



EUROPE REGION

World Confederation
for Physical Therapy

Report of the Chairman of the European Region of the WCPT for the period 2010-2012

**ADOPTED at the
General Meeting 17-19 May 2012
St. Julians, Malta**

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EUROPEAN REGION OF THE WCPT FOR THE PERIOD 2010 – 2012 TO THE GENERAL MEETING 2012

European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT)

Introduction

This report outlines the work of the Executive Committee and working groups using the mandate given at the General Meeting in Berlin in 2010, and including involvement in WCPT General Meeting in Amsterdam, June 2011.

This report is complemented by the reports from the Chairs of the three working groups and from the Treasurer. Therefore there will only be a general overview of the organisation and of the activities, highlighting some of the major achievements.

Six meetings of the Executive Committee have been held since Berlin 2010.

- 19 – 20 June 2010, Brussels, Belgium
- 3 December 2010, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
- 11 – 12 March 2011, A Coruna, Spain
- 16 June 2011, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
- 8 September 2011, St. Julians, Malta.
- 24 – 26 February 2012, Madrid, Spain.

The changes at organisational level

Further to the Report of the Treasurer for the year 2010 when there were 34 Member Organisations, 2011 has seen a growth in the European Region of WCPT which now has 37 Member Organisations, all are in good standing, representing a total of 162,154 Physiotherapists. At the General Meeting of WCPT in Amsterdam, two new Member Organisations were admitted, **Slovakia** and **Ukraine**, with **Lithuania** rejoining.

WCPT 2011 brought a change in the composition of the Executive Committee The election of Emma Stokes to the position of Vice-President of WCPT from her European Regional Representative to WCPT resulted in the elected alternate Johnny Kuhr becoming the Regional representative to WCPT. Elections will therefore be held for the alternate Regional position at the 2012 General Meeting.

List of elected officers		
	Before the WCPT	After the WCPT
Chairman	Sarah Bazin (2010-2014)	Sarah Bazin (2010-2014)
1st Vice Chairman	Roland Craps (2010-2012)	Roland Craps (2010-2012)
2nd Vice Chairman	Sonia Souto (2010-2012)	Sonia Souto (2010-2012)
Treasurer	Bodo Schlag (2010-2014)	Bodo Schlag (2010-2014)
Regional Represent.	Emma Stokes (2011-2015)	Johnny Kuhr (2011-2015)
First Alternate EC	Mateja Znika (2010-2012)	Mateja Znika (2010-2012)
Second Alternate EC	Zbigniew Sliwinski (2010-2012)	Zbigniew Sliwinski (2010-2012)
Alternate Regional Rep.	Johnny Kuhr (2011-2015)	Vacant (2011-2015)
Auditors for the 2012 GM	Austria and Lebanon	Austria and Lebanon

The composition of the Working Groups changed following the 2010 GM due to the normal renewal process.

For the period of 2010 to 2012 the members of the Working Groups were as follows:

Professional Issues Working Group

- Sarah Bazin - Chairman (*Executive Committee European Region of WCPT*)
- Karen Langvad (Denmark)
- Hille Maas (Estonia)
- Ulrike Steinecke (Germany)
- Esther-Mary D'Arcy (Ireland)
- Philip van der Wees (Netherlands) (September 2010 – July 2011)
- Victorine Graaf-Peter (Netherlands) (July 2011 – May 2012)
- Javier Gonzalez Iglesias (Spain)

European Union Matters Working Group

- Roland Craps – Chairman (*Executive Committee European Region of WCPT*)
- Reinhard Beirkircher (Austria)
- Francis Hebting (France)

- Anna Kukka (Finland)
- Hans Krijgsman (Netherlands)
- Natalie Beswetherick (U.K)

Education Working Group

- Sonia Souto, Chairman (*Executive Committee European Region of WCPT*)
- Camilla Wikström-Grotell (Finland)
- John Xerri de Caro (Malta)
- Antonio Lopes (Portugal)
- Charlotte Hager (Sweden)
- Astrid Schaemann (Switzerland)
- Emil Igelsbock (Austria) – Appointed for the 3rd Education Congress planned to be held in Vienna, Austria, in 2012.

The major activities and achievements

The Executive Committee has assured that all the activities of the European Region were in line with the activities and objectives of WCPT. The Regional Representative has acted as the element of liaison with the Executive Committee of WCPT, and the contacts between the two Secretariats have been permanent and fruitful.

The great diversity of activities of the European Region in this period is more fully explained by making reference to specific reports presented to the General Meeting. In this report the most relevant facts are highlighted.

