



Minutes for the European Regional Assembly 2020

Wednesday September 30, on-line through ZOOM, 4-7pm London time.

3.30-4 .00 Roll Call. Delegates logged into the meeting in Zoom and enjoyed informal conversations.

1. Opening of the meeting

Ingrid Engdahl - Greeted OMEP World President Mercedes Mayol Lassalle and colleagues from the World Secretariat, the World Treasurer Elin Eriksen Ödegaard and our UNICEF representative, Lisbeth Gouin.

Everyone was welcomed to the first virtual Regional Assembly of OMEP Europe. Documents were shown via screen sharing. It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to meet online, at this time when travelling is restricted.

The Invitation to participate was voted upon and accepted.

2. Roll Call

Ingrid Engdahl carried out the Roll Call and delegates and observers from 23 European countries introduced themselves (for names and countries see attached Roll Call)

The Roll Call was voted upon and accepted

3. Appointing chair(s), secretary, and 2 scrutineers

Ingrid Engdahl proposed the following roles:

Chairperson - Adrijana Višnjić-Jevtić

Secretary - Paulette Luff

Scrutineers - Milada Rabušicová and Serap Erdogan

The proposed chair, secretary and scrutineers were voted upon and accepted.

4. Adoption of the Agenda

The adoption of the Agenda was voted upon and the Agenda was adopted.

5. Minutes from European Meeting in Panama July 2019

The Minutes of the Regional meeting in Panama in July 2019 were accepted.

6. Reports from National Committees in Europe

Written reports from European OMEP Committees were accepted and are to be distributed in a future European Newsletter.

Additional short reports can be sent from national committees.

There was discussion of whether the European report duplicates the report to World OMEP and whether there should be a separate framework for the European Report? It was agreed that creating reports should not be something that generates more work for busy national committees. However, additional reports from European countries can give descriptions of the activities in different countries feed into the VP Europe report to World OMEP.

7. World OMEP Strategic Plan 2020-2022

Mercedes Mayol Lassalle, OMEP World President, presented the Strategic Plan.

Mercedes cited the 'new pedagogy of the pandemic' and what it teaches; regional cafes have been held online; the European Regional Assembly is a rehearsal for the development of the forthcoming virtual OMEP World Assembly,

The World OMEP strategic plan builds on the strategic plans of former Presidents. The strategy is a framework with pillars and areas of focus. In these times we have to be more OMEPians than ever!

Advocacy – Mercedes has met actors involved with ECEC at frequent meeting with consultative groups of NGOs in UNESCO committee of the rights of the child about a new general comment on the right to ECEC as it is hidden in General comment number 7.

Campaigning for an early childhood decade continues and we wish to create an ad hoc team in OMEP to develop an early childhood decade and then work on the process of spreading the ideas in countries and to national ambassadors.

OMEP has spread messages about refugees.

On 5th October, the International Day of Teachers, the third edition of OMEP Theory into Practice will be launched – it is in French and Spanish (the two previous publications were in English).

An ESD prize in Latin America was presented at a Chilean seminar about ESD.

It was a difficult decision to postpone the World Conference. As we wait to meet again face-to-face, we have adopted new strategies to maintain our activities.

On November 28th the virtual World Assembly will be held.

Ingrid thanked Mercedes for her report, and the plan, and the level of communication and support provided.

8. OMEP Communications

Communication plan – much work in internal and external communications - asking for OMEP voices, blog articles (blog will be an exciting forum to debate and make visible our views about the rights of the child.

9. Annual fee and budgeting within OMEP

OMEP World treasurer Elin Eriksen Ödegaard shared a budget proposal and report – there was dialogue about charging fees at an amount that is locally reasonable – recognising that this is a difficult year for fund raising.

Finance is crucial for OMEP to implement the objectives of the strategic plan.

The income was explained from the 2018 and 2019 report – *see the Treasurer's report to the World Assembly.*

The importance of providing a secretariat to support the World President and the development of tools needed for an effective communications strategy was emphasised. Professional support is needed to ensure the quality of the operation of OMEP and the work and office of the World President. The University of the previous World President provided economic support.

