

Dear DIETS Partners,

I am delighted to announce the DIETS2 Thematic Network has just passed the half-way stage and is progressing well. There are now 101 partners from 31 EU countries and a further 6 associate partners from non-EU countries.

The work packages are each making good progress with their deliverables and we will soon publish:

- a report on diversity of student placements,
- advanced competence statements for dietitians,
- a guide to eLearning.

We have established an editorial panel for an eJournal, and two databases are being created, one of Life Long Learning materials, the other of materials for teaching research methods. In addition, we are working towards an eCourse on teaching research.

Do you belong to an EFAD member association, a Higher Education Institute or a stakeholder organisation? Then we hope to see you at the DIETS/EFAD conference in Portorož, Slovenia on 26/27 October 2012, where we offer workshops and lectures on topics related to “Life Long Learning for a secure nutrition future”. It will also be a forum for the newly created European Specialist Dietetic Networks for Obesity, Diabetes, Ageing, Renal, Public Health Dietetics and Administrative Dietetics to discuss how to develop these specialities at EU level. Separate meetings for EFAD Presidents and DIETS Key Contacts form another key part of the programme.

We are hoping to attract many students to Slovenia, and have negotiated a low registration fee and hostel accommodation to make it affordable for them to attend, present their research and meet other EU students. I would strongly recommend this conference to all dietitians, be they practising, teaching or studying, as the programme is directly relevant to all of us.

Listen to Judith's [podcast](#)

Judith Liddell

DIETS Network Manager and EFAD Secretary General

Please distribute this newsletter and keep information and news coming into our editor Stefan Storcksdieck at stefan.storcksdieck@eufic.org or send any items you would like included in future newsletters to the dissemination work package lead Bernadett Tóth at bernadett.toth1@gmail.com.



Key contacts workshop

Within the 6th DIETS-EFAD Conference in Portorož, a key contacts workshop will be held. Key contacts disseminate information about DIETS within a DIETS partner organisation and volunteer to promote the work of DIETS and the role of dietitians to the relevant national governmental and non-governmental organisations. A vital element of the network process is the key contacts' feedback on the dissemination activities and on the impact of DIETS (exploitation) in their institutions and countries.

Last year's experience showed us that the face-to-face meeting with key contacts allows for an efficient exchange of views and sparks lots of good ideas. Furthermore, the conference has proven to be an appropriate platform for receiving the feedback of partners and key contacts. To exploit this, we have designed the programme of the key contacts workshop to be interactive, primarily focusing on the participants' reflection. We would like to give key contacts an opportunity for sharing their best dissemination methods, together with their ideas on how these could help maximise the outreach of future deliverables. What information would key contacts like from DIETS to help them in their dissemination work, and how can we increase partner participation in the network?

To optimise discussions, please help us compile the evidence of all the good work DIETS partners are doing, and the impact that our deliverables have had on your work. For this, we will need more key contacts engagement, whose feedback is always welcome and to whom we intend to give as much help as they require.



PORTOROŽ, SLOVENIA 26-27 OCTOBER 2012



Life Long Learning for a secure nutrition future



We would like to ask you, the key contacts, to continue your involvement in the life of DIETS by registering to the conference and also to fill in the key contacts questionnaire, which is going to be sent to you early autumn. We are looking forward to meeting you in October, in Slovenia!

Listen to Bernadett's [podcast](#)

*Bernadett Tóth
WP9 Lead*

The 6th DIETS conference – What’s in it for students?

The upcoming conference gives students a unique chance to participate in an international congress – but organized in Europe – together with dietitians and students from about 35 European countries. Additionally, they will have the opportunity to present their posters, share knowledge and make friends with dietitians across Europe.

Last year we received very positive reactions from some 60 students. This year we want to make it even better. The conference will again offer a special programme for students. Students who attended last year mentioned they wanted to follow the normal conference activities for the most part, whereas some students wanted specific students’ sessions such as:

- ✓ about conferences in general;
- ✓ social media;
- ✓ national differences in food and nutrition;
- ✓ other student-related topics.

