

EUROPEAN PAIN
AWARENESS DAY 2026

THE HIDDEN COST OF PAIN



21 OCTOBER 2026



THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM



150
MILLION

Europeans live
with chronic pain

1 in 5
ADULTS
is affected

WHAT IS CHRONIC PAIN?



Pain that
persists
longer than
3 months.

Subjective, sensory and
emotional experience
influenced by
biopsychosocial factors.

THE HIDDEN COSTS OF CHRONIC PAIN



3-10%
OF GDP

lost annually through
healthcare costs,
absenteeism,
presenteeism, and
early retirement

1 in 2 people
say pain affects their
ability to work

Severe pain can reduce
the likelihood of full-time
employment by up to
20 percentage points.

WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY



**HEALTHCARE
PROFESSIONALS**
Educate patients on
coping and recovery.



POLICYMAKERS
Prioritise pain in
health strategies
and fund research.



EMPLOYERS
Create supportive
workplaces for
people living with
pain.



THE PUBLIC
Understand pain
and seek help early.

“Early action improves outcomes
for individuals and society.”



Learn more at
europeanpainfederation.eu