

STATUTES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Adopted 18 March 1967, revised on 27 October 1975,
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Amended and adopted in London, 4 June 2005

Preamble

The European Union of General Practitioners (UEMO) was founded on 18 March 1967 by unanimous agreement of the following organisations:

Germany: Hartmannbund -Verband der Ärzte Deutschlands e. V. ;
Belgium: Association Belge des Syndicats Médeciaux (ABSyM) ;
France: Confédération des Syndicats Médicaux Français; later joined by Syndicat des Médecins Libéraux (SML); (UEMO Membership ended on 5 October 2002)
Italy: Federazione Nazionale degli Ordini dei Medici Chirurghi e degli Odontoiatri (FNOMCeO);
The Netherlands: Landelijke Huisartsen Vereniging;

Subsequently the following new members were admitted:

Luxembourg (1976): Association des Médecins et des Médecins-Dentistes du Grande-Duché de Luxembourg (AMMD);
Denmark (1972/73); Den Almindelige Danske Lægeforening;
Ireland (1972/73); Irish Medical Association, later renamed Irish Medical Organisation;
United Kingdom (1972/73): British Medical Association;
Portugal (1986): Ordem dos Médicos;
Spain (1986): Consejo General de Colegios Oficiales de Médicos de España.
Finland (1987): Finnish Medical Association;
Norway (1992): Alment Praktiserende Lægers Forening (APLF);
Sweden (1992): Sveriges läkarförbund;
Switzerland (1992): Verbindung der Schweizer Ärztinnen und Ärzte;
Austria (1993): Österreichische Ärztekammer;
Greece (1992): Panhellenic Medical Association;
Iceland (1993): Laeknafelg Islands;
Slovenia (1995): Zdravniska Zbornica Slovenije;
Malta (1996): Medical Association of Malta;
Republic of San Marino (2000): Medical Association of Republic of San Marino
Croatia (2001): Croatian Medical Chamber
Slovakia (2003): Slovak Medical Association
Hungary (2003): Federation of Hungarian Medical Societies

The following countries are observers to the UEMO:

Turkey (2003): Turkish Medical Association

Article 1

Title

The organisation shall be known as the European Union of General Practitioners (UEMO), hereinafter referred to as UEMO.

Article 2 – Offices

The Offices and Secretariat of the UEMO shall be located in the country of the national member association of the President or such other place as may from time to time be agreed by the General Assembly.

Article 3 – Objectives

The UEMO is a non-profit-making organisation with the following principal objectives:

- to study and promote the highest standard of training, practice and patient care within the field of the general practitioner throughout Europe;
- to defend the role of general practitioners in the healthcare systems;
- to promote the ethical, scientific, professional, social and economic interests of European general practitioners and to secure their freedom of practice in the interests of the patient;
- to determine the united views of the members and represent them through the appropriate channels to the relevant European Authorities and international organisations;
- to work with the other European medical groupings such as the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) and others (cf. annex I) to strengthen the position and unanimity of the profession in Europe in order to maintain the highest possible standards of education, ethics and patient care;
- to be the leading medical organisation representing general practice in Europe; to be recognised as such by others; to be proactive in its representational role.

Article 4 - Membership

1 – Membership shall normally be open to the single most representative national, non-governmental, independent, organisation representing general practitioners in each of the countries of Europe. Except by special dispensation, official delegates of the member organisations must be general practitioners and active in medical practice.

Each member organisation must ensure that its national delegation is composed in such a way that it is representative of the general practitioners of the country it represents.

2 – Application for admission to membership in the UEMO shall be made to the Presidency which will present a recommendation to the General Assembly for its decision. Admission requires a majority vote of three-quarters of members present. Abstentions are not counted as votes cast. No reason need be given for the refusal of a request for admission.

3 – If a national organisation of general practitioners in Europe so requests, the General Assembly may grant to it an associate member or observer status, subject to the same general conditions set forth previously, even if it is otherwise qualified for full membership.