So we have developed workshops and meetings specific for students. In these sessions, the use of first cycle European dietetic competences will be discussed. An interactive session about “learning and networking on conferences” will be included, starting from students own experiences and expectations with a list of useful hints and tips as a result. Following this, differences in food and cultural habits between countries will be investigated and documented. The final session deals with the e-journal and the DIETS Facebook page and will end with some reflection. *The detailed students programme can be found at <http://www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu/everyone/3580/5/0/30>.*

So if you are a student, we invite you to our next conference in Slovenia! If you are a teacher, we’d like you to inform and encourage your students. After all, besides a two day quality programme about “Life Long Learning”, students will definitely experience the benefit of getting to know other students and exchanging experiences. Attendance would also make a nice addition to their CV, demonstrating the motivation for “Life Long Learning”.

Can there be more? Well, yes! Students have the chance to present their own research outcomes in the form of a poster to an international audience (*for practical information: call for posters on website*). There will even be a prize for “best student research presentation” Do we even have to mention the pleasure and atmosphere of a beautiful Slovenian seaside town? DIETS makes this experience achievable and low-budget for students (*for practical information, students programme, registration forms, call for posters, transport and list of cheap hostels and accommodation: see <http://www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu/everyone/3523/5/0/30>*).

Koen Vanherle
Student Key Contact



Achievements of the DIETS2 working groups – interim report review

The aim of the second DIETS Thematic Network (DIETS2) is to promote excellence in the education of dietitians across Europe at undergraduate and post-qualifying level. To achieve this goal, DIETS2 has five Work Packages (WPs) working on the separate deliverables of the project and four WPs dealing with the management, the quality assurance, the dissemination and the exploitation activities of the network.

In the followings you can read a short review from the interim report (2010-2012) about the achievements of the first five working groups in the context of their objectives. The listed objectives refer to the period of reporting.

Work based and placement learning (WP1)

The objectives of WP1 are:

- a) to map current diversity of practice placement/work based learning opportunities and supporting infrastructure (e.g. guidelines, teacher preparation) used by dietetic higher education
- b) to analyse practice placement/work based learning data

To map the placements for dietitians in Europe, a questionnaire was developed, which comprised 29 questions. HEIs in all DIETS partner countries and, if not represented national associations, were asked to complete the online survey, thus a response rate of 58% was achieved.

To develop the database, the group focused on the content since supporting documents for placements had already been collected via the survey. Currently, a proposal for a user-friendly structure has been made and is being discussed within the work package.

Second and third cycle specific dietetic competences (WP2)

The objectives of WP2 are:

- a) to map working patterns of dietitians in key areas of dietetic practice, throughout Europe in order to identify Life Long Learning requirements and associated competences
- b) to use Tuning methodology to develop specific second and third cycle competences for dietitians

To map the Lifelong learning needs for dietitians in Europe, a questionnaire on *Second and third cycle specific dietetic competences* was developed, which included 20 questions. A total of 2030 dietitians from 35 countries completed the questionnaire.

The results from the questionnaire are being analysed and the LLL needs analysis will be produced and published as a report. A consultation phase for 2nd and 3rd level competences has been made with the participation of professional associations, HEIs, students and service users (e.g. doctors/nurses). A final analysis of the consultation will result in proposed 2nd and 3rd level competences, with a proposed strategy for LLL, to be submitted to the EFAD delegates at the EFAD General Meeting for agreement and acceptance as policy for dietitians working in Europe.

Life Long Learning for Dietitians in Europe (WP3)

The objectives of WP3 is to describe, analyse and compare the courses, modules and programmes available in Europe for dietitians (and other nutrition experts) make recommendations regarding omissions and development.

WP3 has developed a questionnaire about LLL of Dietitians in Europe. The questionnaire will investigate if LLL is mandatory in each country and if there are any consequences for dietitians if they do not undertake further education. Questions concerning units of learning (use of ECTS), payment, and benefits of LLL for the individual dietitian, models of controlling and models of documentation will also be requested.

