

COTEC

Council of Occupational Therapists
for the European Countries



Newsletter

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December 2015

Editorial



Anne Lawson-Porter, Vice President

It's that time of year again when there's an opportunity to pause and reflect on the events of the last year and to look forward to the New Year. The last year has had its challenges, has involved a significant amount of work for the Executive Committee and has also had its rewards.

Challenges such as:

- Succeeding in getting a number of collaborating universities and organizations together to draw up a bid for Horizon 2020 funding for the OT Competence project.
 - Identifying a number of individuals from COTEC and ENOTHE to respond to a request from ESCO to ensure that the profession of OT and its competences are recognized and included in the European Classification of Skills/Qualifications, Competences and Occupations listing.
 - Making sure that COTEC is represented at high level events such as WHO European regional events, EFPC conferences.
- Making sure that the joint Congress can be delivered as a quality event in 2016.

These are just a few!

To achieve this requires a lot of work, particularly from the Executive Committee, who on top of their day jobs give significant personal time and energy in supporting COTEC's goals. Particular mention must be made of Stephanie Saenger, President, who really has given her time, above and beyond what would reasonably be required to ensure that COTEC is becoming more visible and as a result is being invited to more high level discussions and consultations. All Executive members work hard, often in less visible ways, to maintain communication links with national associations, keep the website up to date, manage member queries and maintain good financial and organization governance. Thanks also to individuals from national associations who have responded to calls for assistance and expertise. **Thanks to you all!**

Recognising that COTEC has moved forward in its journey this year is very rewarding; small steps in the right direction will ultimately bring more success.

And so to next year! In 2016 COTEC will celebrate its 30th anniversary. Some activities are planned. Apart from this we certainly have the First Joint Congress to look forward to in June in Galway. There have been close to 900 abstracts received and around 90 reviewers appointed so it's looking like there will be a varied and interesting programme on offer. We certainly hope to see you there! We also want to continue to develop our register of experts, the website as a member resource and to continue building relationships with our national associations and other organisations in Europe.

There is still much to do but with good team work between the national associations and the Executive Committee we will continue to achieve our goals. We look forward to working with you all in 2016 and in the meantime we extend best wishes to all our members for the festive season and success in the New Year.

Anne Lawson-Porter, Vice President

General Assembly 2015

COTEC 3rd General Assembly was held in Riga, Latvia, the 4th October. The Business Meeting was preceded by a Governance Day. 23 out of 29 COTEC Members were represented in person or by proxy. Further details about the 3rd General Assembly can be accessed through this [link](#).

General Assembly 2015 Experience

COTEC's 3rd General Assembly was held in Riga, Latvia, October 4th. The Sunday Business Meeting was preceded by a Governance Day on Saturday. This was my first COTEC experience. I was a little bit afraid because of the unknown environment, as I do not know what to expect from the COTEC Executive Committee and the representatives of the National Associations. Also I was not familiar what the expectations of the others from me are. I was happy to find out how much polite are the persons there. Everybody was very kind and hospitable. So I was really very satisfied by my decision to join and to be part of this professional community.

The most interesting for me from the Governance Day were the round tables, because I believe that the key for successful outcomes is the teamwork. I am in the opinion that the effect of a collection of people is greater than just one person.

Joining COTEC General Assembly was a challenge but also a great opportunity because I am very interested in furthering the occupational therapy career in Bulgaria and in Europe. I was pleasantly surprised by the delegates who were open for all kinds of discussions which leads them to make effective decisions by democratic voting.

This was one exited day for me, because the representatives of the National Associations voted in favor of my adoption in the COTEC Executive Committee. To be a member of the Committee offer a participation in an international team and that leads to the opportunity to learn about breaking news in the profession, best practices or new ideas, hear about key achievers in the field of occupational therapy and also meet and brainstorm with others who are also looking to share and learn new information. This participation is a great way to grow not only my professional network, but also the network of my National Association.

In conclusion, I was very inspired by this first COTEC experience and that keeps my motivation to work hard for the development and the promotion of the occupational therapy profession and this post in the Executive Committee will help me to stay inspired and motivated. It is a privilege for me to work together in an international team in order to develop, harmonize and improve standards of professional practice and education, as well as advance the theory of occupational therapy throughout Europe.