2nd European Clinical Guideline Congress

The 2nd Conference on Clinical Guidelines took place on 2nd December 2010, at the KNGF Annual Congress, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

The objectives of the Conference and the preliminary programme were presented.

Member Organisations were able to send a maximum of three delegates for both events. 35 Delegates from 15 Member Organisations attended.

Full report and presentations are available on our regional website

Guideline International Network (G-I-N)

ER-WCPT has maintained full membership of G-I-N since 2007.

At the 7th International G-I-N Conference, held in Chicago, EE.UU, in August 2010. Philip van der Wees, the representative of ER-WCPT at G-I-N, was elected as new Chairman of G-I-N. He was the first non medic to become a board member of G-I-N in 2009 and then Chairman in 2010. At the 8th G-I-N conference in Seoul, August 2011 he was re-elected as Chairman for 2012.

I would like to take this opportunity for thanking him for all his work on behalf of the ER-WCPT, and to congratulate him on his election.

Establishment of a Foundation

The European Foundation for Physiotherapy and Physical Activity, part of the European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy, or abbreviated European Foundation for Physiotherapy and Physical Activity (E.F.P.P.A.) was set up in Brussels with the notary on 22 February 2011. The ER-WCPT Chairman, the 1st Vice Chairman and the General Secretary were present.

30 MOs are members of the ER-WCPT Foundations' Special Committee: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the U.K.

Further information about the Foundation was presented at the informal meeting in Amsterdam on 17th June 2011 where it was agreed that:

- A revision of the Aims and Objectives of the Foundation to eliminate any duplication of those of the ER-WCPT would be made.
- To have an additional external member on the Board of the Foundation – in terms of good practice, transparency and the protection of ER-WCPT Executive Committee members
- To address other issues in the Articles of the Foundation, which do not have constitutional significance, such as ethical code, sponsorship rules, guides for the grants...
- Some additional amendments (minor syntax/ spelling) were also suggested.

The comments received from the Special Committee members were agreed we are working on amendments to the articles. In the meantime the Foundation has been invited to be a partner in three research applications for grants. In the future, and with the proposed Foundation WG we expect to be more active in grant applications.

Joint meeting of the working groups in Malta, September 2011

For the first time a joint meeting of all three working groups was held in Malta in September 2011. There was an Executive Committee meeting, individual meetings of the working groups, and a one-day joint meeting. The topics of the joint meeting included a briefing research paper from the Education working group, a strategic plan for the region from the EU Working Matters group, and a briefing paper Active and Healthy, the role of Physiotherapist in Physical Activity from the Professional Issues working group. There was an opportunity for discussion, which resulted in suggestions for refinements of the three documents, all of which will be presented to the ER-WCPT General Meeting in May 2012.

The Executive Committee was delighted with the discussion which took place and the cross fertilisation of ideas and proposes to hold a Joint meeting for the third WG meeting in each two-year period. This meeting will take place at the same venue as the next planned GM to check the facilities.

The Executive Committee was also very grateful to the Malta Physiotherapy Association and the Malta Tourist Board for their arrangements and preparation for this meeting.

3rd European Congress on Physiotherapy Education and Post Congress of the ER-WCPT

Preparation is underway for the 3rd European Congress on 8 – 9 November 2012 in Vienna, Austria. Promotion has been impressive especially at the WCPT 2011.

I would like to thank PhysioAustria, the Scientific and Organising Committees and the Education Matters WG for their excellent work in preparation for this congress.

We look forward to seeing you all there.

Cooperation with ENPHE

The cooperation with the European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education has been maintained. The delegations of the two organisations met in 2010, 2011 and 2012 and are planning further common activities. Detailed information can be found in the Education Matters Report.

Representation of the Region in meetings and events

The Region has been represented in several meetings and events.

It is also relevant to consider the contacts with the **European Commission - DG Internal Market and DG Health and the European Parliament**, regarding, for example, the following matters:

- Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications;
- “The Bologna Process and Directive 2005/36/EC on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications: is there scope for creative interaction?”
- Patients Rights in Cross borders.
- EU Health Strategy, 2008 – 2013.
- Brussels Global Health Conference

Special attention should be paid to the involvement of the ER-WCPT on the Physiotherapy case study for a European Professional Card. This card is related to the Directive on Recognition on Professional Qualifications and its aim is to facilitate the migration procedures in Europe. The ER-WCPT has been working on this project with the EU Commission, DG Internal Market, and national authorities from the following countries: Belgium, Italy, Hungary, Poland and UK.

