

Statutes of the registered non-profit association ESHMS

Version 2026

*Modified at the General Assembly of the 21st ESHMS conference, Hamburg,
Germany, 20 August 2026.*

§ 1 Name and geographical base

1. The name of the association is „European Society of Health and Medical Sociology” (ESHMS).
2. The association is based in Hannover, Germany.

§ 2 Purpose

1. The purpose of the association is to promote Medical Sociology throughout Europe and in Israel.
2. In collaboration with local partners the association organizes scientific congresses in the countries defined under §2, Abs. 1. The association also initiates and facilitates collaborative research between members.

§ 3 Non-profit status

The purpose of the association is exclusively scientific and it is non-profit-making. The funds of the association can be used only for the purposes laid down in these statutes. Members do not receive any financial support from the society and no expenses are provided.

§ 4 Business year

The association follows the calendar year and the first business year thus ends on 31st December, 2007.

§ 5 Membership

1. Membership is open only to individuals and not to institutions.
2. Membership is open to individuals whose focus of interest or activity is applied sociology in the field of health.
3. Membership is also open to individuals who do not hold formal qualifications as sociologists, but who are involved in carrying out research or teaching in medical sociology.
4. Membership applications are required to be sent to the executive committee (EC) of the ESHMS in written form. The EC and the advisory board make a decision about the application and inform the candidate of this decision.
5. Honorary membership can be conferred upon individuals who are judged to have made an exceptional contribution either to the society or to medical sociology. The Executive Committee and the Advisory Board reserve the right to recommend honorary members. The general assembly can then confer honorary membership provided that there two-thirds of those attending are in favour.

6. Membership lasts for a maximum of two years, starting once the membership fee has been paid and terminating automatically before the next bi-annual meeting.
7. In addition, membership ends either
 - on death,
 - by written notice of withdrawal sent to the Executive Committee, or
 - by decision of the Executive Committee in agreement with the Advisory Board, in the event of a member failing to pay the membership fee or respond to reminders for a period exceeding one year, or in the case of a member offending against the statutes and thus behaving in a way that is against the interests of the society.

§ 6 Executive bodies of the ESHMS

The executive bodies of the association are:

1. The Executive committee
2. The Advisory Board
3. The General Assembly

§7 Executive committee

1. The executive committee consists of the president, the vice-president and the treasurer. The vice-president may also act as a treasurer.
2. The executive committee is elected by the advisory board. The executive committee is in charge of the current business of the association and represents the association in judicial and extra- judicial affairs. Each member of the executive committee is entitled to act independently.
3. Nomination of candidates for election are required to be made at the meeting of the general assembly, or candidates can be nominated by ESHMS-members in writing. Every ESHMS-member is entitled to nominate candidates. The nomination period needs to start at least one month before elections. Candidates are then asked to accept their nomination.
4. Members of the executive committee are elected for four years, and a second term is possible for a period of four years. In the case of a member resigning from the executive committee, the member from the advisory board who obtains the highest number of votes will join the executive committee.
5. Elections are carried out either in writing or directly at the general assembly which is held in the course of the bi- annual congress of the society. The executive committee decides on how to conduct the elections. The candidates with the highest number of votes are elected.
6. The outcome of the elections is agreed by the previous executive committee.

§ 8 The advisory board

1. The advisory board is elected by the members of the ESHMS. The term of office is four years.
2. The election of the advisory board takes place in conjunction with the elections of the executive committee. It is carried out according to the same rules.
3. The advisory board is charged with providing support to the executive committee in all affairs and giving advice. It consists of at least 6 to 10 members.
4. Advisory board and executive committee meet at least once a year in order to discuss the current affairs of the society.

§ 9 The general assembly

1. The general assembly of the ESHMS provides the main meeting of the association. The meeting takes place every two years at the bi-annual congress.
2. The date of the meeting is announced at least two months in advance. The announcement is made in writing or forms part of the announcement of the congress program.
3. The executive committee reports about their current and past activities.
4. The general assembly takes note of the report and confirms this as an accurate record.
5. The executive committee recommends at what level the membership fee should be set and the general assembly makes the final decision.
6. The general assembly also makes decisions about changes to the statutes and with regard to the dissolution of the association. Decisions concerning the dissolution of the society have to be made with a two-thirds majority with at least 50% of all members being present.
7. The decisions of the general assembly have to be minuted, and the protocol has to be signed by chairperson and minute-taker.

§ 10 Financial affairs

1. The financial affairs of the society are regulated and administered by the executive committee of the ESHMS. This includes the opening and administration of bank accounts, money transactions or other financial transactions. Each member of the executive committee is entitled to sign individually, but they are obliged to inform the other in this event.
2. The executive committee is obliged to inform members about financial affairs. In case of inquiries this has to be done within two weeks after having received the inquiry. Inquiries have to be made in writing, either by normal mail or by e-mail. Responses have to be made in writing.
3. The financial affairs of the association have to be disclosed to the members of the association. This has to be done during the general assembly at the occasion of the bi-annual congress. The members decide about the correctness of the financial activities reported.
4. Two members of the society are acting as auditors of the bi-annual report of the executive committee. They have to be elected by the general assembly after suggestion. Auditors examine the bi-annual report at the occasion of the meeting of the general assembly. Members of the executive committee are not permitted to act as auditors.
5. The society can have its bank account in a European country¹. This country may be different from the country where the society has its legal domicile (see §1).

§ 11 Membership fees

1. Membership fees are fixed by the executive committee, and the reasons for fixing these have to be justified to the general assembly of the ESHMS. The final decision about membership fees is the responsibility of the general assembly.
2. Membership fees have to be paid upon written request or after notification of successful application to join the society.

¹ Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom

3. Membership fees have to be paid for a maximum of two years.
4. Place of fulfilment for payments is the geographical base of the ESHMS.
5. Honorary members are not required to pay membership fees.

§ 12 Dissolution of the association

In case of dissolution of the association, its assets will be transferred to the regional office of the World Health Organization. The regional office is then entitled to use these funds for promoting population-based sociological research.

§ 13 Entry in the register of associations

The European Society of Health and Medical Sociology (ESHMS) shall be entered in the register of associations at the Hanover Registry Court.