

Joint statement on the employment of people with chronic diseases

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Setting the scene



➤ Stakeholder recommendations on chronic diseases and employment

November 2017

Joint Statement on "Improving the employment of people with chronic diseases in Europe"

Framing paper

Preamble

This paper presents the common position of stakeholders from the health, social and employment sectors in Europe on the issue of the employment of people with chronic diseases. It offers recommendations to EU and national policymakers to address the identified challenges. A standalone call to action summarises concrete policy asks to the European Commission and EU Member States in order to achieve improved participation of people with chronic diseases in the employment market; and the organisations behind this statement.

This framing paper is part of the EU Health Policy Platform, an Alliance (EC) of contributors.

Framing paper

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Joint Statement on "Improving the employment of people with chronic diseases in Europe"

Call to Action to enhance labour opportunities for people with chronic diseases

Considering that EU Member States are committed to achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and particularly Goal 3 on Good Health and Well-Being¹ and considering that the European Union shall ensure a high level of human health protection²,

Considering that the European Union is committed to the Health-in-all-Policies approach in EU Treaties,

Considering that the European Union and Member States aim to combat social exclusion and discrimination; and that "access to labour-market opportunities is a key element of social inclusion";

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Having regards to the Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union³ which sets out objectives of full employment and social progress in Europe, and taking into consideration that employment is a policy of shared competence between the European Union and Member States⁴,

Considering that investment, growth and job creation are the cornerstones of the Europe 2020 Strategy and priorities of the Juncker Commission work, which targets an employment rate of 75% for people aged 20-64 by 2020⁵ and outlines the importance of participation of all working-age people in the labour market,

Considering that the prevalence of chronic diseases in Europe is rising, particularly affecting people of working-age⁶ and that 23.5% of the working population in the 28 EU Member States report to suffer from a chronic illness, while an increasingly postponement of the retirement age is observed in all EU countries,

Considering that health and work are interrelated in many ways⁹ and that facilitating the professional integration and reintegration of people with chronic diseases on the labour market would bring significant economic and social benefits in EU countries¹⁰ in addition to personal benefits for individuals with chronic diseases in terms of quality of life and well-being.

¹ United Nations, Resolution 70/1 adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>
² Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFUE) - Part Three: Union policies and internal actions - Title XIV: Public Health - Article 168 (ex Article 152 TEC) Official Journal L115, 09/05/2008 P.0122 - 0124

+

Call to action

CHRONIC DISEASE & WORK

WHAT IS THE SITUATION?

- The prevalence of chronic diseases and disabling conditions has been growing in Europe over the past decade, due to an increasingly ageing population.
- 86%** of all deaths in Europe are due to chronic diseases.
- 1/3 of the European population aged 15+ and 25% of the working-age population.
- The employment rate of people with one or more chronic conditions, especially aged 16-64, is much lower than for those who do not.
- Beyond the direct costs of healthcare (€750 billion in the EU), chronic diseases generate indirect costs for workers, employers and the society. Chronic diseases have a significant impact on labour supply in terms of workforce participation, years worked and so on.

Infographic

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE LABOUR OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC DISEASES

EXISTING POLICY FRAMEWORKS PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EU AND MEMBER STATES TO ACT:

- ➔ UN Sustainable Development Goals including Goal 3 on Health and Well-Being
- ➔ EU Treaties: EU role and responsibility in health (Article 168 TFUE) & objectives of full employment and social progress in Europe (Article 3 TUE)
- ➔ Europe 2020 Strategy with priorities on investment, growth and job creation
- ➔ European Pillar of Social Rights
- ➔ EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020



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Setting the scene

- Presentation to EU Commission on 27th of November, Brussels



Wide endorsement

- 15 contributing organisations
- Over 40 signatory organisations to date



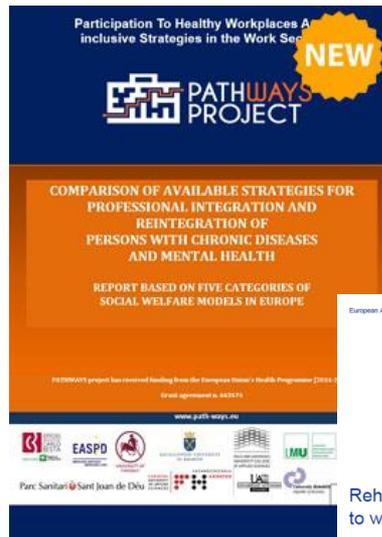
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Context – evidence, recommendations & supportive frameworks



