

By-Laws of the European League against Rheumatism

- Article 1 – Name, domicile, legal stipulations
- Article 2 – Objectives of EULAR
- Article 3 – Membership
- Article 4 – Funds
- Article 5 – Organisational structure of EULAR
- Article 6 – General Assembly
- Article 7 – Executive Committee: members and observers
- Article 8 – Executive Committee: role and tasks
- Article 9 – Standing Committees: role and tasks
- Article 10 – Annual European Congress of Rheumatology
- Article 11 – Audit function
- Article 12 – Amendments to By-laws
- Article 13 – Dissolution of EULAR

Article 1: - Name, domicile, legal stipulations

- 1.1. The present By-Laws are governed by Swiss law.
- 1.2. The name of the organisation is
EUROPEAN LEAGUE AGAINST RHEUMATISM
EUROPÄISCHE RHEUMALIGA
LIGUE EUROPÉENNE CONTRE LE RHUMATISME,
in the following referred to as EULAR. The official acronym EULAR is applicable in all languages.
- 1.3. The domicile of EULAR is at Kilchberg, ZH, Switzerland.
- 1.4. The working language of EULAR shall be English.
- 1.5. The reference text for juridical interpretation of the By-Laws shall be English text.

Article 2: - Objectives of EULAR

- 2.1. The aims of EULAR are to reduce the impact of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) on the individual and society and to improve the social position and the quality of life of people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases in Europe. To this end, EULAR shall stimulate, promote and support the research, prevention and treatment of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases. These include the diseases of the musculoskeletal or locomotor system as well as systemic immune mediated diseases.

- 2.2. In furtherance of these aims, the following activities shall be undertaken or promoted on a supranational European level:
- 2.2.1. *Patient care*: improving and implementing standards of care for people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases; promoting and improving access to care; improving communication between people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases and the professionals involved in their treatment.
- 2.2.2. *Education*: fostering professional and patient education by developing tailored materials and courses; by deploying innovative learning approaches; by facilitating broad access to these educational offers; and by fostering and contributing to the harmonization of educational standards in rheumatology across Europe.
- 2.2.3. *Research*: serving as the focal point for rheumatology research in Europe and the conduit for international research collaborations and interactions with the larger rheumatology research community around the world; developing, publishing and promoting implementation of EULAR Recommendations and Criteria for the classification, diagnosis and management of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases; disseminating latest research in rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases by publishing a leading scientific journal.
- 2.2.4. *Scientific congress and meetings*: organising an annual European rheumatology congress of highest scientific standards and worldwide reputation as well as smaller scientific or educational meetings catering to specific topics and needs.
- 2.2.5. *Public affairs*: engaging with EU political institutions as a recognized partner and source of expertise in rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases towards improving research funding, social policy legislation and quality of care; assisting advocacy actions on the national levels.
- 2.2.6. *Institutional relations*: fostering collaboration with and among EULAR member organisations; collaborating with and supporting the goals of “FOREUM Foundation for Research in Rheumatology”; collaborating with the International League of Associations for Rheumatology (ILAR) and Regional Leagues in rheumatology as well as with international health, medical or educational organisations like WHO, EMA, UEMS and others in view of promoting the objectives and goals of EULAR.
- 2.3. EULAR does not pursue commercial gainful or self-help purposes.

Article 3: - Membership

- 3.1. Members of EULAR shall be organisations interested in and concerned with the aims of EULAR, and which support, further or represent the same aims in their fields. EULAR distinguishes four types of members/observers:
- Regular Members (members)
 - Corporate Members (observers)
 - Honorary Members (observers)
 - Scientific Affiliates (observers).

