SPECIAL EDITION:
THE COUNTRY LIAISONS
Dear young professionals in rheumatology,

We are grateful to deliver the 2022 edition of the EULAR | EMEUNET Country Liaisons Newsletter. The Country Liaisons (CLs) are our national representatives. The CLs, in close collaboration with the Country Liaisons subcommittee, maintain an active network able to reach a substantial number of young rheumatologists, researchers, and allied professionals within the field.

The CLs are the bridge between the EULAR | EMEUNET Subcommittee and the members of our community in different countries as well as national rheumatology societies. As such, they are a crucial pillar that supports our initiatives contributing not only to the success of our network but also that of our members at an individual level by bringing them opportunities for research, training and working across Europe.

The pandemic has put a lot of pressure on our Country Liaisons and Subcommittee members, but still we have managed to maintain the communication and activities as outlined in this newsletter. All our efforts will be directed to strengthening the bond between the Country Liaisons and the EMEUNET community providing all our support and facilities to enhance their outstanding job.

This Newsletter puts the spotlight on our Country Liaisons and their activities as well as new projects we are working on. We hope you enjoy reading our Newsletter and please feel free to reach us for any comments or questions!

Xabier Michelena
on behalf of the Country Liaison Subcommittee

Anastasia Madenidou, Diego Benavent and Mikhail Protopopov
on behalf of the Newsletter Subcommittee

More information about EMEUNET can be found at http://emeunet.eular.org

EMEUNET on Facebook
EMEUNET on Twitter
EMEUNET on LinkedIn
EMEUNET on YouTube
EMEUNET Podcast
THE COUNTRY LIAISONS SUBCOMMITTEE – 2021/2022

The Country Liaison Sub-Committee is the bridge between the EULAR | EMEUNET Committee and the Country Liaisons (CLs), our national representatives. Our objectives are:

1. **To maintain an active CL network.** Our subcommittee establishes fluid communication with CLs to support them on their tasks, receive their feedback, and try to put their proposals into practice. For this purpose, we send out periodic reminders and materials, organize regular teleconferences, and are always available to give any required assistance.

2. **To promote and disseminate EULAR | EMEUNET and its initiatives.** By supporting our CLs, we can reach young rheumatologists, researchers, and allied professionals in every country and attract them to become members and participate in the activities we develop. Our CLs disseminate the information we send them among their colleagues in their country. They also develop national activities aiming to increase the visibility and adherence to EMEUNET and report back so we can boost their visibility through our website and Social Media channels. For assistance in this task, we produce and maintain a repository of constantly updated materials. With our CLs’ help, we obtain translations to increase further the possibilities of reaching more potential new members.

3. **To increase the visibility of CLs and their actions.** We give more visibility to the work of our CLs by posting them on our website, social media channels and our annual newsletter, where we also highlight their promotional activities and those with an outstanding performance.

**Xabier Michelyna**
Sub-Committee Chair

---

**Aggelos Banos**
Monthly Newsletter

**Antigone Pieta**
Website update

**Irene Cecchi**
Advertising materials

**Alessandro Gollo**
Advertising materials

**Tania Gudu**
New Projects
## ONGOING COUNTRY LIAISONS – 2021/2022

### Albania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enida Xhaferi, MD PhD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enida graduated as a medical doctor from the University of Tirana in Albania and gained her rheumatology specialization at QSUT Hospital, Albania.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her main research interests are radiographic axial spondyloarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and rehabilitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:enida_xhaferi@yahoo.com">enida_xhaferi@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Armenia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anna Petoyan, MD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna graduated as a medical doctor from the Yerevan State Medical University in 2013. Currently, she is working as a rheumatology resident in the “Muratsan” University Hospital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her main research interests are antiphospholipid syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, systemic sclerosis, and vasculitis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:petoyan91@gmail.com">petoyan91@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Austria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philipp Bosch, MD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philipp studied medicine at the Medical University of Graz until 2017. He has participated in different exchange programs in Germany, Italy, and the USA, and took the United States Licencing Examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently, he is a PhD and research fellow at the department of Rheumatology and Immunology, Medical University of Graz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His research is focused on biomarkers in psoriatic arthritis. Another interests include imaging in rheumatic diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:philippbosch@gmx.at">philippbosch@gmx.at</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Belarus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anastasyia Tushina, MD PhD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anastasyia has completed her PhD and she is currently working as an assistant in the 2nd Department of Internal Diseases at Belarusian State Medical University, Minsk, Belarus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her main research interest is secondary amyloidosis in patients with rheumatoid arthritis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:chastya@rambler.ru">chastya@rambler.ru</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Belgium

