

Minutes of the First Management Committee Meeting (MC1) of COST Action CA18118: Implementation Research Network in Stroke Care Quality - IRENE

Brussels, Belgium

12/04/2019

1. Welcome to participants

The participants were welcomed by Dr Inga Dadeshidze, Science Officer and by Ms Gabriela Cristea, Administrative Officer of the Action. The Science Officer chaired the meeting, including the election of the Action Chair, Vice Chair, Selection of Grant Holder Institution, that was carried out under agenda items 8 and 9, as well as presentation and discussion of the Action, establishment of the Action structure and Action implementation planning, that was carried out under agenda items 10,11 and 12.

2. Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the participating COST Countries

CSO Approval: 13/11/2018

Start of the Action: 12/04/2019

End of Action: 11/04/2023

Total number of COST Countries having accepted the MoU: 26 (**Annex 2**-Action Fact Sheet)

Total number of COST Countries intending to accept the MoU: 0

Number of parties present at the meeting: 21

The quorum (2/3 of COST Countries participating in the Action) was reached: 21 COST countries out of 26 having accepted the MoU attended the meeting (**Annex 7**, COST doc. 134/14 “COST Action Management Monitoring and Final Assessment” Annex I, Article 9).

3. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda (**Annex 1**) for the 1st Management Committee (MC) meeting was adopted.

4. Tour de table/ introduction of the MC members

The officially nominated delegates participating in the MC1 (**Annex 3**) introduced themselves and presented their background and interests.

5. General information on COST mechanism and the funding and reporting of coordination activities

Dr. Inga Dadeshidze presented the COST overview, policies, and COST Actions: participation, management and monitoring (**Annex 4**). Ms Karima BenSalah, the Media Officer, presented to the MC the COST Action scientific communication strategy and tips (**Annex 5**). Ms Gabriela Cristea continued with an introduction to the COST Action's Administrative Rules and the COST Grant System (**Annex 6**).

Relevant information is on the COST website at <https://www.cost.eu/cost-actions/how-to-participate/> and <https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/>, including the following reference documents:

- Rules of Procedure for COST Action Management Committees (COST doc. 134/14, Annex I)
- COST Grant System Vademecum
- Grant Agreement Template
- Guidelines for Action management, Monitoring and Assessment

6. Agreement on the internal rules of procedure for the MC of the COST Action

The Rules of Procedure for the Management Committee (**Annex 7**) were agreed by the MC.

7. Setting the frame for the Action

The recommendations by the Scientific Committee were presented to the MC by Dr Inga Dadeshidze (**Annex 4**). The Grant Periods (GP) and the budget allocated to the Action for the 1st GP was communicated (**Annex 4**). At the day of the MC1, 22 parties had officially joined the Action. The total budget 135 000 EUR (including FSAC) for 1st Grant Period (01/11/19-30/04/20) has been allocated. The Action Grant Agreement, Work and Budget Plan drafting, Action management and activities planning principles and also tips how to optimize Action budget were presented.

8. Election of the Chair, Vice-Chair

[Prof Robert MIKULIK](#) (CZ), was elected as the Chair.

[Prof Natan BORNSTEIN](#) (IL), was elected as the Vice Chair.

The main proposer of the Action, Prof Robert MIKULIK who supposed to be present at the meeting but unfortunately because of illness (very heavy flue) he was not allowed to travel. He was only one nominated candidate and the recorded film with his speech explaining all related details has been projected. The MC unanimously voted for Prof Mikulik as the Action Chair.

Prof Natan BORNSTEIN, who also contributed a lot to the proposal of the Action and its success, has been nominated as a candidate for the Vice Chair by Ms Veronika Svobodova, the representative from Czech Republic. Prof Bornstein could not be present also because he was nominated in the Action as a MC member just 2 days before this meeting and this made impossible his participation. There were no nominated other candidates from the audience. The MC unanimously voted for Prof Bornstein as the Action Vice Chair.

Both candidates confirmed by email their willingness to be elected as a Chair and Vice-Chair.

9. Selection of the Grant holder institution (GH Scientific representative appointment) and FSAC rate

St. Anne's University Hospital, Brno (CZ) was selected as the Grant Holder Institution.

Prof Robert MIKULIK (CZ) was appointed as the Scientific Representative of the Grant Holder Institution. The MC decided 15% as FSAC rate for the Grant Holder institution.

10. Presentation and discussion of the Action

The co-author of the proposal, Ms Veronika Svobodova, presented the Action on behalf of the Action Chair - Prof Robert Mikulik.

Ms Svobodova presented the main background and context for the Action's proposal as well as its objectives and goals. She stressed the main principle of the proposed IRENE COST Action, which is not searching for new evidence in stroke treatment, but implementation of the evidence-based treatments in stroke into practice. The lack of implementation of evidence-based treatments is the biggest problem in stroke care around the world.

a) As stated in the Memorandum of Understanding, the objectives of the IRENE COST Action (CA18118) are:

- To develop the implementation strategy for stroke care quality measurement in focus countries and testing its feasibility throughout the IRENE COST Action lifetime.
- To provide evidence on stroke care quality in all involved inclusiveness target countries through coordination of data collection and provision of a web-based registry.
- To create a solid international network of stroke professionals involving representatives and relevant stakeholders from as many as possible COST member countries and NNCs and develop communication channels to make the network functional and effective.
- To interconnect IRENE COST Action network with international bodies and initiatives to achieve synergy effects of individual efforts and develop cooperation plan with at least 4 international initiatives or organisations.