Elitsa Velikova,

Member of the Executive Committee

Goodbye and Welcome

During the 3rd General Assembly of COTEC in Riga October 3-4 2015 the GA members said goodbye to Executive Committee member Maria Daniela Farrugia who stepped down after two years of her term. Maria served many years as delegate of Malta in varied roles. She was a dedicated member and her valuable contribution to the work of COTEC and the EC will be missed.

Three longstanding delegates Lena Haglund, Zdenka Pihlar and Gunner Gamborg announced they step down as representatives of their national associations. COTEC thanks them for their contributions and support during all these years and wishes them all the best for the future.

The Russian Professional Association of Ergotherapists was welcomed as new member of COTEC and two Executive Committee members Patric Duletzki and Elitsa Velikova were elected.

The Executive Committee looks forward to work together in the new team.

New COTEC Logo



At the COTEC General Assembly 2015 the new COTEC logo (together with the ENOTHE, ROTOS and OT EU logo's) was presented and favorably accepted by all members. The ENOTHE logo was presented at the ENOTHE General Assembly in Ruse, Bulgaria. The following text was published in the ENOTHE newsletter:

We are pleased to introduce the new ENOTHE logo. The new logo is the result of the boards work over the past 3-4 years following up the general assembly's decision to pursue lines of action to strengthen the visibility and impact of Occupational Therapy in Europe.

A logo for OT-EU has been designed consisting of three rings which can be associated with; the person-environment-occupation model, evidence based practice and the OT-EU collaboration: education-profession-research. The three rings are then broken down into logos for each area. The ENOTHE logo consists of a red ring representing education linking to practice and research. The COTEC logo has a black ring representing the profession that operationalizes education and research. The research logo will represent research that will inform and support education and the profession.

One line of action has been to work towards establishing an umbrella collaborative platform, Occupational Therapy Europe (OT-EU), for ENOTHE and COTEC to present a unified front in addressing health, social and educational policy in Europe. Access to European policy makers and forums is increasingly difficult and only available to registered organisations. Through collaboration with COTEC, which is a registered organisation, ENOTHE's views can be expressed and both networks strengthen their legitimacy when OT-EU speaks for both the profession and education. OT-EU will also be a forum to promote collaboration between the networks, such as the 2016 Joint Congress and establishing a European occupational therapy-occupational science research network. The second line of action has been to establish a common internet portal for OT in Europe. The OT-EU portal will communicate common issues and give access to the independent ENOTHE and COTEC websites, and hopefully a research network website in the not too distant future. Both networks took this opportunity to renew their websites and decided to develop a common website template and modern graphic design to underline the unity of OT in Europe.



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Brian Ellingham, ENOTHE President



WFOT/COTEC/ENOTHE Workshop: WFOT – minimum standards and the challenges of meeting fieldwork requirements

The workshop was held at the 21st Annual Meeting of ENOTHE in Ruse, Bulgaria. Fourteen members out of 9 countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Rumania, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Finland) attended the workshop.

Samantha Shan, VP finance of WFOT explained the Minimum Standards with special focus on the minimum requirements for Fieldwork. It was soon clear the contexts in which educators have to operate is very different. In Germany, the schools have according to the law to provide students with 1700 hours of fieldwork, which exceeds the 1000 hours of WFOT by far. In Romania, national laws make it hard to comply with the standards. In other countries (Latvia, Estonia) there were problems where hospitals which could provide fieldwork, had to be paid for these services. In Spain and Germany, regional laws and/or regulations make it complex to find a common national standard when organizing fieldwork. Some participants thought the Standards were out of date and should be more focused on inter professional practice

Samantha explained that recognition an educational programme can be given if applicants provide a strategic plan that explains the steps that will be undertaken to reach the criteria of the Minimum Standards.

Stephanie Saenger, president of COTEC emphasized the fieldwork is a major issue for both practice and education and should be tackled together. She suggested more information could be systematically gathered from COTEC members to collect best practices.