The case study was presented in an event entitled “Single Market Forum” in Cracow, Poland on 2-4 October 2011. The Polish Presidency of the EU hosted the forum. The 1st Vice Chairman attended on behalf of the ER-WCPT.

The Region has been also present in several meetings organised by the **Belgium Presidency of the EU**, such as:

- Investing in Europe’s health workforce of tomorrow
- Innovative approaches for chronic illnesses in public health and healthcare systems

The Region has also been present at several meetings organised by the **Hungarian and Polish Presidencies of the EU**, such as:

- Investing in Europe's health workforce of tomorrow
- Innovative approaches for chronic illnesses in public health and healthcare systems.

The Executive Committee has considered it necessary to be involved with all relevant European organisations related to our field of activity. Budgetary limitations have restricted a greater activity and forced the establishment of priorities.

Taking advantage of having our office in Brussels, and of having a full time General Secretary, priority has been given to attending the meetings held in this city.

The General Secretary has regular contacts with the following organisations:

- **European Health Forum - EHF**

In 2006, the permanent membership of the ER-WCPT in the EHF was approved. Meetings of the EHF are held twice a year. The General Secretary or a member of the EU WG had attended, on behalf of the ER-WCPT, the meetings during this period. On 23 March 2010, the European Commission Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General informed the ER-WCPT about its membership renewal in the European Health Policy Forum. The selected members for the group are expected to have an active involvement and participation in the EU Health Forum activities.

- **European Public Health Alliance - EPHA**

EPHA provides useful information on health issues and EU policy developments and a Member's Electronic Newsletter. The General Secretary regularly attends EPHA Policy Co-ordination Group Meetings, together with other health organisations. The goal of these meetings is to exchange information among EPHA Members and to discuss the main health topics on the EU agenda.

- **European Fit for Work Foundation**

The foundation held its annual meeting in Brussels on 19 October 2011. The ER-WCPT Chairman, in her role as the physiotherapy representative on the

European Fit for Work Foundation Steering Group, addressed the successful and well attended meeting, and the General Secretary also attended.

Detailed and further information can be found in the Publication and Promotion report.

Future Plans

Each of the specific reports presented to the General Meeting has a list of proposed objectives and recommended activities attached. Most of the projects are ongoing and need to be continued or further developed. The General Meeting will have the opportunity to approve the plan of activities for 2012 – 2014.

Nevertheless, we can assume that all activities will be developed in line with the main objectives and priorities of the WCPT. Some major projects that define the future commitments of the Region, and show a coherent line of action:

- Finalise the inventory of the profession regarding the level of education, activities and scope of practice;
- Monitor the legislative developments at EU level, and their implications for the profession, and cooperate with all relevant entities and partners;
- Further develop the work related to guidelines (clinical and multidisciplinary), standards of practice and implementation;
- Follow up the developments in education at European level
- Prepare the 3rd Guideline Conference
- Promote the third Congress on Physiotherapy Education – 2012 and start preparation of the 4th Education Congress.
- At an organisational level, the improvement of communication with the Member Organisations, the physiotherapists, and the public, in general, will continue to be a priority.

The objective to reinforce the image of WCPT, and of the European Region, as a credible and proactive organisation, representing physiotherapy as a relevant health care discipline and profession, will also be pursued in all activities to be developed.

We have a very ambitious plan of actions for the future and look forward to you collaboration in achieving our objectives.

Invitations to Member Organisation's Conferences

The Executive Committee were delighted to have received invitations to participate in Member Organisation's meetings, Conferences and Congresses. Representatives travelled to France in October 2010, Belgium in February 2011, Poland in March and November 2011, Lebanon in September 2011, Croatia in October 2011, Cyprus in November 2011, Poland in March 2012 and Spain in 2012.

We were pleased to have received invitations to attend the celebrations for 50 years of Physio Austria and the annual Greek Congress, and were most disappointed not to be able to participate due to prior commitments.

Closing Remarks

The work of the European Region of the WCPT has only been achieved through the contribution of many people, including the members of the working groups, to whom I am most grateful. Our organisational model relies on the appointment of members to the working groups financially supported by the Member Organisations, and I would like to thank those who have made this possible.

In general terms I would like to acknowledge the support and collaboration of the Member Organisations in the activities of the Region, in particular at the General Meeting, and at the Conferences and Congress.

It is my privilege to chair the Executive Committee and to work closely with the General Secretary David Gorría: the friendship, support and collaboration of all of them have made my task very easy and extremely rewarding. My warm thanks are extended to all.

Sarah Bazin

Chairman of the European Region of the WCPT