Membership is the main source of financial income, but some countries have difficulty in paying the World membership fee. PayPal has been introduced to facilitate the payments. Countries who have already paid for 2020 were thanked.

Strategic planning of fund raising is important. Creative approaches will be needed to attract donations and raise funds. Donations and similar external funding are needed, authors are encouraged to donate their royalties to OMEP.

Travel costs saved due to restrictions in 2020 will be carried over to future years.

For 2021, it is proposed that every country will pay the Bank Transfers and an additional 15 %, to be decided at the World Assembly.

Ingrid thanked Elin for the report. OMEP currently collects less money than is needed for its work – there is a need to search for donors and sponsors – the budget proposal should be discussed at national level. *Ingrid reminded participants of the opportunity to discuss the budget proposal before the World Assembly (and to propose alternatives if not prepared to pay for the additional 15 % membership).*

Short break

10. Strategy for OMEP Europe

In break out groups, organised by the World Secretariat (for allocation to groups, see numbers on the attached Roll Call), delegates discussed:

- the Corona pandemic
- budget matters – finding sponsors and donors
- OMEP Flagship projects
- Webinars, Cafés, Facebook and more
- International Special days
- Other things

Short feedback reports were given from each group:

Group 2 – Milada Rabušicová reported back – discussed money, finance and how in different countries we raise money, and it is very hard, ‘a disaster’, for OMEP activities if we have to rely solely on fees. The difficult situation of preparatory committees, in concrete Belgium, if they do not have any activity which can bring them some money, and are expected to pay 150 fee and y. In Germany, OMEP is part of a larger organisation but they also have problems in funding. Serap Erdogan from Turkey had three suggestions:

- Hybrid conferences – half face-to-face and semi online to reduce budgets
- Instagram podcasts for ECE teachers
- Continuing the virtual café meetings

Group 3 – Geir Aaserud reported back – recommended increased use of Instagram and other social media – countries can try to follow one another and the website of every can be in Instagram. Student organisations should be started.

Group 4 – Tamara Pribisev reported back – the situation in EC institutions were discussed and the budget – with no conclusions. It was proposed to get more information about fees in different OMEP committees and how national committees calculate their fees scales. Applying for funding for projects is one route. A recent OMEP Erasmus project in five countries (Croatia, Greece, Norway, Poland and UK) looked at parent partnerships. A book is due to be published by Routledge and royalties will be donated to OMEP.

Group 5 – Renata Michalak reported back – this group did not talk about money but spoke about the Covid situation and discovered similar experiences, problems and solutions – it was a small, warm meeting of three people and wonderful to talk.

Group 6 – Maria Vassiliadou reported back– discussed similarities in Covid context - no kindergarten closures in Finland but parents opted to keep children at home – problems seen with domestic abuse and parents and educators struggling. In Cyprus students did lessons online. There were problems

with inequality in Ireland and children without internet could not connect with online educational resources. Useful sharing of ideas. Participation in global projects with UNESCO is encouraged. How can we make OMEP attractive and useful for organisations representing educators? Communication and opportunities to meet virtually are important. We want to create and work on projects together. There will be a virtual OMEP conference in Ireland in November – all are invited.

Group 7 - Susanne Thulin reported back and later in writing:

We discussed how we in our different countries managed to maintain the teaching at **our various preschool teacher educations**. Overall, the teaching has been carried out digitally.

What has caused the most headaches / problems have been the placements. In many countries, preschools have been closed/shut down for months. Different solutions have been worked out ex:

- Use of video documentation and digital three-party talk: supervisor, student and university teacher.
- Other practise related work, cancelled or advanced placement

In Cyprus, students were asked to prepare online lessons for preschool children which they, in the absence of children, tested/implemented as role-plays

We also talked about **the different conditions** that prevail between children. We heard from Ireland that many/sometimes most of the children do not have access to computers or internet especially in areas with immigrants. They live in caravans; many parents are illiterate. We, in the group, all recognize the growing gaps between people that are spreading in society. We said to each other that the work of OMEP is needed in different ways!

