EUCAST committees and subcommittees

EUCAST SOP 4.2

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Foreword

The European Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (EUCAST) is organised by the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and the national antimicrobial breakpoint committees in Europe, currently in France, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands and The United Kingdom. EUCAST was established by ESCMID in 1997, was restructured in 2001-2002 and has been in operation in its current form since 2002.

The current remit of EUCAST is to harmonise clinical breakpoints for existing drugs in Europe, to determine clinical breakpoints for new drugs, to set epidemiological cut-off values, to revise breakpoints as required, to harmonise methodology for antimicrobial susceptibility testing, to develop and maintain a website with MIC and zone diameter distributions of antimicrobial agents for a wide range of organisms and to liaise with European governmental agencies and European networks involved with antimicrobial resistance and resistance surveillance.

Information on EUCAST, EUCAST breakpoints and all documents are freely available on the EUCAST website at http://www.EUCAST.org.

Citation of EUCAST documents

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EUCAST documents published on the EUCAST website should be cited in the following way: European Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing. Name of document, EUCAST version number, year. Website address.

### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>AFST</td>
<td>EUCAST Antifungal Susceptibility Testing Steering Subcommittee</td>
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<td>AFST SC</td>
<td>Antifungal Susceptibility Testing Steering Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSAC</td>
<td>British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA-SFM</td>
<td>Comité de l’Antibiogramme de la Société Française de Microbiologie (France)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRG</td>
<td>Commissie Richtlijnen Gevoeligheidsbepalingen (Netherlands)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIN</td>
<td>Deutsches Institute for Normung eV. (Germany)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECCMID</td>
<td>European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECDC</td>
<td>European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMA</td>
<td>European Medicines Agency</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUCAST</td>
<td>European Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing</td>
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<td>ESCMID</td>
<td>European Society for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases</td>
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<tr>
<td>FESCI</td>
<td>Federation of European Societies of Chemotherapy and Infection</td>
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<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>EUCAST General Committee</td>
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<td>ISC</td>
<td>International Society for Chemotherapy</td>
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<td>NAC</td>
<td>National Antimicrobial susceptibility testing Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWGA (AFA)</td>
<td>Norwegian Working Group for Antibiotics (Arbeidsgruppen for antibiotikaspørsmål) (Norway)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
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<td>SRGA</td>
<td>The Swedish Reference Group of Antibiotics (SRGA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWAB</td>
<td>Stichting Werkgroep Antibioticabeleid (Netherlands)</td>
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1 Scope

1.1 This SOP describes the structure, appointment process, remit and transparency declarations of EUCAST committees and subcommittees.

2 Introduction

2.1 The current basic structure of EUCAST committees and subcommittees has been in operation since the restructuring of EUCAST in 2002.

The EUCAST committee structure includes a Steering Committee, a General Committee and Subcommittees in specific areas. There is close collaboration with National Breakpoint Committees and NACs, although the setup and operation of these committees is not controlled by EUCAST.

3 Steering Committee

3.1 Structure

The Steering Committee comprises the following members:

The Chair, Scientific Secretary, Clinical Data Coordinator and Technical Data Coordinator

These positions together form the Executive of the Steering Committee and are responsible for organising the business of the Steering Committee, leading the preparation of proposals and documents, and interactions with other groups.

One representative of each of the National Breakpoint Committees

When the current EUCAST structure was established in 2002 National Breakpoint Committees were defined as national committees that met regularly (at least twice per year) and were actively involved in setting national breakpoints in the respective countries. The number of committees that met this definition was six until 2011 when the German DIN breakpoint committee was closed and in 2013 was replaced by the German NAC.

Two country representatives from the EUCAST General Committee

When the current EUCAST structure was established in 2002 there were two country representatives from the EUCAST General Committee. This was temporarily increased to three representatives in April 2012 until the German Committee was re-established in 2013.

Up to two “visiting” GC members

“Visiting” GC member arrangements were agreed in 2012 and implemented in 2013 to allow any national representative with an interest in a particular agenda item to attend even if they are not currently members of the Steering Committee. In addition, this provides a means by which national
representatives of countries outside Europe can attend meetings intermittently. EUCAST funding does not cover members from outside the EU, but from 2015 an annual ESCMID grant will contribute towards the costs of attendees from outside the EU.

### 3.2 Appointment process

In making appointments the requirement to maintain expertise in breakpoint setting, antimicrobial resistance, susceptibility testing, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics must be an important consideration.

**Chair, Scientific Secretary, Clinical Data Coordinator and Technical Data Coordinator**

These are appointed by the ESCMID Executive Committee who may take advice from relevant national and international organisations, committees and experts. Appointments are for a period of two years and are renewable. These positions may not be renewed more than three times.

