



Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar
World Organisation for Early Childhood Education
www.worldomep.org

2019: 5
May

European Newsletter - Boletín - Bulletin



OBRIGADO OMEP PORTUGAL

We have just finished a successful European meeting and international conference *Education for sustainable development* in Lisbon, Portugal. My sincere thanks to the whole Portuguese OMEP Committee and to the Museo João de Deus and its school, children, teachers and staff for your warm welcoming and friendly approach.

17 countries were represented during the OMEP Meeting, and it was especially nice to welcome many new delegates. During the meeting each committee made a short report about ECEC and OMEP activities. These reports will be distributed in the next OMEP European newsletter. I ask of all responsible to e-mail me their report as soon as possible, preferably before June 3. More info <https://omepportugal.wordpress.com/euroconf19>

At the Conference we had more than 30 presentations from many different countries.

Social relationships were formed and strengthened.

We also made a Declaration about children's rights and children in migration. Please, translate it and send it to your government and other important people. And finally, together we watched the UN video about the 17 Sustainable development goals. You find it on

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=UN+rap+for+the+sustainable+goals&&view=detail&mid=D17513827782E5D9EC34D17513827782E5D9EC34&&FORM=VRDGAR>



A. Ponces de Carvalho, the Mayor and me/
Ingrid Engdahl



*Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar
World Organization for Early Childhood Education*

2019 DECLARATION on Children's Rights

from the OMEP European Meeting in Lisbon, May 16-18, 2019

We, delegates from 20 countries, are gathered here in Lisbon for the OMEP European Regional meeting and International conference. OMEP works for early childhood education and care and the well-being of children from birth to 8 years. The theme for our conference is Education for sustainable development with the aim to contribute to a re-orientation towards a sustainable future. Education begins at birth, and children develop values, attitudes and behaviour from the start.

2019 is also the year of the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the rights of the child. OMEP was an active partner in the process of writing the convention, and this year we will, together with children, celebrate the convention. Following the convention, children have the right to play, health, education and care, and it is our joint efforts that make this possible. Education relies on well trained and well respected teachers.

Children also have the right to express themselves in all matters that relate to them. Thus, children are important citizens with the right to participate in the development of our societies, and for a sustainable future.

However, today too many children in Europe and around the world are living under dreadful circumstances. Children in migration are among the most vulnerable, and on the doorsteps to Europe, there are children living in camps, even imprisoned. These children are living in extreme conditions, calling for immediate action. Governments have a special responsibility towards these children, to bring them to safety, to help and support them. For young children, every single day is of vital importance for their physical and mental health. OMEP was founded in 1948 around a common understanding of the importance of education for peace. Today, the respect and understanding of the equal value of all people and human rights still needs to be at the core of our actions.

State parties must recognise the rights of all children and especially for the most vulnerable and children at risk. We call on all governments to take immediate action to bring these children to a safe life.

Ingrid Engdahl
Vice President of OMEP in Europe

Antonio Ponces de Carvalho
President of OMEP in Portugal

OMEPE is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organization concerned with all aspects of early childhood education and care. OMEPE was founded in 1948 and has consultative status with UN, UNESCO and UNICEF. OMEPE has 72 national committees in all regions of the world, 27 of them in Europe. www.worldomepe.org

Notes for the minutes for the OMEP European Regional Meeting 2019

Held on Thursday 16th May 2019

At Museu Joao de Deus, Lisbon (Headquarters of OMEP Portugal)

1. The meeting was opened by Ingrid Engdahl, VP for Europe, with a welcome from Antonio Ponces de Carvalho, President of OMEP Portugal
2. The roll call was taken from the sign-in register. 17 countries are represented, 14 European members, Italy (prep. committee), Belgium applying for preparatory membership in Panama, and Australia. Adrijana Visnic Jevtic was appointed as a timekeeper.
3. The agenda was adopted as circulated, Ingrid Engdahl was agreed as chairperson and Paulette Luff agreed to take notes
4. The informal minutes from the European meeting held at the World Conference in Prague, and published in the first newsletter of 2019, were shown and agreed
5. Ingrid Engdahl spoke about the OMEP Action Plan, agreed at the World Assembly in Prague and circulated via the first newsletter of 2019. This is focussed at local, national and world level.
6. Reports were given by Ingrid Engdahl, as VP for Europe, and by all the National Presidents present or their representatives. National reports were presented from 17 countries: Australia, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

NOTE: Ingrid Engdahl will welcome opportunities to visit European OMEP members (travelling by train); people are also encouraged to partner with other countries for visits to share good practice

ACTION: All speakers to send their one-page summary report to Ingrid for distribution.

7. Three working groups were convened with a suggested format for discussion to be choosing a chair person and secretary, going around the group for each person to report from their country, open discussion, and agreement of a summary of important actions for OMEP, e.g. as a potential contribution to the European OMEP declaration 2019.

Working group on Children and Migration:

Must be welcoming – working for acceptance – how can this be done?

Equal rights must be upheld - children are children and language is important e.g. children and migration not migrant children – maintaining focus on individuals and humans

We can work on changing perspectives – especially gaining the child's perspectives

Training must be available for all types of practitioners – formally and informally

Good practices can be shared e.g. working with dance and music – that are useful for all e.g. including transit countries and destinations

8. **Working group on the UNCRC (divided into two groups)**

Needs to be considered in relation to policy, adults and children

Bearing in mind issue of power and participation

Children's awareness of their rights must be raised

The focus must be on the rights of children who are more disadvantaged in all countries

Awareness raising in general on UNCRC is important- including amongst parents

OMEP can foster cooperation between stakeholders and official advocates (such as the ombudsman or commissioner)

It's important to publish articles and papers about participation

Posters can be produced and displayed in kindergartens to promote children's rights and UNCRC in general

Involving students- good teachers sharing experiences and find inspiring teachers to promote Rights in Practice

Teachers' own rights must be upheld, too, with better recognition of their contribution

A group of NGOs in Portugal formed a Child Rights forum – seminars with lawyers on the rights of the child – 20th November children take over parliament to discuss their rights

Listening to children's views in court is vital

In January UNCRC will become law in Sweden – there is an opportunity to spread knowledge about this and to promote it

There must be explicit and implicit recognition of the competence of children

9. Working group on ESD (divided into two groups)

There was an inspiring discussion of projects in each country plus ways to exchange more knowledge of good practice and share information with others.