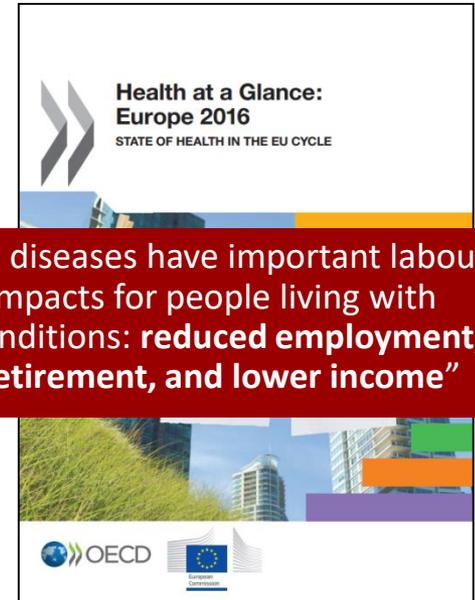
This report examines employment opportunities for people with chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, arthritis and mental health problems in the EU28 Member States and Norway. People with a chronic disease may have a reduced working capacity and experience difficulty staying at or returning to work. The report looks at the prevalence of people suffering from chronic diseases, their employment situation, uneven distribution among occupations and sectors, and working conditions. It looks at policies and measures adopted by governments, social partners and enterprises to improve employment prospects and working conditions of people with chronic diseases. The study was compiled on the basis of individual national reports drawn up by Eurofound's national correspondents in response to a questionnaire.

Antonio Corral, Jessica Darin and Hago Isari, ICFE Research and Consulting



European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

Rehabilitation and return to work after cancer
Literature review
European Risk Observatory



“Chronic diseases have important labour market impacts for people living with these conditions: reduced employment, earlier retirement, and lower income”



Brussels, 10.1.2017
COM(2017) 12 final

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Safer and Healthier Work for All - Modernisation of the EU Occupational Safety and Health Legislation and Policy

{SWD(2017) 9 final}
{SWD(2017) 10 final}



Targets:

- Employment
- 75% of people aged 20–64 to be in work

Baseline

- Considering the **whole** population affected by chronic diseases, irrespective of age
- Being **respectful** of people with chronic conditions who **cannot return** to work
- Growing evidence that **work can help people in recovering from sickness or dealing with physical or mental impairment**. Being able to continue working helps build confidence and **self-esteem**
(MacMillan Cancer Support, 2013; Taskila et al., 2013)



4 priority areas for action identified



1. Invest in prevention of chronic diseases: socio-economic and lifestyle-related factors



2. Integrate primary and specialist care to strengthen chronic disease rehabilitation, recovery and employment



4. Educate employers on the issue of chronic diseases and working conditions, and promote chronic disease awareness at the workplace

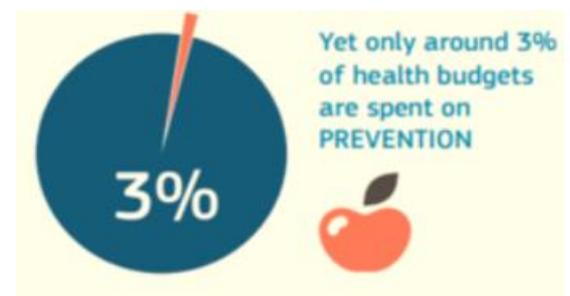
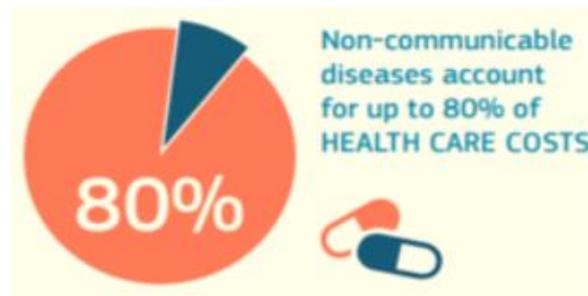


