

COTEC 4 Year Strategy 2021-2024

COTEC is the European Organisation for occupational therapists through membership of their National Associations. This four-year strategy outlines the key areas of concern for the organisation, indicates the areas of political interest and identifies priorities for the next four years. The strategy forms a framework for the work of the organisation which will aid the development of annual action plans covering the period 2021-2024. This strategy is based on the professional values and philosophy of occupational therapy set within the dynamic context in which occupational therapists are educated and work across Europe.

Strategic Vision

Occupational therapy is valued, visible, available and accessible in Europe by service users and policy makers and occupational therapists are proud to be a member of their National OT association and the European Professional Community.

Strategic Goals for the next 4 years

1. Ensure that COTEC engages with and inspires its Member Associations and their members to continue to deliver high quality occupational therapy and occupation based, evidence informed and client centred services in existing and emerging areas of practice.
2. Strengthen political and strategic partnerships locally, nationally, and throughout Europe to increase our presence and visibility in addressing health and societal issues working toward sustainability and promoting an occupational perspective of life.
3. Maintain a sustainable organisation demonstrating the benefits of access to opportunities to contribute to the European agenda for COTEC Members and to support their members' individual professional growth.
4. Contribute actively to Occupational Therapy Europe and take responsibility that practitioners' voice continues to be heard and enacted.

Key Objectives

The Executive Committee in discussion and agreement with General Assembly Members annually, translated into Annual Operating Plans over the next four years, will:

- 1. Ensure that COTEC engages with and inspires its Member Associations and their members to continue to deliver high quality occupational therapy and occupation based, evidence informed and client centred services in existing and emerging areas of practice.**

- a. Maintain effective communication measures - website, newsletters, social media and emails.
- b. Distribute information concerning European health, social and educational policy.
- c. Support Member organisations by:
 - i. Scheduling visits to Member Associations for face-to-face meetings when necessary, about issues of concern for the Association, such as lack of support from ministers and governments.
 - ii. Providing keynote speeches by invitation.
 - iii. Writing letters of concern and / or support to governments/politicians and policy makers.
 - iv. Sharing documents for development and application to the national contexts.
 - v. Supporting the establishment of new occupational therapy associations

2. *Strengthen political and strategic partnerships locally, nationally, and throughout Europe to increase our presence and visibility in addressing health and societal issues working toward sustainability and promoting an occupational perspective of life.*

- a. Increase occupational therapists' awareness about the importance of mutual collaboration and partnerships, within and beyond the health domain, to develop Occupational Therapy profession and COTEC, contributing from their expertise
- b. Encourage and facilitate Members of COTEC to be visible partners in different interdisciplinary and international projects and actions.
- c. Increase collaboration with the third sector, service users and other health and social partners such as NGOs, associations, cooperatives, community groups and others.
- d. Raise awareness of the importance and contribution of Occupational Therapy in health and social systems among the public, community, opinion makers, politicians and decision makers.
- e. Improve the occupational perspective and voice in current dialogues, influencing the development of decisions at the local/national/international political agenda on issues such as: public health, human rights, poverty, citizenship, education, health, disability, employment, sustainable development, displaced persons, by responding to consultations and commenting on European roadmaps.
- f. Involve occupational therapists at a European level by e.g. engaging representatives/experts in meetings relevant to occupational therapy, providing

information about occupational therapy as resource and sharing information on European policies and initiatives.

3. *Maintain a sustainable organisation demonstrating the benefits of access to opportunities to contribute to the European agenda for COTEC Members and to support their members' individual professional growth.*

- a. Provide openness and transparency through robust governance procedures.
- b. Maintain and/or increase membership to meet the future developments of the organisation and identify target regions and potential partners within Europe.
- c. Market and promote the value that being a COTEC Member brings.
- d. Engage Member Associations and their members in COTEC's work to support their professional development.

4. *Contribute actively to Occupational Therapy Europe and take responsibility that practitioners' voice continues to be heard and enacted.*

- a. Consolidate the organisational structure to facilitate communication, joint decision making and effective administration of Occupational Therapy Europe while preserving the autonomy of COTEC and understanding and shaping the relationship between COTEC and Occupational Therapy Europe.
- b. Engage in joint projects to promote the contribution of occupational therapy practice in education and in research addressing European issues.
- c. Contribute in organising a European congress that reflects the needs of the practitioners and the profession in Europe.
- d. Lead the development of a European Community of Occupational Therapy practitioners.

Approved by the 8th COTEC General Assembly, September 27th, 2020