



**European Commission - Speech**  
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**Speech by Commissioner Stella Kyriakides at EPSCO Council - Coordination and collaboration on Long COVID**

Brussels, 14 March 2023

Ministers,

The long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are very real, and they are far-reaching for European citizens, our healthcare systems and our economies.

17 million people across the EU have been affected by Long COVID in the first two years of the pandemic alone - and this number continues to increase.

As many as one in eight people experience symptoms that last longer than expected.

People are left with a range of physical and psychological symptoms, such as fatigue, shortness of breath, or depression.

These symptoms can be debilitating. They can turn your world upside down. They can impact on every single aspect of your life.

A lot of progress has been made in understanding Long COVID, but we still need more answers about its causes and the most effective treatments.

Ministers, we need to rise to this challenge together – and that requires cooperation and coordination.

From our side, we are creating a network of national experts under the EU Health Policy Platform so that together we can address challenges related to the management of Long COVID.

I encourage you to give your support and actively participate in this network.

We will also continue to support research into the causes, consequences, and treatment of Long COVID.

We have already invested over 66 million euros to support large cohort studies on COVID under Horizon Europe.

In addition, under 2021 Horizon Europe, we invested over 42 million euros on six research projects on long COVID.

Together, we must continue to face long COVID through collaboration, sharing of expertise and knowledge, and the development of common solutions.

I trust that our coordinated actions will benefit the millions of patients who are dealing with Long COVID – and it will help to mitigate its impact on our health systems, our economies, and our societies.

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