Dietitians' engagement with ICT to improve learning (WP4)

The objectives of WP4 are:

- a) to describe, analyse and identify barriers/innovations to use of ICT in higher education and the profession in Europe
- b) to undertake a scoping exercise of innovative use of ICT by international dietetic partners

WP4 started a DIETS-Facebook Page at the end of June 2011. By the end of January 2012, 281 unique visitors had clicked the "Like-button". Visitors mostly originated from Portugal (90), Greece (24), Austria (24), UK (19), Spain (16) and Belgium (16). Currently (July 2012), more than 1000 people "Like" the DIETS Page. Regarding the DIETS website, from the end of June 2011 until the end of January 2012, the most popular section was the notice board, with 2014 views.

WP4 will also develop a guide on use of innovative ICT-tools in the education of future dietitians and in the LLL of dietitians in practice. This guide will be informed by results from an on-line questionnaire designed by WP4 to survey the use of ICT in the education of dietitians. The survey findings have been written up as a scientific report.

Teaching enquiry based learning (WP5)

The objectives of WP5 are:

- a) to describe and analyse methods used by Partners to teach enquiry/systematic investigation and research methods to students at first, second and third cycle
- b) to make recommendations about tools for teaching and sharing of research methodologies
- c) to encourage sharing of research and research expertise in the student dietetic profession through the website, conferences and pilot of an e-journal

A pilot was carried out in June 2011 to collect partner's feedback, based on which the structure for the database was agreed. A call for materials used to teach enquiry-based learning and research methods was put out through a webinar and discussion board/alerts to DIETS2 partners and others.

An editorial board with 9 members from 6 Higher Education Institutes in Austria, Greece, Spain and UK, has been established to review students' abstracts for publication in an eJournal.

An Update from the Work Packages

A first draft of an e-course on teaching enquiry has been prepared and will be piloted on the topics of the database, which will be referred to in this e-course. In addition, more information on research topics will be provided.

Additionally two other activities have contributed to the objectives of this WP. A report about current teaching of research in HEI across Europe based on a questionnaire that has been sent out to partners in 2011.

WP8 has launched a series of briefs on the deliverables of the DIETS2 work packages. The presentations of WP1 and WP2 results have already been sent to the key contacts, which will be followed by the outcomes of the other work packages. If you are not a key contact, please visit the Key Contacts Information Folder on <http://www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu/frames.asp?actionID=0> for the briefs and give us your feedback, in case you have made any changes because of DIETS!

PORTOROŽ, SLOVENIA 26-27 OCTOBER 2012



Life Long Learning for a secure nutrition future



European Specialist Dietetic Networks

Throughout Europe dietitians are taking on advanced, expert and specialist roles in such areas as diabetes, obesity, public health, administrative dietetics, care of the ageing and paediatrics to name but a few. Over the past year the DIETS2 Network has been working with these advanced practitioners to document their special and advanced competences which complements work going on around the world (see another article in this Newsletter).

At previous DIETS conferences we have set aside time for delegates to meet with others interested in particular areas of dietetic interest. But this year in Slovenia we will be launching European Specialist Dietetic Networks where dietitians can continue to share their understanding of current practice and look forward to advancing knowledge and evidence-based practice in their own specialist area. They will also be discussing the proposed advanced competence statements. As recognition of dietetic expertise advances in Europe special value will be placed on those dietitians working in these specialist areas. For example the European Union has committed itself to the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases or NCDs (EC 2007 & 2011) such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease by encouraging healthful nutrition through better food choice and increased physical activity. Dietitians, as nutrition experts, can further advance their profession, their professional expertise and, as autonomous professionals, support their patients and all people they work with including other healthcare professionals through supporting these initiatives. By developing specialist expertise they will make an impact on NCDs in Europe.



Higher education has a role to play in this through providing and supporting specialist courses. In DIETS2 Work Package 3 is supporting this aspect of Lifelong Learning through documenting courses for dietitians and highlighting where HEIs need to develop more courses for dietitians and especially in specialist areas. EFAD also wants to support and encourage pan-European developments by defining advanced competence. Come and join us on this journey in Slovenia.

European Commission (2011) MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+MOTION+B7-2011-0489+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

Initiatives to improve nutritional health in Europe; EC White paper, 2007; WHO, 2008 and EU Platform for action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/platform_en.htm

Anne de Looy

Honorary President of EFAD and Coordinator of DIETS2 EU Thematic Network

European Dietetic Advanced Competences

Going from a newly qualified dietitian to an advanced level requires higher levels of knowledge and skills, as it includes significantly more demanding and complex work together with higher levels of responsibility and professional judgment.

