

COTEC Newsletter

Introduction

In this newsletter COTEC Executive committee wants to inform you about the latest developments in COTEC.

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COTEC SUPPORTS DANISH COLLEAGUES

During the Executive committee meeting the COTEC Executive's were informed about the Danish employees in education Lock Out. As the Danish system of negotiation between unions and employers failed to find solutions to the suggested changes in working conditions, the employers/owners of the schools decided to lock out all teachers and employees who are a member of a union. As Occupational therapists also work in education, this prevented them to go to work. The Danish Association for OT's has to pay their salary. The Lock Out had been going on for 1,5 week, and thousands of children and students were not able to go to school.

The Executive decided to change the agenda of the Council meeting in such a way that all Council members were able to join the demonstration and support our Danish colleagues. This was followed up with great enthusiasm. All members, wearing buttons, joined holding their national and some European flag

high! During the walk in between thousands of people they have got a lot of positive attention for both Occupational Therapy and COTEC.

In this way COTEC has shown again it support member associations not only by writing letters but by real action too!



SUCCESS IN GREECE DUE TO JOINT ACTION

The Hellenic Association asked both COTEC and ENOTHE to support them in their efforts to keep independent the only Occupational Faculty in Athens. The Government had an intention that the OT school should merge with the Physiotherapy Faculty due to economical cuts. With all sorts of actions and "COTEC swift and decisive support" the Faculty of Occupational Therapy will stay autonomous.



Σύλλογος Ελλήνων Εργοθεραπευτών
Hellenic Association of Ergotherapists

MEETING WITH CABINET OF COMMISSIONER TONIO BORG, COMMISSION FOR HEALTH AND CONSUMER POLICY IN BRUSSELS



On Monday , March 11th, COTEC President , Mette Kolsrud, ENOTHE President, Anne Lawson Porter and COTEC / ENOTHE link person Stephanie Saenger, met in Brussels to prepare a meeting with Mrs. Paula Duarte Gaspar, Member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Tonio Borg, Health and Consumer Policy.

The aim of the meeting was for Occupational Therapy to be accepted as a credible professional organization, valued in Europe and seen to deliver on policy issues. The focus of the meeting was concerned with how Occupational Therapy makes a difference and is able to find solutions when a gap between an individual's health capacity and everyday activities is predicted or known.

On the March 12th Mrs. Paula Duarte Gaspar and Mrs. Katja Neubauer, deputy Head of Unit of Healthcare systems gave a good hour of their time. They were interested in the presented issues and it was clear they had read all the papers which had been sent in advance. All planned and other issues were

discussed. Both found occupational therapy, with its focus on the needs of both individuals and groups and independence as its goal, very appealing ([COTEC PPT presentation for the meeting](#)).

Mrs Duarte Gaspar had some good advice about how occupational therapy could raise its visibility in Europe. She advised to

- o Grow our alliances within other organisations as for instance EPHA
- o Seek to have a couple of contacts at the Commission in our areas of concern to raise our visibility and inclusion
- o Be included in the Transparency Register
- o Seek out MEPs to champion our involvement.

COTEC therefore asks any member association to share their connections with MEP's with COTEC.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP WITH EUROPEAN FORUM FOR PRIMARY CARE

On behalf of COTEC and ENOTHE Stephanie Saenger had a interesting meeting with the coordinator of the European Forum for Primary Care (EFPC) Diederik Aarendonk to discuss the mutual benefits of an associate membership with COTEC and EFPC. ENOTHE has been a associate member for years and the EFPC participated in the TUNING - and COPORE projects. As community based occupational therapy is growing in a lot of countries it seems obvious participating in the EFPC is worthwhile if not essential.

During the Executive meeting in Copenhagen the Executive's decided to sign the agreement with EFPC. Also National Associations were asked to consider a membership of EFPC. It can strengthen their position in primary health care and both organisations can benefit of each other's knowledge and network. More information is available at www.euprimarycare.org



european forum
for primary care

"LAST" COTEC COUNCIL MEETING

The COTEC council meeting in Copenhagen April 11th - 12th was the last council meeting. The next COTEC meeting will be a General Assembly held in Malta October 21st -22nd 2013. The General Assembly will be for two days. The programme of the first day will be dedicated on getting acquainted with new Council members as well participating at a seminar on European health and welfare policy and occupational therapy in Europe. Day two will be a COTEC business meeting. The aim of the General assembly is to discuss and decide on the future plans for COTEC such as the political program for the next four years, the action plan for next year and the budget.

The Council meeting in Copenhagen discussed and approved the Rules of procedures and discussed a new financial plan for COTEC. It was unanimously agreed that COTEC will need more money to be able to be

more visible and influential at European level. COTEC will also need to pay for some secretarial support in the future since the British Association of Occupational Therapy (BAOT) has decided to [withdraw their secretarial support](#) from 2014 onwards. Council proposed to double the COTEC fees over a three years period. They recommended the Executive's to make a budget for 2014 with an 50 % increased income.



GOODBYE AND BEST WISHES

The 58th and last Council meeting was closed with a small creative farewell event to thank all the delegates and alternates for their contribution to COTEC. All delegates were asked to voice their wishes for Occupational therapy in Europe.



ELECTORAL COMMITTEE WAS INSTALLED

An Electoral committee existing of three Council delegates were elected at the meeting. The Electoral committee will send out the calls for nomination, collect information about candidates for Executive committee positions. At the General Assembly the Electoral committee will present recommendations for the election of candidates to the Executive committee. All National Associations are asked to answer the call of nominations by nominating candidates for the new Executive's.

CHANGES IN THE EXECUTIVE

Due to the economical crisis in Croatia the very dedicated and capable Honorary secretary Saša Radić had to resign from the Executive's. Although we are very sad to say goodbye we are very pleased Saša Radić will stay active in the joint working group for the web portal that is being developed for COTEC and ENOTHE. We thank Saša Radić for all the work she did for the COTEC Executive and sincerely hope she will be back at such a post in future.

Renee Oltman, delegate from Germany, was unanimously elected as member of the Executive.

This means the Executive still exist of four people. This calls for flexibility in responsibilities and tasks. Renee Oltman will focus on the financial matters and Maria Daniela Farrugia will shift her tasks more to the administrative tasks.

GUEST SPEAKER DR. EMMA STOKES

At the second day of the Council meeting dr. Emma Stokes, the European region World Confederation for Physical Therapy (ER-WCPT) Vice President held an inspiring speech on how ER-WCPT managed to be an influential organisation in Europe.

Maria Daniela Farrugia made her acquaintance on the WHO meeting in Malta, which shows again how important networking in the European arena is.



SUPPORT TO ITALIAN ASSOCIATION

The Italian Association has sent a [letter to COTEC to ask for awareness from European OT's about a problem for the Italian OT's](#). Italian conference providers are hiring foreign OT speakers to teach OT methods, but do not allow OT's to enter the conference. The consequences are that OT is ignored as a profession and other professions take the OT positions.