Children's rights not to be over-protected are important – there is work to be done with families and also opportunities for working with students on how they work with materials and nature and engage in risky-play – how is this sustainable and how do attitudes differ in other parts of the world? Children can be asked to identify the problems and different kinds of solutions – it is children's right to indicate what they identify as a problem here and now

More work can also be done in relation to the ESD rating scale to promote its uptake and translation and adaptation in different contexts

It is important to continue with the themes that we have already worked on – and to emphasise how we reach the smallest children – perhaps through teacher training although not all countries have teachers to undertake ESD with birth to three?

It would be interesting to look at how the responses of children have changed over ten years – what the different changes are and how we can compare responses. Children's responses are often more interesting than those of children and teachers.

ACTION: there is a need for more work on all three themes and this can be planned at a national level when the minutes are taken back to national committees and discussed.

10. European ongoing projects:

Croatia reported on an EU Erasmus plus **Transitions project** in four countries – trying to find existing good practices – with different voices on transitions leading to development of training especially for new teachers. It will be disseminated – there is a report about transition practices free to be downloaded already – see the short report in OMEP European newsletter - the focus is on whole day care and transition to school. Questions were asked about the transition between daycare and part-time daycare in after-school centres, which are less well regarded.

Russia reported the **toys of the world project** – it helps children learn about other countries through toys – specifically traditional toys e.g. dolls of different countries that is then linked to finding information about the countries involved. The countries that are cooperating sent presentations about traditional toys and the children learned about toys for about one month, for example, by asking children what they want to do with the toy – draw it, write about it, dance with it. Thus children combine images and ideas of the dolls and the places that they originate from. So far Greece and the US are included in learning about the world through traditional dolls. Children told their parents about the dolls. Countries are welcome to join the project.

Cyprus reported the **Art project for 70 years of OMEP** – OMEP Cyprus held an exhibition in a cultural pedagogical centre where people who are refugees and migrants saw artwork by children from other countries. Phase two is underway with a website – creating a virtual exhibition to exchange and see pictures – and perhaps publishing illustrated books to share.

11. Membership matters:

Italy has made good progress reaching out to organisations and to younger people and recapturing the history of OMEP Italy – and should be endorsed at the World Assembly in Greece in 2020 as a full member.

Belgium is developing its constitution deciding details such as types of membership, period of membership, periods of election for president, working plan, aim, mission etc – this is well underway in Belgium – and they are ready to apply and be accepted as a preparatory committee in Panama North Macedonia is also preparing to apply to form a preparatory committee, and there are plans for a restart of OMEP Austria

There will be a discussion in Panama on membership fees.

12. World Assembly

12-14 European countries have registered to attend in Panama

Portugal and Spain have given their proxy to France – other proxy votes were discussed – can only take two – need to check with proxy givers how to vote during World Assembly.

The nominations for the two candidates for World President were presented by Ingrid.

The VP for Africa is a re-election and for Latin America there is one nominee from Chile.

For World Treasurer, there is a candidate from Norway.

Honorary members need to be nominated in good time – the deadline has passed for this year – typically countries should nominate retired people who have made strong contributions to national early childhood or to OMEP.

Greece will host the next World Assembly, which will be in Athens in July 2020.

13. Declaration – the declaration from the European meeting will be prepared based upon discussions at the meeting and will contain messages about: Children’s Rights; children’s participation from birth; the situations of children in the world, including those affected by migration, living in camps.

Preparation of teachers and the status of early childhood teachers will also be included. Ingrid and Antonio will finish the declaration with support from the group leaders (items 7-9).

14. Next European meeting and conference. As the 2020 World Assembly will be in Greece, the meeting decided there will not be a separate European conference next year. We will request longer time for our regional meeting in Athens.

It was mentioned that both Cyprus and Sweden have offered to host a future European meeting and conference.

15. Any other business. Adrijana has made a call for papers for a book on Children’s Rights in ECE – disseminating good practices amongst OMEP practitioners – this will online publication for teachers to use. Details are in the April European newsletter. Adrijana and Ingrid also announced plans for a book in celebration of 30 years of UNCRC.

16. Closing Antonio Ponces de Carvalho closed the meeting. Welcomed people to Portugal and invited everyone to the reception on May 17 with the mayor at the City Hall. People were also invited to visit schools and to enter into Erasmus projects. A group photo was taken.

Ingrid Engdahl, chair

Paulette Luff, secretary

Next OMEP meeting in PANAMA in July 2019

<https://omeppanama.com/en>

This newsletter is forwarded to you by each national OMEP committee. To unsubscribe - contact your national president.

Este boletín le es enviado por cada comité nacional de OMEP. Para cancelar la suscripción - contacte a su presidente nacional.

Ce bulletin vous est envoyé par chaque comité national de l'OMEP. Pour vous désabonner, contactez votre président national

What's up in Europe? Send your contribution to the next newsletter to ingridengdahl@gmail.com

¿Qué pasa en Europa? Envíe su contribución al próximo boletín a ingridengdahl@gmail.com

Qu'est-ce qui se passe en Europe? Envoyez votre contribution au prochain bulletin à ingridengdahl@gmail.com