To develop tools for increasing professional skills and knowledge of IRENE COST Action and sharing best practice between COST members during the IRENE COST Action period.

b) The Action is organised into four Working Groups:

WG 1 – Leadership

- Providing scientific leadership
- Development and management of the network, consociation of members
- Acceleration of knowledge exchange in leadership
- Establishment of leadership in stroke care in focus countries

WG 2 – IRENE COST Action Members

- Development of a national network for stroke care quality measurement
- Involvement of national stakeholders
- Creation of a National Implementation Strategy

WG 3 – Registry Management

- From research concept to implementation: description of the methodology and technical solutions
- Platform enhancement focused on meeting diverse country demands
- Automated inclusion of data points from existing registries
- Appropriate and up-to-date security
- Alignment with applicable legal frameworks

WG 4 – Dissemination

- Enhancing the impact of the IRENE COST Action through:
 - A) the involvement of diverse stakeholders
 - B) information activities targeted at stroke professionals and stakeholders in other geographical areas
 - C) campaigns to motivate professionals in other medical fields to follow the IRENE COST Action results.
- Informing the lay public about stroke risks and stroke care, in order to increase their awareness and potential interest to be involved in the implementation process

c) The Action's implementation of COST policies on the promotion of Inclusiveness and Excellence (see below list of Inclusiveness Target Countries), gender balance and Early Career Investigators (ECI):

- The main geographical focus of the IRENE COST Action are Inclusiveness Target Countries with the aim to improve stroke care quality in these countries:
 - Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC's): 17 countries (out of 26)
 - Gender balance: a very good balance between female and male participants (approx. 50:50)

Inclusiveness Target Countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Serbia and Turkey.

11. Establishment of Action Management structure

The following MC members have been nominated as candidates for the positions: Working Groups Leaders, STSM Manager, Science Communication Manager, ITC Grants Coordinator and Advisor for Cooperation with Industry:

WG 1 – Leadership:

- Leader: **Prof Valeria Caso (IT)** - proposed
- Vice-Leader: **Dr Dániel Bereczki (HU)** - elected

WG 2 – IRENE COST Action Members

- Leader: **Prof Cristina Tiu (RO)** - elected
- Vice-Leader: **Prof Silva Andonova (BG)** - elected

WG 3 – Registry Management

- Leader: **Prof Georgios Tsivgoulis (GR)** - proposed
- Vice-Leader: **Ms Andreea Madalina Grecu (CZ)** - proposed

WG 4 – Dissemination

- Leader: **Dr Milan Vosko (AT)** - proposed
- Vice-Leader: **Prof Anita Arsovska (MK)** - elected

Science Communication Manager

- **Dr Francesca Romana Pezzella (IT)** - proposed

ITC Grants Coordinator

- **Prof Stanislav Groppa (MD)** - elected

STSM Coordinator

- **Ms Veronika Svobodova (CZ)** - elected

Advisor for Cooperation with Industry

- **Mr Thomas Fischer (AT)** - elected

Due to absence of some nominated candidates for leadership positions, the MC decided not to elect the Leader and Vice-leader of GP3 and the Science Communication Manager; For WG1 and 4, the MC proposed to vote for the Vice-leaders to take the role of the WG Leader temporary and look back at this issue during the next MC meeting.

The MC decision: The election of Leader/Vice-leader positions of the WG 1, WG 3 and WG 4 will be discussed again during the next MC Meeting (expected for September/October 2019 at latest) and the MC voting will be initiated by the Action Chair. Until the election, the role of these WG Leaders will be substituted by the members nominated as Vice-Leaders of the respective WGs.

The MC, at 1st MC meeting, unanimously elected the following CG composition:

WG 1 – Leadership:

- Vice-Leader: **Dr Dániel Bereczki (HU)**

WG 2 – IRENE COST Action Members

- Leader: **Prof Cristina Tiu (RO)**
- Vice-Leader: **Prof Silva Andonova (BG)**

WG 4 – Dissemination

- Vice-Leader: **Prof Anita Arsovska (MK)**

ITC Grants Coordinator

- **Prof Stanislav Groppa (MD)**

STSM Coordinator

- **Ms Veronika Svobodova (CZ)**

Advisor for Cooperation with Industry

- **Mr Thomas Fischer (AT)**

12. Action implementation planning

Work and Budget Plan:

Ms Svobodova introduced a draft of the WBP for the 1st Grant Period:

a) Meetings

- General Assembly + Working Groups (50 people)
- Management Committee Meeting (30 people)
- Pilot study in Moldova – Regional Meeting (20 people)
- Regional meeting for ITC (20 people)

The proposed meetings were discussed and the Management Committee agreed to co-locate the above mentioned meetings. The result will be a **co-located meeting in Moldova in September/October 2019**, which will include a Management Committee meeting, a General Assembly meeting, Working Group meetings and a meeting on the Pilot study in Moldova.

