



## PRESS RELEASE

### **EMHA pioneers a Migraine-Friendly Workplace Stamp to support employees with migraine**

**12 September 2021, Brussels, Belgium.** Today, the European Migraine & Headache Alliance (EMHA) launched a Migraine-Friendly Workplace Stamp at the International Headache Society / European Headache Federation Congress.

This stamp is pioneered by EMHA. It is designed to recognise migraine-friendly workplaces that enable people with migraine to be on equal footing with other employees. The stamp is awarded to the workplaces that have engaged in a series of initiatives that help raise awareness about migraine in the workplace and make necessary adaptations to reduce workplace risk factors and mitigate the impact of migraine.

The accreditation is a voluntary scheme: any workplace (companies, public services...) can ask for a stamp. There are three levels of accreditation to match the level of support given to the employees. The different levels inter alia recognise employers' and employees' education and awareness-raising activities, workplace adaptation, medical care and support.

This initiative is designed to raise awareness about migraine, ensure migraineurs have an equal chance to work and see their basic human rights be fulfilled, motivate employers to implement workplaces that will retain their workforce and promote employees' health and wellbeing.

The Migraine-Friendly Workplace Stamp initiative will be rolled out at a national level with the support of local migraine and headache associations. EMHA will provide support to all workplaces who wish to become migraine-friendly and award the stamp.

To develop the programme, EMHA has worked with a panel of neurologists expert in migraine (Prof. Peter Goadsby, Prof. Messoud Ashina, Prof. Zaza Katsarava, Prof. Pablo Irimia, Prof. Patricia Pozo and Prof. Dimos Mitsikostas) and occupational medicine physicians. Representatives from corporations such as KPMG, Rolls Royce, Teva Pharmaceuticals and Lilly also participated in the preparatory phase.

*'This initiative is an important step towards accompanying migraineurs get the support that they need within the workplace. It also recognises all workplaces that make a firm commitment to their employees who suffer from this disabling neurological disease',* said Elena Ruiz de la Torre, EMHA Executive Director.

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## Work limitations due to migraine

Migraine affects over 41 million adults in Europe (prevalence 14%)<sup>1</sup>. This invisible and disabling disease peaks during individuals' most productive years of life: their productivity at work is limited due to migraine attacks. This represents an important cause of lost working time (17.7% of males and 28.0% of females with migraine can lose over 10 days of activities during a 3-month period). The top 3 impacts of migraine on work are the inability to concentrate on work (52%), missing too many days of work (32%), and lack of understanding among colleagues about their condition or not taking it seriously (27%). An average of 4.6 working days are missed a month due to migraine. Migraine leads to a reduction of 13% working time (absenteeism) and 48% in productivity while working (presenteeism)<sup>2</sup>.

People living with migraine conceal their migraine at work due to the stigma attached to the disease.

## About The European Migraine & Headache Alliance

The European Migraine & Headache Alliance is a non-profit umbrella organization, that includes over 33 patient associations for Migraine, Cluster Headache, Trigeminal Neuralgia and other headache diseases, across Europe. Its head office is in Brussels.

The Alliance was launched in 2006 and since then, being the development of European umbrella organizations a natural progression with more relevance for European nations. Our aim is to speak on behalf of and to advocate for the rights and needs of the 138 million people in Europe living with headache disorders.

EMHA is an active member of the European Federation of Neurological Alliances (EFNA), the International Association of Patient Organizations (IAPO), the European Patients Forum (EPF) and also works closely with organizations such as the European Headache Federation (EHF), International Headache Society (IHS), European Brain Council (EBC) and others.

[www.emhalliance.org/](http://www.emhalliance.org/)

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#TheMigraineMovement

## References:

1. Stovner L.J., Andre C., On behalf of the Eurolight Steering Committee, Impact of headache in Europe: a review for the Eurolight project, *J Headache Pain* (2008) 9:139–146- <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10194-008-0038-6>
2. Martelletti P., Schwedt T.J., Lanteri-Minet M. et al. My Migraine Voice survey: a global study of disease burden among individuals with migraine for whom preventive treatments have failed. *J Headache Pain* 19, 115 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s10194-018-0946-z>