

**- ECOTROS -
European Cooperation
in
Occupational Therapy Research (OTR)
&
Occupational Science (OS)**

A project initiated from the
European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education (ENOTHE)

ENOTHE



**ECOTROS – Research Agenda
October 2008**

Harmonising scientific projects in Europe

Objective: to initiate and facilitate the process of harmonisation of scientific projects in Occupational Therapy Research and Occupational Science in Europe.

Methods: (1) ECOTROS-Workshop for researchers at the European Occupational Therapy Congress May 2008. (2) Research Symposium conjointly organised by ENOTHE, ECOTROS and ISOS (International Society of Occupational Science) at the ENOTHE-Meeting September 2008. (3) Facilitative: further appropriate options if needed.

Preliminary results ECOTROS-Workshop May 2008:

- Prof. Dr. Hans Jonsson introduced a draft theoretical frame of two continuums (“science” from basic to applied and “research” from individual to societal level), in order to map present and future research efforts.
- Twenty researchers from Europe and also from Canada, Australia and USA identified and discussed important research topics and mapped them on the continuums (Fig. 1).

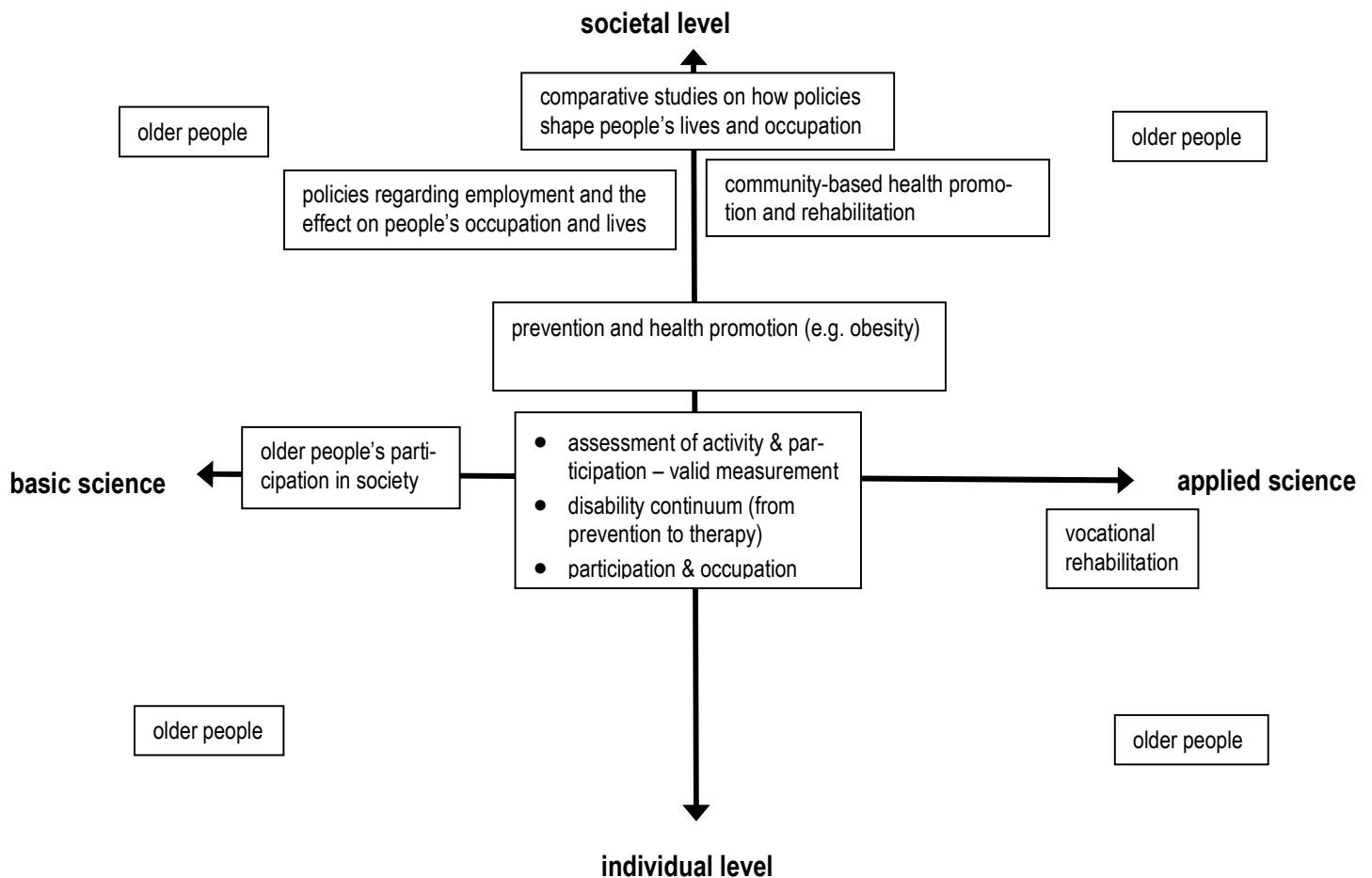


Figure 1: Mapped research topics

Preliminary results, recommendations from 10 ECOTROS-Workshop groups in Sep. 2008

Topic 1: Discussion on how do we promote specific contributions of occupational science to the body of knowledge of occupation and health.

- Develop common programmes of research for one population group
- Promote individual practice + research results + multidisciplinary partnerships in big projects
- Implement a basic module as an introduction of OS in curriculum of OT and interdisciplinary
- Promote BSc students to focus in their dissertations on occupational science within 2-4 'European' topics using ENOTHE network
- Develop an environmental perspective based on occupational risks, e.g. poverty-loneliness
- Use OT focus + method + outcome measures whenever engaged in interdisciplinary research
- Provide evidence
- Define occupational aspects of health in a broader sense
- Use OS theory & language to support OT research
- Bring research to other disciplines
- Identify the system's agenda for health
- Promote OS as a science by multidisciplinary partnerships in big projects
- Respond to public issues (with results of OS)
- Influence with the outcomes of research policy
- Make research accessible for other disciplines
- Be aware of previous/current research of other disciplines
- Communicate the complexity of occupation to therapists + other health professions
- Common programme (cross-cultural) for one population group
 - Creating an European working group
 - Build a programme for health promotion based on OS knowledge and research
 - Culturally acceptable
- Provide a support group of experts to promote occupation based curriculum
- Build bridges between people doing science/practice and between different professions
- Integrate other professionals in education
- Integrate courses on how to find funding in the curriculum

Topic 2: Discussions about which key topics should be part of a European long-term research strategy in OS (building on from Hamburg workshop).