About the economic situation in each committee. We shared ideas with each other about how we manage the budget:

- Arranging conferences
- Continued education, renewal of teaching certificates
- Marketing among students, they can get some benefit if they become members or an subsidized fee
- Establishing a student award; they may receive a small sum or be given the opportunity to publish in the national journal

In Cyprus they have arranged Children's Rights Festival in connection with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with presentations and workshops, students were involved.

Group 8 Kristin Dyrfjord reported back – in Iceland and Sweden preschools were open but in other countries there were closures during lockdown. There were very good discussions about different countries. They spoke about what is happening now and how far things will change e.g. internship difficulties.

Emails are invited to supplement the oral reports to feed into the strategic plans – half page reports from the people who gave feedback – especially with any information about what OMEP has been doing, as concrete actions, during COVID-19.

It was voted upon and agreed to give the Vice President the task to summarize the ideas and write a strategic plan for OMEP Europe.

11. World Assembly 2020

This will take place online on Saturday November 28th.

The registration documents have been sent out to the National Presidents – be alert for receipt of the files and each President should prepare with the national committee to go through the documents. The agenda for the World Assembly is being kept to a minimum. Communications – we

must go through the communications received and be active in giving feedback and asking questions in advance of the World Assembly.

Send emails to Ingrid and Mercedes to raise questions (these needs to be announced in advance).
Share the budget report with the committees to further discuss the budget

12. World Assembly and Conference in Athens 2021

Effrosyni Katsikonouri gave an update about the 72nd OMEP World Assembly & Conference to be held in the centre of Athens in cooperation with five Greek Universities.

OMEP Greece with the cooperation of World OMEP and the valuable help of Ingrid Engdahl had everything ready for July 2020. To have an idea how organized everything was, even the school visits for conference participants were arranged.

Brief information about the conference is as follows:

Abstracts submitted: 420

Accepted Abstracts: 404

Accepted Oral presentations: 286

Accepted Poster presentations: 97

Accepted Symposia: 21

119 registered participants

The pandemic stopped the process and the 72nd OMEP World Assembly & Conference were postponed and the new dates are: **12-16/07/2021**. The six Invited Speakers have already accepted the updated invitation.

The web site of the conference www.omep2021.org will open for new abstracts. Abstract submission reopens 1 October 2020 until 31 November 2020.

Already accepted abstracts don't need to resubmit. Changes of abstracts will be accepted by logging in with the old username and password. Conference newsletters will be sent on a monthly basis and we should aim for at least 500 people from Europe to attend this conference.

13. Any other business

The relationship between UNESCO and OMEP is being strengthened and the profile of OMEP raised. Lisbeth Gouin, UNESCO Paris representative for OMEP gave a short speech to the European assembly on **the OMEP / UNESCO report**, as follows:

I speak on behalf of Danièle Perruchon and myself, we are both representatives of OMEP at UNESCO.

You can read the UNESCO 2019 report on the 2019 OMEP Global Report. I think it is best to tell you a few words about our activities during this period of the Corona VIRUS

I would like to share with you an initiative of a group of NGO in official partnership with UNESCO who have created a special solidarity initiative for their associations in the field as one response to the COVID-19 crisis

This initiative is a closed Facebook page solidarity network of our associations on several continents to exchange information, good practices, the realities of the situations to report examples of exceptional solidarity initiated by civil society on all continents; to propose a new vision for the post COVID-19 period taking into consideration the experiences of the local communities.

We worked on a synthetic report on 8 themes:

- i. Fight against poverty
- ii. Inclusion of isolated and marginalised populations
- iii. Fight against discrimination
- iv. Aid to displaced populations
- v. Support for women during the crisis and improvement of their situation
- vi. Implication of youth and their vision of the future
- vii. Importance of Information and Communication Technology for all
- viii. Transmission of trustworthy information about health

OMEP gave examples for 5 themes and was in charge of new technologies and communication and I thank OMEP –Africa, America latina, EUROPE for their participations

This week our work will be transmitted to the Human Sciences sector, We will send you our finalized work.

