

COTEC Annual Report 2019

During its 33rd operational year in 2019, COTEC continued in its quest to make Occupational Therapy visible, valued, accessible and available for all European citizens by supporting its members and by collaborating on a European level on various social and health issues affecting European citizens. Collaboration with other health care organisations and service user organisations was again strengthened and co-operation took more permanent forms.

This was also the first year during which COTEC employed an Office Administrator for the full year, providing administrative support to the Executive Committee as well as COTEC Members. Office support has also brought additional resources to external communication and marketing and Shawn Abela's contribution is greatly appreciated. COTEC Office had also a significant role in administrating the OT-Europe Register of Experts and overseeing that Occupational Therapy Europe graphic guidelines are consistently implemented, and protocols developed to facilitate our work and improve transparency. We have also renewed our membership in the EU Transparency Register that lists organisations that try to influence the law-making and policy implementation process of the EU institutions. This membership gives COTEC exclusive access to meetings relating to policymaking and implementation in the European Union.

COTEC published four newsletters over the year – in March, June, September, and December 2019. The Newsletter remains one of our standard methods of sharing news with our members about the work being undertaken by the Executive Committee. It also serves as a launch pad for our members to share their work and for experts in the OT-Europe Register of Experts to connect with others. The Summary of the Profession 2019 was also published in July 2019 and for the first time included data from our newest member, Polskie Stowarzyszenie Terapii Zajęciowej from Poland.

The Executive Committee presented its work at the 7th Annual General Assembly held in Brussels, Belgium. A new round of elections was held during which Anu Söderström was elected as COTEC President and Sarah Warren as a new Member of the Executive Committee. At the same, COTEC bid farewell to Stephanie Saenger and Patric Duletzki at the end of their terms as COTEC President and Member of the Executive Committee respectively. Thank you, Stephanie, and Patric for your work.

The work carried in 2019 is presented under the four COTEC Strategic Goals underneath. For those interested, a more detailed report of actions is available on request.

I would like to thank all COTEC Members, the past and present members of the Executive Committee for the work done. With everyone's input, COTEC has been able to increase the visibility and value of the profession in Europe and support the work of our Members to influence the availability and accessibility of the profession.



Anu Söderström
COTEC President

Develop political and strategic partnerships locally, nationally, and European wide to increase our presence and visibility in addressing societal issues and to promote an occupational perspective of life.

Members of the Executive Committee and Experts enrolled in the OT-Europe Register of Experts were engaged in and/or represented the profession in the following projects:

Expert representation:

- network for "Improving access to healthcare for vulnerable and underserved groups" by No Body Left Outside Platform
- Annual meeting of the European Delirium Association
- European Cancer Organisation, ECCO, Essential Requirements for Quality Cancer Care article
- 12th European Public Health Conference
- MEP Alliance for Mental Health meeting
- MULTI-ACT Project, an EU-funded project aiming to increase the impact of brain research
- European Forum for Primary Care, EFPC, Advisory board

Executive Committee representation

- European Public Health Association, EUPHA, Public Health Week (participation during the whole week through social media and participation in the Launch event in Brussels)
- 69th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe –statements from Non-State Actors
- Health First Europe, HFE, working group on the healthcare workforce of the future, participated in writing a paper on Digital Health and joined the HFE workshop with a presentation at the EHMA conference
- Member of HFE Executive Board
- Contact with Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe, AAATE); AAATE declaration "Improve Access to Quality Assistive Technology for Realising Fundamental Human Rights and Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in a Fully Inclusive Manner" was endorsed
- Contacts with European Health Professionals Dialogue
- European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy 20th Anniversary
- European Patients' Forum, EPF, Congress
- 2nd International Symposium on Health Literacy in Bielefeld
- 4th European Health Literacy Conference in Dublin

Calls, Consultations and Memberships

- Subscription/Membership at EU Health Policy Platform
- Endorsement/membership "Safe, Healthy Age-Friendly Environments" network
- Membership - Health First Europe (HFE)
- Membership - European Pain Forum
- Consultation: European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 – A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe
- MEP4OT campaign
- Journal Primary Health Care Research & Development - COTEC published two open access articles about OT and Primary Care

- Call for occupational therapists to participate in the Primary care Multiprofessional Researcher network, PRIMORE
- The poll for 2020 European Health Policy Platform topics was responded to

Ensure that COTEC engages with and inspires its member associations and their members to continue to deliver high quality occupational therapy and occupationally based, evidence informed services in existing and emerging areas of practice.

Executive Committee Interim meetings in Prague, Luxembourg and Brussels offered possibilities to meet with the Boards and representatives of three of our Member Associations. In Luxembourg, the Executive Committee together with the Board of ALED had a meeting with the Luxembourg Ministry of Social security. COTEC also received invitations to national congresses/annual meetings from our Members in Austria, Bulgaria, France, Latvia, Poland, and the UK.

COTEC-ENOTHE 2020 Congress planning proceeded with abstract submission and reviewing and the Congress was widely promoted. COTEC Social media accounts were administered by appointed persons and posts and publications were shared frequently. Specific social media campaigns were followed and supported. Through social media, European occupational therapists were invited and encouraged to participate in many projects and issues to which COTEC was invited.

Continue to work towards the development of a sustainable network organisation by improving member engagement and ensuring that every occupational therapist understands the importance of being a member of their national association and pride in belonging to the community of occupational therapy.

COTEC's role as a European Network of occupational therapists is well established and during 2019 we received regular invitations and surveys aimed at reaching occupational therapists for many projects and studies. Invitations for which COTEC did not nominate a representative were forwarded to our profession through Member Associations and / or social media.

COTEC was represented at ANFE's (France) Congress in April, RCOT (UK) Annual conference in June and in March a greeting was sent to ErgoAustria 50 years Anniversary Conference. Our Polish member, PSTZ, requested support on a national issue and Institut de Formation en Ergothérapie at the University Paris-East Créteil (UPEC) launched an international day with COTEC represented. World OT Day was celebrated through a Flash Mob in Brussels the day after COTEC General Assembly.

COTEC Communication strategy was developed further, and communication channels used in various ways. COTEC Members were all in turn invited to share news on COTEC Newsletters and Members were followed in social media.

Based on discussions at the Governance Day and General Assembly a working group on "Good membership" was established and Honorary fellowship and Fellowship scheme was presented at the GA.

To collaborate with ENOTHE and establish a new European umbrella organisation to coordinate and strengthen the impact of Occupational Therapy in Europe

COTEC President and Vice President were members of the Occupational Therapy Europe Coordinating Group and the Vice President co-opted to the ROTOS Standing Committee.

The Coordinating group had regular meetings and a WFOT representative attended some meetings. Preparations for the legal founding process were one of the main objectives of OT-Europe following approval by members of COTEC at the 7th General Assembly in Brussels. Together COTEC and ENOTHE responded to a request from the Panhellenic Association of occupational therapists; COTEC and ENOTHE Offices had regular contacts regarding common issues in order to secure the representation of the profession where necessary. The planning and preparations of the 2nd COTEC-ENOTHE Congress required collaboration and both organisations had representatives in the Scientific and Organisational Committees.

Through the year there were new nominations to the Register of Experts and Experts were invited to represent the profession at several meetings and events. COTEC also invited Experts in several expert areas to contribute to consultations and/or give background information when preparing COTEC presentations. Four Experts were presented in a newly established Meet the Expert -section in COTEC Newsletters