3.2. Regular Members

- 3.2.1. Regular members shall be the following organisations:
- National scientific societies of rheumatology
 - National organisations of people with arthritis/rheumatism in Europe (PARE)
 - National organisations of health professionals in rheumatology (HPR)
- 3.2.2. Regular Members may only be from Europe and the neighbouring countries.
- 3.2.3. All organisations mentioned under 3.2.1 from the region mentioned under 3.2.2 may apply for membership in EULAR.
- 3.2.4. Only one scientific society, one HPR organisation and one PARE organisation from each country can be admitted as Regular Member. In case there are other relevant organisations in that country, the applicant for membership has to inform the potential other candidates about its application. Several national organisations may establish a joint association, federation or another organisation enabling such several country organisations to jointly become a Regular Member.
- 3.2.5. If more than one organisation of a specific country wish to apply to become a Regular Member and these organisations cannot find an agreement with regard to EULAR membership within six months, the General Assembly will decide which organisation shall become Regular Member. To this end, the General Assembly shall review which organisation meets best the objectives of EULAR.
- 3.2.6. A PARE organisation or HPR organisation may only become Regular Member if it is autonomous and has a governing body such as an executive committee or a board of directors. PARE organisations should follow the recommended principles of User-led Organisations recommended by EULAR. The Executive Committee will examine each membership application. If necessary, it can delegate a member of the Executive Committee to the site in order to review the situation and/or request the PARE or HPR organisation to provide supporting documentation.

3.3. Corporate Members

- 3.3.1. Corporate Member can be companies linked to rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases, such as manufacturers of medicines, medical equipment or supplies, insurance companies, etc.
- 3.3.2. Corporate Members are expected to support and foster the aims of EULAR. A membership agreement shall lay out the terms of corporate membership in EULAR, including termination.

3.4. Honorary Members

- 3.4.1. As a mark of distinction, individuals who have rendered outstanding service in accomplishing the objectives of EULAR may be elected as Honorary Members. Honorary Membership shall be bestowed by the Executive Committee.

3.5. Scientific Affiliates

- 3.5.1. Scientific societies located outside Europe or neighbouring countries may apply to become a Scientific Affiliate. The Executive Committee shall vote upon such affiliation. Scientific Affiliate organisations shall share and support the aims of

EULAR and shall serve the purpose of expanding EULAR's network of expertise. They may be invited to collaborate on EULAR activities or committees as co-opted contributors.

- 3.5.2. If a current scientific Regular Member decides to become a member of another Regional League, its status in EULAR shall be changed to "Scientific Affiliate" as described under 3.5.1.

3.6. Application, admission and termination

- 3.6.1. Potential new members or observers must send their written application to the Executive Committee at the address of the Executive Secretariat.
- 3.6.2. The General Assembly shall vote upon the admission of new Regular Members.
- 3.6.3. The Executive Committee shall vote upon the admission of Corporate Members, Honorary Members and Scientific Affiliates.
- 3.6.4. Members or observers may terminate membership at the end of a calendar year by delivering six months' prior written notice to the Executive Committee at the address of the Executive Secretariat.
- 3.6.5. If a Regular Member breaches the By-Laws or does no longer fulfil the conditions required to be a member, the membership may be put on hold or terminated by the General Assembly with a two-thirds majority vote of the Regular Members present at the General Assembly.
- 3.6.6. If a Corporate Member does not fulfil its financial or other membership obligations, the Executive Committee may consider termination of membership as defined in the corporate membership agreement.

Article 4: - Funds

4.1. Financial year

- 4.1.1. The financial year of EULAR shall be the calendar year.

4.2. Funds

- 4.2.1. Funds needed by EULAR shall be raised by annual membership fees from Regular Members, by payment of the agreed fees by Corporate Members, by donations, by investments and by surpluses from the European Congress of Rheumatology and by other EULAR activities.
- 4.2.2. EULAR may solicit and accept contributions or other support from organisations or individuals. Any initiative in this direction must be approved by the Executive Committee.

4.3. Membership fees

- 4.3.1. Regular Members and Corporate Members shall pay membership fees each year, in the year of admission calculated on a pro rata basis.
- 4.3.2. The Executive Committee shall submit to the General Assembly a proposition concerning the annual membership fees to be paid by Regular Members. The annual fees for Corporate Members shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

- 4.3.3. At the beginning of each calendar year the Executive Secretariat shall address an invoice for that current year to all Regular and Corporate Members. The membership fees shall be paid no later than 30 June of the current year.
- 4.3.4. If a Regular Member is late in payment of two membership fees, it shall lose its right to vote at the General Assembly. If a Regular Member is late in payment of three membership fees, the General Assembly may terminate the membership or put it on hold. In exceptional and justified cases, the General Assembly may reduce or waive the membership fees for a limited period.
- 4.4. **Guidelines**
- 4.4.1. The Executive Committee shall issue precise guidelines on administrative matters (including ethical aspects) as well as on financial aspects of EULAR including, for instance, who is authorised to sign and who shall be empowered to make disbursements
- 4.4.2. The assets of EULAR may only be used in furtherance of its objectives. No portion thereof shall be paid, either directly or indirectly, by way of dividend or otherwise, to members or affiliated organisations
- 4.5. **Remuneration**
- No EULAR officer, with the exception of the Executive Director and the members of the Executive Secretariat, shall receive any salary.

