p>	<p>Who should get screened</p>	<p><b>Feeling healthy doesn't mean skipping screening.</b></p> <p>👤 Who should get screened for CRC?</p> <p>All adults aged 50 to 74 (the exact age range varies across Europe depending on the country and the type of test).</p> <p>⚠️ Under 50?</p> <p>Testing may still be needed if you have a higher risk, such as a family history of colorectal cancer or genetic conditions. Talk to your doctor about the right approach for you.</p> <p>✅ Screening saves lives, even if you feel healthy. Take the test when you're invited.</p>	

			 <p>CANVA link (template)</p>
<p>11 Mar</p>	<p>Home test screening before colonoscopy</p>	<p>Most countries start colorectal cancer screening with a simple home test: the <b>Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)</b>.</p> <p>FIT checks for hidden blood in stool - an early sign of polyps or colorectal cancer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ A positive result means a follow-up colonoscopy to find the cause.</li> <li>⇒ A negative result usually means repeating the test in two years.</li> </ul> <p>Screening is easy, safe, and proven to save lives.</p> <p>Take the test when you're invited, even when you feel perfectly well.</p>	



[CANVA Template link](#)

12 Mar

Personal story on screening and how saved life

***“If I had been screened two years earlier, I might have avoided a lethal bullet!”***

*Read Luca's story and why he encourages everyone in the screening age to get screened.*

*Colorectal cancer can develop silently. That's why listening to people who've been through it matters.*

*For those over 50, screening is a proven way to stay more in control of*



		<p>future health. It's not about luck; it's about taking charge of your health even when you feel well.</p> <p>Read his story here:  <a href="https://digestivecancers.eu/patient-story/luca/">https://digestivecancers.eu/patient-story/luca/</a></p>	<p>CANVA Template link</p>
<p>14 Mar</p>	<p>Colonoscopy preparation</p>	<p>Have a colonoscopy coming up? This video walks you through the preparation step by step: what to eat, how to take the preparation solution, and why it matters for clear, reliable results.</p> <p>A good preparation is important as it helps you clean your bowel properly so your doctor can obtain the clearest and most reliable results.</p> <p> Watch the video below and prepare confidently for your colonoscopy.</p>	<p><u>The link to this video will be shared later on.</u></p>

17 Mar

What is a flexible sigmoidoscopy/colonoscopy and why it matters?

A colonoscopy uses a tiny camera on a long, flexible tube to examine the entire length of the large bowel (colon) and is the most thorough way to check for disease.

🕒 It takes typically 15–30 minutes to examine the entire large bowel.

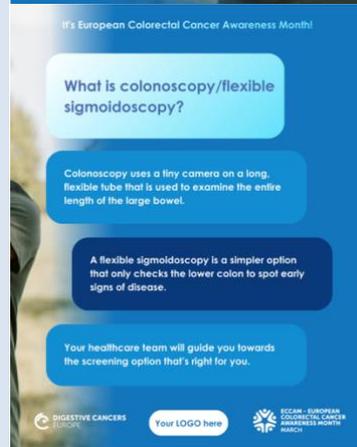
A flexible sigmoidoscopy is a simpler option that looks only at the lower part of the colon and rectum.

🕒 It usually takes just 10–15 minutes for flexible sigmoidoscopy.

👤 Your doctor will review the results and discuss next steps.

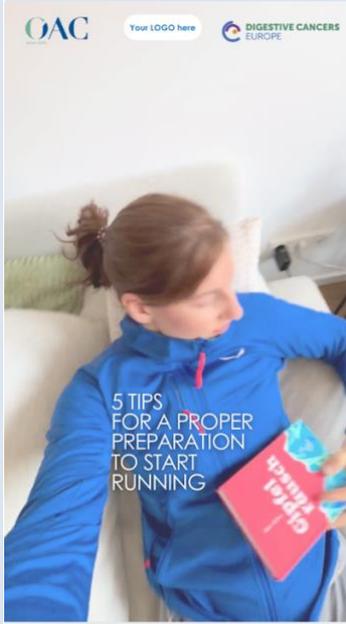
➡ If polyps or other suspicious findings are detected, a full colonoscopy may be recommended to examine the rest of the colon.

Early detection matters, even a quick test like this can save your life.



CANVA Template Link

21 Mar	ECCAM Tool	<p>Create a personalised awareness image for European Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Add your logo with our image generator and share the message on screening and healthy ageing.</p> <p>(link to the tool, which will be share later on)</p>	 <p>CANVA Template link</p>
24 Mar	Collaboration with OAC on exercising for all levels	<p><b>Healthy ageing involves prevention, not just chance.</b> Regular screening and physical activity support long-term health.</p> <p>Moving your body regularly, eating well, limiting alcohol, and avoiding smoking all help reduce your risk of digestive cancers.</p> <p>In preparation for the upcoming 5K Fun Run &amp; Walk at ESMO GI 2026, we're teaming up with Outdoor Against Cancer (OAC) to share how simple activities like walking or running can help keep you healthy and support prevention.</p> <p>Because looking after your body is about long-term habits that make a real difference.</p> <p>To learn more about the Fun Run, visit: <a href="https://funrun.digestivecancers.eu/">https://funrun.digestivecancers.eu/</a></p>	<p>Video with OAC with tips to exercise for walking/running for all levels and health conditions.</p> <p>The modifiable video can be found here:</p> <p><a href="https://www.canva.com/design/DAAHALnt2J9E/VGk1fX-jc-V7a5gTt5blOg/view?utm_content=DAHALnt2J9E&amp;utm_campaign=designshare&amp;utm_medium=link&amp;utm_source=publishsharelink&amp;mode=preview">https://www.canva.com/design/DAAHALnt2J9E/VGk1fX-jc-V7a5gTt5blOg/view?utm_content=DAHALnt2J9E&amp;utm_campaign=designshare&amp;utm_medium=link&amp;utm_source=publishsharelink&amp;mode=preview</a></p>

			
<p>28 Mar</p>	<p>image generator tool promotion</p>	<p>Create your own awareness image for ECCAM 2026! Use our custom-made image generator tool to add your logo and share your commitment to screening and healthy ageing.</p> <p>(link to the tool, which will be share later on)</p>	 <p>Canva template link</p>

31 Mar

Wrap Up & thanks

Thank you for joining us this month. Keep the momentum going, keep raising awareness about screening, share your story and encourage friends and family to do the same. And don't forget to do screening test once invited!



[CANVA Template Link](#)