Representatives of associate member and observer organisations at meetings of the UEMO will have the right to speak, but not to vote. Associate member and observer organisations will share in the expenses of the UEMO as determined by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Treasurer.

4- The UEMO Membership is dependent on the payment of membership fees, from full members, associate members and observers, as laid down in Annex II.

Article 5 – Withdrawal

Any member may withdraw from the UEMO. However, the withdrawal must be explained and reasons given by the President of the member organisation to the UEMO President for communication to the General Assembly three months prior to the autumn meeting the current year. A member withdrawing from the UEMO for any reason must pay in entirety its subscription for the budgetary year in which it withdraws and forfeits the right to any assets of the UEMO.

Article 6 – Exclusion/Suspension

1 – A member shall be excluded from the UEMO if it has been in serious breach of its duties as a member, especially if it has sought to act against the UEMO in a detrimental way or if it has failed to fulfil the qualifications governing representation in Article 4.

2 – A decision to exclude a member may only be taken by a three-quarters majority of all members present and entitled to vote. Abstentions are not counted as votes cast.

3 – A member organisation which fails to pay its full annual contribution before the spring meeting of the following year shall automatically be suspended until payment of the arrears has been made, unless the General Assembly, after thorough consideration, decides otherwise by a three-quarters majority of all members present and entitled to vote. Abstentions are not counted as votes cast. Any member organisation with continuing arrears of two years or more shall have its membership status considered by the General Assembly, which may decide to exclude that member in accordance with articles 6.1 and 6.2 and annex III to this document.

Article 7 – Official Organs

The official organs of the UEMO are the Presidency, the General Assembly, the Board and the Secretariat.

Article 8 – Presidency

1 – The Presidency of the UEMO shall consist of the President, the Secretary General and the Treasurer, as well as four Vice-Presidents. The procedure for electing the national member organisation hosting the Presidency and the President him- or herself shall be as follows:

Firstly, the General Assembly shall agree upon the national member organisation which is to assume the presidency for a four-year term. The order of rotation shall be decided by the General Assembly on the basis of applications made by delegations at the autumn meeting one full year before the final autumn meeting of the existing Presidency.

When the national member organisation is so agreed upon, the President shall be elected for one four-year term by the General Assembly by a three-quarters majority of members present and entitled to vote (cf. articles 9.2 and 10.1). Abstentions are not counted as votes cast. He or she shall not be eligible for re-election.

2 - In special circumstances, the host member association may propose a change in the Presidency. The General Assembly can also decide to refuse this proposal and accept applications from other national member organisations, but the President may only be removed from office by the General Assembly on the basis of a three-quarters majority vote, and any change in the Presidency is subject to the approval of the General Assembly. Abstentions are not counted as votes cast.

The President must have the prior support of his or her national member association for the tenure of his or her UEMO office.

3 - If for any reason the President is unable to complete his or her term of office, a new President nominated by the host organisation of the Presidency and approved by the General Assembly for the remainder of the term, shall take his or her place at the next General Assembly or Board meeting. In the interim, the affairs of the UEMO shall be managed by the four Vice-Presidents under the chairmanship of the senior Vice-President (i.e. the Vice-President with the longest time in office). During any such period, insofar as possible, the Secretariat established by the national member organisation hosting the Presidency shall assist the Vice-Presidents in carrying out their duties. If this is not possible, the Vice-Presidents shall propose to the national delegations an alternative Secretariat.

4 - The Secretary-General and the Treasurer shall be appointed by the President, subject to the confirmation of the General Assembly. Neither the Secretary-General nor the Treasurer shall undertake executive functions in the event that the President is temporarily or permanently unable to continue the duties of his or her office (cf. article 8.3 above).

