



Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire  
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar  
World Organisation for Early Childhood Education  
[www.worldomep.org](http://www.worldomep.org)

2021:3  
August

## European Newsletter - Boletín - Bulletin

### *Dear OMEP members in Europe!*

Here is a short update on meetings, statements and conferences. I write in times of severe unbalance. In Europe, we now must realise that we live in the Anthropocene, the age of humankind. In this period the development of planet Earth is totally depending on the activities of us humans, and in a negative way. The floodings, the heavy rains, the extreme temperatures, the huge all-consuming fires are all examples of the unsustainable life patterns that have been allowed to flourish during the last 50 years. My most sincere thoughts and concern to all who have been struck by these extreme climate related conditions.

The IPCC – the International Panel for research on climate change – launched its latest report on August 9. (<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-i/>). The call for strong and immediate action towards sustainability is now stronger than ever. In this, I am happy to be part of the serious ESD-projects within OMEP, and I am happy to introduce a book in this newsletter 's rights, the UN Convention and the urgent need for transforming our societies and daily lives towards sustainability. And, on top and bottom of all this, the pandemic is still strong! This month, we will manifest the World Organisation for Early Childhood Education - OMEP - by holding a virtual World Assembly on August 28. **Don't forget to register!** See you there!

*Ingrid Engdahl*

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### VIRTUAL WORLD ASSEMBLY 2021

**Saturday, August 28, 2021**, at 8:00 a.m. ART (Buenos Aires) 1pm CET (Stockholm)

#### Subscription:

<https://forms.gle/eAUvHpEQ4dyZNv9f6>

#### 20 European countries have already subscribed:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ukraine.

#### The documents are at

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13zhyoSwUdbF3yRfTWWN2Px-LUGy3WrJA?usp=sharing>

Observers can participate through YouTube OMEPWorldtv, without previous registration.



## INVITATION TO A Q&A-SESSION BEFORE THE VIRTUAL WORLD ASSEMBLY 2021

As the possibilities to talk and discuss are very limited during the virtual World Assembly, the Executive Committee has organised a series of meetings to enhance the communication possibilities. It all started on June 19 with an Extraordinary session of WA. Then we held our European regional assembly on June 23.

And now I invite you to attend a **Questions & Answers- session around the WA Agenda (1.5-2 hours)**.

This will take place just before the WA, **on Thursday, August 26, 2021**, at 5 pm (CET, Stockholm time).

It will be an informal session organised in ZOOM, where you may bring up any questions that have come up during your preparations for the WA.

Join the Zoom Meeting on August 26:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87663034074?pwd=TjAvVm9rQIN4N2cvWVM0ZVJKS1BqUT09>

Meeting ID: 876 6303 4074

Passcode: 448659

Welcome – Ingrid Engdahl

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### European Regional Assembly, June 23, 2021.

#### Minutes

Twenty-one Countries Represented at the European Regional Assembly as follows

Cyprus	Bulgaria	Bosnia Herzegovina
Finland	Croatia	Czech Republic
Greece	France	Germany
Italy	Iceland	Ireland
Poland	Norway	Portugal
Russia	Russia	Spain

Slovakia  
United Kingdom

Sweden

Turkey

Lisbeth Gouin, UNESCO and Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson, OMEP World also in attendance

**Item 1. Opening Address:** Ingrid Engdahl, OMEP VP for Europe, welcomed everyone and brought up the important decision made by the European Union on June 14 on The European Child Guarantee: How the EU protects children. Mercedes Mayol Lassalle, President World OMEP, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and acknowledged the challenges posed by Covid restrictions, which continue to prevent in-person meetings.

**Attendees voted upon and accepted the invitation to participate in the virtual European Assembly.**

**Item 2. Appointing Chair, secretary and scrutineers.**

Ingrid Engdahl proposed the following roles, which attendees voted upon and accepted:

**Chair:** Milada Rabušicová, Czech Republic

**Secretary:** Mary Moloney, Ireland

**Scrutineers:** Matteo Corbucci, Italy; Serap Erdogan, Turkey

**Item 3. Roll call.** Milada Rabušicová carried out the Roll Call. Delegates and observers from 21 European countries (see appendix 1) introduced themselves

**Attendees voted upon and accepted the roll call.**

**Item 4. Adoption of Agenda:** 100% of attendees voted to adopt the agenda.

**Item 5. Minutes from European Virtual Meeting September 2020.** Minutes presented and proposed by Ingrid Engdahl. Minutes accepted.

