



CONSTITUTION

April 2013

Item 1: Declaration of the foundation of the OCE

1. A Committee of the Permanent Liaison of the “**Orthoptists of the European Community (O.C.E)**” is created. It is a non-profit association.
2. It is not limited by time.
3. The registered office of the Committee is located 22 rue Richer, 75009 PARIS/France.
4. The location of this office can be changed by decision of the Council of the Committee.

Item 2: Mission

The OCE ("Orthoptistes de la Communauté Européenne") is the representative professional body in the EU and spokesperson for the profession on European topics.

The purpose of the Committee is

- to establish the connection with the member countries in view of assuring the passage of information on present and future developments within the orthoptic profession in member countries,
- to represent the orthoptists of the member countries within the body of authorities of the EU and especially within the European Commission,
- to disseminate the suggestions and decisions made by the authorities affecting the orthoptic profession as well as to communicate advice and proposals to these authorities,
- to promote among the member countries a coordination of working conditions and a harmonisation of the orthoptist's training,
- to provide assistance to member organisations and to individual members when common interests are concerned.

Item 3: Definition

Orthoptists shall be defined as the holders of a specific diploma or degree in orthoptics which is recognised by the competent authority of the country of training or which is eligible for recognition by the competent authority of Member States under the amended Directive 89/48 EEC of 21.12.1988 relating to a general system of recognition of higher education diplomas awarded on completion of professional training for a minimum of three years.

The orthoptists profession has a paramedical status.

The professional titles recognised in the different member countries are the following :

AUSTRIA	: Orthoptist/Orthoptistin
BELGIUM	: orthoptist/orthoptiste
CZECH REPUBLIC	: ortoptistka
GERMANY	: Orthoptist/Orthoptistin
DENMARK	: ortoptist
SPAIN	: -
FINLAND	: orthoptist
FRANCE	: orthoptiste
UNITED KINGDOM	: orthoptist
GREECE	: ορθοπτικῶν
ITALY	: ortottista-assistenti di oftalmologia
IRELAND	: orthoptist
LUXEMBURG	: orthoptiste
MALTA	: orthoptist
NORWAY	: ortoptist
NETHERLANDS	: orthoptist
PORTUGAL	: ortoptista
SWEDEN	: ortoptist
SWITZERLAND	: orthoptiste/Orthoptist/Orthoptistin

Item 4: The constituent member organisations

The constituent member organisations are:

GERMANY	: Berufsverband der Orthoptistinnen Deutschlands e.V.
AUSTRIA	: Verband der diplomierten Orthoptistinnen und Orthoptisten Oesterreichs
BELGIUM	: Belgische Orthoptische Vereniging/Association Belge d'Orthoptie
DENMARK	: Dansk Medicinsk Ortoptisk Forening
FRANCE	: Syndicat National Autonome des Orthoptistes
ITALY	: Associazione Italiane Ortottisti ed Assistenti in Oftalmologia
LUXEMBURG	: Orthoptistes de la Direction de la Santé
NORWAY	: Norske Ortoptisters Forening
NETHERLANDS	: Nederlandse Vereniging van Orthoptisten
PORTUGAL	: Associação Portuguesa de Ortoptistas
UNITED KINGDOM	: British and Irish Orthoptic Society
SWEDEN	: Sveriges Ideella Ortoptistförening

Item 5: Membership

5.1 Full members

The OCE is open to the representative national organisations of orthoptists of any of the member countries of the European Union where orthoptic practice is recognized in accordance with the amended EC General Directive n°89/48.

- No country may have more than two members and two substitute members on this committee.
- The delegates must be appointed by the national representative organisations.
- They must inform the respective organisations about the work of the OCE.
- It must be the concern of each national representative organisation to inform all new delegates and to provide them with complete documentation about the activities of the OCE.
- Each full member disposes of two votes.
- The minimal number of full members for the quorum is fixed at five.

5.2 Associate members

Groups of at least 2 orthoptists who practice orthoptics or reside in an EU member state which is not represented in the OCE, can become associate members, on the condition that there is no representative orthoptic organization in that country.

