



**European Pain Federation EFIC: Chronic pain affects one in five Europeans**  
The ‘Societal Impact of Pain’ Symposium on May 23 and 24, 2016, will discuss the societal impact of pain and urge decision makers to prioritise pain care in Europe

*Around 20 percent of Europe’s adult population suffer from chronic pain, with the resulting direct and indirect costs amounting to a significant 1.5 to 3 percent of total GDP in Europe. At the “Societal Impact of Pain” Symposium, experts, patients’ representatives and policy makers will discuss the socioeconomic implications of pain and policy solutions to this burden for individual and societies.*

**Brussels, 18 May 2016** – Approximately 20 percent of Europe’s adult population – more than 80 million people – suffer from chronic pain, meaning pain which occurs repeatedly over a period of three months or longer. Some 9 percent of Europeans experience pain on a daily basis. The total direct and indirect costs of chronic pain amount to an estimated 1.5 to 3 percent of total European GDP. It is against this alarming background that the European Pain Federation EFIC and its partners will discuss the socioeconomic implications of pain and policy solutions to this burden for individual and societies at the 6<sup>th</sup> European Symposium “Societal Impact of Pain (SIP 2016): Time for Action”. The meeting will take place in Brussels on May 23 and 24, 2016 and will bring together pain experts, patients’ representatives and policy makers from around Europe.

“Our objective is to increase the visibility of chronic pain as a medical, economic and social problem, since it affects quality of life more than most other illnesses,” says Dr Chris Wells, President of EFIC. “We are not just talking about the huge burden the treatment of chronic pain places on health budgets, but above all the indirect costs arising from lost productivity and incapacity for work.” Chronic pain accounts for 500 million sick days a year and proves to be the most frequent cause of early retirement and incapacity for work.

“The SIP 2016 symposium aims to engage all stakeholder groups involved in future policy making impacting the societal impact of pain. The outcome of the symposium will include concrete policy suggestions”, says Prof Bart Morlion, EU Liaison Officer and President Elect of the European Pain Federation EFIC. “It is one of EFIC’s major goals to improve pain management in Europe at all levels. We are confident that the symposium will contribute to this end by providing an excellent opportunity for an exchange of information and best practices and by stimulating discussion through task-oriented working groups.”

Topics to be discussed at the SIP 2016 symposium are:

- Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce
- Chronic Pain: a disease or an underlying symptom?
- The relevance of pain in cancer care and rehabilitation
- Pain as a quality indicator for health care

Confirmed speakers include MEPs from ten EU countries, leading researchers and specialists in the field of pain, representatives of patients' organisations, and senior Commission representatives.

The scientific framework of the "Societal Impact of Pain" (SIP) platform is under the responsibility of the European Pain Federation EFIC<sup>®</sup>. Cooperation partners for SIP 2016 are Pain Alliance Europe (PAE) and Active Citizenship Network (ACN). The pharmaceutical company Grünenthal GmbH is responsible for funding and non-financial support (e.g. logistical support). The scientific aims of the SIP symposia have been endorsed by a large number of international and national pain advocacy groups, scientific organisations and authorities.

For further details see: <https://www.sip-platform.eu/>

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