Article 5: - Organisational structure of EULAR

- 5.1. The *General Assembly*, which is the annual official meeting of its Members, shall be the highest authority of EULAR.
- 5.2. The *Executive Committee* including the *Steering Group*, headed by the President, which shall be the overall managerial and supervisory board of EULAR.
- 5.3. The *Standing Committees*, which shall deal with specific aspects of rheumatology and the *Study Groups* established under the umbrella of the Standing Committees.
- 5.4. The *Scientific Programme Committee*, which shall be responsible for developing and designing the scientific programme for the European Congress of Rheumatology.
- 5.5. The *Executive Secretariat*, headed by the Executive Director, which shall support the entire EULAR organisation in developing, managing and promoting EULAR initiatives, activities and programmes as set out by the Executive Committee.

Article 6: - General Assembly

- 6.1. **Composition, members, observers**
- 6.1.1. The General Assembly shall be the highest authority of EULAR and be composed of members and observers.
- 6.1.2. Regular Members shall be the members with the right to vote. Each Regular Member shall be represented by one delegate. Regular Members may register a delegate by informing the Executive Committee at the address of the Executive

Secretariat in writing or by designating another delegate by means of written proxy. Delegates have the right to speak and to vote at the General Assembly.

- 6.1.3. Corporate Members, Honorary Members and Scientific Affiliates shall have observer status at the General Assembly with no right to vote. An observer may have the right to speak in debates, submit proposals or raise points of order.
- 6.1.4. The Executive Committee shall attend the General Assembly; its members/observers have the right to speak, make proposals and issue recommendations to the General Assembly. They have no right to vote.
- 6.1.5. The President shall preside at the General Assembly meetings.
- 6.1.6. EULAR will not refund any travel or other expenses related to participation in the General Assembly.

6.2. Meetings, invitation

- 6.2.1. The Ordinary General Assembly shall be held every year together with the European Congress of Rheumatology.
- 6.2.2. The Executive Committee may convene an Extraordinary General Assembly at any time. An Extraordinary General Assembly may also be convened if one fifth of the Regular Members so request.
- 6.2.3. The invitation to the General Assembly shall be sent at least three months in advance by e-mail or regular mail to the last communicated address of the Regular Members, Corporate Members, Honorary Members and Scientific Affiliates.
- 6.2.4. The agenda of the General Assembly shall be sent no later than one month in advance by e-mail or regular mail to the last communicated address of the Regular Members, Corporate Members, Honorary Members and Scientific Affiliates.
- 6.2.5. Each Regular Member may propose a motion at the General Assembly, provided that not less than two months before the date of the General Assembly due notice is given in writing to the Executive Committee at the address of the Executive Secretariat. Motions listed under "Miscellaneous" and presented shortly before or at the General Assembly will not be voted upon.

6.3. Competences

The General Assembly shall have the following competences:

- 6.3.1. Determine and amend these By-Laws.
- 6.3.2. Elect the President, the Vice-President PARE, the Vice-President HPR, the Treasurer, the General Secretary and the independent auditor.
- 6.3.3. Approve the annual report and the financial year-end statements.
- 6.3.4. Determine membership fees for Regular Members.
- 6.3.5. Discharge the members of the Executive Committee.
- 6.3.6. Admit new Regular Members or terminate membership.

6.4. Election process for the President, the Vice-President PARE, the Vice-President HPR, the Treasurer, the General Secretary

- 6.4.1. At least six months prior to the General Assembly the Regular Members shall be invited by the Executive Secretariat to put forth names of candidates before 1

February. A candidate must be nominated by the Regular Member he/she is a member of; the nomination can be supported by other Regular Members. Nominations must be accompanied by a CV and a statement as to the suitability of the candidate as well as an acceptance of the candidate to be nominated. The Executive Committee may establish a search committee acting as an advisory body for nominations.

6.4.2. A list of all candidates and their CVs will be sent to the Regular Members together with the agenda of the General Assembly. The list may also include the Executive Committee's proposal.