The workshop was originally targeted at supporting Eastern European countries in establishing occupational therapy education. A question was raised about COTEC and ENOTHEs strategy to give this support. As neither ENOTHE nor COTEC have limited means and manpower, the current strategy is to facilitate communication with people, institutions and organizations in our networks to find the most adequate support that can be provided. As was shown in the keynote address of Giedre Kavaliauskiene the development of a successful OT program is based on many different forms of support.



Interview with a Member of the Executive Committee

On October 23, 2015 Elitsa Velikova, a member of the Executive Committee of COTEC, gave an interview at the invitation of the Bulgarian National Television on the occasion of the 21st annual meeting of ENOTHE held on the eve of the World Day of occupational therapy. During the conversation Elitsa Velikova explain the essence of occupational therapy for the audience in order to promote and achieve an understanding of the profession among the community. She emphasized that the occupational therapy should be considered as an integral part of the comprehensive rehabilitation of people with disabilities or special needs.

The video is available at: <http://bnt.bg/predavanyia/dobro-utro-s-bnt2/novi-mikrobusi-za-hora-s-dvigatelni-problemi>



Elitsa Velikova on the Bulgarian National Television

COTEC & ENOTHE Joint Meeting

The COTEC Executive Committee met in Galway with the ENOTHE board. Due to personal circumstances Anne Lawson-Porter and Renée Oltman were not able to attend. The items on the agenda were related to the first joint COTEC ENOTHE Congress in Galway, joint future projects and the strategy for OT-EU.

Quite some OT EU relevant subjects were identified and it was decided the OT-EU strategy will be prepared by a working group of presidents and vice presidents of both organisations. Both organisations will work together on OT-EU workshops to be presented at the COTEC-ENOTHE Congress in Galway in June 2016.

The next joint meeting will be held in Abcoude, The Netherlands in January 2016.



COTEC and ENOTHE Presidents



All looking at the COTEC-ENOTHE

Congress 2016 venue

1st COTEC-ENOTHE Joint Congress, June 15-19, 2016

The first joint Congress of COTEC and ENOTHE will take place in Galway, Ireland, June 15th -19th 2016. The theme of the congress is 'Connecting' and this is the first congress which will offer an opportunity draw on expertise from education, practice, research and policy on the same platform. More than 800 abstracts were submitted and these will be reviewed by the end of January 2016 when the authors will be notified. One aim of the congress organisers is to make this congress accessible to as many people as possible: Fees have been kept as low as possible, budget accommodation is available for those who choose this option and reduced fees are available for students and delegates from lower income countries. Registration is now open, Early bird registration with lower fees will close February 28th, 2016. Please read more www.cotec-enothe2016.com



Interview with Prof. Agnes Shiel

Prof. Agnes Shiel from the National University of Ireland, who is a Chair of the COTEC-ENOTHE Congress 2016 Committee was interviewed by Patric Duletzki. Listen to the following podcast to get the latest news from one of the organizers.

The interview is available at the COTEC website: <http://www.coteceurope.eu/?cat=7> or by the following link: <https://soundcloud.com/ot-podcast/prof-agnes-shiel-about-the-joint-congress-2016-in-galway>



Professor Agnes Shiel,

Chair of the Congress Committee,

COTEC-ENOTHE 2016

CHRODIS



COTEC Executive Committee is very grateful Giedre Kavaliauskiene, president of the Lithuanian Association of Occupational Therapists was willing and able to represent COTEC at the Conference „Joining Forces in Health Promotion to Tackle the Burden of Chronic Diseases in Europe“ Vilnius(Lithuania), 24- 25 November 2015.

Giedre promoted the role of Occupational Therapy and wrote an interesting report.

Quote:” The message was well received by the representatives, they agree that occupational therapists must have the role in planning strategies of health promotion and diseases prevention.”

One recommendation: ‘Occupational therapists must have their place in implementing already existing and in the process of developing new strategies in health promotion and diseases prevention.’

Read Giedre Kavaliauskiene's report [here](#).



Giedre Kavaliauskiene and Vanessa Challinor at CHRODIS

WHO European Region and Mental Health Consortium

On December 8, Patric Duletzki and Stephanie Saenger followed an invitation of the World Health Organization to participate in a meeting of Staff groups active in mental health in the European Region.

