

Parliamentary questions
25 November 2011

Question for written answer
to the Commission
Rule 117
Jiří Maštálka (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Lack of data and statistics on chronic pain

The only pain-related studies available at European level date back to 2007. A Eurobarometer survey⁽¹⁾ entitled 'Health in the European Union', published that year, showed that just under one third of respondents experienced muscle, joint, neck or back pain that affected their daily activities, while 25 % experienced chronic pain, i.e. pain lasting for three months or more. The same survey also revealed that some population groups are more likely to suffer from chronic pain than others. Those over 55 years of age experienced pain almost twice as much as those in the 15-24 age group, and 37 % of women surveyed experienced pain compared with 27 % of men. It is clear, therefore, that pain is a considerable public health challenge.

1. Does the Commission think it should launch a new, more in-depth study of pain conditions, including an evaluation of the adequacy of assessment, diagnosis, treatment and management of acute and chronic pain in the general population and in high-risk groups, as well as its impact on the social and working lives of patients and their carers, families, employers and so on, in order to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon and take the right policy decisions?
2. Is the Commission giving consideration to the idea of developing a study aimed at identifying barriers to providing appropriate pain care in the Member State, in order to put the right policies in place with a view to improving the state of pain care research, education and clinical care in Europe?

Eurobarometer survey entitled 'Health in the European Union', Special Eurobarometer 272,
⁽¹⁾ September 2007.

The question is available at the following link:
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2011-010993+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>