In 2009, EFAD adopted the European Dietetic Competences and Performance Indicators (PIs) at a threshold level for entry into the profession (EFAD, 2005, www.efad.org). Thereafter the profession and higher education institutions (HEI) in Europe began a process to ensure that all dietitians qualifying from their programmes have achieved these competences.

Within the current context of Europe, the development of competence statements for dietitians post-qualifying is as important and therefore highly relevant for the profession to support best possible dietetic practice. In addition and bearing in mind that the key ambitions of the Thematic Network for Dietitians (DIETS2) are:

- ✓ To prepare dietitians to be able to undertake and evaluate health promoting interventions and publish findings (enquiry led-learning)
- ✓ To support dietitians to develop and use contemporary communication and pedagogic/education methods (ICT)
- ✓ To enable dietitians to continually enhance their own expertise and relevance through Life Long Learning (LLL)

The work of Work Package 2, led by Professor Agneta Hornell, defines the competences of advanced and specialist dietitians. These generic competences should be reached after “some years” of practical experience combined with continued education and other experiences of LLL. Practical work experience is essential to improve competence, but years in practice are not enough by themselves to reach advanced level. *How* a dietitian works and what LLL-experiences the individual chooses to undertake will be crucial in the process (see Figure 1, next page). It is possible to work many years as an adequate and competent dietitian without reaching advanced level.



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

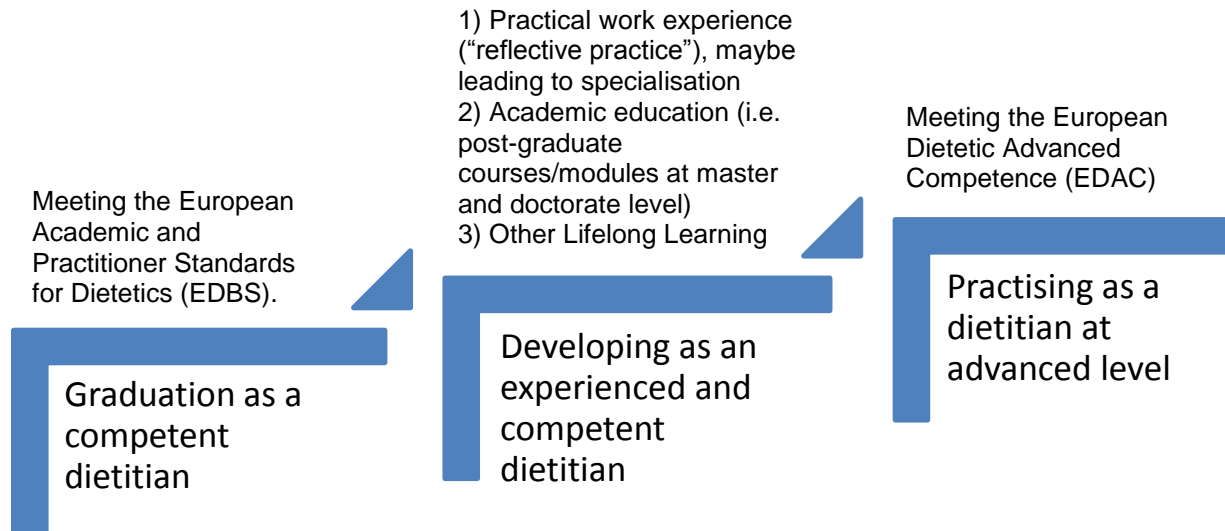


Figure 1 Flowchart over the progression from newly graduated dietitian to a dietitian practicing at advanced level, indicating standards to be met at the two levels and the experience required to reach the higher level

An advanced practice or specialist dietitian will also want to add to these specific competences for their own speciality for example in paediatrics or renal or diabetes. They then will be able to demonstrate they meet the advanced competence standards by drawing on a wide range of evidence. The evidence can be gained from professionally recognized programmes of study, for example a degree at Masters Level or equivalent, or by using a competency-based assessment process. Other approaches may also be used to demonstrate commitment to evidence-based practice to meet the advanced competence standards.