This meeting at the WHO office in Copenhagen was the first of yet to be planned consecutive sessions for presidents of European associations acting on behalf of occupational therapists (COTEC), psychologists (EFPA), psychiatrists (EPA), mental health nurses (Horatio), and social workers (IFSW). Never before presidents of these five organizations met.

In a very pleasant and open atmosphere everyone was able to express views, expectations and ideas. All participants showed interest in each other's work and expressed a strong will to collaborate with each other and the WHO.

The parties decided to issue a letter of intent to announce their willingness to collaborate on a European level on issues regarding education, research and practice and committed themselves to disseminate WHO's work.

The new consortium will

- Support and disseminate the just published WHO report with recommendations on refugees and mental health
- Comment the recommendations paper on mental health in Europe
- Officially announce the collaboration and alliances on each other's websites
- Invite each other at conferences and symposia
- Look into possibilities of organizing a summer school for 5 participants of each profession

WHO will make a draft of the letter of intent, send out a report for the members to give feedback and start a survey to collect numbers of professionals working in Mental Health.

A second meeting will be planned in six-month time.

For occupational therapy this is a great chance to enhance their profile in relation to other professions in mental health and to work with WHO office for the European region. As members you will in time receive a short survey regarding occupational therapy in mental health.

To read more: [Mental Health Action plan WHO European Region](#)



COTEC Signed Glasgow Declaration



Alzheimer Europe launched the Glasgow Declaration on 20 October 2015, the same day it was adopted unanimously by delegates from 26 AE member organisations.

The Glasgow Declaration calls for the creation of a European *Dementia* Strategy and national strategies in every country in Europe. The signatories also call upon world leaders to recognise *dementia* as a public health priority and to develop a global action plan on dementia.

COTEC was happy to sign the Glasgow Declaration and encourages National Associations and individual OT's to sign the declaration.

Find more at the COTEC website <http://www.coteceurope.eu/?cat=1>

and <http://www.alzheimer-europe.org/Policy-in-Practice2/Glasgow-Declaration-2014>

AOTI Celebrates its 50th Birthday !



On Friday 16th October 2015 the Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland, AOTI held an event in Dublin to celebrate its 50th birthday.

Among invited guests were two of the original founding members of the Association – Sr. Eugene and Mrs. Anna King. Also invited and in attendance was Ms. Stephanie Saenger, COTEC President, who emphasised in her speech the impressive achievements of AOTI and the continuing important and loyal contribution of the Irish Association to COTEC. In the beautiful Thomas Prior Hall in Ballsbridge, Dublin, with over 200 occupational therapists gathered on the night for many hours of chat, remember old times, socialise and network. The slideshow of pictures of the past was very popular and initiated a lot of conversation and laughter and new pictures were taken by the professional photographer.

The Association looks forward positively to the next 50 years and all the challenges the years will bring.

Read more about the history and achievements of AOTI [here](#).

See more pictures from the Celebration [here](#).



COTEC President Stephanie Saenger
giving a speech

Phil Dunne.

Representative of AOTI to COTEC



The two presidents Stephanie
Saenger and Pauline Burke

Job Market in UK



Inaugural College of Occupational Therapy job fair a resounding success

The first College of Occupational Therapy job fair was held in October, attracting 89 delegates and 22 employers. Focused on recruiting OTs for London, the one day fair saw one occupational therapist offered a job at a leading NHS London hospital during the event. Delegates attended from as far afield as Ireland, Holland and Malta and of those who responded to COT's survey 87 per cent rated the event good or excellent.

The event took place at COT's office in London attracting employers from NHS health trusts and local authorities in the Capital. One employer said in anonymised feedback that the day offered a 'great atmosphere and good chance to meet other networks and many prospective employees,' while another said it proved a 'great opportunity to have so many OTs in one place.'

The fair was held in recognition of the occupational therapy recruitment crisis affecting the Capital. Julia Skelton, director of professional operations at COT, said: 'We were delighted by the response and understand that further recruitment leads are being followed up. Following feedback we are considering future events for bands 6 and 7 and experienced OTs in London. We hope this approach goes some way to help ease the recruitment crisis in London.'