Possible second Management Committee Meeting during the 1st Grant Period, destination and date to be announced.

b) Training Schools

- 1 training school
- Dr Brinkmeier offered to organise a training school for communication with a focus on a specific target group (such as patients, governments, social media)
- Dr Budincevic proposed to organise a training school within the annual “Summer Stroke School” in Dubrovnik in June 2019. Dr Dadeshidze agreed that this is possible, however, due to lack of time, this will be taken into consideration for the year ahead
- Dr De Miquel offered to organise a training school in EV treatment at the Bellvitge University Hospital in Barcelona

Dr Dadeshidze stressed that each training school organised within the IRENE COST Action requires a research-based content.

c) Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)

- For the 1st Grant Period, the proposed number of people participating in the STSM is 13

d) Dissemination meetings (high profile events or conferences not organised by the IRENE COST Action)

- A maximum of 2 (according to COST rules)

e) ITC Grants

- For the 1st Grant Period, the proposed number of people applying for the ITC Grant is 6

f) Dissemination

- Website, design, brochures, flyers, publication fees

Ms Svobodova introduced a draft of the budget plan. This draft was discussed and will be altered according to further input from the members of the Management Committee.

As above proposed meetings will be merged, a part of the budget will be saved and could be invested in higher number of STSM or ITC grants or higher number of Training School attendees.

The Grant Manager, Ms Svobodova, and Action Chair, Prof Mikulik, will submit the new version of the budget to the Scientific Officer.

A. COST Networking Tools	EUR
(1) Meetings	58 120
(2) Training Schools	12 480
(3) STSM	18 520
(4) ITC Conference Grants	8 760
(5) COST Action Dissemination	18 500
(6) Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA)	1 000
B. Total Science Expenditure (sum of 1 to 6)	117 380
C. Financial and Scientific Administration and Coordination (FSAC) (max of 15 % of B)	17 607
Total Grant (B+C)	134 987

Activities out of the Budget Plan:

Ms Svobodova emphasized that within IRENE COST Action, there are important activities, which do not fall into the designated budget, such as the **collection and provision of data for the registry**. This crucial activity is based on a personal effort of Management Committee members and cannot be covered by the Action's budget.

13. Any Other Business (AOB)

- In the near future, the deliverables of the Action will be discussed, mainly with regards to the timeline. Furthermore, the division of Management Committee members into Working Groups will be decided.
- The Management Committee strongly suggest that each member communicates his/her expertise and proposed roles within the Action to the Action Chair, in order to divide the participants into the four Working Groups accordingly.
- When agreed that MC Members should send their proposals on how they would contribute to the IRENE COST Action, Ms Svobodova has pointed out that the research proposals need to go in line with the Action proposal (IRENE COST Action MoU). If the budget will be fragmented to support activities not in line with the stroke care quality monitoring and improving, it will not be able to achieve the goals of the IRENE COST Action.
- For the second Management Committee meeting, Dr Knoche suggested to have a management tool in place, in order to ensure an effective management of the Action.

- A number of Management Committee members expressed their interest in establishing a “Sub-Working Group” e.g. a Task force (with a specific timeline) focused on the post-acute phase of stroke and rehabilitation. This will be further discussed with the Action Chair.
- Some Management Committee members expressed a need to change the objectives/deliverables or to establish new Working Groups. This was rejected by Dr Dadeshidze, as crucial parts of approved and ongoing COST Actions cannot be altered.
- Ms Svobodova reminded that IRENE COST Action is focused on monitoring and improving stroke care quality. The goals are described clearly in the MoU incl. definition of the registry.
- Some MC Members asked if only RES-Q needs to be used for quality monitoring. Ms Svobodova answered that whichever tool (other registries) can be used for the monitoring and improving.
- Some MC members asked if it is possible to change the metrics in RES-Q Registry. Ms Svobodova answered, that yes. 1) The registry form is still under development (the basic version was prepared based on the paper of Bo Norrving¹) and any improvement is welcome, and 2) the registry is customizable and metrics can be modified based on country needs.

14. Closing

The meeting was closed at 4:30 p.m.

List of Annexes

Annex 1- Agenda

Annex 2- Action Fact Sheet

Annex 3- Attendance list

Annex 4- Science Officer (SO) presentation

Annex 5- Communications Officer presentation

Annex 6- Administrative Officer (AO) presentation

Annex 7 - The Rules of Procedure for COST Action Management Committees (COST doc. 134/14, Annex I)

https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/COST-134-14-REV-3-COST_Action_Management_Monitoring_Final_Assessment.pdf

Annex 8 – Presentation of the Action Chair and other related documents

¹ Norrving B, Bray BD, Asplund K, Heuschmann P, Langhorne P, Rudd AG, Wagner M, Wiedmann S, Wolfe CDA, European Implementation Score Collaboration: Cross-National Key Performance Measures of the Quality of Acute Stroke Care in Western Europe. Stroke 2015, 46:2891–2895.