5 - Each of the four Vice-Presidents shall be elected by the General Assembly for one four-year term. Only one Vice-President shall be elected each year, at the autumn meeting, with the exception stipulated in article 8.6. The four Vice-Presidents shall represent four different national delegations. A Vice-Presidential vacancy shall be filled by election from a member organisation country other than that of the retiring Vice-President - accordingly, a Vice-President shall not be eligible for re-election. The expenses of the Vice-Presidents - except when specifically invited to represent the UEMO at an international or other meeting - shall not be borne by the UEMO. The duties of the Vice-Presidents shall be as stipulated in article 8.7 below.

6 - If for any reason a Vice-President is unable to complete his or her term of office the national delegation of that Vice-President shall, subject to approval by the General Assembly, appoint a successor from its country to complete the term of office, or a new election shall be held.

7 - The duties of the President, Secretary-General, and Treasurer shall be to implement the decisions of the Board and General Assembly, to prepare the meetings of the Board and General Assembly, to conduct the daily work of the UEMO, to maintain contacts between the UEMO and the relevant European authorities, the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME), and other international organisations (cf. annex I). The duties of the Vice-Presidents shall be to advise and assist the Presidency in planning and analysing UEMO work and policy and, at the request of the President, to represent the UEMO at international meetings and on other occasions.

8 - The President represents the UEMO, acts on its behalf, and has full power to sign, with the exception of a special power of attorney requested by the General Assembly. Any legal document affecting the UEMO shall be signed by the President.

9 - Except by special dispensation, all political officers of the UEMO shall be General Practitioners, currently in active medical practice.

Article 9 – The General Assembly

1 – The UEMO shall normally hold a General Assembly twice a year, in spring and autumn. The General Assembly shall consist of up to six delegates from each of the member organisations. Each delegation shall have the right to one vote. The General Assembly shall be called and chaired by the President and organised by the UEMO Secretariat. An extraordinary General Assembly must be called if requested by three delegations. The General Assembly shall approve the venue of future meetings.

2 - Unless otherwise stated in the Statutes, the General Assembly cannot make a valid decision unless half of the members of the UEMO with voting rights are present or represented. A delegation unable to be present at a General Assembly or Board meeting may grant its proxy to another delegation. No delegation may hold more than one proxy.

3 – Each member organisation is entitled to bring in legal advisers or other experts and assistants.

4 - The General Assembly is empowered to make all relevant political and organisational decisions concerning the UEMO in accordance with the Statutes (cf. Article 10).

5 - Meetings must be announced and the agenda issued at least one month in advance. The meeting is empowered to make decisions only on those questions included in the agenda, which may be modified by a unanimous decision.

6 - The annual budget will be adopted by the autumn General Assembly each year. The basic contribution shall be determined on a yearly basis when the overall budget is fixed by the General Assembly. The contribution key of each member, associate member and observer will be calculated in accordance with the provisions of Annex II. In extraordinary cases, the General Assembly may approve a deviation from the key by a three-quarters majority of all members present and entitled to vote. Abstentions are not counted as votes cast.

7 – The General Assembly may decide, on the recommendation of the President, to limit the number of languages employed or necessary for a given period.

8 – The General Assembly shall elect from amongst its national delegations two auditors whose duties shall be to monitor the UEMO accounts, to ensure that the funds have been employed in agreement with the objectives of the UEMO and the decisions taken by the UEMO General Assembly and to report their findings back to the General Assembly. One auditor shall be elected every two years, for a four year term of office. If an auditor is unable to complete his or her term of office a new auditor shall be elected for the remainder of the tenure. An alternate auditor shall be elected by the General Assembly to serve at any meeting where one of the two auditors is unable to attend.

Article 10 – Decisions of the General Assembly

1 – Decisions made by the General Assembly shall normally be by consensus. In the event of a vote, all decisions shall require a three-quarters majority of those delegations present and entitled to vote. A vote shall be required if two delegations request it. For voting procedures, when reference is made to the three-quarter majority, abstentions are not counted as votes cast.

