

ENOTHE

European Network
of Occupational Therapy
in Higher Education



Strategy 2016 - 2020

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Introduction

At the Annual Meeting (AM) 2014, the General Assembly mandated the Board to create a five year strategy from which yearly action plans can be identified. This reflects the networks desire to be mindful of European policy and the need to be more strategic and proactive in addressing health, social and educational issues across the European region. Occupational therapists and occupational therapy educational programmes need to be aware of the policy context they operate within, as well as future trends and emerging fields of practice, in order to remain relevant and credible moving forward.

As a small organization, without official Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) status, it is necessary that ENOTHE collaborate with other organizations, networks and stakeholders to promote and develop the profession and to communicate and exchange occupational therapy views and contribute to the wider debate on education, health and social policy. As an educational network, ENOTHE's actions should have an influence on the content and pedagogy in the education of occupational therapy professionals. This strategy document will enable members to participate in discussions and development of yearly action plans for the strategic period.

Procedure

During the 21st Annual Meeting in Ruse at the Pre-General Meeting the ENOTHE board introduced the Strategy plan version 1 to the attendees. This was followed by a workshop on 23th of October 2015 in which members attending were asked to formulate the Strategic aims and Strategic Area's they liked, what they missed and what they would like to change/alter. Then the members of the workshop were asked to formulate concrete actions from the plan and what they could contribute as an institution or as a representative. Also could they suggest other institutions or persons who could contribute to work on concrete actions. The suggestions from the pre-GA and workshop were added to the document.

During the board meeting in Galway 20 November 2015, the input of the Ruse workshop was discussed in version 2 and the document rephrased by the members of the board in version 3. The revised Strategy document #4 was sent to all representatives of 65 member institutions and through them to appointed bachelor and master students. This was achieved by an online survey to validate the document and to engage members by inviting them to reformulate the three aims, prioritize the areas, to formulate actions and to offer contributions to achieve those actions.

On the 18 June 2016 at the General Assembly which took place in Galway, Ireland, the Strategy Plan 2016 – 2020 was accepted by the members and brought into effect.

Background Context

ENOTHE has been established as a network for two decades, during which time it has been engaged in its Annual Meetings and projects, and has been an important arena for occupational therapy educators to meet, share experiences, find inspiration and last but not

least establish international partnerships. ENOTHE members and their representatives on the board, value ENOTHE's contribution to developing occupational therapy in Europe by promoting occupational therapy education. We would like to see the network continue to develop as a resource and arena for collaboration. To be fit for purpose ENOTHE needs to address contemporary issues such as trends in health and social care, decentralization of services and multidisciplinary collaboration. Accordingly, ENOTHE is engaging in discussion about its continued relevance and sustainability by ensuring that professional competences comprise and include social and political changes, E-health and entrepreneurship. In creating this strategy the board has discussed the policy issues that are likely to influence the next five years. These are outlined below:

- The Bologna Process is a collective effort of public authorities, universities, teachers, and students, together with stakeholder associations, employers, quality assurance agencies, international organisations, and institutions, including the European Commission.(1)
The main focus is:
 - the introduction of the three cycle system (bachelor/master/doctorate)
 - strengthened quality assurance and
 - easier recognition of qualifications and periods of study

- European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
As the main objective of the Bologna Process since its inception in 1999, the EHEA was meant to ensure more comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education in Europe. Between 1999 - 2010, all the efforts of the Bologna Process members were targeted to creating the European Higher Education Area, that became reality with the Budapest-Vienna Declaration of March, 2010. The next decade will be aimed at consolidating the EHEA and thus the current EHEA permanent website will play a key role in this process of intense internal and external communication.(2)

- The World Health Organisation Health 2020 Strategy is aimed at strengthening public health through the life course. In particular strategies for mental health, children and adolescents, with continued work on non-communicable diseases (NCD) and the ageing population. NCDs are chronic diseases such as neurological, respiratory, cardiovascular, cancer and palliative care. Providing healthcare for NCDs is becoming increasingly expensive, so better managing of chronic disease through public health, primary care and health improvement strategies are more pressing.

- UNESCO's message is about creating holistic policies that are capable of addressing education on human rights and include social, cultural, and political perspectives for a curricular and sustainable development.(3)

- European 2020 targets also form part of the political context in which occupational therapists learn and practice. The five targets are focused on employment for 16 – 25 year olds, poverty reduction aimed at children, tertiary education for 16 – 35 year olds, increases in % Gross Domestic Product (GDP) earmarked for research and development and improvements to emissions affecting climate change. Whilst these targets at face value may have limited application to Occupational Therapy, there are potential opportunities in research, work and education for example through Horizon 2020 (research) and other initiatives aimed at health and social care.

The overarching initiatives influencing all the above areas are concerned with public health, health improvement and primary care, as these are seen to be preventative health strategies. They will require personal engagement and responsibility and be more accessible to greater numbers of people. Inequity of access though will continue to be a challenge as many people in society are severely disadvantaged through poverty and lack of social participation opportunities.

Strategic Aim A

To be proactive in developing OT education which is comparable and supports the mobility of students and teachers.

To create arenas to share knowledge in between educational institutions across Europe so that graduates of OT are fit for the future in changing social-cultural, technological and political contexts.

Strategic Aim B

To promote OT within European Higher Education systems in all three educational cycles through a solid research and interdisciplinary involvement.