**Item 6. European VP Annual report 2020.** Ingrid Engdahl provided a summary of the annual report, which will be voted upon at the Virtual World Assembly on August 28.

**Item 7. International Journal of Early Childhood (IJEC).** Ingrid Engdahl provided an update in relation to accessing IJEC. Springer renegotiated OMEP's agreement. Journal is moving to a digital format. From June 2021 all OMEP members can access all issues of the IJEC through the OMEP World new website, as part of their membership. Each national committee has been provided with an access code, which they share with paid up members. Registration to IJEC through this link: <https://omepworld.org/register/>.

**Item 8. OMEP communication plan – how to use the new logos**

Following a short video presentation on how to use the new OMEP logos, attendees had an opportunity for questions and answers. Each national president have received a link to a folder on Google drive so they can access Country specific and generic logos for use on presentations, letters and so on. The link will be distributed again.

Mercedes Mayol Lassalle and Ingrid Engdahl presented information relating to Item 10: **OMEP Virtual World Assembly August 28, 2021**. Questions or changes must be sent to WP before July 15.

Procedure e.g., appointing members to World Work teams	Mercedes
Virtual World Assembly 2020 Minutes	Ingrid
World Report 2020	Video
Treasurer´s Balance 2020	Video - Elin Eriksen Ödegaard
Budget 2021	Video - Elin Eriksen Ödegaard
National Committees encouraged to pay membership fees	
Presentation of Preparatory Committees to change the status to National Committee Sierra Leone and Paraguay	Mercedes
Nominations for Regional Vice President Europe	Ingrid
Ingrid Engdahl is not available for re-election.	
Croatia nominates Adrijana Višnjić-Jevtić	
Sweden nominates Adriana Višnjić-Jevtić	

**Item 9. Breakout Groups.** Task to discuss IJEC, OMEP’s communication plan, operationalising the OMEP flagship initiatives (e.g., colour your rights, a decade of ECE, General comment, play and resilience), and election of regional VP.

#### **Item 10. Feedback from Breakout Groups.**

**Group 1.** Possible expansion of ‘Wash from the Start’, focussing upon introducing children to the concept of where water comes from, the right to water, the privilege of having access to water. Possibility of developing resources to support this approach, working with the WHO etc. Potential for complementarity between Wash from the Start and Colour your Rights

Some discussion regarding expectations of groups in relation to the projects.

**Group 2.** Query regarding additional 15% increase in membership fee. Elin Eriksen Ödegaard explained that this is not a fee increase, rather it is to ensure that the cost of transferring money between countries. As such the banking system takes 15% from fees to cover the transfer cost. The 15% therefore ensures that OMEP World receives the full membership fee (e.g., \$200 and not \$170). Erin confirmed that debt forgiveness for non-payment of fees is granted for 2018 and 2019. However, national committees are asked to pay the fee for 2020 2021.

Group 2 discussed ‘What OMEP means’. See OMEP as an important aspect of professional life with connections all over the world.

Also noted the need to move progressively toward using the new OMEP logos. Time required so that national committees use up existing supplies of headed paper for instance, while using new logos on all social media accounts.

Serap will circulate proposals for ESD project to national presidents.

**Group 3.** Discussed the budget 2020 and 2021, focussing upon how to address the challenges and deficit in funding arising from Covid-19. Talked about the new possibilities with IJEC, as a means for recruiting new members. Also discussed nominations for VP Europe.

**Group 4.** Spoke about current issues that require attention in many countries, such as domestic violence (Cyprus have experience of working in this area). Also discussed

- Potential new projects: lack of male teachers in early childhood education. Possibility of exploring this matter internationally
- Possibility of developing a worldwide podcast regarding children's rights. Start with Europe

Maria Vassiliadou confirmed that a sponsor has been secured for the illustrated book: Colour your Rights, and will include practicals that can accompany the initiative on the rights of the child.