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alla Ayten Ishchenko, MD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ayten is a young rheumatologist and PhD fellow working in KU Leuven, Belgium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her main research interests are spondylarthritis, psoriatic arthritis, imaging, and musculoskeletal ultrasound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:alla.ishchenko@telenet.be">alla.ishchenko@telenet.be</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hamdija Mujaric, MD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamdija graduated as a medical doctor from the Military Medical Academy in 2007. He is currently working in the rheumatology department at the university clinic in Sarajevo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His main research interests are echography of the abdomen and locomotor system, and biological therapy in rheumatic diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:hamdo_m@yahoo.com">hamdo_m@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Bulgaria           | Rositsa Dacheva, MD          | Rositsa graduated from the Medical University of Sofia, Bulgaria, in 2013.  
                             She is currently working as a Rheumatology resident in the Department of Rheumatology at the University Hospital “St. Ivan Rilski” in Sofia.  
                             Her interests include systemic lupus erythematosus, treatment strategies, autoantibodies, systemic sclerosis, and musculoskeletal ultrasound. |
| Croatia            | Mirna Reihl, MD PhD          | Mirna graduated as medical doctor from Zagreb Medical School, University of Zagreb, Croatia in November 2015. She started her rheumatology residency at the Division of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology, Department of Internal Medicine, University Hospital Centre Zagreb and University of Zagreb, School of Medicine, Zagreb.  
                             Her main interests are Adult Onset Still's Disease and ultrasonography. |
| Czech Republic     | Veronika Balajková, MD       | Veronika graduated as a medical doctor from the Charles University (Prague, 2015). Currently, she is a rheumatology trainee at the Institute of Rheumatology in Prague. In 2018, she obtained a 1st degree of specialization in internal medicine.  
                             In 2015, she started her PhD with a special interest in neuropsychiatric lupus. She is also part of a research group on systemic lupus erythematosus supported by the Ministry of Health of Czech Republic. |
| Denmark            | Morten Aagaard Nielsen, MD   | Morten graduated as a medical doctor in 2016. After one year as an intern in general and acute medicine, he started his PhD at Aarhus University.  
                             He is currently working as a Rheumatology resident in the Department of Rheumatology under the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Tartu.  
                             His main research interests include epidemiology and imaging techniques in rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis. |
| Egypt              | Ahmed Negm, MD PhD           | Ahmed graduated from the Faculty of Medicine at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. He is currently working at the Department of Rheumatology under the Faculty of Medicine of the Al-Azhar University.  
                             His main research interests include epidemiology and imaging techniques in rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis. |
| Estonia            | Puis Liis, MD                | Liis graduated from the University of Tartu in 2017. She is currently a third-year rheumatology resident at the University of Tartu.  
                             Her interests include systemic lupus erythematosus, systemic sclerosis, ultrasonography, and vasculitis. |
## ONGOING COUNTRY LIAISONS – 2021/2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anne Kerola, MD PhD</td>
<td>Jean-Guillaume Letarouilly, MD</td>
<td>Nino Gobejishvili, MD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anne graduated from the Medical Faculty of the University of Helsinki in 2016. She is a rheumatologist at the Päijät-Häme Central Hospital in Lahti, Finland. She has been involved in rheumatology research in her home country from 2012, and defended her thesis on epidemiology of comorbidities in rheumatoid arthritis in 2015.

Her major research interests include comorbidities and health care utilization in rheumatic diseases.

[anne.kerola@helsinki.fi](mailto:anne.kerola@helsinki.fi)

Jean-Guillaume is a rheumatologist at the Lille University Hospital and currently a full-time PhD student at the Paris Descartes Medical School.

He is part of the Lille University Hospital federal project dedicated to care, research and education in the field of inflammatory and immunological diseases and their targeted treatments. He is also a board member of the French association of young rheumatologists.

[jeanguillaume.letarouilly@gmail.com](mailto:jeanguillaume.letarouilly@gmail.com)

Nino is the Head of the Georgian young rheumatologists union (SARG) and is currently working at the Aversi and Medical House Clinic in Tbilisi in Georgia.

Her professional and scientific interests focus on immune tolerance, especially in rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, systemic sclerosis, and vasculitides.

[rheumarheuma@yahoo.com](mailto:rheumarheuma@yahoo.com)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Greece and Cyprus</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Johanna Mucke, MD</td>
<td>George Fragoulis, MD PhD</td>
<td>Dóra Sárvári, MD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Johanna received her MD from Heidelberg University. She is currently working as a clinical and research training fellow in rheumatology at the Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf.

Her interests are synovial inflammation in rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and connective tissue diseases.

Johanna is an active member of the German Society of Young Rheumatologists ("Rheumadocs").

[johanna.mucke@med.uni-duesseldorf.de](mailto:johanna.mucke@med.uni-duesseldorf.de)

George is a senior rheumatology registrar at “Laiko” hospital, Athens, Greece and holds an honorary research fellow position at the University of Glasgow.

He graduated in 2007 and supported his PhD in Athens, in 2014. His main interests include Sjögren’s syndrome, SLE, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis and IgG4-related disease.

He was also a member of the EMEUNET Newsletter subgroup.

[geofragoul@yahoo.gr](mailto:geofragoul@yahoo.gr)

Dóra Sárvári is a medical doctor since 2016, currently working at the Immunology Department of Rheumatology Centrum, Budai Irgalmasrendi Kórház, Budapest, Hungary.

