

Dear colleague,

The ILAE Europe occupies a central and vital role in epilepsy education, research, and support across the continent. I am therefore honored and privileged to be nominated as a candidate for the ILAE Europe Committee election for the 2025–2029 term.

If elected, I will dedicate myself to advancing our shared goals, promoting improved care for people with epilepsy, and contributing to the strategic development of ILAE Europe.

My focus will be on three key areas:

1. Education – Addressing Asymmetry Across Europe

I firmly believe that knowledge is the foundation for progress in epilepsy care, and that young epileptologists represent our most valuable resource. Coordinating and harmonizing epilepsy care in Europe demands significant effort, particularly in light of economic disparities among countries.

It is essential that advanced and high-quality educational programs in wealthier European nations be made accessible to promising young epileptologists from all ILAE chapters. In Serbia, the Serbian League Against Epilepsy subsidizes short-term exchanges for young members in leading European epilepsy centers.

I support the idea that European meetings focused on various aspects of epilepsy management—endorsed by ILAE officers and experts—should be hosted in countries with limited resources and open to the broader neurology community. This approach can significantly improve clinical practice and help address existing inequalities. A good example is the Migrating Course on Clinical Epileptology, which began in Serbia in 2007 and illustrates this principle well.

2. Research – Strategic Collaboration and Support

A long-term strategic objective must be to deepen our understanding of epilepsy pathophysiology and to enhance treatment options for patients. Programs that enable Ph.D. students and young researchers to spend time in leading European centers need to be reinforced.

I strongly advocate for close collaboration on multicenter research projects across Europe—particularly those that include small, but well-established centers in middle-income countries. This inclusivity strengthens the quality and diversity of European research in epileptology.

3. Promotion – Focusing on Regional and Local Engagement

There is a pressing need to promote epilepsy as a public health priority at the local and regional levels through continued education that emphasizes inclusivity and diversity. Despite varying socio-economic and political conditions in local communities, these efforts can lead to increased cooperation and community development.

With numerous national chapters, Europe's diversity can significantly enrich epileptology at local platforms. Successful local initiatives should be shared and amplified through ILAE Europe.

As President of the Serbian League Against Epilepsy, I am deeply committed to combating stigma. I believe that local work can meaningfully contribute to broader goals. For example, our League produced a documentary that tells the story of a person with epilepsy—from the first seizure to awake craniotomy—against the backdrop of complex social challenges. This artistically rendered film aims to raise public awareness and highlight the everyday struggles faced by people with epilepsy.

If elected, I will work tirelessly alongside delegates from all European chapters to advance the mission of ILAE Europe in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Aleksandar J. Ristić