



Zoltán Szekaneč<sup>1</sup>, Włodzimierz Samborski<sup>2</sup>, Przemysław Kotyla<sup>3, 4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Rheumatology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary

<sup>2</sup>Department and Clinic of Rheumatology, Rehabilitation and Internal Medicine, Poznań University of Medical Sciences, Poznań, Poland

<sup>3</sup>Department of Rheumatology and Clinical Immunology, Voivodeship Hospital, Sosnowiec, Poland

<sup>4</sup>Department of Internal Medicine, Rheumatology and Clinical Immunology, Medical University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland

# *E pluribus unum* — how we established the Central European Congress of Rheumatology (CECR) Journal

The Central European Congress of Rheumatology (CECR) was initiated in 1996 in Piešťany (Slovakia) as a common initiative of the Presidents of 6 Central European societies for rheumatology: Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Croatia joined as the 7<sup>th</sup> member at a later stage. CECR was the result of seeking a common platform to exchange ideas, and results of research, and finally to meet each other. Seven countries affiliated with CECR have a lot of similarities in location in the central part of our continent, and similar history, in particular history of medical development (mainly based on Austro-Hungarian and German medical tradition). Obviously, there are many differences between these countries in population, organization of healthcare, gross domestic product, tradition of medical research, and many others.

With the success of the first CECR congress, this idea has been continued, and every other year, CECR congresses were organized in various cities in Central Europe: Warsaw (1998), Bratislava (2000), Baden (2002), Budapest (2004), Bled (2006), Prague (2008), Sopron (2010), Krakow (2012), Vienna (2014), and again Prague (2016), Zagreb (2018), Bratislava (2022). The next CECR congress is scheduled for 2024 in Slovenia.

For many years, however, the unmet need was a lack of a common journal for all CECR countries to make the CECR activities more visible. This resulted in the loss of many interesting ideas and results of research and simply reduced significantly the possibility to communicate with each other.

In order to overcome this limitation at the last CECR congress in Bratislava, Prof. Zoltán Szekaneč, together with the presidents of the national societies, took the initiative to create a common platform to facilitate communication between all members of rheumatological society in various countries. At that moment only one journal was “on stock” orientated on rheumatology and published in English, a contemporary Latin language for all scientists. “Rheumatology Forum” is a scientific and educational journal published in English by the major Polish media company Via Medica and satisfactorily met all requirements to become an international journal for all countries affiliated with CECR. All CECR presidents in their voting unequivocally agreed to create a CECR journal.

This is the beginning of a way, however. With the many possibilities we also have a lot to do. First of all, to make the journal visible in PubMed and second to put it on the list of Web of Science.

The start of the journey is always difficult. Fortunately, we are working with a team of enthusiastic CECR presidents supported by thousands of young as well as more experienced rheumatologists and scientists. We do hope that by working together we can create a modern rheumatology journal for Central Europe as rheumatologists in this part of Europe simply deserve it.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None declared.

## Address for correspondence:

Prof. Przemysław Kotyla, MD, PhD  
Department of Internal Medicine,  
Rheumatology and Clinical  
Immunology,  
Medical University of Silesia  
Ziołowa 45/47  
40-635 Katowice, Poland  
e-mail: pkotyła@sum.edu.pl