

# COTEC

Council of Occupational Therapists  
for the European Countries

## Newsletter

**June 2016**

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## Editorial



2015 will be remarkable to me, because this is the year when I became a member of the COTEC family.

My involvement in the Executive Committee began last year during the 3rd General Assembly, held in Riga, Latvia. Joining COTEC Executive Committee was a challenge because I belong to a country where occupational therapy has only 10 years of history, but this was also a great opportunity for me because I am very interested in furthering the occupational therapy career not only in Bulgaria, but in Europe.

I have participated in 3 interim meetings and monthly skype conversations full with different discussions which has given me great insight into the needs of the OT career and how COTEC operates. The opportunity to collaborate with National

Associations and organizations across Europe has allowed me to build relationships and gain information and new knowledge which makes me more effective in my obligations.

As a member of the Executive Committee, I am looking forward to continue my work in order to help making the OT more visible and valued in Europe!

And of course, one of my most important tasks is making the newsletter for you in order to keep you informed about the COTEC activities.

*Enjoy the articles in this edition reflecting different events and the successful teamwork between the national associations and the Executive Committee!*

**Elitsa Velikova, Member of the COTEC Executive Committee**

# 1<sup>st</sup> Joint COTEC-ENOTHE Congress Galway June 2016

The first Joint COTEC-ENOTHE Congress, Galway, June 16-19, 2016

The first Joint COTEC-ENOTHE Congress was the culmination of four years of consistent hard work, steered by NUI Galway in collaboration with AOTI and the COTEC and ENOTHE organisations. And what a Congress it turned out to be! Over 900 delegates, from 45 countries across the world, came together to hear key note addresses from Professor Marion Walker, Professor Jan de Maeseneer, Professor Salvador Simo Algado, Professor Corey Keyes and Professor Mary Law who gave her last international keynote address before retiring. Daraine Mulvihill, Sports Reporter, gave an inspiring address to end the Congress, explaining how she managed her life and career after multiple amputations following meningitis.



There were a large number of oral presentations, workshops, symposia and poster presentations – truly something for everyone, whatever their professional interest. The Scientific Programme was well supported by exhibitors and also Market Places where institutions and individuals promoted their ideas for education and research.

The theme of the Congress was 'Connecting – Education, Practice, Research and Policy' and this was very successfully achieved; not only in the Scientific Programme but in the social programme too, made possible by a true Irish welcome including good food, good music and dance and above all friendliness and helpfulness.

Professor Agnes Shiel and the Congress Team at NUI Galway and the Association of Occupational Therapy in Ireland (AOTI) are to be congratulated for a very successful Congress.



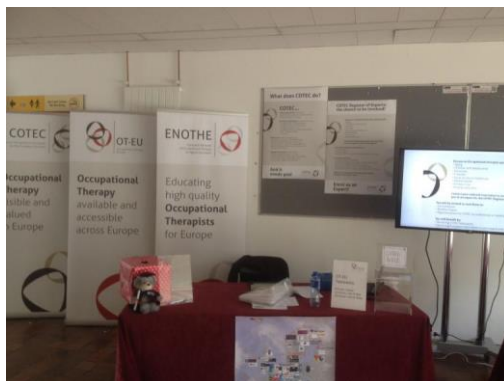
*Welcome to the Congress*

In closing the 2016 Congress, the hosts of the next Congress in 2020 were announced.

***Book the dates early in your diary for October 2020 in Prague.***

For more information, please visit:

[www.cotec-enothe2020.com](http://www.cotec-enothe2020.com)



*COTEC-ENOTHE Stand*



*Bags and Programme*

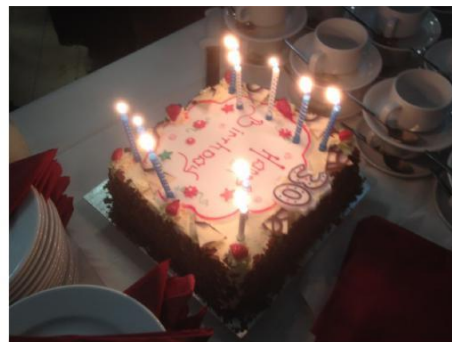
## COTEC General Assembly 2016

The 4th COTEC General Assembly was held in Galway, Ireland adjoined with the 1st COTEC-ENOTHE Joint Congress, June 18th, 2016.