Exactly which of the competences described a dietitian has to reach and which performance indicators they have to be able to show before being regarded as working at advanced level will be determined by their National Dietetic Associations and national legislation. The EDAC-document also provides a benchmark for monitoring development of the profession in Europe as opportunities are introduced for LLL. It also presents a challenge to Higher Education, the Professional Bodies and individual learners to consider how they can support, through educational programmes and more informal means, the advancement of their colleagues, learners and themselves.

At the conference in Slovenia we will begin to draw together the specialist competences and explore how Higher Education can respond and support this aspect of LLL.

Anne de Looy
Honorary President of EFAD and Coordinator of DIETS2 EU Thematic Network

Standardised Languages and the Nutritional Care Process

Dietitians have long been considering how best to express their care process and in Figure 1 you can see some of the history from a North American perspective. This year the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations set up a working party to investigate a care process which would suit dietetics internationally.

In Europe dietitians are also working to decide which models to adopt. In some countries such as the UK a model very similar to that developed by Lacey and Pritchett in America is being promoted and in the Netherlands dietitians are using Problem Solving Documentation model since 1985 or POR (**P**robleem ge-**O**riënteerde **R**egistratie), see Figure 2.

<p>New Basic Model POR 1998 6 steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intake • Dietary Assessment • Dietetic Diagnosis • Dietetic Treatment Plan/Intervention • Evaluation • Ending Treatment

Figure 2 Model used in the Netherlands (from Wineke Remijnse; personal)

1982: Mason et al.	4-step	USA
1992: Gates et al.	7 step	USA
1996: Brylinsky.	5-step	USA
2001: Splett and Myers.	5-step	USA
2003: Lacey & Pritchett	4-step	USA
• A	Assessment	
• D	Diagnosis	
• I	Intervention	
• M/E	Monitor/Evaluation	

Lacey K, Pritchett E. Nutrition Care Process and model: ADA adopts road map to quality care and outcomes management. J Am Diet Assoc. 2003;103(8):1061-1072.

Figure 1 History of Dietetic Models

The European Federation of Associations of Dietitians through the work of its Professional Practice Committee, led by Dr Jolein Iestra, is considering all of the various models and a survey was undertaken last year to find the usage of the care process and the standardised languages in Europe; the results are available from EFAD. Another survey is currently being undertaken to understand better how dietitians in Europe use the process and its associated 'languages'. The survey outcomes will be presented at the DIETS conference.

Associations are giving guidance on which care process is to be adopted although this is not necessarily required for dietitians to begin using a process to document dietetic care. However if the language used by dietitians to explain to other healthcare professionals (and to each other) the nutritional assessment, the nutritional diagnosis, the plan, the intervention and the evaluation the process becomes much more clear. So a standardised language that could accompany a dietetic care process would make the dietetic care more transparent.

American dietitians have developed the International Dietetic and Nutrition Terminology (IDNT) and Australia, Canada and are in the process of adopting formally OR implementing this language as are several European countries and affiliates (Sweden, Norway, UK, Israel). The IDNT is being translated for use in Sweden, Italy, Norway and Portugal. The Dutch Institute of Allied Health Care and Dutch dietitians developed the WHO

Standardised Languages and the Nutritional Care Process

International Classification of Functionality, Disability and Health (ICF) further for nutrition and dietetics: the ICF-Dietetics, which will be presented in English in September this year in Sydney at the ICDA-Congress. If both languages could be made compatible and implemented then dietitians around the world would all, theoretically, be able to speak very explicitly with each other and the potential to share evidence concerning dietetics would be much greater.

This is what Marleen Meteling-Eeken had to say on my question how is standardised language used by dietitians in Germany:

“In Germany the ICF has been introduced into the health care system and legislation. A Standing Working Group of delegates of Health Care Professional Associations (AG-MFA) wrote in 2009 an ICF position paper. According to this paper all affiliated Associations (Dietitians, Ergotherapists, Medical Technical Assistants, Midwives, Orthoptists, Physiotherapists, and Speech therapists) accepted the importance and significance of the ICF and endeavour the dissemination of the ICF in the daily work to support an optimal care of the patients/clients. That’s why the German Dietitians Association (VDD) is interested in the ICF-Dietetics, possibly in combination with the IDNT”.