### **Item 11. Nomination for Regional Vice President for Europe 2022-2024.**

Ingrid Engdahl clarified that the nominations for VP must be notified by July 15 and should be made by each national committee. If more candidates are nominated, one way to discuss this could be during a virtual café. Once all nominations are received, national committees are requested to take time to discuss and agree on a candidate.

Milada confirmed that Ingrid is VP through to the end of December 2021.

### **Item 12. OMEP World Assembly and Conference in Athens 2022**

Plans for the OMEP World Assembly and Conference in Athens in July 2022 are progressing well. Check <https://www.omep2022.org/en/> for further information. A call for new abstracts will be issued in autumn 2021. Ingrid Engdahl is the chair of the scientific committee for the Conference in Athens 2022.

### **Item 13. OMEP European Regional Assembly 2022**

Ingrid Engdahl proposed that European representatives meet from lunch – evening on July 10, 2022, in Athens, followed by the OMEP European Assembly.

### **Item 14. AOB**

Ingrid Engdahl reminded attendees that she will invite to OMEP Virtual Cafés to be held August 15-25. This is an opportunity to discuss, and review documentation for the Virtual World Assembly on August 28

Klara Bahtic Croatia issued an invitation to their Conference: Change in ECE as the Answer to the New Normal, Opatja, November 11-12

Malgorzata Szczeczko, Poland issued an invitation to an e- conference: Children's Rights to High Quality ECE in Poland, October 22-23

Maria Vassiliadou thanked committees that have forwarded letters of intent, but urges more European Committees to participate in Colour your Rights. Submit virtual picture by end of June and actual pictures by July 23

Mercedes thanked attendees for their participation, commitment and proposals to enrich the work of OMEP. She expressed thanks to Ingrid for her work as VP Europe.

### **Item 15. Closure**

Ingrid Engdahl thanked everyone, and especially the chair and the secretary, for involved presence and closed the assembly.

Mary Moloney

Milada Rabušicová

Matteo Corbucci

Serap Erdogan

Secretary

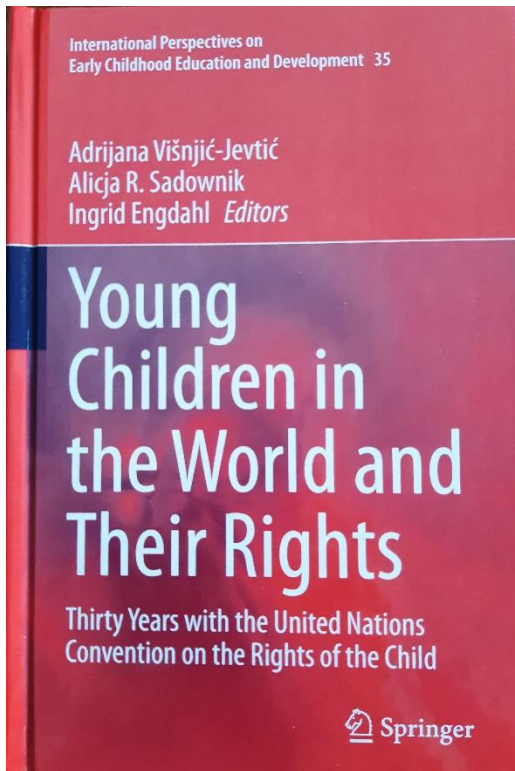
Chair

Scrutineer

Scrutineer

**Delegates at European Regional Assembly June 23, 2021, Point 2. Appendix 1.**

Country	Delegate	email	Observer	email
Belgium				
Bosnia Her-cegov.	Tamara Pribisev Beleslin	< <a href="mailto:tamara.pribisev-beleslin@ff.unibl.org">tamara.pribisev-beleslin@ff.unibl.org</a> >,		
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WP Team	Eliana, Camila, Gonzalo	< <a href="mailto:worldassistant@worldomep.org">worldassistant@worldomep.org</a> >,		



Springer arranges a book launch during the EECERA (digital) conference 2021.