- health promoting/meaningful lifestyles ... within different age groups (particularly older people), different sub groups of society, different cultures/religious beliefs, affects of politics on shaping people's lives and occupations, occupational transition
- how people handle change (eg. coping with disability), their coping strategies, and why people keep on doing what they do - quality of life issues
- 'measurement' tools for participation
- The research should be multi-disciplinary, linked to ICF and with international collaboration.
- We need duplicate studies across Europe and these must be published. Must all gain experience in applying for funding.

Topic 3: Discussions about how we progress to long-term research strategies in Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Research in Europe

- Find funding, take EU-priorities into account by looking at the call for proposals of the European Union, try to make European politicians value the positive impact of occupation on health and well being and the necessity of research in this field.
- Identify societal needs which can be addressed by exploring, understanding and improving human doing on individual and community level.
- Specify the contribution of occupational science to the solution of health problems in European communities.
- Improve networking: internationally, interdisciplinary, between universities with programmes in occupational therapy and science, between organisations representing clients, practitioners, educationalists and researchers in the field of occupation and health.
- Provide ongoing support for (future) researchers in the field on their way from students to experts. Then keep the high level and powerful researchers within the “occupational therapy community”.
- Try to participate in funded long-term interdisciplinary research projects. Offer overtaking (minor) tasks within large-scale research projects by doing the dissertation (it may be on Bachelor, Master or PhD-Level) within the frame/scope of such projects.

Topic 4: Discussions about future possibilities for the current informal networking of research in occupational therapy and occupational science, in order to facilitate collaborative links and joint projects.

- Connect people from other disciplines (consider a multidisciplinary approach for Occupational Science)
- Networking is important for sharing experiences and developing an identity as occupational scientist or OT researcher
- Connect existing networks (international, European, national) (WHO, ENOTHE, COTEC, WFOT, ECOTROS, ISOS, etc.)
- Use a common database
- Adopt a transparent work style and have an inclusive membership
- Media and IT are important technologies to networking, however, meeting face-to-face is also important.

Conclusion: (1) Workshop results are to be disseminated via the ECOTROS mailing list. (2) Since the ENOTHE funding period for the ECOTROS project group is finished, ECOTROS goes for new EU-funding for future networking of researchers in Occupational Therapy Research and Occupational Science in Europe.

*ECOTROS Project Group
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