She teaches medical students and prepares presentations for immunology and rheumatology conferences. Her major interests include scleroderma, lupus, ultrasonography of joints, and teaching medical students.

[sarvari.dora@gmail.com](mailto:sarvari.dora@gmail.com)
### ONGOING COUNTRY LIAISONS – 2021/2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ireland</strong></td>
<td>Ramona Valea, MD</td>
<td>Ramona graduated from the “Carol Davila” University in Bucharest in 2010 and has completed her training in rheumatology in Romania and Ireland. She is currently a certified rheumatology consultant in Ireland. She was awarded a EULAR research fellowship in Dublin regarding the use of ultrasound in patients with asymptomatic hyperuricemia in 2014. Her interests include patient care and imaging in rheumatic diseases.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:valearamona@yahoo.com">valearamona@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Israel</strong></td>
<td>Jennifer Ben Shimol, MD</td>
<td>Jennifer graduated from the medical school at SUNY Downstate Medical Center followed by a residency in internal medicine at Montefiore Medical Center and a fellowship in rheumatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center. Currently, she is working as a full-time rheumatologist at the E. Wolfson Medical Center. She has been involved in research studies, including most recently an evaluation of rheumatologic iRAEs and an assessment of PET/CT in large vessel vasculitis. Furthermore, she is very dedicated to clinical education.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jennifer.benshimol@gmail.com">jennifer.benshimol@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Italy and San Marino</strong></td>
<td>Francesca Crisafulli, MD</td>
<td>Francesca graduated in Medicine and Surgery at the University of Pavia in 2015. She is currently a rheumatology resident at the Hospital ‘Spedali Civili Brescia’. Her main areas of interest are systemic autoimmune diseases and the management of pregnancy in patients with rheumatic diseases. Since November 2018, she is a member of the Young Rheumatologists Committee of the Italian Society of Rheumatology (SIR Young).</td>
<td><a href="mailto:crisafulli.francesca10@gmail.com">crisafulli.francesca10@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Latvia</strong></td>
<td>Evija Stumbra Stumberga, MD MD MSc</td>
<td>Evija graduated from the Riga Stradina University. She is currently working as a Doctor Internist and Doctor Neurosonology at the Health Center of Riga Stradins University. Her interests include atherosclerosis, cardiovascular diseases, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and ultrasonography.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:evijastumbra@inbox.lv">evijastumbra@inbox.lv</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lebanon</strong></td>
<td>Mira Merashli, MD</td>
<td>Mira obtained her medical degree from Beirut Arab University. She received specialty training at the American University of Beirut, where she completed two years of clinical fellowship in Rheumatology in the Division of Allergy, Immunology &amp; Rheumatology. She pursued a clinical research fellow for one year at the Chapel Allerton Hospital (Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust).</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dr.merashli@hotmail.com">dr.merashli@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lithuania</strong></td>
<td>Ona Montvydaite-Kreivaitiene, MD</td>
<td>Ona graduated as a medical doctor from the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences in 2011. She is currently working at the Dainavos outpatient clinic and is an assistant in the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:o.kreivaitiene@gmail.com">o.kreivaitiene@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ONGOING COUNTRY LIAISONS – 2021/2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Country Liaison</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td><strong>Chris Vassallo, MD</strong></td>
<td>Chris is a Rheumatology Trainee at Mater Dei Hospital at Msida, Malta. His professional and scientific interests focus on patients with Giant Cell Arteritis, Systemic Sclerosis, and Vasculitis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:chris.vassallo89@gmail.com">Email</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td><strong>Victoria Sadovici-Bobeica, MD PhD</strong></td>
<td>Victoria is an assistant professor at the Department of Internal Medicine and Pharmacy “Nicolae Testemitanu” in Moldova. She graduated from the same university in 2009. Her main research interests include systemic diseases and systemic lupus erythematosus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:victoria.sadovici-bobeica@usmf.md">Email</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td><strong>Rifat Medjedovic, MD</strong></td>
<td>Rifat received his MD degree from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Montenegro. He is currently working as a specialist at the Department of Rheumatology and Internal Medicine of the Clinical Center of Montenegro. His main interests are ultrasound imaging and systemic lupus erythematosus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:rifat.medjedovic@gmail.com">Email</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td><strong>Féline Kroon, MD PhD</strong></td>
<td>Féline Kroon is a rheumatology trainee at the Zuyderland Medical Center in Heerlen, The Netherlands. She received her PhD for research into treatment and outcome measurement in hand osteoarthritis in November 2020. She is a member of the young Dutch Arthritis Association. She has also been involved as a fellow in EULAR management recommendations projects and is an active member in two OMERACT working groups. Féline is also a member of the EMEUNET NL Sub-Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Macedonia</td>
<td><strong>Maja Bojadzioska, MD</strong></td>
<td>Maja became a rheumatologist in 2010 and is currently working at the clinical hospital of rheumatology in Skopje, North Macedonia. Her professional and scientific interests focus on patients with arthritis and postmenopausal osteoporosis. She also works as an assistant at the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:majajurukovska@yahoo.com">Email</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td><strong>Siri Lillegraven, MD</strong></td>
<td>Siri graduated as a medical doctor from the University of Oslo in 2006. She is currently working at the Diakonhjemmet Hospital as a research fellow. Her main research interests are imaging, epidemiology, and rheumatoid arthritis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:siri.lillegraven@gmail.com">Email</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ONGOING COUNTRY LIAISONS – 2021/2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role/Institution</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Aleksandra Opinc, MD</td>
<td>Medical University of Lodz; Rheumatology Clinic- Internal Medicine Subunit, USK-WAM Hospital, Lodz. She works as a research and teaching assistant at the Department of Rheumatology, Medical University of Lodz. Her main scientific interests include connective tissue diseases, mostly idiopathic inflammatory myopathies.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aleksandra.opinc@umed.lodz.pl">aleksandra.opinc@umed.lodz.pl</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Filipa Farinha, MD</td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine of the University of Coimbra; Rheumatologist in Portugal. Currently, she is a PhD student at University College London, focusing on the clinical outcomes, autoantibodies and antigens involved in the pathogenesis of membranous lupus nephritis. Her main research interests include systemic lupus erythematosus, biostatistics, musculoskeletal ultrasound, and paediatric rheumatology.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:filipa.mcfarinha@gmail.com">filipa.mcfarinha@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Vasilia Jorgoveanu-Stoian, MD PhD</td>
<td>Medical doctor from the University “Carol Davila” in Bucharest in 2012. She is currently working as a rheumatology specialist in private health care. Her main research interests are musculoskeletal ultrasonography and Sjogren’s Syndrome.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jorgoveanuvasi@yahoo.com">jorgoveanuvasi@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Elizaveta Vasilenko, MD</td>
<td>Medical Faculty of the St. Petersburg State University; Rheumatologist in Russia. She has started her PhD studies at the same university in September 2017. Her main areas of interest are axial spondyloarthritis and psoriatic arthritis.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:elisaavas@gmail.com">elisaavas@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>Jelena Colic, MD PhD</td>
<td>Epidemiology department at the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade; specialised doctor at the Institute of Rheumatology, Belgrade. She was a member of the organizing committee of 10th ORPHEUS conference in Belgrade in 2015 and is a member of the EUSTAR Young investigators group from April 2018.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jcolicster@gmail.com">jcolicster@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Ulrika Ursinyova, MD PhD</td>
<td>MD at Comenius University and defended her PhD thesis at the Slovak Medical University, Bratislava. She is currently working as a rheumatologist in training at the National Institute of Rheumatic Diseases in Piestany, Slovakia. Her professional and scientific interests focus on biological therapy and prognosis of treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ulrika.ursinyova@gmail.com">ulrika.ursinyova@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ongoing country liaisons – 2021/2022