21 out of 30 COTEC members were represented in person and three members by proxy at the General Assembly. For further details, please read [here](#).



*General Assembly '16*



*The Birthday Cake*

## First Register of Experts Meeting

On Friday the 17th of June 2016 12 experts and COTEC's executive committee met for the first time in Galway to exchange ideas about a discussion paper proposed by COTEC. The discussion paper contained procedures about when to make use of experts, about possibilities for experts to represent COTEC, and how experts can be reimbursed for their efforts.

All in all the feedback received seemed positive with room for improvement in certain areas. Most important for the experts is an effective use of communication channels between COTEC and experts, and amongst experts themselves. Catchy e-mail subject lines are as important as web-infrastructure to facilitate discussion about and work on different tasks. To answer public consultations on behalf of COTEC some experts raised the importance of a leader that coordinates available resources in the respective groups. Also a decision-building process needs to be clarified. Skype-meetings can be arranged amongst experts to answer calls and consultations. Members of the meeting responded to the suggestion of writing a report for the COTEC newsletter on a quarterly basis, that it would be more important to write something for COTEC's newfeed. The reports however may be used in the newsletter as well to reach recipients that visit coteceurope.eu unregularly. Despite reimbursement for "travel, accommodation and/ or other plausible costs like fees for attendance" for experts representing COTEC on important events, it is important for them to appear namely on COTEC's website. Despite acknowledging the expert groups effort it also enhances the expert's credibility. Input of this meeting will be taking into account when drafting a second discussion paper. We invite all experts of the register to comment on this again, leading us to a final statement on the use of the experts register.



***The register of experts consists of experts nominated by member associations of COTEC in the fields of Mental Health, Aging, Dementia, Children and Adolescents, Poverty Reduction, Primary Care, Equal Access to Healthcare and e-Health.***

## Occupational Therapy Europe (OT-EU) Launch

COTEC and ENOTHE have, for some time, been working towards greater collaboration to ensure a strong Occupational Therapy voice in Europe around our common aims of increased visibility, accessibility, availability and value to the citizens of Europe.

The first Joint Congress in Galway in June was one outcome of this collaboration, along with the launch of the OT-EU web portal with links to the specific interests of COTEC and ENOTHE. A third area of collaboration included eight OT-EU workshops at the Congress on issues of policy or professional interest which support the aims stated above. The workshops covered the following topics:

- Evidence Based Practice
- Primary Care
- eHealth
- Refugees
- Emerging Areas of Practice
- Fieldwork Education
- Influencing Political Decision Making
- Developing OT-EU Research

OT-EU will analyse the outcomes of the workshops over the next few months and this will help to set the priorities and direction of travel for OT-EU over the next year or two.

COTEC and ENOTHE are very grateful to the workshop presenters from across Europe who gave their time and expertise in facilitating the discussion of these topics.





## OT-EU Website

A collaboration of COTEC and ENOTHE members worked hard to finish the OT-EU website just in time for the first joint COTEC-ENOTHE Congress.

Occupational Therapy Europe is not only the first address to inform service users and stakeholders in health and social services across Europe about occupational therapy, but also a resource for occupational therapists. The Website serves as an online representation of a unified occupational therapy voice in the European arena.

Go and visit [www.oteurope.eu](http://www.oteurope.eu), do not hesitate to send us your feedback.

## Meeting with WFOT, COTEC Executive Committee and ENOTHE



Meeting with WFOT



Previous to the joint Congress and the COTEC General Assembly, COTEC Executive Committee had their 'traditional' meeting with WFOT. As Samantha Shan, the official link person between WFOT and COTEC could not be present, it was a pleasure to talk to the WFOT president Marilyn Pattison. COTEC Executive Committee invited President and Vice President of ENOTHE to attend.

For a short report read [here](#).