3. Develop adequate policy frameworks and incentives to support the employment, return-to-work or retention-at-work of people with chronic diseases



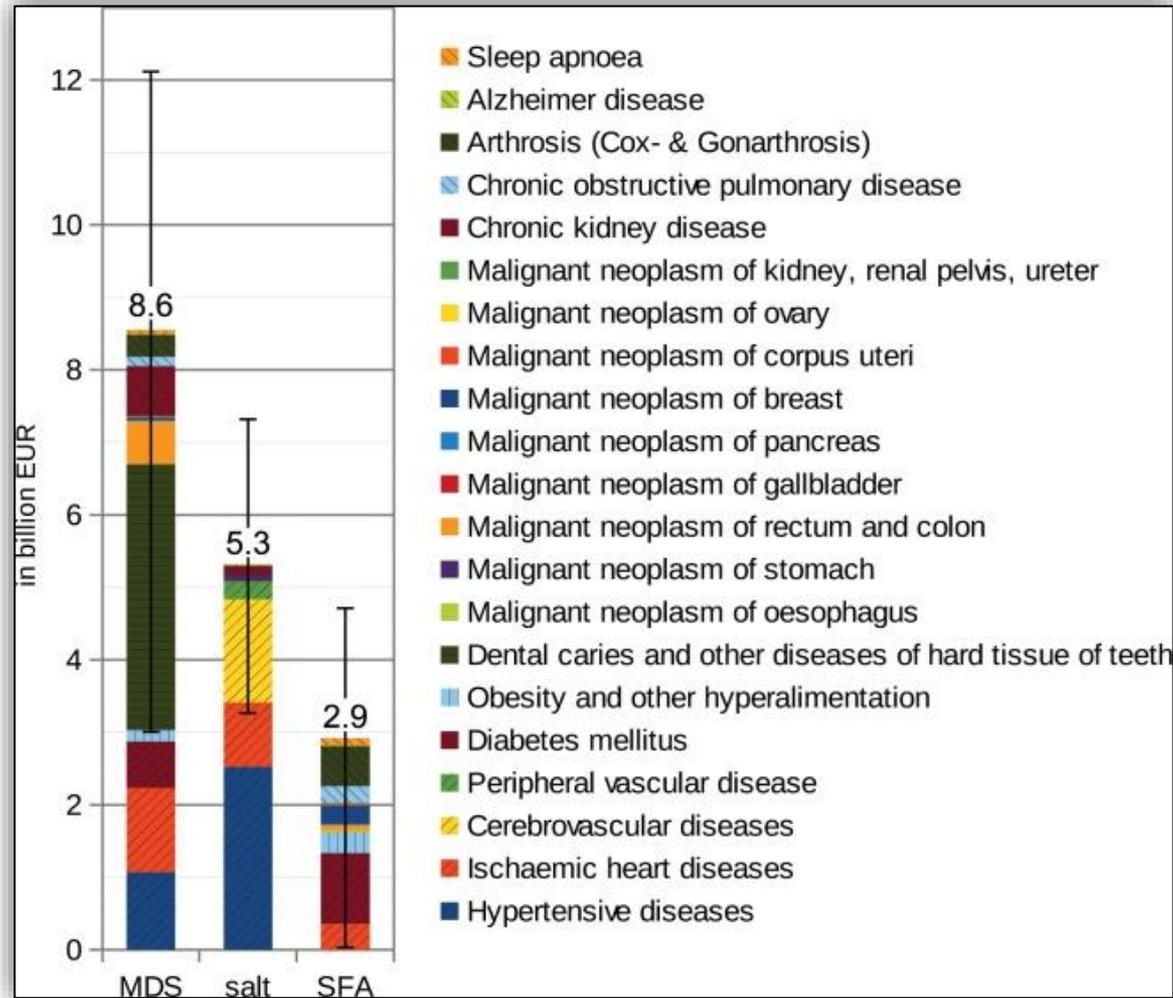
1. Invest in prevention and earlier detection