Slovenia 🇸🇮

Jaka Ostrovršnik, MD

Jaka graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ljubljana. Currently, he is a resident and PhD student at the Department of Rheumatology in Ljubljana. He is interested in clinical research, mostly in the field of vasculitis, and will start soon to investigate rheumatic manifestations of cancer immunotherapy.

jaka.ostro@gmail.com

Spain 🇪🇸

Valentina Emmanuela Emperiale, MD

Valentina graduated as a medical doctor from the Pontificial Catholic University of Chile in 2014, where she was an undergraduate clinical research assistant for the Rheumatology Department and teaching assistant. She also conducted an elective internship in Rheumatology in Baden. Besides the clinical practice, she is focused on medical education and clinical research, particularly in spondyloarthritis and systemic autoimmune diseases.

vemperiale@gmail.com

Sweden 🇸🇪

Heidi Kokkonen, MD PhD

Heidi Kokkonen is currently working as a Resident Physician at the Rheumatology Department, Public Health and Clinical Medicine, Norrlands University Hospital, Umeå, Sweden. Her research area is risk factors for the development of rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and its association with cardiovascular disease. Heidi Kokkonen has recently been selected as a board member of the Swedish Rheumatology Association.

heidi.kokkonen@umu.se

Switzerland 🇨🇭

Muriel Elhai, MD PhD

Muriel is a medical doctor, currently an Assistant at the Department of Rheumatology, University of Zürich. She completed a PhD in Immunology (mouse models of systemic sclerosis). After working for four years in Paris as an Assistant in Rheumatology, she moved to Zürich to work as a postdoc in the Center of Experimental Rheumatology on the epigenetic changes of synovial fibroblasts in joint diseases. Her main research interests are systemic sclerosis, autoimmunity, and synovial fibroblasts.

muriel-elhai@hotmail.fr

Turkey 🇹🇷

Ufuk Ilgen, MD

Ufuk graduated as a medical doctor from the Hacettepe University Medical School in 2011. He is currently working as a research assistant in the Department of Rheumatology at the Trakya University Medical School in Edirne.

