

COTEC Annual Report 2013 - Foreword

This Annual Report consists of two parts. The first part describes the main challenges of the year 2013 and the second part is the report of the actions taken in relation to the Action Plan 2013.

The Annual report which was presented at the 1st COTEC General Assembly in Malta, Oct. 2013 included the outcomes of 2012 and those of 2013.

The Annual report presented at the GA of 2014 will cover the year 2013 and will therefore repeat much of the annual report given in Malta. It will however mean that the archived records will be correct.

The new Executive Committee started their work in November and met face to face for the first time in February 2014 and took a lot of action. In light of this an Interim report for 2014 will be given separately.

For clarification, the presence of an asterisk (*) in this report indicates that more information is to be found in the Interim report and some of the items will be on the Agenda of the General Assembly in Nijmegen.

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In 2013 there were two COTEC meetings; the last COTEC Council meeting in Copenhagen 11 – 12 of April 2013 and the first General Assembly in Malta in October 2013.

In advance of the Council meetings the Executive Committee met for two days. Interim meetings for the Executive Committee were held in Helsinki 7-10 February, and in Zagreb 14-15 of June 2013. The interim meeting in Helsinki also included a meeting with the WFOT President, Sharon Brintnell and the Vice President Finance and link person to COTEC Samantha Shann, and the ENOTHE board. At the meeting in Zagreb the President of ENOTHE, Anne Lawson Porter, was present for two days. Regular Skype meetings between Executive Committee members were held in addition to the meetings outlined above.

During the period of 2013 the members of COTEC Executive were:

President, Mette Kolsrud, Norway

Vice President, Renée Oltman, Germany, elected in April 2013

Honorary Secretary, Saša Radic, Croatia, until June 2013.

Treasurer, Maria Daniela Farrugia, Malta

Link person to the ENOTHE board, Stephanie Saenger, The Netherlands, served as a full board member.

In Malta, October 2013, the first General Assembly elected the new COTEC Executive Committee to serve for the following four years:

President, Stephanie Saenger

Vice president, Anne Lawson Porter

Vice president Administration, Anu Söderström

Vice President Finance, Renée Oltman

Member, Maria Daniela Farrugia

Member, Helena Cronebäck

The work of the Executive Committee was characterized by four main challenges in 2013.

1. The ambition to be more visible and active in European health- and welfare politics

COTEC became a legal entity in 2012, with the intention as a founding NGO, to seek out more opportunities to work with other organisations concerned with health and welfare politics in Europe. COTEC was successful in becoming a member of two European organisations: European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and European Forum for Primary Care (EFPC)

COTEC Executive was also successful in securing a meeting with Mrs. Paula Duarte Gaspar, member of the Cabinet of Health and Consumer Policy and Mrs. Katja Neubauer, deputy head of Unit of Healthcare system. This was the first meeting for COTEC on this high level in EU and a number of actions emerged from this e.g. the need to be on the Transparency Register, the need to identify key advocates for COTEC's causes.

2. Restructuring of the organisation, and cooperation with ENOTHE

Restructuring the organisation made a big step forward in 2013 and resulted in the first General Assembly in October 2013 in Malta. The Council adopted a political program for 2012-2016 in Copenhagen which gave direction for the work. Since then a description of a new organisational model and necessary policy documents have been made and are adopted. The latter was adopted at the Council meeting in Copenhagen in May 2013, and the new organisation was established with General Assembly in October 2013.

Parallel to this restructuring of COTEC, the cooperation with ENOTHE has been strengthened. The two organisations have agreed on the goal that there needs to be one clear voice on behalf of Occupational Therapy in Europe. The cooperation is developing well, with several joint working/expert groups and a constructive dialogue on a new OT-Europe identity/voice.

3. Strengthening communication with the Member Associations

The creation of the COTEC Newsletter has been a major step forward to achieving better communication with the Member Associations. The first COTEC Newsletter was sent out in February 2013, the fourth in November 2013. Another change is to send information directly to the Associations and not through the delegate, although the delegate is copied in to these direct communications at the delegates' requests. Members were also asked to give input for the Action plan for 2014. Although some actions were received it is hoped that Member Associations will influence the development of the Annual Action Plan more intentionally in the future.

4. Changes to the Executive during 2013 and the reorganisation of COTEC impacted on the Executive Committee's capacity and therefore ability to complete many of the actions planned for 2013

The fourth big challenge in 2013 was the lack of human resources in the Executive. The previous President had stepped down at the end of 2012 and the Hon. Secretary in spring 2013 and this led to a dramatic drop in the Executive's capacity. This led to the recognition that an Executive with only four persons is very vulnerable. Fortunately, the person elected as a link person to the ENOTHE board (Stephanie Saenger) served as a full member of the Executive. Having recognised the vulnerability of a four person executive, six persons were elected to the new Executive Committee at the GA in Malta.

