

### Maltese organisations come together to address the Societal Impact of Pain

Approximately 20 percent of Europe's adult population, more than 80 million people, suffers from chronic pain, meaning pain which occurs repeatedly over a period of three months or longer. Some 9 percent of Europeans experience pain every day. Chronic pain accounts for 500 million sick days a year and is the most frequent cause of early retirement and incapacity for work. The total direct and indirect costs of chronic pain amount to an estimated 1.5 to 3 percent of total European GDP.

Against this worrying backdrop, on the 8-9 June 2017, Maltese organisations will come together to find ways to improve pain care in Malta and across Europe. In the first half of 2017, Malta will be responsible for the Presidency of the Council of the EU. During the Maltese Presidency, the 2017 Societal Impact of Pain (SIP) Symposium will be organised in Malta as part of the government's programme of events

The 2016 SIP Symposium took place in Brussels on the 23-24 May. Participants discussed the socioeconomic implications of pain and [policy solutions](#) to this burden for the individual and society. The meeting was subject to great political interest. Over 20 Members of the European Parliament were involved in the Symposium, including Alfred Sant, Therese Comodini Cachia, Miriam Dalli and Roberta Metsola.

**Dr Chris Wells, President of the European Pain Federation EFIC®** stated *"It is of utmost importance to increase the visibility of chronic pain as a medical, economic, and social problem. We need to address the huge burden the treatment of chronic pain places on health budgets and the indirect costs arising from lost productivity and incapacity for work."*

**Silvana Fanalista, President of No Pain Foundation** declared *"This is a great opportunity for Malta since, for the first time, it will host all European stakeholders involved in the important issue of chronic pain. Chronic pain is a complex issue; distress spreads out to the familial, emotional, social and economic spheres."*

**Gertrude A. Buttigieg, Honorary Secretary of the Malta Health Network** noted *"We really hope that all Maltese organisations active in pain care working together towards SIP 2017 will lead to the development of cross cutting actions and moving away from a silo mentality."*

On the 7 July 14.00–18.00, the Maltese Health Network and No Pain Foundation have invited European representatives of the SIP platform and Maltese organisations involved in pain for a first discussion on the feasibility of cooperation in Malta and preparations for SIP 2017.

The scientific framework of the "[Societal Impact of Pain](#)" (SIP) platform is under the responsibility of the [European Pain Federation EFIC®](#). Cooperation partners for SIP 2017 are [Pain Alliance Europe \(PAE\)](#) and [Active Citizenship Network \(ACN\)](#).

The SIP 2017 symposium is co-hosted by the [Malta Health Network](#) and the [No Pain Foundation](#). The pharmaceutical company [Grünenthal GmbH](#) is responsible for funding and non-financial support (e.g. logistical support). In the past the scientific aims of the SIP symposia have been endorsed by over 300 international and national pain advocacy groups, scientific organisations and authorities.

For more information on SIP on Malta visit <https://www.sip-platform.eu> or contact us at [sip-platform@grunenthal.com](mailto:sip-platform@grunenthal.com) or in Malta at [info@maltahealthnetwork.org](mailto:info@maltahealthnetwork.org) or [info@nopainfoundation.org](mailto:info@nopainfoundation.org)



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