Strategic Aim C

To demonstrate the value and evidence of Occupational Therapy as contribution to European health and societal issues of individuals, communities and other stakeholders to increase the visibility of OT.

To achieve these aims ENOTHE defined the following four strategic areas to develop yearly action plans:



<h2>Strategic Area 1: Education</h2>
<p>To support, develop and improve educational programmes for European occupational therapists that are comparable, of high quality, relevant and responsive to changes in society</p> <p>To promote OT within European Higher Education systems in all three educational cycles, research and innovation.</p>
<p>CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ EMERGING FIELDS: To promote the OT contribution and role in the health and social system within emerging fields such as urban development, OT and technology, decentralisation and community work and inter-professional collaboration. □ COMPETENCIES: To enhance competences in the three educational cycles in relation to social, political, cultural and technological development, entrepreneurship, innovation and internationalization. □ FIELDWORK: to develop links for cooperation between educational programmes, fieldwork educators, stakeholders and clients in order to address the occupational needs of clients and society.
<p>TEACHING COMPETENCIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To support the development of innovative teaching and learning competences by the integration of evidence based teaching and learning methods and best practice in education.

Strategic Area 2: Partnerships & OT Evidence

Influence strategic partnerships by demonstrating the OT evidence and the value of occupation in addressing European Health and Societal Issues.

INTERNAL PARTNERSHIP

- To be an inclusive network of university members from all European regions by creating financial and practical solutions for inclusion.
- Demonstrating and promoting the value and contribution that becoming a member of ENOTHE brings.
- To support members' initiatives by creating project groups to build knowledge and expertise in OT education
To promote members' interaction during Annual meetings and inter-annual meetings, through the exchange of members' achievements.
- To debate and create more collective awareness of the strategic issues for the discipline development.
- To support student platforms
- To support joint international programme initiatives of ENOTHE members

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

- To encourage members to build a solid relation between theory discourses, practice actions and research in different interdisciplinary projects, activities and education through closer collaboration with the Consortium of Institutes of Higher Education and Rehabilitation in Europe (COHEHRE), European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education (ENPHE) and The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (2).
- To build partnerships with the third sector (social partners as NGOs, organisations, associations, cooperatives and community groups) and other social partners

DISSEMINATION RESEARCH

- To promote collaboration between institutions, teachers, students and stakeholders in research such as Occupational Science Europe (OSE). To facilitate dissemination of research results/outcomes to promote evidence informed practice in existing and emerging fields.
- To morally facilitate research related to OT Education development

POLITICAL ALLIANCES

- To identify OTs with political awareness or knowledge within specific fields to become members of partner organisations in health and social systems at all levels
- to raise awareness of the importance of occupational therapy among the public, community, opinion makers, politicians and decision makers on different dimensions through local, national and international levels.

Strategic Area 3: SUSTAINABLE NETWORK ORGANISATION

Continue to work towards the development of a sustainable network organisation with improving membership engagement comprising all European regions

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

- To create effective internal and external communication strategies by supporting the distribution of information concerning European health, social and educational policy.
- To increase collaboration among members of ENOTHE and between members, students and the board.
- To create a website with core historical documents, access to products, a database with educational films.
- To create long term planning for future meetings

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- To develop a unique brand and style for use in public relations and marketing.
- To raise awareness that visibility is a collective responsibility

GOVERNANCE

- Achieve transparency in internal procedures by developing good governance guidelines and procedures

ADMINISTRATION

- Secure financial sustainability underpinned by robust, fit for purpose administration systems by increasing membership, decrease expenses, alternation of membership policies to meet current costs and sustain future developments.
- Transparency of the financial administration activities that are undertaken by the office and the elected board, including regular review of all activities and pricing structures for membership and annual meetings
- Explore options for a future permanent base of the ENOTHE office

Strategic Area 4: OT-EU Umbrella

To collaborate with the Council of Occupational Therapists for the European Countries (COTEC) to strengthen the impact of occupational therapy in Europe

ORGANISATION

- To develop an organisational structure to coordinate and facilitate communication, joint decision making and effective administration, whilst preserving the autonomy of each respective organisation.
- To develop a European OT Umbrella organisation with three elements comprising of ENOTHE, COTEC and Research in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science (ROTOS) each contributing from their respective roles in society such as teacher, practitioner, and researcher.

RESEARCH NETWORK

- To support the establishment of a Research Occupational Therapy & Occupational Science network to support collaboration between researchers and to provide evidence which supports the goals of OT-EU of promoting OT in Europe.
- To develop and facilitate strong, strategic partnerships locally, nationally and internationally to increase OT presence and to raise OTs profile and visibility when working with health and societal issues by promoting an occupational perspective of life.

JOINT ACTIONS

- To engage in joint projects that promote the unity of occupational therapy in Europe, such as organising joint congresses and developing technically and visually compatible integrated websites and utilising social media.
- To establish ENOTHE-COTEC expert groups to advise and inform OT-EU on European issues such as health and social policy, professional qualifications and regulations of Occupational Therapy in Europe.

POLITICAL ALLIANCES

- To collaborate with our internal partners in supporting the participation and representation of OTs through OT-EU in forums and organisations, alliances with NGOs, such as European Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupation (ESCO), EFPC and others.

References

1. http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/bologna-process_en.htm
2. www.ehea.info
3. <http://en.unesco.org/about-us/introducing-unesco#sthash.iM6JZEf.dpufabout> creating