
Abstract:
European Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Cervical Cancer Screening have been initiated in the Europe Against Cancer Programme. The first edition established the principles of organised population-based screening and stimulated numerous pilot projects. The second multidisciplinary edition was published in 2008 and comprises approximately 250 pages divided into seven chapters prepared by 48 authors and contributors. Considerable attention has been devoted to organised, population-based programme policies which minimise adverse effects and maximise benefits of screening. It is hoped that this expanded guidelines edition will have a greater impact on countries in which screening programmes are still lacking and in which opportunistic screening has been preferred in the past. Other methodological aspects such as future prospects of human papillomavirus testing and vaccination in cervical cancer control have also been examined in the second edition; recommendations for integration of the latter technologies into European guidelines are currently under development in a related project supported by the European Union Health Programme. An overview of the fundamental points and principles that should support any quality-assured screening programme and key performance indicators are
presented here in a summary document of the second guidelines edition in order to make these principles and standards known to a wider scientific community.