## COTEC Picture Poster Competition 2016

There were two entries to the 2016 Picture poster competition with the theme "COTEC Connecting OTs for 30 years – what will the future look like?" Posters were on display near COTEC-ENOTHE stand area at NUI Galway during the COTEC-ENOTHE 2016 Congress and all Congress participants were asked to give their vote. The winner of the competition received 51% of the votes given. The winner is **Gabriella Figliuono from Italy** and she will get a free registration to the COTEC-ENOTHE 2020 Congress in Prague. **Congratulations!**



The Winning Poster

## COTEC 30 years Quiz

All COTEC-ENOTHE 2016 Congress participants got the COTEC 30 years Quiz in their Congress bags and were asked to return the quiz slip to COTEC Stand during the Congress. All returned quiz slips attended the raffle with a possibility to win a free ticket to COTEC-ENOTHE 2020 Congress in Prague. An independent assistant drew the lucky quiz slip and the winner of the free registration is **Erna Schönthaler from Austria. Congratulations!**

## New COTEC Vice President (VP) Finance



**Eva Denysiuk**

First I want to thank the General Assembly for supporting me and giving their trust by electing me as new VP Finance. I am glad for the opportunity to work together to make European Occupational Therapy visible, valued, accessible.

I will do my best to contribute to this vision with the competencies I acquired through my work experience and formal education. Let me give you a short overview.

During my entry-level training in Germany I got interested and involved in the National Association's work. Already as a student I had the chance to inform others about OT, for example on a fair for rehabilitation. I always was an active member and took part in the yearly National Assembly and Congress. Sadly due to time constraints I didn't take a position on a board up till now.

Time constraints were the main reason for this as I started to do a part-time Bachelor program in Heerlen, Netherlands during my last year of training in Germany.

I started to work as an OT in 2010 in a mental health hospital in Aachen, Germany, where I am still employed on a part-time basis. My specialization is prevocational training. These knowledge and skills I learned in practice I brought back to fresh students when I started to take up a role in education. Through this position it was also possible for me to introduce the good and important work of OT associations to the students. Again, I took the European approach and work in education in Germany and the Netherlands.

Real involvement with COTEC started during my studies for my master programme: European Public Health at Maastricht University. The programme introduced me to policy making on EU level, to health issues that matter to the whole of Europe (and the world), cross-border healthcare and the "health in all policies"-approach to name a few. I was hooked and got in contact with the German delegate Renée to think about ways to put my new knowledge into practice for OT.

Besides my "German virtues" which help me to deal with facts and figures in my VP Finance position, my professional interest as an OT includes health literacy, empowerment and shared-decision making especially (but not exclusively) in the field of mental health.

I am looking forward to fill my position and contribute in a meaningful way. I wish to put my knowledge into practice together with my fellow members of the Executive Committee, the General Assembly but also with individual OTs who have understood that they can make a difference. In this regard I want to thank my colleagues at Alexianer Aachen GmbH and Zuyd Hogeschool who encouraged me to apply for this position and support me on an everyday basis.

## News from COTEC Member Associations

In every COTEC Newsletter issue starting in this issue there will be short news from a number of COTEC Member associations included.

Five associations have sent in their news to this June 2016 issue.

[ErgoAustria](#) describes the revision of the occupational profile of the profession and the registration of the profession which is on the way.

[The Cyprus Association of Occupational Therapists](#) announces the development of the first Occupational Therapy Educational Program in Cyprus and share news about proposals to renew the registration process of OTs as well as development of a Professional Development Unit System.

[Estonian Association of Occupational Therapists](#) announces current policy developments and the graduation of the 100th Occupational Therapist in the country.

[The Hellenic Association of Ergotherapists](#) is to become a legal entity and their proposal on OT service being as equally refunded to clients as other health care services is on the way to approval.

[AITO, Italy](#) announces the new President and Executive Committee and news goals that have been set and describes recently celebrated Italian OT Day.





# Final Consultation of the European Framework for Action on Coordinated Integrated Health Services Delivery

May 2-3 COTEC president Stephanie Saenger and ENOTHE Vice president were present at Final Consultation of the European Framework for Action on Coordinated Integrated Health Services Delivery. President of COTEC was invited to have a 5 minutes' presentation at the panel on the occupational therapy perspective on Comprehensive services, which was very well received. The text was sent to WHO for further consideration and published on the COTEC [website](#).