Higher Education needs to now take a more detailed interest in the developments around the Care Process and the Standardised languages as their students will increasingly encounter both in their practice placements and as newly qualified students. The DIETS conference will have special workshops where we can continue the discussion on these very important and exciting initiatives.

Anne de Looy

Honorary President of EFAD and Coordinator of DIETS2 EU Thematic Network



CALLING ALL STUDENTS

In the autumn (October), the DIETS Network and more specifically Work Package 5 are going to call for your project abstracts to publish in an e-journal. This is only for graduate (first degree) students and the idea is that you send to the editor an abstract of the project that you have completed as part of your degree programme. These will be selected and then published so that all students can see what work is going on around Europe.

Watch the Facebook page and other website pages to find out when the call will be made and the deadlines for submission. We will also let your teachers know.

Time is still available to submit your abstracts for the conference in Slovenia. Go to the DIETS website (www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu) to find further details – including the prize for best student presentation. There is a special registration rate for students and plenty of hostels near the sea for you. A special student programme is also going to run – so don’t miss out!



Qualitative research explores the factors influencing research involvement amongst academic dietitians working in the university setting

Research involvement is fundamental to dietetic practice as it establishes a knowledge base and fuels scholarly discourse. In healthcare, research allows evidence-based practice and therefore improves patient care, whilst for the individual registered dietitian (RD), research involvement improves knowledge and skills. Academic dietitians working in the university setting are potentially in a strong position to advance research – both in terms of conducting it and also in teaching it to the future dietetic workforce. However, few studies specifically address the factors that influence research involvement amongst dietitians in this setting.



We recently undertook qualitative semi-structured interviews with thirteen academic dietitians working in universities in the United Kingdom (UK), the results of which have recently been reported in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly the Journal of the American Dietetic Association) (Whelan and Markless, 2012). Dietitians were purposively sampled from throughout the UK working in institutions with varying focus on teaching and research. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed thematically by the same researcher.

There were three distinct factors that influenced research involvement amongst academic dietitians in the UK: (1) Institution or department; (2) Academic activities; and (3) Influence of individuals. Within these factors there were eight themes, and there was complex interaction between each of these (see table). Many of the themes were very specific to the dietetics context, including being a small discipline, being in newer universities without established research portfolios, having greater teaching responsibilities, and the availability of grants in areas related to nutrition. Depending on the context, these themes could either enhance or hinder research involvement. For example, limited or extensive availability of research facilities (laboratories, clinical research facilities etc) could hinder or enhance research involvement respectively.

(1) INSTITUTION OR DEPARTMENT	(2) ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES	(3) INFLUENCE OF INDIVIDUALS
Departmental structure and size Interdisciplinary mix Domination and isolation of dietetics Impact on teaching Collegiality	Faculty roles Job description Diverse contracts (e.g. teaching only) Joint clinical-faculty role	Self Skills and attitudes Previous research experience Confidence in research Gender and family responsibilities

(1) INSTITUTION OR DEPARTMENT	(2) ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES	(3) INFLUENCE OF INDIVIDUALS
<p>University philosophy and implementation Research or teaching philosophy Availability of research facilities Research training courses Managerialism and promotion</p>	<p>Time and teaching Teaching and impact on research time Differing nature of teaching and research Issues specific to teaching dietetics</p>	<p>Significant others Senior academics Colleagues and collaborators Partners and family</p>
<p>Being established in research Cumulative advantage of being established in research Cumulative disadvantage of not being established in research</p>	<p>Research and research grants Different nature of dietetic research Research grant availability Impact of national policy</p>	

The factors that influence research involvement amongst academic dietitians are complex and interact, and therefore solutions to overcome these barriers will need to account for this. The factors might vary in different settings and in different countries, but the findings reported here provide a framework for how these could be approached, analysed and interpreted.

The full research is reported in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics:
Whelan K, Markless S. Factors that influence research involvement amongst Registered Dietitians working as university faculty: a qualitative interview study. J Acad Nutr Diet. 2012;112:1021–1028.

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We look forward to seeing you in Portorož!

PORTOROŽ, SLOVENIA 26-27 OCTOBER 2012



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