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| http://t1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTG10mdaXZcPspj5sXSG2g6ZKBBJORBqSgIB33b6lkR-NWsbEXy | **O**rganisation **M**ondiale pour l'**E**ducation **P**rescolaireWorld Organization for Early Childhood EducationOrganización Mundial para la Educación PreescolarΟ.Μ.Ε.Ρ. |
| **Vice President for Europe**Department of Educational Science and Early Childhood EducationUniversity of Patras265 04 RION – GreeceTel.: 6972634854E-mail: nekstel@upatras.gr 14th September 2013 |

To European National Committees

Dear Presidents and Dear Members of National Committees in Europe,

First of all I want to wish you a Fruitful and Productive new school year.

I was really happy to meet some of you in Shanghai. The World Assembly and Congress were really excellent. We are grateful to China Committee for its efforts. As you already know, Maggie Koong, who was our treasurer, was elected unanimously as new President of OMEP (2014-2017). Mercedes Mayol Lassalle was elected as Vice President for Latin America. We congratulate both of them. I have to say that World Assembly applauded extremely warmly Ingrid for her efforts during the years of her service. For the minutes of the European Meeting see below.

Current issues

1. Website

Please, visit the address [www.omep.e-host.gr](http://www.omep.e-host.gr) . This is our website. Notice that this address is not permanent. One of my students has helped me to build this site. I need your comments before booking the permanent address. I would like also to check the information of your country and suggest me any corrections.

1. Time to act

I would like to remind you the mail which was send to you on 22nd of July 2013. It concerns especially the Committees of the following countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Norway, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey & United Kingdom.

I do know that some countries like Bulgaria and UK have done some work on it. Please, do not hesitate to contact me for any information or possible support. I would be very grateful if you inform me about your acts.

1. Next Conferences and Regional Meetings

In 2014 there will be not a Regional Conference since the World Assembly and Conference is in our region. Please, visit the website [www.omepireland.ie](http://www.omepireland.ie) and spread the information in your country.

Following the discussion taken place in Zagreb I discussed the possibility of hosting the European Regional Meeting and Conference for 2015 with French, Spanish and Russian Committees. The President of Russian Committee, Russian President, Larisa Paramonova, has expressed its willingness to organize it in spring 2015 in Russia. We are really happy for this.

1. Videos

Following the suggestion to make some movies in order to show our work and attract new members I have made two short movies: one for Zagreb and one for Shanghai. Please, visit the following:

-Zagreb:<https://vimeo.com/71722835>, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=96Kw6Pqzj8Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96Kw6Pqzj8Q)

- Shanghai: <https://vimeo.com/74001999>

This is my first time to make such a work and I would appreciate your comments.

I will try to make a video on our history, too.

1. European Project

Please, notice that the European Project on multicultural education is open to any country interested in joining. Promote it in your country and support participation.

1. Participation

The world President ask us to participate in the UNISCO Questionnaire. Please, visit the website: <https://secure.unesco.org/survey/index.php?sid=87242>

Also, Lisbetth Söderberg ask us to reply the questions for the Decade for ESD.

1. Please, remind our decision for establishing a strong partnership with a less prosperous country in Africa or elsewhere and work on that. The need is urgent.
2. Slovakian National Committee celebrates its 20 years anniversary by organizing a Conference in Kosice on 11 to 13 of October. Next week, 18-20 October, Greek National Committee organizes its Conference on Personal and Social Development in Early Childhood. Warm wishes to both Committees.

With my warmest regards and looking forward to hearing your news

***Nektarios Stellakis***

Vice President of OMEP for Europe

**European Regional Meeting**

**2013 World Assembly - Shanghai, China – 9 & 10 July 2013**

Present at the meeting:

Satu Jarvenkallass (Finland); Daniele Perruchon & Lίsbeth Gouin (France); Ewa Hammes (Germany); Nektarios Stellakis (Greece); Patricia O’Connor & Caoimhe Mahony (Ireland); Ruta Kanepeja (Latvia); Εlin Eriksen Odegaard & Geir Aaserud (Norway); Anna Wrobel, Ewa Lewadowska & Dorota Pakuka-Tamou (Poland); Antonio Ponces de Carvalho (Portugal); Natalya Ryzhova (Russia); Ingrid Engdahl, Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson, Emelie Stavholm, Bibi Karlsson, Ulla Gustavsson, Eva Ahlin, Eva Arlemalm-Hagser, Elisabet Doverborg (Sweden); Gelengul Haktanir (Turkey); Janet Morris, Dorothy Selleck & Elizabeth Rosenthal (UK)