6.4.3. All candidates will be invited to give a short presentation at the General Assembly.

6.4.4. The candidates shall be elected by majority vote of the Regular Members at the General Assembly. When more than two candidates are proposed for a position, the person with the lowest number of votes is excluded from the next voting, unless one candidate receives more than 50% of the votes during the first voting. The voting is repeated until one candidate has received more than 50% of the votes.

6.5. Decisions

All decisions taken at the General Assembly shall be determined by simple majority vote of the delegates present, with the exception of matters stipulated under article 3.6.5 and 13.1.

6.6. The elections shall be by secret ballot.

Article 7: - Executive Committee: members and observers

7.1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of "members" with voting right and "observers" with no voting right.

7.2. The Executive Committee shall have the following members: the President, the President-Elect, the Vice-President PARE, the Vice-President HPR, the Treasurer, the General Secretary and the Standing Committee Chairs.

7.3. The Executive Committee shall include the following observers: the Past-President, the Editor-in-chief of the EULAR journals, the Executive Director, the Chairs-elect and Past-chairs of the Standing Committees, and the additional liaison or lead functions co-opted by the Executive Committee for a pre-defined period of time.

7.4. An observer may speak in debates, submit proposals or amendments, raise points of order and circulate documents. An observer has no right to vote.

7.5. In case of votes or elections in the Executive Committee, the President, the President-Elect, the Vice-President PARE, the Vice-President HPR, the Treasurer, and the General Secretary shall have one vote each.

7.6. The Standing Committee Chairs shall have 1/2 vote each.

7.7. The total term of office of an Executive Committee member with voting right, in one or combined positions, may not exceed 8 consecutive years in total.

7.8. The President

- 7.8.1. The function of President shall be divided into a two-year term of office as President-Elect and a two-year term as acting President.
- 7.8.2. The President shall be elected by the General Assembly for a term of office of four years, commencing at the end of the European Congress of Rheumatology. Elections shall be held every two years as the current President-Elect takes over as acting President. Re-election is not possible.
- 7.8.3. Only Medical Specialists active in the field of rheumatology are eligible as President.
- 7.8.4. The President-Elect shall have the functions of deputy to the acting President.
- 7.8.5. The President shall be the principal officer of EULAR and shall in general supervise and direct the business and affairs of EULAR, subject to the direction and control of the Executive Committee. He/she shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and of the General Assembly.
- 7.8.6. The President shall report to the General Assembly on his/her term of office.
- 7.8.7. Should the President be unable to complete his/her term of office, the President-Elect shall succeed. Should the President-Elect be unable to complete his/her term of office, the Executive Committee may appoint a successor to hold office until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

7.9. Past-President

- 7.9.1. At the end of his/her term of office, the former President shall continue to assist the Executive Committee as Past-President. The Past-President shall secure continuity and have an advisory function on the Executive Committee. He/she shall have observer status.

7.10. Vice-President PARE

- 7.10.1. The Vice-President PARE shall be elected by the General Assembly every three years for a term of office of three years, commencing at the end of the next European Congress of Rheumatology. Re-election is not possible.
- 7.10.2. In the year commencing after his/her election and ending with the next European Congress of Rheumatology, he/she shall have observer status at the Executive Committee. The observer year is intended to be an introduction to the role and responsibilities of the Vice-President PARE.
- 7.10.3. Only qualified persons active in PARE organisations are eligible for office as Vice-President PARE.
- 7.10.4. Should the Vice-President PARE be unable to complete his/her term of office, the Executive Committee may appoint a successor to hold office until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

7.11. Vice-President HPR

- 7.11.1. The Vice-President Health Professionals in Rheumatology (HPR) shall be elected by the General Assembly every three years for a term of office of three years,

commencing at the end of the next European Congress of Rheumatology. Re-election is not possible.