REPORT: Action plan for COTEC 2013

1. Values of Occupational Therapy in Europe

GOAL

Human rights and diversity

ACTION

Establish contact with the WHO Europe together with WFOT

REPORT

It was clarified that COTEC cannot enter WHO separately as a NGO, because all NGOs working with WHO have to be multi-regional organisations. The joint meeting with WFOT in Helsinki discussed a common strategy and cooperation for WHO's work in Europe.

COTEC intends to work more towards European issues in WHO as a regional member of WFOT.*

Participate at the WHO congress in Helsinki summer 2013

WFOT decided that this congress was not at a high priority and would not attend the WHO congress in Helsinki. Therefore COTEC could not participate alongside WFOT in this congress.

Inclusion and participation

Meeting with European Forum for Primary Care about cooperation and membership. The EFPC is focused on inclusion and rights for all citizens on primary care.

COTEC is now an associate member of EFPC, and has urged its members to join EFPC as national members.

In October 2013 Marije Bolt, Occupational Therapist working in primary care in Amsterdam was appointed as the representative of COTEC & ENOTHE to the Advisory board of the EFPC. She started her work with a successful promoting of the profession in EFPC.

2. Health and social affairs in the European countries

GOAL

Health and welfare for the European population

ACTION

Participate in the EPHA meeting and learn how EPHA can be useful in the political work of COTEC

Approve a position statement on OT

Make a new strategy plan for "COTEC goes EU 2013-2016"

REPORT

On the 3th September 2013, Stephanie Saenger representing COTEC, attended the EPHA General assembly. On September 4th and 5th the EPHA annual conference was held with the theme "[Brave New World, inclusive growth and wellbeing or vested interests and lost generations?](#)" The two day programme was interesting and covered a lot of important issues.

COTEC representative has attended the conference and utilized both knowledge and network opportunities.

A position statement on community based occupational therapy was planned to be finalised at the Copenhagen meeting by a working group. The working group concluded that they could not carry out the task. In order to represent occupational therapy in its best way in the Advisory Board, Marije Bolt developed a short survey for all COTEC member associations. Although COTEC had already collected very useful information about Primary Care/community based OT in the Summary of the Profession and also in the concept Position Paper of the working group of Gunner Gamborg (February 2013), more detailed information was needed from Member Associations.. The COTEC Executive was very disappointed that only three countries responded to the survey.

EU strategy plan was made and presented in the action plan 2014 at the general assembly in Malta. The General Assembly gave a mandate to the new elected Executive Committee to adapt the action plan 2014 according to the remarks made in the GA and the budget.*

Mr. Tonio Borg, the European Commissioner for Health and

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Sustainable health and social care	<p>Participate in open discussions related to EU health strategy</p> <p>Make and distribute information on OT relevant to the Health Strategy 2020</p>	<p>Consumer Policy, was invited to be key speaker on the Health strategy 2020 at the seminar day at the General Assembly in Malta. He sent a video message. Other representatives of EU spoke at the seminar day.</p> <p>COTEC has not found open discussions related to The EU health strategy to participate in 2013.*</p> <p>Three representatives from COTEC Executive - Ms Mette Kolsrud and Ms Stephanie Saenger, and ENOTHE - Ms Anne Lawson Porter, met with Member of EU Cabinet in Health and Consumer Policy Mrs Paula Duarte Gaspar and Deputy Head of Unit Healthcare system, Mrs Katja Neubauer the 12th of March. The representatives gave a short power point presentation on COTEC, OT in Europe and OT's contribution to the health and welfare for inhabitants in Europe, and especially on the strategy for Active and Healthy Aging. This was the first meeting for COTEC at this high level in EU.</p>
New assistive technology	<p>Make a statement on the European Year of the Brain 2014 for relevant stakeholders</p>	<p>The presentation was published in the newsletter number 2. A statement on the European Year of the Brain 2014 was planned together with ENOTHE. A draft brief for a joint expert group is produced, but no working group was established.</p>