His main research interests are amyloidosis, hereditary periodic fever syndrome, antiphospholipid syndrome, treatment of familial Mediterranean fever, biomarkers, and activity/severity indices in systemic sclerosis.

ufukilgen@gmail.com

United Kingdom 🇬🇧

Su-Ann Yeoh, MD

Su-Ann graduated as a medical doctor from the University of Nottingham, UK in 2012. She IS currently working as a Rheumatology Clinical Research Fellow at University College London, UK. Her main research interests are bDMARDS, rheumatoid arthritis, T-cells, TNF-alpha, and treatment strategies.

su-ann.yeoh@nhs.net
### ONGOING COUNTRY LIAISONS – 2021/2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Andrew Melville, MD</strong></td>
<td><strong>Olena Zimba, MD PhD</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Melville is a clinical research fellow and first year PhD candidate at the Institute of Infection, Immunity and Inflammation in Glasgow, UK. Prior to this, he spent two years in Leeds as a rheumatology registrar and academic clinical fellow. His current research focus is around psoriatic arthritis and experimental medicine.</td>
<td>Olena got her PhD degree in 2010 and since 2013, she has been undertaking post-doctoral research in the field of systemic vasculitides. She is currently working as an Associate Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine N2 at the Danylo Halytsky of the Lviv National Medical University. Olena is also a member of the EMEUNET Peer Mentoring Sub-Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:andrew.melville@glasgow.ac.uk">andrew.melville@glasgow.ac.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:zimbaolena@gmail.com">zimbaolena@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COUNTRY LIAISONS ACTIVITIES

Although the current pandemic posed challenges, it has not stopped our Country Liaisons! Here are some of the activities they promoted during the current year.

Jean-Guillaume Letarouilly, our CL for France informed the EMEUNET members that the French Young Rheumatologists has opened an Instagram account (ref_rhumato_officiel)

Our CL for Poland, Aleksandra Opinc, has updated the mailing list of Polish EMEUNET members and circulated news and posts regarding EMEUNET to the national members. She has also established active cooperation with the Head of the Section of Young Rheumatologists of the Polish Society of Rheumatology (MD Magdalena Włoch-Targońska). Together they have prepared a publication entitled "EMEUNET and the Section of Young Rheumatologists of the Polish Society of Rheumatology activities – an update". The article presents the opportunities associated with membership in both sections - the Section of Young Rheumatologists of the Polish Society of Rheumatology and EMEUNET.

This article has increased awareness of EMEUNET among young rheumatologists and encouraged more people to register. Currently, the Section of Young Rheumatologists of the Polish Society of Rheumatology is organising the first national conference of young rheumatologists. The event will be held in mid-June 2022 in an online form.
COUNTRY LIAISONS ACTIVITIES

Jelena Colic (CL for Serbia) has presented activities of EMEUNET at the National hybrid congress in September 2021 (Godišnji kongres UReS/ORS 2021)!

Nino Gobejishvili (CL Georgia) is the head of SARG (Georgian Young Rheumatologists Union). Nino previously led the “RMDs Public Awareness Program of Georgia, 2019–2020”, which represented the wider “Don't Delay, Connect Today” campaign in Georgia, funded by ILAR and conducted within the SARG. She has recently shared information about the EMEUNET-SARG collaboration in the introductory poster at the meeting in a booth-space format. This initiative highlighted the importance of emerging connections between young colleagues from Black Sea countries and helped expand the youth circle. SARG/EMEUNET communication will be one of the presentable topics at BSR 2022.
İlgen Ufuk (CL Turkey) is building, in collaboration with other EMEUNET members from Turkey, a group of young rheumatologists under the umbrella of their National Rheumatology Society.

After working on this project for about a year, they received approval from their national society.

They will also have a separate session during their national congress dedicated to young rheumatologists.

Alla Ishchenko (CL Belgium) together with her young colleagues, members of the Belgian Young Rheumatologists and with support of Lilly have organised a live meeting on the subject of psoriatic arthritis. Twenty young rheumatologists attended the meeting on pathophysiology, clinical aspects and imaging in psoriatic arthritis, followed by a short quiz.

Before the session, Alla gave a brief presentation on how to become an EMEUNET member and how to get involved in EMEUNET activities. It was a great networking opportunity for the young rheumatologists!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR KEEPING ON PROMOTING EMEUNET IN THIS DIFFICULT YEAR!
EMEUNET Advertising Materials

WE ARE MOVING!

EMEUNET Advertising Materials

The EMEUNET advertising materials will be available online, allowing full accessibility for both EMEUNET members and non-members. This step is in line with the main mission of Country Liaisons, spreading and promoting the EMEUNET network among young rheumatologists and healthcare professionals in the immune-rheumatic field.

All information will be available at [https://emeunet.eular.org/membership_en.cfm](https://emeunet.eular.org/membership_en.cfm). Here you will find a brief summary of our network’s mission and the opportunities offered to those willing to join. Moreover, we will be able to trace clicks of on-page users’ engagement to improve our work and better link with your expectations and interests.
Once again, the traditional EULAR Country Liaisons meeting took place on line at EULAR 2021. Nevertheless, we had a great time together with a full programme and discussion.