**September 17, 2021, 1:00 pm CET.**

The launching video will then be made available at the OMEP Website.

This book was created to mark the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to find out how children's rights and the Convention is understood today worldwide. Our book examines how key ideas of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are respected and implemented in 15 countries in five regions of the world, starting from educational, policy and, most importantly, children's perspectives.

The book advocates children's rights today, arguing for its vital importance, in the best interests of the children. Although 30 years have passed since the convention was adopted, respect for children's rights can't be taken for granted. We live in times of great global challenges, for example climate change, pandemics, prolonged military conflicts and mass migration. All these aspects challenge the exercise of children's rights and a true implementation of the convention. This is why we gather authors from all the regions of the world, for a joint reflection on the CRC. And we focus on the important role of Early Childhood Education.

Therefore, this book may be an inspiration for everyone advocating early childhood education – to reflect the position of children and their rights today, in her/his country, place and educational settings.

We hope you will enjoy the book!

Adrijana Višnjić-Jevtić, Alicja Sadownik and Ingrid Engdahl



Again, this year, the OMEP Executive Committee (EXCO) decided in March to **postpone the World Assembly and Conference** to be held in Athens **11 to 15 July 2022**. The programme and the venues will remain the same.

Accepted **submitted abstracts can be kept** until next year, but, if someone does not wish to present it at OMEP2022, s/he will have the possibility to withdraw it, sending an email to [info@omep2022.org](mailto:info@omep2022.org). Don't forget to state the abstract number.

For **new submissions** OMEP Greece and AFEA (responsible for the organization and logistics) **will open the abstract submission portal again for two months** in the autumn.





# Governing quality Early Childhood Education and Care in a global crisis: first lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic

NESET Analytical Report, 2021  
**Summary**

This report explores the different ways in which European Union Member States have attempted to ensure high-quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) for children and families in the era of COVID-19. The data analysed show that ECEC played a crucial role in countering the negative effects of the pandemic on children, families and communities. However, compared with other levels of education, ECEC appears to have been one of the sectors most vulnerable to the policy decisions taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## AUTHORS

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## LANGUAGE EDITOR

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Access the full report: [bit.ly/NESET\\_ECEC\\_COVID19](https://bit.ly/NESET_ECEC_COVID19)



## ABOUT NESET

NESET is an advisory network of experts working on the social dimension of education and training, set up at the initiative of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG EAC).

The Network is one of the seven key knowledge providers that contribute evidence-based advice to DG EAC. NESET provides reliable, independent and rigorous scientific support, country-specific expertise and advice to the European Commission in relation to equity and social aspects at all levels of education and training. NESET acts as a knowledge broker, bridging the gap between EU policy coordination and the academic world.

## NESET COORDINATION

NESET is coordinated by PPMI – a leading European research and policy analysis centre. PPMI began coordinating the Network in January 2015, and has successfully developed a network of over 60 highly qualified researchers and education policy specialists from around 40 countries.

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### Context

All children, and particularly those who are most socially disadvantaged, risk being among the biggest victims of the pandemic. This is due both to the socio-economic impact of the crisis on their families, and the consequences of the measures taken to contain the virus, which affect their learning and wellbeing. By interconnecting the functions of ECEC – educational (investing in children's wellbeing, learning, participation); social (supporting families in the upbringing of their children); and economic (helping parents in combining work and household responsibilities) – the sector can play a key role in supporting all children and families to face the crisis, and in particular those at risk of social exclusion. ECEC can greatly contribute to breaking the cycles of poverty and discrimination, as already stated in many EU documents. The COVID-19 situation may, therefore, represent an opportunity for the ECEC sector to revisit its identity and evaluate the lessons learned, both in terms of its daily practice after the emergency, and as a possible preparation for future crises.