- 7.11.2. In the year commencing after his/her election and ending with the next European Congress of Rheumatology, he/she shall have observer status at the Executive Committee. The observer year is intended to be an introduction to the role and responsibilities of the Vice-President HPR.
- 7.11.3. Only qualified persons active in rheumatological health professions are eligible as Vice-President HPR.
- 7.11.4. Should the Vice-President HPR be unable to complete his/her term of office, the Executive Committee may appoint a successor to hold office until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

7.12. Treasurer

- 7.12.1. The Treasurer shall be elected by the General Assembly every two years for a term of office of two years, commencing at the end of the European Congress of Rheumatology. Re-election for one single term of office is possible.
- 7.12.2. Only Medical Specialists active in the field of rheumatology are eligible as Treasurer.
- 7.12.3. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all EULAR financial matters and shall report to the Executive Committee as well as to the General Assembly.
- 7.12.4. The Treasurer shall perform his/her duties in line with specific guidelines on managing financial matters of EULAR issued by the Executive Committee.
- 7.12.5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the budget and the financial year-end statements, which shall be audited by an independent auditor. He/she shall present the budget for the following year to the Executive Committee meeting in September; he/she shall provide to the Executive Committee and the General Assembly the audited financial year-end statements.
- 7.12.6. In the event of the Treasurer being unable to complete his/her term of office, the Executive Committee may appoint a successor to hold office until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

7.13. General Secretary

- 7.13.1. The General Secretary shall be elected by the General Assembly every two years for a term of office of two years, commencing at the end of the next European Congress of Rheumatology. Re-election for one single term of office is possible.
- 7.13.2. Only Medical Specialists active in the field of rheumatology are eligible as General Secretary.
- 7.13.3. The General Secretary shall be responsible for activities to be decided by the Executive Committee in accordance with the needs of the organisation at a given time.
- 7.13.4. Should the General Secretary be unable to complete his/her term of office, the Executive Committee may appoint a successor to hold office until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

7.14. Editor-in-Chief of the EULAR Journals

- 7.14.1. The Editor-in-Chief of the official EULAR journals shall be an observer in the Executive Committee ensuring direct contact between the work of EULAR and its official scientific journals. He/she shall have no right to vote.
- 7.14.2. Appointment of the Editor-in-Chief by EULAR and BMJ Publishing Group shall be for 5 years with the possibility of renewal for 2 further years, which has to be mutually agreed. The total term of office shall not exceed 7 years. The Executive Committee, in collaboration with the BMJ Publishing Group, and the Editor have the right to terminate the appointment at any stage. Notice must be given at least one year prior to the intended date of termination of the appointment.

7.15. Executive Director

- 7.15.1. The Executive Director shall act as managing head of the Executive Secretariat and be an observer in the Executive Committee.
- 7.15.2. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.
- 7.15.3. The Executive Director shall attend the meetings of the Steering Group, the Executive Committee and the General Assembly and be responsible for the agenda and the proceedings of such meetings on behalf of the President.
- 7.15.4. The Executive Director shall employ additional personnel at the Executive Secretariat after consultation with the Steering Group. A contract shall be agreed between the Executive Director and other personnel covering terms of employment, work and termination of employment.

7.16. Standing Committee Chairs

- 7.16.1. The Standing Committee Chairs shall support the acting President in his/her duties, especially related to matters within their area of competence, and report to the Executive Committee as well as to the General Assembly.
- 7.16.2. The Standing Committee Chairs shall be elected by the Executive Committee in March every two years for a term of office of two years, commencing at the end of the following year's European Congress of Rheumatology. Re-election is not possible. Newly elected Chairs shall be introduced to the General Assembly.
- 7.16.3. In the year after his/her election and ending with the next European Congress of Rheumatology, he/she shall have observer status as Chair-Elect at the Executive Committee. The observer year is intended to be an introduction to the role and responsibilities as Standing Committee Chair and ensure continuity in the committees.
- 7.16.4. At the end of his/her term of office and for a period of one year, the former Standing Committee Chair shall continue to assist the acting Standing Committee Chair as Past Chair. The Past Chair shall secure continuity and have an advisory function. He/she shall have observer status at the Executive Committee.

7.16.5. Scientific Standing Committees

The Scientific Standing Committees include, for example:

- Standing Committee on Investigative Rheumatology

- Standing Committee on Education and Training
- Standing Committee on Epidemiology and Health Services Research
- Standing Committee on Clinical Affairs
- Standing Committee on Paediatric Rheumatology
- Standing Committee on Musculoskeletal Imaging

Only scientifically qualified persons active in the field of rheumatology are eligible as Chairs of Scientific Standing Committees.

7.16.6. Standing Committee of People with Arthritis/Rheumatism in Europe (PARE)

Only qualified persons active in PARE organisations are eligible as Chair of the Standing Committee of PARE.