We started with the presentations by Ufuk Ilgen from Turkey, Anne Kerola from Finland and Jean-Guillaume Letarouilly from France which inspired an interesting discussion and encouraged all of us to maintain our bonds with the EMEUNET community. From the CL Subcommittee, Xabier Michelena, organised an interactive quiz to identify areas for improvement. The main feedback included better communication with their national societies enhanced by EULAR and more visibility. Other suggested areas for improvement were more interaction between the CLs and more clinically oriented EMEUNET projects. In this line, we are happy to announce that we are starting the EMEUNET Country Liaisons Clinical Webinar Series.

We hope we can meet each other in Copenhagen this year and celebrate one of the most outstanding networks of young rheumatologists in the world!
The Country Liaisons work for the spread of our network in their countries. The number of EULAR | EMEUNET members varies between countries and is one of the aspects we use to assess the performance of each Country Liaison. Below you can find the current top 10 countries with the most members of our community and the ones with the best recruitment figures over the past year.

### Top ten countries with most EULAR | EMEUNET members until March 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top ten countries with most new EULAR | EMEUNET members recruited 2021-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>New members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium/Portugal</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top ten countries with most new EULAR | EMEUNET members recruited 2021-2022
THE OUTSTANDING COUNTRY LIAISONS - FAREWELL

Being a Country Liaison requires continuous effort and significant commitment to spreading the EMEUNET voice at a national level. We have been so lucky during the past years to have the most committed and outstanding Country Liaisons for Italy and Portugal, Francesca Crisafulli and Filipa Farinha.

They’ve massively increased the number of EMEUNET members in their respective and have positioned EMEUNET in the best spot one could possibly imagine. They are now leaving their posts to pursue other projects, but we want to take the opportunity to thank them for their hard work. Keep tuned for the official call if you wish to represent Italy or Portugal as a Country Liaison.

A big thank you to Francesca (Italy and San Marino) and Filipa (Portugal). Good luck!

CONGRATULATIONS FOR YOUR TERRIFIC WORK!
THE COUNTRY LIAISONS CLINICAL WEBINARS

As discussed in the EULAR Country Liaison Meeting, our CLs asked for more clinically-oriented projects. We are happy to announce the new EULAR Country Liaison Clinical Webinars Series, where the CLs will select a lecturer from their country to present a clinical subject. The webinars are endorsed by EULAR Education and you can register on the webpage (https://esor.eular.org/enrol/index.php?id=368). Thanks to Jean-Guillaume Letairouully and Professor Claire Daien for agreeing to participate in the first webinar.

EMEUNET PEACE MESSAGE

An atrocious war is hitting Europe and beyond and together with the EMEUNET committee, Country Liaisons gave a strong message of unity and peace in a social media video. Thanks for participating. Peace! https://twitter.com/EMEUNET/status/1508745978735702016
UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

APRIL 2022

British Society for Rheumatology Annual Conference
- When and Where: 25-27 Apr 2022, Glasgow, UK (Hybrid Event)
- Website: https://www.rheumatology.org.uk/events-learning/conferences/annual-conference

66th Japan College of Rheumatology Annual Conference
- When and Where: 25-27 Apr 2022, Yokohama, Japan

MAY 2022

4th Digital Rheumatology Day
- When and Where: 6-7 May 2022, Berlin, Germany
- Website: https://digitalrheumatology.org/4th-digital-rheumatology-day/

European Workshop for Rheumatology Research (EWRR)
- When and Where: 5-8 May, Vienna, Austria
- Website: https://www.meduniwien.ac.at/web/ueber-uns/events/2022/european-workshop-for-rheumatology-research/

Australian Rheumatology Association Annual Scientific Meeting
- When and Where: 20-22 May 2022, Perth, Australia (Hybrid Event)
- Website: https://www.araconference.com/

JUNE 2022

EULAR 2022| Congress 1-4 June
- When and Where: 1-4 June, Virtually and onsite in Copenhagen, Denmark
- Website: https://congress.eular.org/registration.cfm

Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies (FoCIS) Annual Meeting 2021
- When and Where: 21-24 Jun 2022, San Francisco, USA
- Website: https://www.focisnet.org/meetings/focis-2022/

European Society of Musculoskeletal Radiology (ESSR) Congress 2022
- When and Where: 9-11 Jun 2022, Rostock/Germany
- Website: https://www.e SSR.org/congress/essr-2022/
EULAR 2022 will be an extraordinary year for EULAR, marking not only our first-ever hybrid congress but also our 75th anniversary! We look forward to welcoming you on-site in Copenhagen or virtually. Read the welcome message from the EULAR President, Prof. Annamaria Iagnocco.

The EULAR 2022 Scientific Programme is now online!

The EULAR 2022 Scientific Programme will start on Wednesday, 1 June 2022. Go to programme.

EULAR 2022 Congress will be held both virtually and onsite in Copenhagen, offering our first-ever hybrid congress experience. Registration is now open!

