



PRESS RELEASE

May 25, 2016

NOW THERE IS NO EXCUSE - TIME FOR EU LEADERS TO ACT ON THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF PAIN

For the first time, pain experts, patients, citizens, and policy-makers set out detailed policy recommendations to show EU and national governments how to address the societal impact of pain

Brussels, Belgium –The second and final day of the Societal Impact of Pain (SIP) symposium came to a close today and, following in-depth discussions, a series of clear policy recommendations have been put forward to fundamentally change pain care and the effect of pain on society.

The recommendations are:

- 1. Implement Article 8.5 on the degree of patients' pain in the Cross-border Healthcare Directive**
- 2. Establish an EU platform on the societal impact of pain**
- 3. Integrate chronic pain within EU policies on chronic diseases**
- 4. Ensure that pain care is a part of policies and strategies on cancer**
- 5. Initiate policies addressing the impact of pain on employment**
- 6. Implement workplace adjustments for people with chronic pain**
- 7. Increase investment in pain research**
- 8. Prioritise pain within education for health care professionals, patients and the general public**

(See the recommendations in full in the annex attached)

Giovanni La Via MEP, Chair of the European Parliament's Environment Public Health, and Food Safety Committee announced that he is working with a number of influential MEPs to launch a Written Declaration on chronic pain. The Written Declaration will call for, among other things, a reference network for centres of excellence in pain treatment. When discussing pain care on day one of the SIP symposium, Tapani Piha, Head of Unit for cross-border healthcare in DG SANTE, had said that European Reference Networks, due to be established by the European Commission this year, could one day focus on conditions for which expertise are rare.

Mr La Via was joined by 20 MEPs who supported this year's symposium.

Following the success of this year's symposium, Alfred Sant MEP, former Prime Minister of Malta, confirmed that his government will invite SIP to host their 2017 symposium in Malta during the Maltese presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Mr Sant stated:



"Pain is a common element of numerous chronic diseases. The European Union and member states must act now on the urgent burden that it causes individually to patients and seek to make chronic pain relief an integral part of public health policies."

To view photos and videos of the workshop: <https://www.sip-platform.eu/events/sip-2016/impressions.html>

To download photos, videos and logos: <https://www.sip-platform.eu/press/registration-to-press-area.html>

For more information, please contact Sam Kynman: sam.kynman@bm.com, +32 490 65 0434

The scientific framework of the SIP symposium and platform is under the responsibility of the European Pain Federation EFIC®. This year's edition sees for the first time the formal cooperation of the patient community, represented by Pain Alliance Europe (PAE), and the civil society, represented by Active Citizenship Network (ACN), partners for SIP 2016, further providing added value in addressing the topic of the societal impact of pain. The pharmaceutical company Grünenthal GmbH is responsible for funding and non-financial support (e.g. logistical support).

Over 300 international and national pain advocacy groups, scientific organisations and authorities have endorsed the scientific aims of previous SIP symposia and meetings. The objectives of this year's SIP Symposium have been endorsed by over 160 pain advocacy and scientific organisations.