	CVD	Hyper tension	Diabetes	Cancer	Kidney disease	Liver disease	Resp disease	Mental health
<i>Unhealthy diet</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
<i>Tobacco use</i>	X	X		X	X		X	X
<i>Obesity</i>	X	X	X		X	X		X
<i>Physical inactivity</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Alcohol misuse</i>	X	X	X	X		X		X
<i>Environmental factors</i>	X			X	X		X	



- Halving cardiovascular events for England and Wales alone would result in discounted savings in healthcare costs of approximately £14 billion a year (*National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), UK; public health guidance 25 - June 2010*)
- Bringing the inhabitants in Germany to use the recommended quantities of salt, sugar and fat, would result in 2.1 billion of savings per year and per 10 million people on health care costs for chronic diseases (*Meier et al, PlosOne, 10: e0135990; 2015*)





Recommendations - prevention

- A comprehensive **EU chronic disease action plan** that would include a section on labour and address prevention and early intervention *(EC)*
- **EU-wide awareness campaign** on CDs and risk factors *(EC)*
- Effective **policy/regulatory action** on major risk factors *(EC) (MS)*
- Increased **spending, national strategies** on health promotion and disease prevention *(MS)*
- Dedicated information sessions/trainings at the **workplace** on prevention *(EC) (MS)*



2. Integrate primary and specialist care

- Levels of care should interact as part of the treatment pathway for a person with a chronic condition to foster staying in, integration or reintegration in the labour market



Recommendations - integration

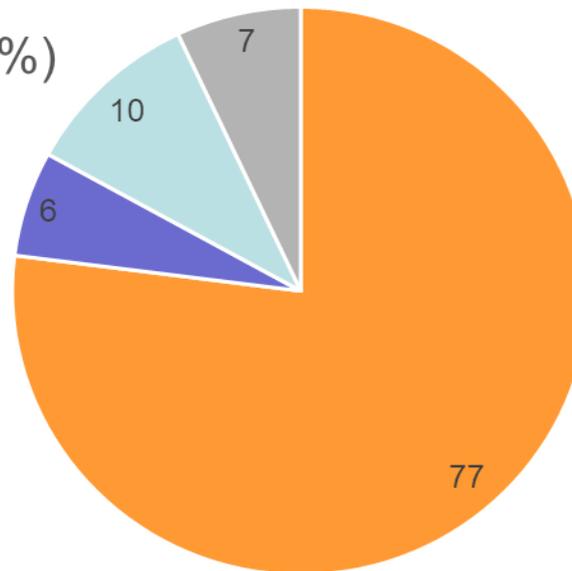
- **Integrated care services** including psychological, social and employment counselling early on in the care pathway, **multidisciplinary rehabilitation team** (MS)
- Foster **IT solutions and their use** to address problems of communication/information transfer between healthcare/ employment settings (EC) (MS)
- Finance/**foster research** on integrated care for CDs (EC)
- **Exchange** + implementation of **best practices** across Member States (EC)
- **Identify & discuss “bad” practices** (EC)



3. Develop policy frameworks and incentives to support (re) employment and retention at work

Employment status* (%)

*: participants in a Finnish re-employment program



■ Stable attachment

■ Delayed (weak start, improvement)

■ Leavers (drop-outs with time)