7.16.7. Standing Committee of Health Professionals in Rheumatology (HPR)

Only qualified persons active in the field of health professionals in rheumatology are eligible as Chair of the Standing Committee of HPR.

Article 8: - Executive Committee: role and tasks

8.1. Role

The Executive Committee shall be the overall managerial body of EULAR with tasks and duties as described under article 8.8.

8.2. Steering Group

A Steering Group consisting of the President, the President-Elect, the Past-President, the Treasurer and the Executive Director shall deal with organisational and administrative matters arising between the Executive Committee meetings that need special or immediate consideration, action or response. It also prepares the agenda for the subsequent Executive Committee meetings. The respective Vice-Presidents will be included in Steering Group discussions on matters of relevance and interest to PARE and HPR.

8.3. Meetings and Decisions

Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at least three times in a calendar year, i.e., one on the occasion of the European Congress of Rheumatology, the other two in March and September. The Steering Group may decide to have extraordinary meetings of the Executive Committee, when considered necessary.

8.3.1. The agenda with enclosures for Executive Committee meetings, prepared by the Executive Director together with the President, shall be mailed by the Executive Secretariat to the members and observers of the Executive Committee two weeks prior to the meeting. The minutes, when agreed by the President, shall be mailed to all members and observers of the Executive Committee. The minutes will be ratified by the Executive Committee at its next meeting. Important decisions will be published on the EULAR website.

8.3.2. Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority vote. In the event of a tie, the President shall have a casting vote.

8.3.3. Upon request of the Steering Group, decisions may also be taken by mail or telephone conferences, if a majority of the members of the Executive Committee so approves.

8.4. Tasks of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall:

- 8.4.1. Supervise, control and direct the business and affairs of EULAR, its committees and other functional bodies, and its publications; actively promote its purposes; and supervise the disbursement of its funds. Specifically it shall:
- 8.4.2. Issue reports, including those of the President, the Standing Committee Chairs, the General Secretary and the Treasurer.
- 8.4.3. Deliberate on financial matters.
- 8.4.4. Receive and discuss any requests, (project) applications, reports submitted to it.
- 8.4.5. Propose candidates to the General Assembly to fill vacant positions in the Executive Committee.
- 8.4.6. Elect Standing Committees Chairs.
- 8.4.7. Issue special guidelines for scientific congresses, meetings or courses organised by EULAR, or on behalf of EULAR.
- 8.4.8. Issue or amend guidelines, standing orders, policies supplementing the By-Laws.
- 8.4.9. Decide on requests for EULAR scientific endorsement.
- 8.4.10. Appoint or dissolve Standing Committees.
- 8.4.11. Propose and submit to the General Assembly applications for Regular Membership for decision.
- 8.4.12. Decide on the location of the European Congress of Rheumatology.
- 8.4.13. Supervise execution of the provisions of the By-Laws, and prepare and submit any amendments to the By-Laws for vote at the General Assembly.

8.5. Election process for Standing Committee Chairs

The procedure for election of the Standing Committee Chairs (ex-officio members of the Executive Committee) shall be as follows:

- 8.5.1. The relevant Standing Committee Chairs and Regular Members shall be invited to propose candidates to the Executive Committee before 1 February of the year of election. Nominations should include a CV and a motivational letter of the candidates. The Executive Committee may establish a search committee acting as an advisory body for nominations.
- 8.5.2. Standing Committee Chairs shall be elected by the Executive Committee at its meeting in March. When more than two candidates are proposed for a chair, the person with the lowest number of votes in the first voting shall be excluded from the next voting. The voting is repeated until two candidates remain for the final voting. The person with the majority of votes shall be considered elected.

8.6. Delegation

The members of the Executive Committee may delegate certain tasks; they remain, however, responsible for them as if they were retained by them. The

Executive Committee may also establish functional bodies such as advisory committees, working groups or liaisons for special tasks. The Executive Committee may also request the advice of experts regarding specific items of the agenda.

8.7. FOREUM Foundation for Research in Rheumatology

In line with the terms and rules established by “FOREUM Foundation for Research in Rheumatology”, the Executive Committee shall propose three candidates for election on the FOREUM executive committee. The President shall ex officio serve as an observer on the FOREUM executive committee.

