

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

5.7.2005

41/2005

WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Richard Howitt, David Hammerstein Mintz, Ursula Stenzel, Adamos Adamou
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on rheumatic diseases

Lapse date: 5.10.2005

Written declaration on rheumatic diseases

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas there are over 100 million people of all age groups in the EU with arthritis, and whereas arthritis constitutes the greatest single cause of physical disability,
 - B. whereas effective research will foster new therapies for rheumatic diseases, bringing enormous savings to the EU economy and to Member States,
 - C. whereas rheumatic diseases can be serious, disabling and painful, and whereas people affected frequently experience social exclusion and reduced life expectancy,
 - D. whereas people with rheumatic diseases can lead full and independent lives but require appropriate support,
1. Calls on the Commission and Council to:
 - ensure that the EU's 7th Research Framework Programme makes rheumatic diseases one of its explicit priorities;
 - ensure that the EU's new health strategy makes arthritis (musculoskeletal disorders) one of its priorities;
 - strengthen legislation to outlaw disability discrimination through a specific Disability Directive;
 - encourage Member States to take measures to ensure better access to the full range of treatments in all EU countries;
 2. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council, the Commission and the Member States.