

**Question for written answer E-002210/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI), Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI)

Subject: Chronic pain in children and adolescents

Paediatric chronic pain has become increasingly common in recent years, as a result of various health, individual, societal and environmental factors. Studies have shown that a staggering 46 % of children and adolescents¹ suffer from this disorder, which accounts for costs of up to EUR 9 000 per family²³.

The Commission has been supporting best practice exchange on the issue among the Member States, particularly with a view to scaling up best-in-class approaches in order to promote health and prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by tackling common risk factors.

In her 2022 State of the Union speech⁴, President von der Leyen announced a new mental health initiative for 2023, stemming from the Conference on the Future of Europe⁵. Given the close link between chronic pain and mental health, as corroborated by the latest medical research, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. Will the Commission's comprehensive approach to mental health⁶ include the consequences of chronic pain?
2. Does the Union prevention, preparedness and response plan established by Article 5(3)(j) of Regulation 2022/2371⁷ include chronic pain, as an NCD, in its 'support to Member States for the monitoring of the impact of a serious cross-border threat to health on the provision and continuity of healthcare services, including for other diseases and conditions during health emergencies'?

Submitted: 12.7.2023

¹ Miró, J. et al., 'Chronic Pain and High Impact Chronic Pain in Children and Adolescents: A Cross-Sectional Study', *The Journal of Pain*, Vol. 24, No 5, Elsevier, New York, 2023, pp. 812-823.

² Sled, M. et al., 'The economic impact of chronic pain in adolescence: methodological considerations and a preliminary costs-of-illness study', *Pain*, Vol. 119, No 1-3, IASP Press, Seattle, 2005, pp. 183-90.

³ Groenewald, C.B. et al., 'The Economic Costs of Chronic Pain Among a Cohort of Treatment-Seeking Adolescents in the United States', *The Journal of Pain*, Vol. 15, No 9, Elsevier, New York, 2014, pp. 925-933.

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/ov/SPEECH_22_5493.

⁵ https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2022-06/communication_1.pdf.

⁶ https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2022-10/com_2022_548_3_en.pdf.

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 on serious cross-border threats to health and repealing Decision No 1082/2013/EU (OJ L 314, 6.12.2022, p. 26): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2371>.