Contacts were made and or strengthened with e.g. European Forum of Primary Care (EFPC), European Brain Council, Eurocarers, editor Primary Health Care Research and Development asked for a publication and International Foundation for Integrated Care requested a publication as well.



## 16th International Conference on Integrated Care

From May 23rd to 25th 2016 the 16th International Conference on Integrated Care took place in Barcelona. The main theme of the Conference was about: "A movement for Change: Enabling People-Centred and Integrated Health and Social Care".

Mieke Gerritsma (COTEC Expert Group Primary Care) and her colleague Laia Sobany, occupational therapists in Spain (Catalonia) were present and answered our request to make a short [report](#) about this also for occupational therapists important event.



## WHO Meeting of Representatives of Groups Active in Mental Health in the European Region

On June 7th COTEC president attended the second WHO Meeting of representatives of Groups active in Mental Health in the European Region.

This time the President and the Vice President of the International Organisation of Physical therapy in Mental Health (IOPTMH) were invited and joined the consortium. Amongst other issues the consensus document (earlier referred to as Letter of Intent) was discussed and will be published in September.

[Read more](#).



# High Level Policy Roundtable: “Making Empowerment a Reality: Patients as Partners”

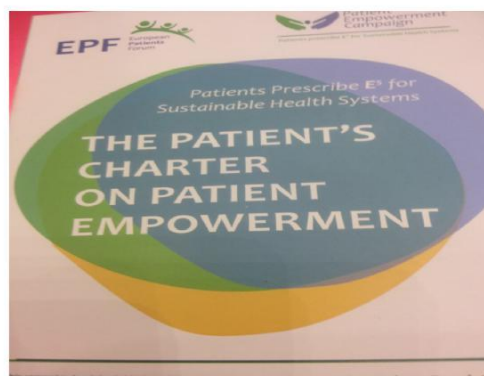
On June 22<sup>nd</sup> COTEC president attended the **High Level Policy Roundtable: “Making Empowerment a Reality: Patients as Partners”** at the European Parliament in Brussels.

In this meeting around 80 participants, representatives of patients’ organisations, civil societies, Industry, press, MEPs, Deputy, permanent representative to the EU were present. Occupational therapy was the only health profession present.

Read more [here](#).

What can you do?

Please send in best practices on Occupational Therapy and Patient Empowerment to [stephanie.saenger@coteceurope.eu](mailto:stephanie.saenger@coteceurope.eu)



## COTEC Secretarial News

### 5th COTEC General Assembly 2017

The 5th COTEC General Assembly will be held in Vienna, Austria. Exact dates will be announced soon. Agenda and papers will be circulated two months prior to the meeting.

COTE Governance day will be held the preceeding day and the Executive Committee will prepare a program for this. All enquiries and requests concerning the GA should be addressed to VP Administration Anu Söderström.

### COTEC Newsletter

Starting from the June 2016 issue the Newsletter will always include news from COTEC Member associations. A group of Members will be asked to submit news to each issue and all 30 Members will be given space in one Newsletter every year. Members who will be asked to contribute to the September Newsletter will be contacted with instructions soon.

For any other comments or feedback related to the Newsletter, please contact Executive Committee Member Elitsa Velikova, [elitsa.velikova@coteceurope.eu](mailto:elitsa.velikova@coteceurope.eu).

### COTEC Executive Committee meetings

The Executive Committee has a Skype meeting every month. The next Skype meetings are scheduled for Thursday, July 21st and Thursday, August 18th and Thursday September 8th 2016. For agenda items and other issues or proposals please contact [anu.soderstrom@coteceurope.eu](mailto:anu.soderstrom@coteceurope.eu). The meetings are scheduled to start at 18:00 CET all the above mentioned dates.

COTEC Executive Committee next face-to-face meeting will take place in Amsterdam September 22-24, 2016. During the meeting Executive Committee will also meet with ENOTHE Board.

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***Wishes all a wonderful summer!***

