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The Migraine Movement

PRESS RELEASE

EMHA Launches International Migraine and Headache Alliance to Advance Global Recognition and Prioritization of Migraine

Brussels, 16 July, 2026. — The [European Migraine and Headache Alliance](#) (EMHA) today announced the launch of the [International Migraine and Headache Alliance \(IMHA\)](#), a new global committee bringing together patient advocates, clinicians, researchers, and partner organizations committed to elevating migraine on national and international health agendas, and advancing the global 'Migraine Movement.' Through coordinated advocacy, **IMHA will amplify the global voice of the migraine community, driving recognition of migraine as a major public health priority and ensuring its profound impact on individuals, families, economies, and healthcare systems can no longer be overlooked.**

Migraine is a highly prevalent and disabling neurological condition, affecting an estimated 1.1 billion people worldwide¹ and ranking among the leading causes of disability globally². Built on EMHA's longstanding international collaborations and expanding global project portfolio, the IMHA is designed to strengthen the patient voice, broaden advocacy reach, and accelerate progress toward the global recognition and prioritization of migraine. The initiative reflects EMHA's commitment to working with partners around the world to improve awareness, diagnosis, treatment, and policy action for people living with migraine.

Key examples of EMHA's international advocacy work include **the [EMHA Migraine Scoring System](#) (EMHA-MSS) and [MAPgraine](#)**. The EMHA-MSS is now published on EMHA's website and translated into 15 languages. The tool gives patients a practical way to communicate migraine burden and supports more meaningful discussions with healthcare professionals. EMHA has also launched MAPgraine, an interactive European map of access to migraine treatments across 12 countries, highlighting differences in availability, affordability, and barriers to care. Together, these tools translate patient- and country-level evidence into practical resources that support awareness, communication, and policy discussions.

*"This international committee is an important step in giving migraine a stronger, more formal global identity," said **Elena Ruiz de la Torre**, Executive Director of the European Migraine Headache Alliance. "Migraine affects millions of people across borders, yet it is still too often under-recognized and under-prioritized. By bringing together an international committee and a broad coalition of stakeholders, we can strengthen the patient voice and push migraine higher on national and international agendas."*

The initiative is also backed by leading voices from the international neurological community.

*"Migraine is one of the most disabling neurological disorders, and progress depends on collaboration across disciplines, countries, and communities, said **Dr. Mario Peres**, neurologist and president of the International Headache Society, "This initiative will provide an important framework for strengthening advocacy, improving communication, and advancing the global response to migraine."*

*“I’ve never seen a brighter time for migraine. We understand this disorder better than ever before. The future of migraine is in our hands,” said **Prof. Peter Goadsby**, neurologist at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia. “With the right partnerships, we can drive real change—but if we don’t act, nothing will happen,”*

*“We hope you will achieve this together as an alliance,” said **Dr. Patricia Pozo-Rosich**, neurologist at Vall d’Hebron University Hospital in Barcelona, Spain. “Unity is essential. At the local level, every country must engage its policymakers and build a movement for change. Only by working together across borders can we truly put migraine on the map.”*

Two international patient advocacy organizations also welcomed the launch of IMHA, highlighting the importance of stronger global collaboration to improve migraine awareness, diagnosis, and care.

*“Across South Korea, migraine remains a significant but often overlooked health challenge,” said **Kihan Park**, Executive Director of People with Headache. “In 2021, migraine’s socioeconomic burden was estimated at 1.50% of GDP in South Korea—higher than cardiovascular disease—highlighting the serious impact of this condition and the urgent need for greater awareness, advocacy, and action. According to a 2019 survey by the Korean Headache Society, two in five people with migraine in South Korea waited more than 11 years for a diagnosis. This underlines the urgent need to improve awareness and ensure earlier, more timely diagnosis.”*

*“Argentina’s migraine community has long needed a stronger international platform to share experiences, best practices, and advocacy goals,” said **María Agustina Hildt**, International Representative of Asociación Migraña y Cefaleas Argentina (AMYCA). “IMHA offers a meaningful opportunity to connect local realities with global action, and we invite other patient advocacy groups around the world to join this effort so we can work together to make the burden of migraine visible where decisions are made.”*

Looking ahead, IMHA will continue expanding its international network through the launch of the IMHA. The inaugural IMHA kick-off meeting and first multi-stakeholder gathering will take place alongside the [European Headache Congress](#) (EHC) in Berlin, from 9–12 December 2026.

About the International Migraine and Headache Alliance (IMHA)

The IMHA will bring together international members and multidisciplinary stakeholders to support shared priorities, including global recognition and prioritization of migraine, promotion of the migraine scoring system, and coordination of international projects, awareness initiatives, and evidence-based campaigns.

EMHA will continue its current work while expanding its international dimension through IMHA, its multidisciplinary international committee. This global network aims to ensure that migraine is not only better understood, but also more consistently recognized and prioritized around the world.

About the European Migraine and Headache Alliance (EMHA)

The European Migraine and Headache Alliance (EMHA) is a patient-led organization dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by migraine and headache disorders through advocacy, education, awareness, and strategic partnerships. EMHA consists of 40 European associate members as well as 23 international associate members.

For more information, contact communications@emhalliance.org, visit www.emhalliance.org and follow @emhalliance.

REFERENCES:

1. The global burden of disease: 2024 update, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanour/article/PIIS1474-4422\(24\)00038-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanour/article/PIIS1474-4422(24)00038-3/fulltext); Steiner T.J. et al, 2020).
2. Migraine is the second leading cause of disability worldwide (GBD 2019/2021; Vos et al., 2020), and the number one for women under age 50 ([EMHA White Paper, 2024](#)).