**National Breakpoint Committee representatives**

These are appointed by the respective national breakpoint committees. Each committee can appoint one representative and a deputy, but only one may attend each meeting. If a National Breakpoint Committee representative is appointed as Chair of the Steering Committee there will not be an additional appointment of a separate national representative for that country.

**Country representatives from the EUCAST General Committee**

These are appointed by the ESCMID Executive Committee. When there is an upcoming vacancy for General Committee members on the Steering Committee an invitation is sent to General Committee members inviting them to apply for a term of office on the Steering Committee. Terms of office commence after the annual ECCMID meeting. Before the ECCMID meeting the ESCMID Executive will appoint the General Committee representatives taking into account the past representation on the Steering Committee to ensure that there is a spread of representation across the EUCAST General Committee membership and expertise in breakpoint setting and antimicrobial susceptibility testing. Priority will also be given to countries that have not been previously represented on the Steering Committee.

Appointments are for a period of two years and are not renewable unless there are no new applications from the General Committee.

**Visiting General Committee members**

Any General Committee member may apply to attend any specific Steering Committee meeting. The arrangements for the visiting General Committee members are as follows:

- Up to two additional visiting General Committee members may attend each Steering Committee meeting by prior agreement.
- The Steering Committee meeting dates will be on the website six months
in advance.

- A preliminary agenda will be posted on the EUCAST website three weeks before each Steering Committee meeting.
- General Committee members must inform the EUCAST Scientific Secretary at any time in advance but no later than two weeks before the meeting of his/her wish to attend the meeting.
- If more than two General Committee members wish to attend a single meeting the EUCAST Steering Committee Executive will decide who can attend, with the intention of fairly distributing General Committee representation. General Committee members will then be informed whether they can attend and whether part of the agenda is closed to them (confidential data on new agents).
- All travel/accommodation and costs will be organised and borne by the visiting General Committee representative although ESCMID members can apply for a “EUCAST Steering Committee observership.”
- Up to five European and five ESCMID “EUCAST Steering Committee observerships”, each with a maximum value of 1000 Euros, are available each year. Application should be made to the EUCAST Chair and the observerships are granted at the discretion of the EUCAST Chair.
- Parts of the Steering Committee meeting may be restricted by confidentiality agreements covering the breakpoint setting process for new agents in parallel with the MAA submission to EMA. Visiting General Committee representatives will be asked to leave the meeting when confidential data on new agents are discussed if the visiting representative has not signed a confidentiality agreement with the relevant company.

Observers
Observers from ECDC and EMA may attend Steering Committee meetings.

Co-opted experts
Experts from outside the committee may be co-opted to participate in discussion of specific topics as agreed by the Steering Committee.

3.3 Remit
To further the objectives of EUCAST, which are:

- To form in EUCAST, under the auspices of the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), a network of established experts in the determination of antimicrobial breakpoints and in antimicrobial susceptibility testing.
- To determine, review and revise European clinical breakpoints and epidemiological cut-off values for surveillance of antimicrobial resistance in close collaboration with the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and ECDC.
- To promote the development and standardization of in-vitro antimicrobial susceptibility testing methods used in Europe.
- To promote quality assurance of in-vitro antimicrobial susceptibility testing.
- To promote education and training in antimicrobial susceptibility testing.
- To advise ECDC and other European Union health agencies on issues related to antimicrobial susceptibility testing and detection of resistance determinants relevant to public health.
- To collaborate with international groups, ECDC and other European Union health agencies involved in antimicrobial susceptibility testing and/or the epidemiology of antimicrobial resistance in human pathogens.
- To work towards international consensus and harmonization of clinical breakpoints and antimicrobial susceptibility testing.

The Steering Committee is responsible for the assessment of data, formulation of proposals, consultation with the EUCAST General Committee and other relevant groups. Final decisions are taken by consensus within the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is also responsible for preparation and maintenance of documents related to breakpoints and antimicrobial susceptibility testing and for development and maintenance of the EUCAST websites.

### 3.4 Transparency declarations

Each Steering Committee member will make a declaration of commercial or other interests in activities economically or otherwise related to antimicrobial agents. This could be companies involved in drug development and/or marketing or in the manufacture of susceptibility testing products. The declarations will be submitted at the start of each term of office. Any new interests relating to current discussions must be declared by the individual member. The declarations, which will meet the standards of ESCMID, will be held by the Chair and will be presented on request. Steering Committee members will excuse themselves from discussions on issues where a conflict of interest exists and this will be noted in minutes.

### 3.5 Meetings

The Steering Committee meets as frequently as required. Five meetings each year are routinely scheduled for January/February, in conjunction with ECCMID in March/April, July, September and November. Dates and locations are listed on the EUCAST website a year in advance.

