



## **“THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF PAIN – A ROAD MAP FOR ACTION”**

In 2001, the European Federation of the International Association for the Study of Pain Chapters (EFIC®) published its Declaration on Pain which called on national governments and the EU Institutions to increase the level of awareness of the societal impact of pain. Ten years on from the EFIC Declaration on Pain, national and EU policy action has been very limited. At the same time, basic and clinical science have demonstrated the feasibility of pathways out of pain for many types of acute and chronic pain, but health care systems currently do not guarantee general access to these.

According to the 2007 Eurobarometer survey on “Health in the European Union”<sup>1</sup>, almost one third of respondents experience musculo-skeletal pain which affects their day-to-day life. The burden of suffering that pain imposes on individuals and the enormous costs that society has to bear not only by healthcare systems but also the social, economic and employment sectors only illustrate the urgency for European governments and the EU Institutions to act and to put, as a priority, the societal impact of pain on their policy agenda.

### **We call on European governments and the EU Institutions to:**

1. Acknowledge that pain is an important factor limiting the quality of life and should be a top priority of the national health care system.
2. Activate patients, their family, relatives and care-givers through the availability of information and access to pain diagnosis and management.
3. Raise awareness of the medical, financial and social impact that pain and its management has on the patients, their family, care-givers, employers, and the healthcare system.
4. Raise awareness of the importance of prevention, diagnosis and management of pain amongst all healthcare professionals, notably through further education.
5. Strengthen pain research (basic science, clinical, epidemiological) as a priority in EU framework programme and in equivalent research road maps at national and EU level, addressing the societal impact of pain and the burden of chronic pain on the health, social, and employment sectors.
6. Establish an EU platform for the exchange, comparison and benchmarking of best practices between member states on pain management and its impact on society.

---

<sup>1</sup> Eurobarometer survey on “Health in the European Union”, Special Eurobarometer 272e, September 2007  
[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_publication/eb\\_health\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_publication/eb_health_en.pdf)



7. Use the EU platform to monitor trends in pain management, services, and outcomes and provide guidelines to harmonize effective levels of pain management to improve the quality of life of European Citizens.

This “Road Map for Action” to address the societal impact of pain in the EU has been endorsed by many organisations and was signed at the Symposium “Societal Impact of Pain 2011”, 3-4 May 2011, Brussels.



European Federation of IASP® Chapters (EFIC®)  
Medialaan 24  
1800 Vilvoorde, Belgium  
[www.efic.org](http://www.efic.org)  
E-mail: [secretary@efic.org](mailto:secretary@efic.org)

**Note: Click on [this link](#) to see the list of endorsers.**

---