Also in Shanghai: Katarina Koledova (Slovakia); Ulla Grob-Menges (Switzerland)

Minutes: Taken by Dorothy Selleck, Honorary Member

Even though we had just 90’ the European Regional Meeting was very fruitful. A lot of topics were mentioned. The most important were:

* How could we define and assess quality in ECEC?
* The financial situation sets a lot of challenges for our Organization
* Participation in OMEP Projects and Collaboration with less prosperous countries

Decisions:

* Every European country should establish a strong partnership with a less prosperous country in Africa or elsewhere.
* Each European OMEP country should respond to the initiatives for the inclusion of ECEC to Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

Nektarios welcomed all delegates (13 countries plus 3 proxies). The World President welcomed all delegates and thanked them for making the long journey to China.

A word from the UNESCO Representative from Paris

Received minutes of previous meeting (Zagreb, 8th May 2013)

Sharing information by each representative present

Emphasis across Europe has been on ESD despite the financial crisis across the world

Report of the Regional VP

Need to encourage countries not still in OMEP to join through proper partnerships. It was agreed that greater efforts need to be made to persuade the non OMEP countries to participate through projects etc. Italy was involved, now Denmark is sadly not participating, but Bosnia and Serbia are in contact.

At present some European countries are supporting projects in other less prosperous countries (eg. UK and Kenya on the WASH project, Poland and Nepal). Sweden is striving to extend the ESD project to other countries through enthusiastic, positive support of good practice with effective use of technology (eg. Power points, CD, DVD, skype meetings). Every European country should establish a strong partnership with a less prosperous country in Africa or elsewhere.

Still there are millions of children out of school with high levels of children in poverty across Europe.

A discussion followed on how we define “quality” in ECEC. Need more discussion on that issue in order to come to a conclusion. Due to time restriction this discussion was postponed.

Several countries’ governments stipulate early years class sizes to 25 pupils. There is a lot of concern about that, even though the actual quality depends on the way adults interact with children, how do they co-operate, what do they learn, and if they have fun. These points are crucial in each learning situation.

In addition, consideration is given to group sizes, staff qualification and the influence of in-service education. A big factor is the attitude, ambitions of parents and social political expectations.

It is most important that the early years education curriculum is based on PLAY, communication, effective interaction and not focusing mainly on learning.

OMEP Europe does much on quality through ensuring “children rights from birth”. Geneva’s links to OMEP are a vital part of OMEP’s work.

From “Peace education” to ESD: integrating social, economic, environmental factors

Each OMEP European country has guidance on standards to be attained through early childhood education. We all need quality and equity, but financial costs vary. Many European countries are now suffering from financial restrictions. Big gaps between the haves and have nots children.

Each European OMEP country should respond to the initiatives for the inclusion of ECEC to Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

Website of OMEP Europe is now available. It is hoped that it will be much used.

Newsletters are vital in keeping regular links with OMEP members. Translation costs a lot and support is needed.

Need its country to develop quality goals, which should be implemented and assessed.

Current stage of the World Project on ESD and the European Project “What is Europe?”. Countries are encouraged to participate.

Proposal for the next European Regional Meeting and Conference.

2014: World Assembly and Conference in Cork, Ireland. There will not be Regional Meeting in spring.

2015: Russia or Spain – to be defined. Russian President, Larisa Paramonova, has expressed its willingness to organize the ERM&C in spring 2015 in Russia.

Further discussion centered on quality in ECEC – Ensuring the best start for all children. Each European OMEP country should react carefully to current national policies on ECEC striving to give each child a FAIR CHANCE.

Too many in Europe’s young, poor children need much help in health, eating, and suitable learning opportunities and to enjoy their childhood.

We must all strive to give all children fair opportunities.

Any Other Business: None