2 – Modification of the statutes shall require a decision by three-quarters of all members present and entitled to vote. Abstentions are not counted as votes cast. Changes in the statutes shall be notified to members at least three months prior to the General Assembly at which

they are to be adopted. Any change to the annexes is not considered a change to the statutes and shall follow the procedure laid down in Article 10 (1).

3 – Decisions relating to the European Union shall be taken only by a vote among the delegations representing organisations from the EU-countries, subject to the principles covered in articles 10.1-10.2.

Article 11 – The Board

1 – The second decision-making body of the UEMO is the Board, which may consider matters referred to it by the Presidency or the General Assembly or matters it deems necessary or advisable to consider in a smaller forum than the General Assembly.

2 – The Board shall consist of a member for each national delegation acting as the Head of his or her national delegation, the President, the Vice-Presidents and the two Auditors. National delegates to the Board shall be nominated by the delegations concerned and may be re-appointed.

3 – The Board shall normally meet twice a year, generally immediately before each of the two General Assemblies. The Board shall also meet when necessary, called by the President or at the request of three national member organisations. The quorum and voting rules for the Board shall be the same as those for the General Assembly (cf. articles 9.2 and 10).

Article 12 – The Secretariat

1 - The Secretariat shall assist the Presidency, General Assembly and Board in carrying out their work. The Secretariat shall be under the jurisdiction of the President.

2 - The Secretariat shall be located as stipulated in article 2.

3 - The member organisation hosting the Presidency shall control the Secretariat for the duration of the President's term subject to article 2. The Secretary-General or his or her deputy and the President shall be responsible for the day-to-day running of the UEMO (cf. Art. 8.7).

Article 13 - Dissolution

Dissolution of the UEMO shall be subject to the same conditions set out in Article 10.2 regarding modification of the statutes. In the case of such decision, the General Assembly shall decide on the method of dissolving the UEMO and the manner in which its assets are to be disposed of.

Annex I

UEMO Inter-organisational co-operation

With reference to Article 3, Objectives, fifth indent, following are the names of some of the organisations with which UEMO currently works to strengthen the position and unanimity of the medical profession in Europe in order to maintain the highest possible standards of education, ethics and patient care:

- The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME);
- The European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS);
- The Permanent Working Group of European Junior Doctors (PWG);
- The World Health Organisation (WHO).

Other organisations with which the UEMO currently works in co-operation include:

- The European Society of General Practice/Family Medicine (WONCA Region Europe);
- The European Association of Senior Hospital Physicians (AEMH)
- The European Federation of Salaried Doctors (FEMS)
- Conférence Européenne des Ordres des Médecins (CEOM).

Annex II

1. The contribution of each member shall be determined as follows:
 - i. A standing charge applied equally to all members
 - ii. A contribution being a proportion of the budget of UEMO after deduction of the total of the standing charges collected, the ratio to be determined by multiplying the population of each individual country expressed as a percentage of the total population of member states and observers by the GDP of each country expressed as a multiple of the lowest GDP of any member state or observer
 - iii. Except that contributions shall be subject to a maximum and minimum cut off so that the largest three and smallest three contributions contribute equally
2. Observer members shall contribute at 1/3 of the level they would have paid if they had the status of full members
3. National populations and estimates of GDP will be determined on an annual basis by the treasurer from the resources of the OECD
4. The level of the standing charge shall be determined by UEMO from time to time meeting in general assembly and shall be recorded formally in the minutes of the respective meeting.

Annex III

Exclusion of member organisations and its consequences – Re-establishment of full active membership (Article 6)

In the application of the provisions of article 6, the member organisation in question shall have the right to speak on this matter to the meeting considering such exclusion. In the case of exclusion, granting of the UEMO membership to another appropriate national organisation in the country in question shall be considered. (In such a case, the General Assembly may decide to make an exception to the requirements of Article 4.1 of the UEMO Statutes in the best interest of UEMO).

Re-establishment of full active membership shall be based on a decision by the General Assembly. The delegation's ability to pay its subscription together with accumulated arrears and any interest incurred shall be taken into account by the General Assembly.