

**EULAR:  
Annual congress to bring together 14,000 from around the world to discuss  
'decades of life' in rheumatology**

***Kilchberg, Switzerland, 27 May 2019 – The European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) will hold its Annual European Congress of Rheumatology from 12 to 16 June, 2019, at the Feria de Madrid. This year's congress serves as a platform for 14,000 delegates from Europe – and beyond – to discuss the latest in rheumatology, including paediatric rheumatology through joint participation of the Paediatric Rheumatology European Society (PReS).***

The EULAR Congress 2019 will address a wide range of topics including innovation in population, health service, clinical, translational and basic science. Sessions are dedicated to the presentation of the latest scientific findings in the field of rheumatology, to People with Arthritis and Rheumatism in Europe (PARE) and to Health Professionals in Rheumatology (HPR). The participation of young rheumatologists and researchers from the Emerging EULAR Network (EMEUNET) offers future perspectives in the discipline, while poster presentations and poster tours offer an opportunity for knowledge exchange and solutions among congress delegates. Finally, dedicated, high-quality health care industry sessions provide in-depth insight from the industry perspective.

Professor Johannes W. J. Bijlsma, EULAR President, says, "Madrid 2019 will provide an unique event for the exchange of scientific, clinical and patient focused information on a global basis. In 2019, we will be delighted to celebrate our close cooperation with paediatric colleagues – thus our congress will be jointly organised with PReS, assimilating knowledge across the spectrum of the 'decades of life'. EULAR will take great pleasure in welcoming physicians, including our paediatric colleagues, patients, their families, health professionals and representatives of the pharmaceutical industry to the annual congress, and hope that their stay in the beautiful city of Madrid will be informative, educational and thoroughly enjoyable."

Professor Berent J. Prakken, PReS President, comments, "Through the years, EULAR has been our natural partner, and for a good reason: Our patients also need the best possible care after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Our efforts today are intended to offer our patients the very best chance to follow their dreams and aspirations tomorrow – and beyond. To achieve our common objective, our adult colleagues are our strongest allies. The congress offers exceptional possibilities for our visitors; together, EULAR/PReS is stronger. Madrid offers us the opportunity to learn from each other and be inspired by new perspectives offered by our colleagues."

Data collected in a European Survey on Working Conditions by the European Foundation in Dublin found that, as early as 1996, members of the Spanish workforce were affected by rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs): Work-related low back pain was reported by 32.9% of the population, neck pain by 29.6%, pain in the upper back by 19.7%, legs by 11.7%, feet-ankles by 8%, shoulders by 7.2%, buttocks-hips by 6.9%, knees by 6.7%, arms by 6.2%, hands by 5.4%. In total, around 69.2% of Spanish workers reported some sort of musculoskeletal complaint.

Professor Juan J. Gomez Reimo, President of the Spanish Society for Rheumatology, SER, comments, "A 2016 study by EPISER shows that the prevalence of rheumatoid arthritis has increased in Spain since the year 2000. For the first time, we know how prevalent rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases such as psoriatic arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and systemic lupus erythematosus are in the adult population in Spain. We look forward to taking part in the Annual EULAR Congress of Rheumatology to discuss these findings and learn from others in the pursuit of working on solutions for these diseases together."

Dr. Milena Gobbo, Head of OpenReuma, the national health professional association in Spain, comments, "Only 40% of Spanish public hospitals have rheumatology nurse-led clinic for assessment, patient education and clinical follow-up. There is a lack of recognition and visibility of the interventions performed by rheumatology nurses and other health professionals, such as physiotherapists, psychologists, podiatrists or occupational therapists. Two outstanding activities have however been developed: The first official rheumatology post-graduate course for health professionals is available at the Alicante University, and an EULAR course for health professionals in rheumatology will be held in March 2020 in Madrid. The EULAR Congress is an opportunity to join other health professionals and encourage them to apply to these courses."

Professor Victoria Romero Pazos, Director of the Spanish League Against Rheumatism, LIRE, comments, “According to a National Survey on Public Health in 2017, the prevalence of diseases of the locomotor system – osteoarthritis and lower back pain – is on the rise. A national statistical office survey found that, in 2008, RMDs accounted for 20% of days missed at work, while back problems were responsible for more than 50% of temporary incapacity at work, with joint diseases responsible for 1 of 3 disabilities in Spain, 33% of the causes lying with rheumatic diseases. The EULAR Annual congress offers opportunity for LIRE and its members to connect with each other and beyond – and to find ways to lessen the impact on people’s lives, together.”

Nearly 5,000 abstracts were submitted to the EULAR Congress in 2019 alone. EULAR has a unique three-pillar structure meaning that science, healthcare and people with a rheumatic and musculoskeletal disease are all represented by the association. The annual congress is designed to facilitate interaction between patients, medical doctors, scientists, health professionals, and professionals representing the pharmaceutical industry both from within Europe and from around the world.

-ENDS-

## NOTES TO EDITORS

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## About EULAR

The European League against Rheumatism (EULAR) is the European umbrella organisation representing scientific societies, health professional associations and organisations for people with RMDs. EULAR aims to reduce the burden of RMDs on individuals and society and to improve the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of RMDs. To this end, EULAR fosters excellence in education and research in the field of rheumatology. It promotes the translation of research advances into daily care and fights for the recognition of the needs of people with RMDs by the EU institutions through advocacy action.

## About RMDs

About Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases Rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) are a diverse group of diseases that commonly affect the joints but can affect any organ of the body. There are more than 200 different RMDs, affecting both children and adults. They are usually caused by problems of the immune system, inflammation, infections or gradual deterioration of joints, muscle and bones. Many of these diseases are long term and worsen over time. They are typically painful and limit function. In severe cases, RMDs can result in significant disability, having a major impact on both quality of life and life expectancy.<sup>1</sup>

## YouTube: EULAR TV

Broadcasting at the EULAR Congress over the EULAR YouTube channel, transmission will include:

- **EULAR 2019 Congress News**
- **Press conferences and interviews**
- **Live streaming of selected sessions from the Congress for the first time:**

June 12 | 13.00-14.00 The Open plenary session

June 12 | 14.15-15.45 WIN & HOT: New avenues of OA & osteoporosis management

June 13 | 10.15-11.45 WIN & HOT: Advances in understanding and treating of SLE

June 14 | 10.15-11.45 WIN & HOT: Paradigm shifts in arthritides

Watch at [YouTube.com/EULARorg](https://www.youtube.com/EULARorg)

## EULAR 2019: Scientific Programme

To view the EULAR Congress 2019 programme, please go to:

<https://apps-congress.eular.org/eular2019/en-GB/PublicProgram/Index?pProgramGrade=All&pHideLogin=True&pHidePersonal=True>