EULAR 2022 Congress
June 1-4, 2022
Join us in Copenhagen or online.
The event is endorsed by: eular

The 4th “Digital Rheumatology Day” will take place in Berlin, Germany on May 6-7, 2022.

The event will be hybrid – live and virtual.

Topics this year will be (all with a focus on rheumatology):

- New digital solutions and user preferences
- New Apps and digital therapies in the field
- AI & self-learning systems
- Telemonitoring & PRO’s
- Digital biomarkers
- Analysing the online health community
- Pitching Event for providers and developers of digital care solutions that can improve quality of care in rheumatology
- Workshops on AI, LinkedIn and Twitter and DIGAs

Preliminary program is available online!
Registration is now open: https://digitalrheumatology.org/4th-digital-rheumatology-day/
EULAR Online Courses and Modules

**Compilation of EULAR Online Modules**
EULAR has developed e-learning opportunities with the newest updates in the field of rheumatology. 99 modules are available, covering different areas of rheumatology

- **Fee**: 25 EUR for each module
- **Start**: no deadline / any time
- **Available for**: 1 year after booking

**11th EULAR Online Introductory Ultrasound Course**
The course, covering 7 modules, is designed for approx. 7 months of training, the expected learning time per week is around 2 1/2 hours. Upon passing the examination, a EULAR certificate will be issued.

- **Fee**: 150 EUR
- **Start**: 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
- **Available for**: 1 year + 1 year extension

**12th EULAR Online Course on Systemic Sclerosis**
The Course consists of 10 modules dealing with physiopathology, clinical aspects and management of SS. All modules are developed by EUSTAR

- **Fee**: 150 EUR
- **Start**: 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
- **Available for**: 1 year + 1 year extension

**17th EULAR Online Course on Rheumatic Diseases**
The course is managed by a scientific course committee controlling the structure and content of the course and performing regular quality control and advancement. The full version covers the entire field of rheumatology and consists of 55 illustrated modules (of which some are optional), each one covering a specific topic. The expected learning time per week is calculated around 2 1/2 hours but very flexible for the learners who can enter the learning system at any time and have available free of charge an extra year if needed. Knowledge and skills are targeted to suit a level of knowledge appropriate for the final years of training as a rheumatologist.

- **Fee**: 150 EUR
- **Start**: 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
- **Available for**: 2 years + 1 year extension
EULAR ONLINE COURSES AND MODULES

14th EULAR Online Course on Connective Tissue Diseases
The Course consists of 16 modules which deal with immunology and systemic auto-immune diseases, such as SLE, scleroderma, and vasculitis.
- **Fee**: 150 EUR
- **Start**: 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
- **Available for**: 1 year + 1 year extension

2nd EULAR Online Course on Patient Education for Physicians and Health Professionals
The Course consists of 4 modules (approx. 6 hours each). The learning objectives are: understand the problematics of chronic rheumatic diseases, understand issues of patient education, develop attitudes in the relationship with the patient, elaborate a program of patient education, perform an educational diagnosis, design and animate educational workshops evaluate a program and among different learning objectives. Upon passing the examination a EULAR certificate will be issued.
- **Fee**: 150 EUR
- **Start**: 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
- **Available for**: 1 year + 1 year extension

4th EULAR Online Course for Systemic Lupus Erythematosus
The Course consists of 12 modules covering the recent updates in diagnosing and managing SLE, as well as the recent updates to management guidelines.
- **Fee**: 150 EUR
- **Start**: 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
- **Available for**: 1 year + 1 year extension

5th EULAR Online Course on Imaging in RMDs
The Course covers 3 modules. The learner level is aimed primarily at Section Residents and Fellows in Training as well as Rheumatologists. It aims to educate rheumatologists and future rheumatologists on how to interpret imaging examinations in chronic inflammatory RMDs and to use the imaging results to guide their daily treatment.
- **Fee**: 150 EUR
- **Start**: 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
- **Available for**: 1 year + 1 year extension
8th EULAR Online Course for Health Professionals in Rheumatology
The course consists of a total of 8 modules. Care is given to integrate the multidisciplinary perspective of the treatment of rheumatic diseases.
➢ **Fee:** 150 EUR
➢ **Start:** 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
➢ **Available for:** 1 year + 1 year extension

9th EULAR/PRES Online Course in Paediatric Rheumatology
The 11-module course represents a joint effort of EULAR and the Paediatric Rheumatology European Society (PRES), offering a deep insight of all the aspects related to rheumatic diseases in children and adolescents including their impact on the growing body and the differential diagnosis with other paediatric disorders.
➢ **Fee:** 150 EUR
➢ **Start:** 17.10.2022; **Registration will open in June 2022**
➢ **Available for:** 1 year + 1 year extension
EMEUNET Research Speed-Dating at #EULAR2022

The EMEUNET Research Speed-Dating is an organized networking activity during the EULAR 2022 conference in which young rheumatologists and researchers interact in a series of short one-on-one conversations to determine if there is mutual interest for research collaborations. The EMEUNET research Speed-Dating will provide an opportunity for participants to explore collaboration interests in a cursory way, forming the basis for further and more profound interaction.

