

## SILC QUESTION ON CHRONIC MORBIDITY

### **PH020 Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?**

by long-standing I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time?

Yes	1
No	2

It is necessary to keep in mind that the recommended wording contains 'alternatives'. For instance:

- 'chronic' or 'longstanding' 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. But it seems that in some countries/languages it would be strange to use the word 'have' and that they 'suffer' means the same as 'have'.

- 'health problem' seems not to be understood in some countries/languages and therefore 'illness or condition' is the alternative.

The main characteristics of a chronic condition are that it is permanent and may be expected to require a long period of supervision, observation or care.

Rather than adding further details to the question wording, interviewers should be instructed to be as inclusive as possible in answering to PH020. This means that the following would all be included:

- problems that are seasonal or intermittent, even where they 'flare up' for less than six months at a time;

- problems not seen by the respondent as very serious (hay fever again): the item on severity or limitation would 'screen out' less serious problems at the second stage;

- 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);

- problems that the respondent treats him self or herself (e.g. with over-the-counter drugs);

- problems that have lasted ( or recurred), or are expected to last (recur) over a six month period or longer.

For this question a proxy should be limited as much as possible.

This question is the same CM question than the one included in the Minimum European Health Module ([MEHM](#))

**Source:**

[Questionnaires](#)

**Additional information on SILC can be found at [Eurostat](#) or [The European Health Survey System](#)**