

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001991/25
to the Commission
Margarita de la Pisa Carrión (Pfe)
(19 May 2025)**

Subject: Addressing migraine as a neurological disease in EU health policy

For too long, neurological disorders have been subsumed under ‘mental health’ labels, obscuring their distinct causes, care needs and research priorities. A forward-looking EU public health strategy should adopt a ‘brain health’ framework covering both mental health conditions and neurological diseases.

Migraine is a disabling neurological disorder affecting over 41 million people in Europe. In Spain, more than five million people live with migraine, and around one million with chronic migraine. It is a leading cause of disability in people under 50, especially women, and seriously impacts productivity, quality of life and healthcare costs. Yet it remains underdiagnosed and undertreated, and funding for care and research remains inadequate.

The Commission has taken welcome steps to promote mental health, particularly through the 2023 comprehensive approach to mental health, and has provided institutional support via the Committee on Public Health and the Mental Health Intergroup. However, these efforts largely do not address neurological conditions such as migraine.

Given this:

1. Will the Commission develop a dedicated EU neurological action plan, similar to its mental health strategy, to address diseases such as migraine, multiple sclerosis, and Parkinson’s?
2. What steps will be taken to improve access to diagnosis, specialist care and treatment for migraine across the Member States, thus reducing inequalities?
3. How will the Commission boost EU research funding for underfunded high-burden neurological conditions?

Submitted: 19.5.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(28 August 2025)**

According to Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ⁽¹⁾, Member States are responsible for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care, including treatment ⁽²⁾.

The Commission supports Member States in reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including neurological disorders, under the ‘Healthier Together’ — EU NCD initiative ⁽³⁾.

A joint action ⁽⁴⁾ supports Member States to reduce the burden of neurological disorders, through health literacy, early detection, and integrated care pathways.

The communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health ⁽⁵⁾ supports the prevention and early detection of mental health problems and provides support to vulnerable groups.

The Commission also supports the collection and sharing of best and promising practices through the EU Best Practice Portal on Public Health ⁽⁶⁾.

The Commission regularly exchanges views with Member States via the Expert Group on Public Health ⁽⁷⁾ on priorities in addressing key public health challenges, and currently it does not envisage the development of a dedicated EU plan for neurological disorders.

The Commission has provided opportunities for funding research on under-researched medical conditions, including migraine, through Horizon Europe.

⁽¹⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/tfeu_2008/art_168/oj/eng.

⁽²⁾ Article 168(7) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:TOC>.

⁽³⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/healthier-together-eu-non-communicable-diseases-initiative_en.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://jadementia.eu/>.

⁽⁵⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-of-life/european-health-union/comprehensive-approach-mental-health_en.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/dyna/bp-portal/>.

⁽⁷⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/expert-group-public-health_en.

The Health Cluster Work Programme 2023-2024 ⁽⁸⁾ had a call topic on ‘Tackling high burden for patients, under-researched medical conditions’ ⁽⁹⁾.

Moreover, the Health Cluster 4 of the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025 includes a similar topic in its call ⁽¹⁰⁾. Horizon Europe ⁽¹¹⁾ will continue to provide opportunities for funding research in this broad area of under-researched medical conditions ⁽¹²⁾.

⁽⁸⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-1-general-introduction_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf.

⁽⁹⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-hlth-2024-disease-03-14-two-stage>.

⁽¹⁰⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/HORIZON-HLTH-2025-01-DISEASE-07>.

⁽¹¹⁾ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.

⁽¹²⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>.