Location: EULAR 2022 Congress Venue
Time & Date: Thursday 2nd of June at 12 pm

Application requirements

Before applying, do ensure that you have prepared the following application documents:

- Completed application form
- CV
- Motivation letter
- Proof of nomination by National Society for the EULAR Congress bursary (If applicable)

For more information and registration, access through the EULAR website.
EULAR Online courses:
- RMD: EULAR Course on Rheumatic Diseases
- US: EULAR Online Introductory Ultrasound Course
- IMG: EULAR Online Course on Imaging in RMDs
- PAED: EULAR / PRES Online Course in Paediatric Rheumatology
- HPR: EULAR Online Course for Health Professionals in Rheumatology
- SSc: EULAR Online Course on Systemic Sclerosis

The EULAR Educational Cooperation with National Societies (EULAR ECONS)
The EULAR Research Center

How does it work?

1. Select your support area and describe your needs in a short online form
2. Get matched with an experienced scientist
3. Obtain up to 10 hours of free consultation
4. Share your feedback upon service completion

Support Areas

- Basic/Translational Research (using patient/human materials, e.g. cells, serum…or Dedicated animal models of RMDs to address bedside-to-bench research questions)
- Clinical Research
- Epidemiology and Public Health
- Health Services Research
- Implementation Science

Study design
Statistical methods
Sampling strategy
Data collection and analysis
Patient involvement
Participant recruitment strategy
Access to patient and human materials
Access to equipment and technologies
Research reporting
EU grant writing support

The EULAR Research Consultation Service is offered through the EULAR Research Centre. The service is available for researchers based in EULAR-affiliated countries.
The EULAR Outcome Measures Library (OML) aims to be a comprehensive database of validated instruments (indices, questionnaires, scales, or others), with an emphasis on patient-reported outcomes (PRO) used in rheumatology. The EULAR OML was created by rheumatologists, health professionals, students and patients, all of whom are engaged in the field of rheumatology.

The database includes a detailed description of each instrument, including the instrument itself (and validated language versions, if available), useful references, a description of the population(s)/setting(s) where it has been validated, recommendations and rules for use, guideline for interpretation of the results in clinical practice or in research, information on the most relevant psychometric properties of each instrument. Instruments are categorized by disease or by topic. Also, guidelines for interpretation of results in both practice and research settings are provided. The OML is an ongoing project and is frequently updated with the most recent information on PROs in rheumatology.

For more information visit:

http://oml.eular.org/
EMEUNET PODCASTS!

Are you too busy to read the whole Newsletter?
Do you want to keep updated about the main EMEUNET activities and save time?

With our Podcasts, you can get updated while on the go, with extracts of the recent newsletters, highlights of the most recent publications in the field of Rheumatology, selected for you by EMEUNET members (What Is New), interviews and review of other EMEUNET activities.

Where to listen:

```
 Anchor  Apple Podcasts  Breaker  Google Podcasts  Overcast  Pocket Casts  Radio Public  Spotify
```

SHARE YOUR IDEAS!

Over the years EMEUNET has developed several projects covering different topics and areas of interest. However, we always appreciate any suggestions and welcome new ideas to expand on what we currently offer to EMEUNET members. Make your voice heard and share your ideas with us!

For additional suggestions and ideas, just write down some lines to summarize your proposal and send it either via email at emeunet@eular.ch or through our website (http://emeunet.eular.org/contact_us.cfm). Don’t forget to provide your contacts so we can come back to you for additional details!

More information about EMEUNET can be found at http://emeunet.eular.org

www.facebook.com/EMEUNET
www.twitter.com/EMEUNET
https://www.linkedin.com
EMEUNET Tube
EMEUNET Podcast
The European Alliance of Associations for Rheumatology (EULAR) is very concerned about the situation in Ukraine, and it condemns Russia’s unacceptable act of aggression towards the country. As hospitals are being attacked and access to medical aid is interrupted, EULAR wants to respond to this humanitarian crisis and particularly support the Ukrainian people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs), who need urgent treatment and assistance.

Together with EMEUNET, EULAR has developed a support programme for young Ukrainian rheumatologists, enabling them to take up their profession, maintain and further develop their skills, and provide care to a range of patients, including particularly displaced Ukrainian RMD patients. Across Europe, Ukrainian rheumatologists or rheumatologists in training can apply for this programme, sponsoring their employment in one of EULAR’s various partner hospitals or institutes. EULAR will fund up to 20 such positions, allowing for a stable income for a Ukrainian physician who had to flee their country, and securing medical treatment for Ukrainian refugees with RMDs. EULAR will provide € 500,000 for this purpose.

What: Funding programme for displaced Ukrainian physicians
Who can apply: Hospitals or medical institutions (employers) in countries with many displaced Ukrainian refugees
Target group: Ukrainian rheumatologists, focus on rheumatologists in training
How much: 20,000 – 30,000 EUR/year

Please send your application to eular@eular.org.