



SIP

Societal Impact of Pain

**Time for Action
2016**

#SIP2016Action

Report SIP WG4

**Pain, rehabilitation and
reintegration of workers in the
workforce**

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Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce



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WG Reporter 1 WG Reporter 2 WG Reporter 3	Marian Nicholson (Pain UK, Shingles Support Society, PAE) Antonella Cardone (The Work Foundation) Marcel Leppée (Andrija Stampar Institute of Public Health)
Welcome and introduction to the symposium	WG faculty
Health as an investment	Stephan Bevan (Institute for Employment Studies IES)
The economic impact of chronic pain in Portugal	Luís Filipe Azevedo (CIDES)
Centre of knowledge in work incapacity focuses on reintegration with disabling pain	Saskia Decuman (NIHDI)
Multimodal pain therapy: reality?	Michael Schenk (BVSD)
Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce	Dame Carol Black
Back pain and second opinion or Headache and cooperation	Harald Möhlmann, AOK Nordost
Pain, Work, Age	Anne-Sophie Parent (AGE)

Working Group 4 - Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce

Draft policy recommendations

- **The European Commission**, in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy and European Semester framework of economic governance, should promote policies that reflect the link between health and growth, and that recognise the interconnection of health care, employment and social protection policies and systems.
- **The European Commission** should establish an EU platform for the exchange, comparison and benchmarking of best practices between member states on pain management and its impact on society.
- **The European Commission** should increase investment in pain research (basic science, clinical, epidemiological) as a priority in future EU framework programs, and undertake research on involuntary causes of early retirement across Europe.

Working Group 4 - Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce

Draft policy recommendations

For the EU:

- The European Union, in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy and European Semester framework of economic governance, should promote policies that reflect the link between health, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, and that promote the interconnection of healthcare, work and social protection policies and systems.
- The European Union should establish an EU platform for the exchange and benchmarking of best practices between Member States on pain management, vocational rehabilitation and its impact on work and society. This will support the implementation of early interventions in the interface between health and work.
- The European Union should encourage Member States to develop sustainable work participation taking advantage of existing pain research (basic science, clinical, epidemiological) and support additional research to fill the gap when needed, including making use of the Eurobarometer.

Working Group 4 - Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce

Draft policy recommendations



For Member States:

- Member States should build bridges between healthcare, work and social protection policies and systems, to improve the work participation of people with health-related challenges.
- Member States should appoint and empower relevant National Institutions (e.g. cross-ministerial working groups) for Health and Work who report to and coordinate policy among Health, Social, Labour and Finance Ministries.
- Member States should increase investment in pain research (basic science, clinical, epidemiological) in national research on pain management, vocational rehabilitation and its impact on society.
- Member States should invest in the prevention of chronic pain and accelerate return to work via education and the earliest possible detection of patients at risk through systematic screening and appropriate multidisciplinary pain therapy.

Working Group 4 - Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce

Draft policy recommendations

- Member States should invest in interventions which have sustainable work participation as an outcome.
- Member States should prioritise vocational rehabilitation as part of the patients' general rehabilitation.
- National plans should encourage enforcement of existing national legislation requiring reasonable, flexible workplace adjustments by employers that can help people with chronic pain stay in work or reintegrate into the workforce.
- Member States should invest in Early Intervention and technologies to prevent involuntary early retirement and allow older workers to continue to benefit from participation in the workplace.
- Member States should prioritise chronic pain as a national public health priority:

Working Group 4 - Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce

Draft policy recommendations

- Develop and implement National Policies and Plans for Chronic Pain to maximise opportunities for people of working age to stay in and/or return to work as soon as possible.
- Make early intervention (prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care) and return to work a priority of chronic pain management.
- Deliver novel, strategic and integrated approaches to health and work policy and practice to include sustainable work participation as a clinical outcome.
- Develop methodologies for chronic pain cost-of-illness studies and cost-effectiveness evaluations of interventions to support rational decision-making and cost-effective resource allocation in healthcare.
- Develop a multidisciplinary approach in the total chain of care.



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