Colour my Rights – Maria Vassiliadou from Cyprus gave an update - details of the project will be circulated and participants should spread them and the timeline to their countries – the theme is strong due to the pandemic to offer opportunities for children to express their views and have their voices heard. The deadline for the images – 2 or 3 per country is December 18th

ESD rating scale project – this is a little on hold due to school closures for COVID-19 and it is difficult during the pandemic when schools are under pressure – 19 countries are involved and six countries have sent reports so far. The scale is a starting point for training and the need for more sustainable lifestyles. In Croatia at the University of Zagreb future teachers are using the scale and will use it in their practice and for reflections in their assignments.

Natalya Ryzhova announced that in December there will be an **international online conference on ECCE** with a special symposium dedicated to sustainable development in the early years – Ingrid and Natalya will present on sustainability and the ESD scale An invitation was extended to all and information will be circulated

There are **two projects launched by OMEP Russia** – about the project «WE ALL TOGETHER WANT...» – to let children share their dreams and that the project about THE TRADITIONAL TOYS OF THE WORLD continues.

14. Next Regional meeting

We will continue with virtual cafes – there will be a virtual café in November in preparation for the World Assembly

Next regional meeting will be during the Athens conference as a regional assembly – on Sunday 11th for a European meeting in preparation for the conference. At the Athens regional meeting we will decide the next venue for the regional meeting; Cyprus, Sweden and Turkey have invited us.

15. Closure

Ingrid gave thanks to everyone for their participation, and especially to the chair, secretary, scrutineers and of course to the World President and the World secretariat and closed the meeting.

Paulette Luff
Secretary

Milada Rabušicová and Serap Erdogan
Scrutineers

Attachment

Participants at the 2020 OMEP Regional Conference for Europe

2020-09-30

Country	Delegate	Group	Observer	Group
All persons		1		1
Belgium (Prep. committee)	Jan Peeters	2	Siska Van Daele	3
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Tamara Pribisev	4	Marica Travar	5
Bulgaria	Elena Roussinova	6		
Croatia	Adrijana Visnjic Jevtic	7	Edita Risogulj	8
Cyprus	Maria Vassiliadou	6	Chrysa Nitsiou	7
Czech Republic	Milada Rabušicová	2	Dana Moravcová	3
Denmark	Stig G. Lund	4		
Finland	Kaisu Muuronen	6		
France	Danièle Perruchon	6	Adeline Rouleau	8
Germany	Eva-Lotta Bueren	2		
Greece	Effrosyni Katsikonouri	4	Sofia Saiti	5
Iceland	Kristin Dyrfjord	8		
Ireland	Judith Butler	6	Denise Baker	7
Israel				
Italy (Prep. committee)	Matteo Corbucci	8	Biagio Graziano	2
Latvia				
Lithuania				
Norway	Geir Aaserud	3	Aihua Hu	4
Poland	Renata Michalak	5	Anna Wróbel	6
Portugal	(António Ponces de Carvalho NO)	7	Jaime Santos	8
Russia	Natalya Ryzhova	2	Ekaterina Nasonova	3
Slovak Republic	Jarka Kreškóciová	4		
Spain	Maria Eugenia Gonzalez Medina	6		
Sweden	Susanne Thulin	7	Laila Gustavsson	8
Switzerland	Will not attend (Sep 24)			
Turkey	Serap Erdogan	2	Gözde TOMRIS	3
Ukraine	No answer			
United Kingdom	Paulette Luff	4	Dorothy Selleck	5
VP for Europe	Ingrid Engdahl	9		
World President	Mercedes Mayol Lassalle	9		
World Treasurer	Elin Eriksen Ödegaard	9		
UNESCO Paris	Lisbeth Gouin	9		
World Secretariat		9		