

## PH020: SUFFER FROM ANY CHRONIC [LONG-STANDING] ILLNESS OR CONDITION

**Topic and detailed topic:** Health: status and disability, access to, availability and use of healthcare and health determinants / Disability and Minimum European Health Module

**Variable type:** Annual

**Unit:** All current household members aged 16 years and over or selected respondent (where applies)

**Reference period:** Current

**Mode of collection:** Personal interview (proxy as an exception for persons temporarily away or in incapacity)

**In use (period):** Yes, since the first year of the EU-SILC data collection

**Series' differences:** No changes

### VALUES AND FORMAT

1	Yes
2	No

### FLAGS

1	Filled
-1	Missing
-3	Not applicable (Non-selected respondent (RB245 equal to 3))

### DESCRIPTION

The question corresponding to this variable is part of standardised variables and also part of the Minimum European Health Module (MEHM). It should be asked just after the PH010 question and just before the PH030 question. It should not be used as a filter question for the PH030 variable.

The MEHM consists of two more variables on health status: self-perceived general health and limitation in activities because of health problems (also known as Global Activity Limitation Indicator - GALI). If the MEHM is implemented, all the questions should be asked in the recommended order (i.e. self-perceived general health, long-standing health problem, and limitation in activities because of health problems) and with no inclusion of any other health status related questions before or between the MEHM questions as it could have an impact on the results.

On implementing the reference question (see section 'reference question'), it is necessary to keep in mind that the recommended wording allows for possible adaptations. For instance:

- 'chronic' or 'long-standing' should be chosen according to what is 'best understood' in a country/language.
- it is intended to ask if people 'have' a chronic condition, not if they really 'suffer' from it. However, the verb 'suffer' can be used in countries/languages where it is considered more suitable for the question formulation and still retains the same meaning as the verb 'have' in English.
- 'health problem' seems not to be understood in some countries/languages and therefore 'illness or condition' is the alternative.

The terms 'disability, handicap, impairment' should not be included in the question as synonyms for 'illness or health problem'.

Rather than adding further details to the question wording, interviewees should be instructed to be as inclusive as possible when considering the actual prevalence of a long-standing health problem. This means that the following could be considered as long-standing health problems (i.e., the corresponding option for an answer would be 'yes'):

- problems that are seasonal or intermittent, even where they 'flare up' for less than six months at a time (for instance allergies);
- chronic problems not considered by the respondent as very serious; severity doesn't play a role in this variable;
- problems that have not been diagnosed by a doctor (to exclude these would mean permitting those with better access to medical services to declare more problems);
- a long-standing disease that doesn't bother the respondent and/or is kept under control with medication (for instance people with a high blood pressure);