



THE EUROPEAN WEEK AGAINST PAIN A BRIEF HISTORY

Harald Breivik, President of EFIC

The Launch of the European Week Against Pain

The **European Week Against Pain (EWAP)** which takes place annually, was started as part of EFIC's Europe Against Pain Initiative, in October 2001, in Brussels at its launch at the European Parliament, where EFIC put forward a declaration that:

"Pain is a major healthcare problem. Although acute pain may reasonably be considered a symptom of disease or injury, chronic and recurrent pain is a specific healthcare problem, a disease in its own right"

The Objectives of the European Week Against Pain

The intention of the EWAP was to create more awareness of pain as a major health care problem among the lay public, healthcare workers and healthcare policy makers.

In addition, the idea of a dedicated week focused on the pain cause, would be an occasion for national chapters of EFIC and all other partners in the *Europe Against Pain* initiative to take direct actions at the regional, national and local levels. During this week each year, a high profile media campaign would be organised, including interviews with radio, TV and publications on the issues and activities undertaken during the week. This would include submission of articles on pain, to major national and international newspapers and EU specialised press, with sections on health. The overall objective therefore of the European Week, would be to sensitize the EU stakeholders and the public alike to the issue of chronic pain. Maximum press coverage would also be sought in association with regional, national and local events held during the pain week.

The European Week Against Pain so far:

2001	The European Week Against Pain was launched at the European Parliament. Most of EFIC's member-societies throughout Europe organized local awareness events during that week with public lecture series on pain-related topics, articles in news papers and news-magazines, TV- and radio interviews with pain experts, national marathons and sponsored walks
2002	During the second European Week Against Pain in October 2002, similar activities were organized in many of the national pain societies in Europe, events of the 2001 were shared, and national chapters built on these ideas to expand their local activities
2003	The 3 rd European Week Against Pain, October 2003 was highlighted during EFIC's Triennial Congress "PAIN IN EUROPE IV, in early September 2003 and focussed on emphasizing new data. There was a European Web-cast which received a great number of hits from journalists and viewers across Europe, with follow-ups and reviews in many newspapers, magazines and journals. In addition to this awareness, activities were carried out by each of the Chapters in the various countries across Europe, during the 12-19 October, 2003.
2004	The dates of the 4 th EWAP are 11-16 October, 2004. This is highlighted on the 11 th , since EFIC has joined forces with IASP and the WHO for a world-wide effort and the launch of the Global Day Against Pain, in Geneva. Again, this will be followed up with activities organized by the 28 national and regional pain societies and chapters of IASP, in 34 European countries. For information on EFIC, National IASP Chapters and their EWAP activities, please visit www.efic.org

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