See more: [JOBS FAIR 2015](#)

Julia Skelton
Director of Professional Operations
College of Occupational Therapists

EPF Patient Empowerment Campaign at the National Congress of Ergotherapie Nederland

At the National Congress of Ergotherapie Nederland (EN) the Committee for International affairs supported the EPF Patient Empowerment Campaign (<http://www.eu-patient.eu/>) in a simple but effective way.

All participants were asked to have their picture taken with the E5 (Expertise, Education, Equality, Experience and Engagement) Pledge. Every Occupational Therapist was willing and enthusiastic. As they all recognised the importance of Patient Empowerment and the connection with OT not much explanation was needed. As one of the OT's stated: "Nobody with any sense can be against this!"

All the pictures were tweeted on the COTEC twitter account and EPF has tweeted the pictures as well. #PatientsprescribeE, @eupatientsforum @COTECEurope

The COTEC Position Statement on OT and the 5E's were available on the stand and a short article was published in the Dutch Journal of Occupational Therapy (EM).

COTEC encourages all National Associations to support the EPF Campaign, see for information the COTEC website <http://www.coteceurope.eu>



**COTEC AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS IN EUROPE
SUPPORT THE INITIATIVE OF EPF ON PATIENTS
EMPOWERMENT**



Taking the pictures

EFPC Conference

The conference of the European Forum for Primary Care 2016 will be held in Riga from the 4-6 September. The title of the conference is *"Crosscutting Informal Care and Professional Primary Care"*.

For more information:

<http://www.euprimarycare.org/riga/efpc-2016-riga-conference-4-6-september>



european forum
for primary care

National Emission Ceiling (NEC) Environment Council Meeting

On initiative of EPHA COTEC co-signed an open letter to the NEC with the objective to raise awareness on public health recommendations for strong national emission ceilings (NEC) Directive.

Read the [letter](#).

Mette Kolsrud New Position

COTEC would like to congratulate Mette Kolsrud on her new position as the Political Adviser in the Department of Seniors and Health and Social Services in the City Government of Oslo, the capital of Norway. Ms. Kolsrud is the former President of the Norwegian Association of Occupational Therapists, Ergoterapeutene. She was the President of COTEC 2012-2013 and Vice President 2009-2012.

Read more about Mette's current work [here](#).

COTEC Secretarial News

COTEC website and email addresses

The new COTEC website was launched in October and content will be updated and amended. The web address is www.coteceurope.eu

Also the Executive Committee emails have been changed, they now are firstname.lastname@coteceurope.eu

4th COTEC General Assembly 2016

The 4th COTEC General Assembly will be held in Galway, Ireland, June 18th, 2016. This time there will not be a separate Governance day program as the GA is part of the COTEC-ENOTHE 2016 Congress program. Call for agenda items will be sent out in February and meeting papers will be circulated two months prior the meeting by April 18th.

COTEC Executive Committee Elections

According to the Constitution the Executive Committee of COTEC consists of 6 positions: President, Vice President, VP Finance, VP Administration and two Members. Vice President Finance, Renée Oltman announced she will leave her position mid-term at the next General Assembly, so there will be elections for the VP Finance at the GA 2016. The term of office for the VP Finance is four years with a possibility to be re-elected in the same position for a term of two years. The Call for nominations has been circulated November 22nd, 2015 and nominations are asked by March 1st, 2016. The Election process and Elections at the meeting will be conducted by the appointed COTEC Electoral Committee: Mariliis Pöld, Elisabete Roldão and Petra Schwab.

COTEC Executive Committee meetings

The Executive Committee has a Skype meeting once every month. The next Skype meetings are scheduled for Thursday, January 14th and Thursday, February 11th, 2016. For agenda items, proposals and exact times please contact anu.soderstrom@coteceurope.eu

COTEC Executive Committee next face-to-face meeting will take place in Amsterdam, January 21-23, 2016.

COTEC

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Wishes all a warm and cozy winter season



and a good start of a great 2016!