### 4 General committee

#### 4.1 Structure

The General Committee comprises the following members:

**The Chair, Scientific Secretary, Clinical Data Coordinator and Technical Data Coordinator**

These positions are the same as the Executive of the Steering Committee and provide the link with the Steering Committee.

**Representatives of individual countries**

One representative of each country from Europe and any country outside...
Europe interested in being part of the EUCAST process.

**Representatives of FESCI and ISC**  
One representative of each of these international groups with an interest in antimicrobial chemotherapy.

**Observers**  
General Committee meetings are open and may be attended by any individual as an observer.

### 4.2 Appointment process

**Chair, Scientific Secretary, Clinical Data Co-ordinator and Technical Data Coordinator**  
These are appointed by the ESCMID Executive Committee who may take advice from relevant national and international organisations, committees and experts. Appointments are for a period of two years and are renewable. These positions may not be renewed more than three times.

**Representatives of individual countries**  
These are appointed by appropriate medical associations from each country. The nature of the appointing association will depend on national structures and organisations and are most likely to be a NAC or a national society of clinical microbiology and/or infectious diseases and/or medicine. In the absence of any of these appropriate organisations a personal recommendation from a nationally respected professional worker will be accepted.

Appointments are not time limited but representatives are asked every three years to get their sponsor to confirm the appointment.

**Representatives of FESCI and ISC**  
These are appointed by the respective organisations international groups.

Appointments are not time limited but representatives are asked every three years to get their sponsor to confirm the appointment.

### 4.3 Remit

- To provide a national view to EUCAST on issues relating to breakpoints and antimicrobial susceptibility testing
- To inform national groups, laboratories and individuals of EUCAST proposals and guidelines to laboratories
- To respond to consultation documents from the EUCAST Steering Committee

### 4.4 Transparency declarations

When responding to formal consultations and on request from the Chair, members must declare any commercial or other interest in activities economically or otherwise related to antimicrobial agents.
### 4.5 Meetings
The General Committee meets once each year in conjunction with the annual ECCMID meeting, which is usually held in March or April. Dates and locations are listed on the EUCAST website and members are notified as soon as the programme for ECCMID is released, usually in February.

### 5 Antifungal susceptibility testing subcommittee (AFST)

#### 5.1 Structure
The EUCAST Antifungal Susceptibility Testing Subcommittee (AFST) is a standing EUCAST subcommittee that deals with all aspects of antifungal susceptibility testing, including breakpoints and susceptibility testing methodology for antifungal agents. The organisation of the AFST Subcommittee partly mirrors that of the EUCAST structure for antibacterial agents, with an AFST Steering Committee of six members and a full subcommittee with national representatives from each European country where possible.

**The AFST Steering Committee**
This is comprised of the AFST Chairperson, the Scientific Secretary, the Clinical Data Coordinator, two representatives from the AFST full subcommittee and a representative of the EUCAST steering committee. The AFST Steering Committee is responsible for organising the activities of the AFST Steering Committee and the AFST full subcommittee, leading the preparation of proposals and documents, and interaction with the EUCAST Steering Committee.

**AFST full subcommittee members**
Each country represented on the EUCAST General Committee may have one representative on the AFST subcommittee. As expertise in this area is not as wide as for antibacterial agents there may not be representatives from all countries.

#### 5.2 Appointment process
Appointments to the AFST Subcommittee may be from the NAC or, if a NAC has not been formed or lacks the necessary expertise in antifungal susceptibility testing, from a national society of clinical mycology, microbiology, chemotherapy or infectious diseases. The national representative on the AFST Subcommittee should be invited to be a member of the NAC. Appointments are not time limited but representatives are periodically asked for their sponsor to confirm the appointment.

The EUCAST Steering Committee appoints the Chairperson and, in consultation with the AFST Chairperson, appoints the Scientific Secretary and the Clinical Data Coordinator of the AFST Steering Committee. The EUCAST Steering Committee also appoints a EUCAST SC representative on the AFST.
Subcommittee to provide a direct link between the EUCAST Steering Committee and the Subcommittee, to advise on procedural matters and to participate actively in the work of the Subcommittee.

Appointments to the AFST Steering Committee as Chairperson, Scientific Secretary, Clinical Data Coordinator and EUCAST SC representative are reviewed by the EUCAST SC every two years or on the request of the AFST Steering Committee or on the request of three or more members of the AFST subcommittee.