### The report

The report examines the measures taken by selected EU member states – two countries (Sweden and Croatia), as well as three regions (Flanders in Belgium, Berlin in Germany and Emilia-Romagna in Italy) – to deal with the COVID-19 crisis during the first year of the pandemic (March-December 2020), in order to ensure quality ECEC for children and families. It is expected that this analysis of coping strategies and lessons learned will be relevant to other EU Member States and regions.

### Key findings

Taking into account the areas of the European Quality Framework (EQF) on ECEC, the report underlines the following key findings: 1) **Accessibility**: it appears that the pandemic has had an especially negative effect on ECEC attendance among socially disadvantaged children and families. Some countries have employed specific policy measures to support these groups. In general, however, guaranteeing wide access to ECEC at a structural level remains a challenge; 2) **Workforce**: the recognition and support accorded to ECEC staff have varied between contexts, underlining the need to invest in recognising the value this profession at a structural level. The role of pedagogical coaches and leaders has also been found crucial in supporting ECEC staff; 3) **Curriculum**: the temporary suspension of in-person activities due to the COVID-19 emergency prompted a re-adaptation of pedagogical practices and the development of IT capabilities within ECEC organisations. Guaranteeing children's autonomy and maintaining continuous relationships with families appear to have presented the biggest challenges; 4) **Monitoring and evaluation**: during the crisis, ECEC staff appreciated the 'supportive' elements of monitoring processes (as opposed to 'controlling' ones); 5) **Governance and funding**: institutional fragmentation emerged as a major challenge in governance across all of the countries/regions analysed. Countries/regions that were well organised and financed as integrated systems, appeared able to face the crisis without the need to take extreme measures to ensure the viability of the ECEC sector.



### Recommendations for improving the accessibility and quality of ECEC for vulnerable children

Drawing on the data explored, the report provides policy guidelines for each area of the EQF analysed. Here is a selection of the most crucial ones:



#### Accessibility:

- Striving for **inclusiveness** of provision should remain a key target. Efforts should be made to ensure that ECEC remains available, accessible and affordable for vulnerable groups → outreach
- Adequate **digital equipment** and **in-person home visits** are crucial tools to maintain communication with children and families who are not attending ECEC centres.
- Ensuring **warm and welcoming transitions** from home to the ECEC centre is crucial.



#### Workforce:

- **Salary continuity** should be guaranteed for ECEC staff.
- **Pedagogical coaching, collegial reflection and planning** should not be discontinued after the pandemic.
- **Staff conditions and concerns** should be acknowledged and consideration should be given to the possibility of including them among **priority groups for vaccination**.
- ECEC leaders play a key role. They should be granted the opportunity to **systematically engage in peer-learning initiatives** within locally established professional networks, umbrella organisations and trade unions.



#### Curriculum:

- In times of crisis, ECEC centres can become places of resilience.
- **Compliance with safety/hygiene protocols** should not hinder children's agency and participation.
- Specific initiatives should be put in place to sustain relationships of trust between parents and professionals. Online communication can also help to achieve this.



#### Monitoring and evaluation:

- Investments should be made in **monitoring infrastructure** that **systemically supports** (rather than controls) ECEC centres.



#### Governance and funding:

- A **clear flow of communication** should be ensured between national, regional and local authorities via existing umbrella and statutory bodies.
- Balance is required between **centralised processes of policy regulation** and **decentralised implementation**.
- **Fragmented and underfinanced ECEC systems** required higher levels of support during the pandemic. Investing in well financed, structural ECEC helps to manage crises in a more efficient way.

# 11<sup>th</sup> World Environmental Education Congress Building Bridges in Times of Climate Urgency

14-18 March 2022

In Prague

CZECH  
REPUBLIC

[11TH WORLD Environmental Education CONGRESS WEEC \(weec2022.org\)](https://www.weec2022.org)

## Important dates during 2021

- August 26** Q&A-session for the OMEP WA.
- August 28** OMEP Virtual World Assembly
- August 31** Abstract submission closes for 11th WEEC in Prague in March 2022
- September 21** International Peace Day
- October 5** World Teacher Day
- October 15** World Handwashing Day
- October – December** Reopening of abstract submission for OMEP 2022 in Athens
- November 20** International Children's Day

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