

**Question for written answer E-004197/2026
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: World Arthritis Day on 12 October

Rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) are rapidly escalating in the EU. Already affecting 120 million Europeans, cases of RMDs such as rheumatoid arthritis and hip osteoarthritis will increase by around 80 % by 2050.

This trend is alarming given the profound and overlooked burden of RMDs on public health, social convergence and the EU's economy. Disproportionately impacting women, RMDs are already the leading cause of disability, caregiving and workplace health problems in the EU, as well as being the second most common reason for consulting a doctor. EU workforce productivity costs related to RMDs alone are estimated to be up to 2 % of GDP.

In response to the EU's escalating RMD crisis, what steps is the Commission taking now and planning to take in the future to advance RMD prevention and treatment and ensure that people living with RMDs can access, maintain and return to work?

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