Question for written answer E-002948/2024
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Pain and non-communicable diseases

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are responsible for 80 % of the disease burden in EU countries.

Chronic primary pain is pain that is associated with significant emotional distress or functional disability and that is not better accounted for by another medical condition. Here, chronic pain is the dominant clinical problem and is considered to be a condition in its own right.

The onset of chronic primary pain is best understood as an interplay between various biological, psychological and social factors, which vary from person to person. Some examples are chronic widespread pain (such as fibromyalgia), complex regional pain syndrome and musculoskeletal pain (e.g. non-specific chronic low back pain).

Further, a scoping review on high-burden under-researched medical conditions, published by the Commission in 2023, explicitly includes conditions such as fibromyalgia (an example of chronic primary pain), and states that designing programmes for diseases and conditions such as these will help improve health and healthcare in the EU.

1. Given the close link between NCDs and chronic pain, which conditions is the Commission planning to include under its NCDs initiative, and is chronic pain among them?

2. Can the Commission guarantee that chronic pain will be adequately addressed under this or any other equivalent policy?

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