- Representation per country is limited to one delegate and one substitute.
- They must inform the other orthoptists in their country and engage themselves to create a national representative organisation at the earliest opportunity.
- They have one vote per country.

5.3 Individual members

An orthoptist who practices or resides in a EU member state not represented in the OCE, can become an individual member if he is the sole representative of the profession in this country

- These members will be informed of the activities of the OCE their opinion may be solicited.
- They will not attend any meeting unless they have been invited by the Executive officers.
- They do not have any voting rights.

Item 6: Observers

Representative national organisations can ask permission to send an emissary to observe the functioning of the OCE with the aim to join at a later date.

- This emissary will not attend any meeting unless he has been invited by the Executive Council.
- These emissaries will be informed of the activities of the OCE, their opinion may be solicited.
- They do not have any voting rights.
- The period during which an organization can stay observer is limited to two years

Item 7: Decision making bodies

The Council and the Executive Officers make the decisions of the OCE.

Item 8: The Council

8.1 The Council is the meeting of all OCE members.

The Council define the broad orientation of the OCE and establish the programme of the Committee.

The meeting takes place at least once every two years and is convened either by the Executive Officers or by a minimum of one third of the full members.

Notice of the meeting must be given to the delegates at least one month prior to the date fixed for the meeting.

8.2 The full members and the associate members:

- elect the Executive Officers from the member countries and control their activity
- decide on the dismissal of the Executive Officers in case of serious non-respect of the Constitution,
- (re-)appoint the auditor
- vote the activity report
- fix subscription fees and approve the financial report
- decide on any change of the Constitution and the Procedural guidelines.

8.3 Decisions

8.3.1

Legitimate decisions of the Council are only possible if at least the half plus one of the members entitled to vote is represented.

8.3.2

The decisions concerning admission or exclusion of Executive Officers, modifications of the Constitution, admission or exclusion of members and dissolution of the OCE are taken by a majority vote of two thirds.

8.3.3.

Each country has the right to request the exclusion from a majority decision taken by the Council. The designation of the country as well as the motivation of its attitude must be mentioned in the minutes of the meeting.

8.4. Resolutions /Vote

8.4.1

The resolutions of the Council are taken by the majority of members voting, abstentions being considered as validly expressed votes. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman is entitled to a second or casting vote.

8.4.2

Votes may be given by proxy. However, a voting member can vote by proxy for one country only. Proxy votes must be given in writing by the delegate representing the absent country.

Item 9: The board of executive officers, composition and responsibilities

9.1 Number

The minimum number of Executive Officers is four: a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

No member country can hold more than one office.

9.2 Election

The Executive Officers are elected by the OCE members with right to vote.

- They are elected for a four-year period and can be re-elected for a further four-year period.
- After a break of one term they can seek re-election.
- Any candidates for a position of Executive Officer must be supported by the member organisation to which they belong.
- In case of vacancy or resignation one Officer, his functions are performed by the other Officers. His replacement is provided at the next meeting of the Council, for the remainder of the term.

9.3 Responsibility

The Executive Officers are responsible for carrying out the decisions of the Council. They are responsible for managing the OCE between the meetings of the Council on the basis of policies laid down. The Executive Officers have no power to take any decision without the authorisation of the national organisations represented on the OCE except on day-to-day matters.

9.4. Duties

9.4.1

The Executive Officers manage the administration. They may co-opt a person to assist them in their administrative functions with the consent of the Council.

The President and the other Executive Officers retain the right to vote of their national organization.

9.4.2

At each Council meeting, the Executive Officers must present a written report, detailing their activities since the last meeting.