3. Occupational Therapy Practice and Development

GOAL	ACTION	REPORT
Qualification and standards for the Occupational Therapy profession	Work on recommendations for specialisation in OT in Europe	A document was presented in the Copenhagen meeting, and a group was established to work further on the guidelines. In Malta it was decided the new Executive Committee would decide how this item will be presented in the action plan for 2014
Education and professional developments	Develop a common website with ENOTHE	A joint working group is working on a common website. Funding is allocated on the budget for a common website. Planned launch in 2014. *
	Establish expert group together with ENOTHE on relevant topics	The funding for joint groups is allocated. Joint expert group on research is established in 2013. Report was given in ENOTHE meeting York and GA in Malta. Joint feedback was given by ENOTHE/COTEC *
	Strengthen the cooperation with WFOT	WFOT, represented by President Sharon Brintnell and Vice-president Finance and link person to COTEC Samantha Shann, ENOTHE and COTEC had a joint meeting in Helsinki. All agreed upon strengthening the cooperation for topics relevant for Europe. It was confirmed COTEC is a regional group of WFOT. A communication chain with WFOT and ENOTHE is being worked upon.*
Research	Work further to strengthen the cooperation with ENOTHE on the topic of research	Joint expert group on research is established in 2013. Their assignment is to design a structure and action plan for how OT research and researchers can be represented in a sustainable way in the context of OT EU, to ensure the legitimacy and credibility of Occupational Therapy in Europe. Report was given in ENOTHE meeting York and GA in Malta. *

4. Labour market

GOAL

Mobility
New jobs

ACTION

Develop an example list of new jobs for OTs in different countries

REPORT

No tasks have been carried out but it is planned that this will be tackled through the new website

5. The organisation

GOAL

Implementing the new organisational model

ACTION

Make a clarification on advantages and costs to have a paid general secretary for some hours a week

Organize the first COTEC General Assembly
Establish the new organisation

REPORT

Further work on clarification of advantages and costs to have a paid general secretary or a paid president for some hours a week will be worked on. An agreement has been established with the German NA to provide secretariat services to COTEC free of charge. Due to the change of the ENOTHE office from Copenhagen to York the discussion on a possible joint secretariat with ENOTHE is postponed till after 4 years. The First General Assembly was arranged in Malta 21-22 of October. Last details of the new structure of the organisation were discussed and approved in Copenhagen. As the proposals for the new fee structure were unacceptable for all members a fee group was established in Malta with an assignment to make proposals to be presented in the 2nd General Assembly. *

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GOAL	ACTION	REPORT
	Strengthen the cooperation with the Member Associations	The executive committee started to send out newsletters to the National Associations after each executive meeting. The first newsletter was sent out after the executive meeting in Helsinki in February. A second and third newsletter was sent out after the Copenhagen meeting in April and the interim meeting in Zagreb in June. The last newsletter was sent out in November.
Communication strategies	Update the website and prepare for a joint website with ENOTHE	The website is still not satisfactorily updated. The website will be updated but it is also characterized by the situation that it is an old fashioned site and we are working on a new common platform with ENOTHE. *
Cooperation with other organisations and networks	Work further with the plan for closer cooperation with ENOTHE	It is decided that there will be sent out Newsletter from the executive committee to the member associations four times a year, which has been achieved.
	COTEC/ENOTHE will make use of the WFOT stand at the WFOT congress in Japan in 2014.	Executive Committee had a joint meeting with ENOTHE board in February in Helsinki. The president of ENOTHE joined the COTEC executive interim meeting in Zagreb in June. There are four joint expert groups at the moment. Supplementary to the work of the ENOTHE link person, close relations and regular communication are established with the ENOTHE president. The first joint meeting is planned in 2014. COTEC executive and ENOTHE board are working on a draft for an OT-EU umbrella 'organisation ' to be implemented in 2016.
	Have a closer cooperation with ER-WFPT	COTEC /ENOTHE have send in a workshop abstract for the WFOT congress. * The vice president of ER-WFPT was invited as a guest speaker at the Council meeting in Copenhagen. Subsequently a short meeting with her and the COTEC executive committee was arranged.

GOAL

Strengthen communication with EU

ACTION

Investigate the benefits of closer cooperation EHF

Meeting with European Forum for Primary Care about cooperation and associate membership.

Use the membership in EPHA and EHF to strengthen the strategy for working towards EU

Develop a strategy in preparation for a further contact with EU institutions

REPORT

Some information on The European Health Forum is investigated. It might be an important organisation, but their meetings are expensive. COTEC has decided not to join their meeting this year due to the costs.

COTEC has become an associate member of EFPC in May 2013. An OT officially representing both ENOTHE and COTEC has been nominated to the advisory board of EFPC. This nominee Marije Bolt has attended the EFPC meeting in Istanbul in September 2013 and was elected to the advisory board.

A questionnaire on OT in Primary Care was sent out to all members with the newsletter, only three National associations answered the call.*

One member of the COTEC executive committee has attended the 4th Annual conference and the General Assembly for EPHA (European Public Health Alliance) in September.

A draft of the EU communication strategy plan has been started and will continue to be worked on. *