No later than one month prior to the annual ECCMID, the AFST Steering Committee will encourage AFST Subcommittee members to apply for one of the two NAC positions on the AFST Steering Committee. On recommendation of the AFST Steering Committee the NAC members are confirmed by the EUCAST Steering Committee. The NAC positions are for a two year term so that one of the two representatives is replaced each year. Countries not previously represented on the AFST SC will have priority and appointments will be renewable only if there are no other applicants.

All terms of office commence after the annual EUCAST AFST Subcommittee meeting (held during the ECCMID). Subcommittee members are informed about the structure of the AFST SC and about the process for appointing AFST SC members.

### 5.3 Remit
- To set breakpoints for antifungal drugs using EUCAST processes for breakpoint setting, consultation and decisions
- To develop reference methods for antifungal susceptibility testing
- To promote education and training in antifungal susceptibility testing.

### 5.4 Transparency declarations
Each AFST Steering Committee member will make a declaration of commercial interests in companies involved in marketing of antimicrobial agents and/or development or in the manufacture of susceptibility testing products. The declarations will be made/updated at the start of each term of office. Any new interests relating to current discussions must be declared by the individual member. The declarations will be held by the EUCAST Chair and will be presented on request. AFST Steering Committee members will excuse themselves from discussions on issues where a conflict of interest exists and this will be noted in minutes.

### 5.5 Meetings
The AFST Steering Committee meets three times each year, once in conjunction with ECCMID in March/April, and twice more throughout the year.

Minutes of meetings are copied to the EUCAST Steering Committee.
## 6 Other subcommittees

### 6.1 Structure
The Steering Committee may establish ad-hoc subcommittees to work towards achieving specific objectives of EUCAST.

The subcommittee will comprise a Chairperson and as many members as required to fulfil the remit of the subcommittee.

### 6.2 Appointment process
The Steering Committee will appoint the Chairperson and the members will be appointed by the Chair in collaboration with the Steering Committee.

Appointments will last for the duration of the subcommittee, which will be established for a limited timescale to achieve the objectives of the subcommittee. The subcommittee will be disbanded when the objectives have been achieved or if the Steering Committee decides that further work is no longer beneficial. A disbanded subcommittee may be re-established if the Steering Committee decides that further work is needed.

### 6.3 Remit
The remit will be defined by the Steering Committee in advance of establishment of the subcommittee.

Consultations and decisions on subcommittee proposals are made through the EUCAST Steering Committee.

### 6.4 Transparency declarations
The Chair will notify subcommittee members that they must provide written details of any commercial or other conflicting interest in activities economically or otherwise related to the activity of the subcommittee. It is the responsibility of each subcommittee member to excuse themselves from discussions and decisions related to issues where there may be a conflict of interest and to inform the Chair of the subcommittee. A record will be kept by the Chair.

### 6.5 Meetings
The number and frequency of meetings must be agreed in advance between the subcommittee Chair and the EUCAST Steering Committee Chair.

## 7 National Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing Committees (NACs)

### 7.1 EUCAST recommends that all countries set up a NAC (or a committee corresponding to this description). Although EUCAST interacts closely with these committees they are not direct EUCAST committees and their structure, appointment process, remit, transparency declarations and meetings are defined by the national organisations that set up the NAC.
### National Breakpoint Committees

#### 8.1 Structure
There were originally six National Breakpoint Committees: BSAC (UK), CASFM (France), CRG (The Netherlands), DIN (Germany), NWGA (Norway) and SRGA (Sweden). The DIN breakpoint committee has been replaced by the German NAC and CRG is now incorporated into Stichting Werkgroep Antibioticabeleid (SWAB).

Each national breakpoint committee consists of 10-20 experts within the fields of clinical microbiology, infectious diseases and pharmacology. Some have additional experts from other medical specialties, from veterinary medicine and from the pharmaceutical and antimicrobial susceptibility testing industry.

The interaction of the EUCAST SC with the National Breakpoint Committees has been central to the harmonisation of European breakpoints for existing agents (see EUCAST SOP 1.x), the setting breakpoints for new agents (see EUCAST SOP 2.x) and the revision of breakpoints (see EUCAST SOP 3.x).

These committees fulfil the role of NACs in their respective countries but they also have an additional role in the setting of breakpoints for new agents, which is a confidential process that includes the active National Breakpoint Committees, but not NACs in other countries.

#### 8.2 Appointment process
As these committees are national committees, the appointment process is within the control of the organisations that set up the committees.

#### 8.3 Remit
As these committees are national committees, the remit is within the control of the organisation that set up the committee. However, the objectives will in many aspects be similar to those of EUCAST as the National Breakpoint Committees are all part of the EUCAST breakpoint setting process.

#### 8.4 Transparency declarations
Members will meet the requirements for transparency detailed by the national organisations that appoint them.

#### 8.5 Meetings
Meetings will be as defined by the individual national breakpoint committees.