9.5 Function of the President

The President has the special functions:

- to act as the liaison Officer to all authorities of the European Union and to represent the views and propositions of the OCE,
- to conduct the delegation of the Executive Officers to the meetings with the aforementioned authorities, the other Officers may accompany him at these meetings,
- to liaise between the Executive Officers and the Council,
- to present the activity report at plenary sessions,
- to liaise with the organizer of the Council meeting,

9.6 Function of the Vice-President

The vice-president has the special mission:

- to liaise with the other Executive Officers when presenting the views of the OCE to the competent authorities of the European Union,
- to ensure the functions of the President in case of resignation or vacancy of the President's post,
- to help in the preparation of documents and to accompany the President if required in all meetings with the European Union or other authorities,
- to participate in the preparation of the activity reports of the Executive Officers,

9.7 Function of the treasurer

The treasurer has the special mission to:

- ensure the correct acquittance of the subscription fees
- manage the financial records (register of expenditure and income, justified by accounting documents)
- acquittance of all financial obligations
- reimburse the expenses of the Executive Officers
- maintain the necessary contacts with the bank
- manage the accounts
- collect all necessary documents for tax declaration, for use by the auditor
- analyse the financial situation of the OCE and to develop proposals for a sound financial management and optimal development
- edit the financial report and a preliminary budget for the coming year, and to present these documents first to the other Executive Officers and then to the Council
- execute the financial instructions approved by the voting members of the Council
- assume exceptional expenses that are sanctioned by the Executive Officers and will be justified before the Council at a later date
- participate in the preparation of the necessary files for presentation of the OCE views to the relevant authorities (EU or other)

9.8 Function of the secretary

The secretary has the special mission to:

- convene the members for the Council meeting and to prepare the agenda
- convene the Executive Officers for their meetings and prepare the agenda
- ensure the preparation of the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Officers and of the Council,
- prepare the elections
- lay down the deeds concerning modifications of the Constitution and of the composition of the board of Executive Officers with the responsible body.
- participate in the preparation of the necessary files for presentation of the OCE views to the relevant authorities (EU or other)

Item 10: Funding

- The expenses of each full member of the OCE are the responsibility of the organisation of the country being represented.
- The associate members, individual members and observers take responsibility for their own expenses.
- All expenses covering the work of the Executive Officers are paid by the OCE on presentation of invoice. It is the same for the expenses of the working parties, within the limits fixed by the Council.
- The funds consist of the subscription fees of the members – organisations or individuals- and of all resources resulting from the activities of the OCE.
- The yearly subscription of the members must be revised annually
- The Council determines the date on which the contribution is to be paid.
- If the subscription fee is not paid at the appointed date, the member is called to order. Subsequently if the subscription fee is not paid within an delay of six months:
 - the organisation's or the associated member's right of vote is suspended
 - the organisation, the associate member or the individual member lose all other advantages

- The subscription fee is fixed in proportion to the number of full members belonging to each national organisation.
- The funds are paid into a special bank account opened by the Executive Officers in conformity with the legislation in force in the country where the account has been opened. Each member country is responsible for the payment of any transfer fee.
- The auditor is chosen in the country that is represented by the Secretary Treasurer. He will check the regularity of management at each ordinary plenary session. He is proposed and accepted for a two-year period.
- The Executive Officers will submit enquiries for grants and ad hoc financing to National and European authorities.

Item 11: Official languages

The official languages at meetings are French and English.

The documents submitted by the Executive Officers are presented in French and English.

The minutes and the agenda are sent to the OCE members in a French and an English version.

Item 12: The OCE Procedural Guidelines

The OCE Procedural Guidelines describe the functions of the OCE.

Item 13: Dissolution

In case of dissolution of the OCE, the member organisations are responsible for the eventual financial liability of the OCE. The quotas of the debt are determined for each national organisation in the same proportions as its quota for the yearly subscription.

In case of assets the members will decide on their attribution to one or several associations having relations with orthoptics or pleoptics.

Item 14: Other legal obligations

Everything not covered by the Constitution or by the Procedural Guidelines is subject to the law on non-profit associations in the country where the Constitution is registered.

The Constitution has been formulated and approved by the General Assembly

May 3rd, 1990.

They have been modified and approved by the Council in Leuven (Belgium)

April 11th, 2003.

The last modification: Council Meeting in Oslo/Norway

April 21, 2012

Attachments: Internal rules of the OCE