Article 9: - Standing Committees: role and tasks

- 9.1. The Standing Committees shall deal with specific aspects of rheumatology as outlined in article 2, to accomplish special tasks, work on specific questions, and evaluate, propose and supervise specific projects and activities in their area of competence. Standing Committees are headed by a Chair. There should not be more than ten Standing Committees.
- 9.2. Each Regular Member has the right to propose one delegate active in the field of the respective Standing Committee. The candidate shall provide a CV. The Standing Committee Chair has the right to co-opt additional members. If a delegate does not attend any meetings of the Standing Committee for 2 years, the Chair has the right to request that the organisation removes or replaces the delegate.
- 9.3. The term of office of delegates shall be at maximum 6 years.
- 9.4. The country, where the Chair comes from, shall have the right to elect an additional delegate to the Standing Committee.
- 9.5. Standing Committees may initiate and support the build-up of EULAR Study Groups, i.e., networks of experts in specific fields of rheumatology. The Study Groups shall provide the Standing Committees with bi-annual reports.
- 9.6. The Standing Committee Chairs shall provide a copy of the minutes of their committee meetings to the Executive Committee for information.

Article 10: - Annual European Congress of Rheumatology

- 10.1. Every year (preferably in June), EULAR shall organise a European Congress of Rheumatology. The venue of the European Congress of Rheumatology shall be determined by the Executive Committee two to four years ahead. When determining future venues, the Executive Committee shall seek to consider a variety of hosting countries while keeping in mind logistic and financial aspects as well as regulatory issues.
- 10.2. The Executive Secretariat shall visit proposed cities and conference centres and investigate the feasibility for holding the European Congress of Rheumatology. Based on their report, the Executive Committee will take the final decision on the venue of the European Congress of Rheumatology. The General Assembly will be informed at its next meeting.

- 10.3. The aim of the European Congress of Rheumatology is to provide a forum of the highest standard for scientific (both clinical and basic), educational and social exchange between professionals involved in rheumatology, liaising the patient organisations, in order to achieve progress in the clinical care of patients with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases.
- 10.4. The programme of the European Congress of Rheumatology shall be developed by a Scientific Programme Committee including clinical and scientific experts as well as patient and health professional representatives. The Executive Committee shall define chair roles and working mode of the Scientific Programme Committee. The Scientific Programme Committee shall be composed of the voting members of the Executive Committee as well as a reasonable number of co-opted members serving for 3 years to provide the necessary expertise in the required fields of rheumatology. Upon exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Executive Committee, the term of a member can be extended for one year.
- 10.5. The Scientific Programme Committee members shall be elected by the Executive Committee.
- 10.6. The European Congress of Rheumatology will also provide an opportunity for the pharmaceutical industry to present their products and research in accordance with regulatory laws. The Executive Committee shall issue, and discuss with industry, a set of rules governing such presentations ("Code of Practice between EULAR and the Pharmaceutical Industry") as well as other guiding documents related to the collaboration as the need may be.

Article 11: - Audit function

- 11.1. The General Assembly shall appoint an independent auditor in accordance with Swiss law.
- 11.2. The auditor will submit its annual report to the Treasurer at the beginning of the following calendar year.

Article 12: - Amendments to By-Laws

- 12.1. Amendments of these By-Laws may only be decided by the General Assembly.
- 12.2. The Regular Members may propose an amendment to the By-Laws. Such proposal shall be sent to the Executive Committee at the address of the Executive Secretariat no later than seven months prior to the next Ordinary General Assembly.
- 12.3. The Executive Committee shall inform the Regular Members at least three months before the General Assembly of the substance of the proposed amendments, giving them an opportunity to provide feedback or suggest modifications.
- 12.4. The wording of the proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Regular Members together with the agenda of the General Assembly.
- 12.5. Proposed amendments shall be adopted by a two-third majority of the votes.

Article 13: - Dissolution of EULAR

- 13.1. Any motion to dissolve EULAR must be submitted to the Executive Committee for presentation to the General Assembly. A comprehensive report must be submitted to all Regular Members no later than six months before the General Assembly. Dissolution may only be decided by a two-third majority of the votes.
- 13.2. In the event of the dissolution of EULAR the General Assembly will decide which tax-exempt institution in Switzerland, equal or similar in its aim as that of EULAR, will receive its assets.

*EULAR Executive Secretariat, Kilchberg, Switzerland
April 2015*

*Updated By-Laws 2015 ratified by
EULAR General Assembly, Rome, June 2015.*