■ Never attached



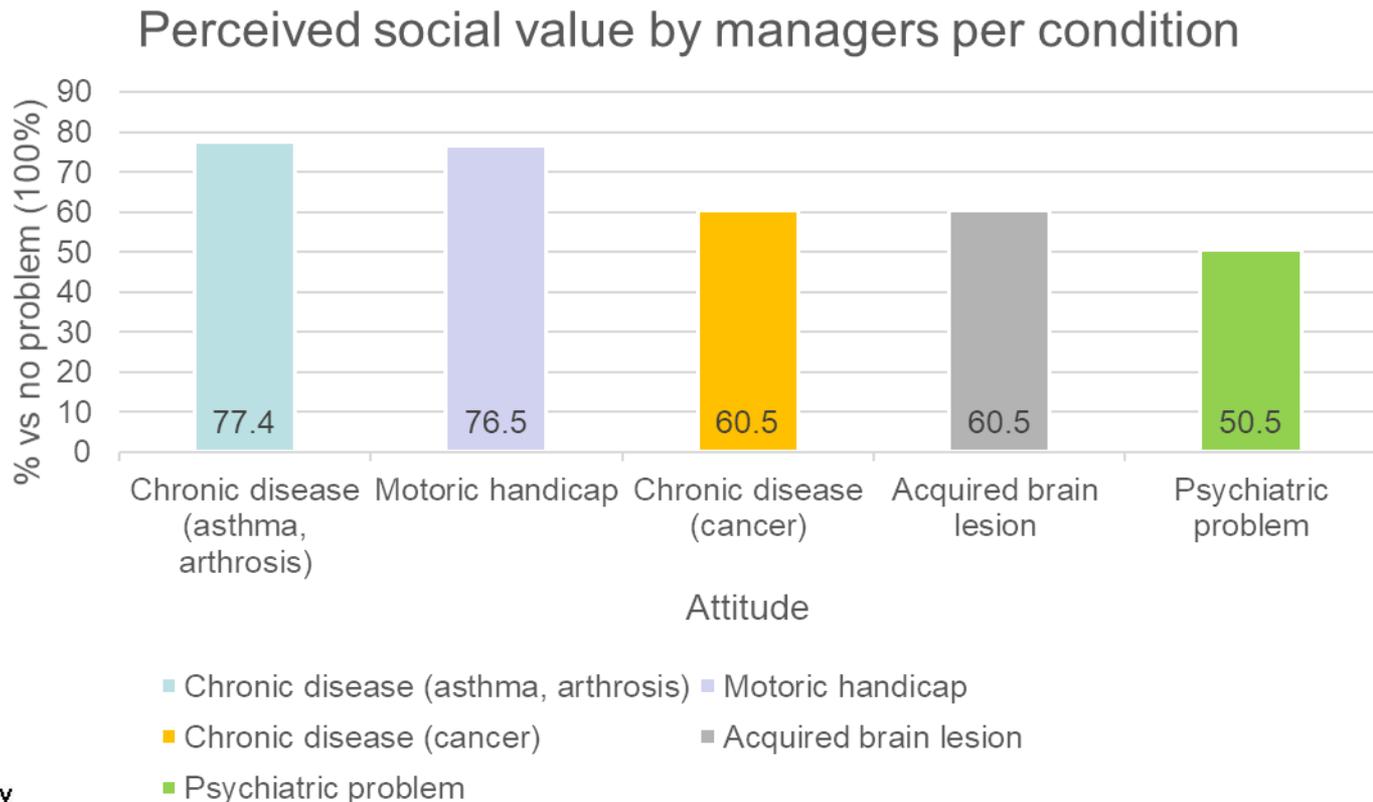
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Recommendations - policy

- **Counselling agencies:** link between the care pathway and the employment sector *(MS)*
- **Financial support to workers and companies** to make gradual return-to-work possible: reskilling, training and workplace rearrangements *(MS)*
- Effective application + monitoring of **anti-discrimination** legislation *(MS) (EC)*
- European Investment Funds to invest in **innovative business models** *(EC)*



4. Educate employers on the issue of chronic diseases and working conditions, and promote chronic disease awareness at the workplace



Recommendations - education

- Modules on health promotion, disease prevention and CD management at the workplace in **curricula in business schools/ higher education** (MS)
- **Trainings and toolkits for employers** on accommodating employees with CDs (MS) (EC)
- **National awareness campaigns** to promote health in workplaces and reduce discrimination (MS)
- EU-led online **interactive stakeholder platform** to share best practices (EC)



Conclusions

Invest in Prevention & Rehabilitation, and stimulate Retention & Re-integration in the workplace

Benefit to the individuals:

Allow workers with chronic illnesses to continue **to fulfil their professional activities** and make a **valuable contribution** to the workforce

Value for Europe:

- Contribute to achieve **sustainable employment** (Europe 2020 Strategy & UN Goals)
- Contribute to better lives and **better running economies** for Europeans
- **Reduce inequalities in Member States**, create a more **harmonised Europe**



ecda

United to reverse the rise in chronic disease

**eu
ropean
chronic
disease
alliance**



Thank you

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