

According to the OMEP Constitution:

Preparatory Committees are committees on the way to becoming National Committees, and have the same obligations as National Committees. After one year, the Preparatory Committee may submit an application to the World Assembly for National Committee status.

Preparatory Committees that have not achieved National Committee status within five years must reapply for preparatory status.

There can only be one National Committee in each member country although it is possible, after admission, to form "Chapters" with each being represented on the executive committee of the National Committee. Only National Committees have the right to vote in OMEP World Assemblies.

An outline of the requirements follows. Help can be obtained from the Regional Vice President or from the World President. First it is necessary to establish a National Committee of OMEP in **your** country. You may be linked with another well established National Committee for guidance. There will inevitably be differences in National Committees, according to local needs and the available resources, but although these differences add vigour to the organization, it is important that certain general principles are applied.

How the Committees Work

Each committee, whether Preparatory or National:

- 1) Must subscribe to the aims and objectives as set out in the OMEP Constitution.
- 2) In addition to its own local activities, must agree to work on the common projects decided upon by the World Assembly.
- 3) Must accept as members any national organisation or individuals with no person or organisation being excluded by reason of race, creed or political opinion.
- 4) Must pay an annual membership fee to OMEP. This amount is decided according to the scale approved by the World Assembly.
- 5) Must submit an annual report of activities to the World President, through the Regional Vice President, including the number of members and a list of office bearers.

A National Committee receives:

- 1) An invitation to participate in the annual OMEP World Assembly, where each country may be represented by one voting delegate, a deputy and, where space is available, an observer. One delegate of a Preparatory Committees may attend, but has no voting rights.
- 2) OMEP information and communications, including one free copy of the International Journal of Early Childhood (IJEC) and the current OMEP Annual Report. Orders may be placed for further copies of IJEC at the member rate currently in place.
- 3) An invitation to submit contributions to the Journal.

Forming the Committee

There are several ways in which to begin:

- 1) A small group of interested people or established groups drawn from the fields of education, health, welfare or other fields meet to begin the process. Their common interest must be in young children (0 - 8 years).
- 2) One or more existing national organizations take the initiative. Where a national or even an international perspective exists, an OMEP Preparatory Committee may be formed by the representatives of organizations particularly interested in young children.
- 3) A Government, Ministry of Education, Health or Social Affairs may appoint a group to establish an OMEP Preparatory Committee.

The Process of Preparation

- 1) Constitution. The group must be willing to abide by the rules laid down in the OMEP constitution and must draw up their own national OMEP constitution within the international framework. Copies of the current OMEP constitution can be obtained from the Regional Vice President or the World President to serve as a basis for drawing up a national OMEP constitution.
- 2) Working plans. The group should draw up working plans for the Preparatory Committee. This will depend largely on the conditions in the country and the financial situation but might include:
 - a) influencing people, individuals, policy makers, administrators and public opinion.
 - b) using the media for publicity about issues related to the education and care of young children.
 - c) carrying out surveys and investigations to highlight issues and stimulate discussion.
 - d) arranging for the offering of short training courses, seminars or conferences.
 - e) linking with other professionals, such as in institutions of higher education, for the purpose of furthering early childhood education and care policies and practices.
 - f) enlarging membership by disseminating information through personal and professional contacts.
- 3) Finance. The group must decide on the ways in which finances will be raised to further the Preparatory Committee work. This may take the form of:
 - a) an annual membership fee
 - b) raising funds
 - c) organising conferences at a suitable charge
 - d) applying to national or local government sources for support.

Application for Recognition as a Preparatory Committee

Once the above steps are in place, the next step is to apply for recognition by the OMEP World Assembly. The following documents should be sent to the Regional Vice President who will forward them to the World President.

- 1) A letter of application for recognition as a Preparatory Committee;
- 2) A list of all Committee members, showing their professional status, and
- 3) A draft constitution in one of the three official OMEP languages – English, French, Spanish.

After consideration by the World Executive to ascertain that all materials have been received, the application will be put before the World Assembly at its next annual meeting where recognition may be granted and rights of Preparatory Committee will be awarded.

A Preparatory Committee wishing to be granted full National Committee status will pay the Annual Fee, complete an Annual Report of the activities carried out by the Preparatory Committee, and submit a list of members and committee office bearers. The World Assembly may then grant the full rights of National Committee status, including voting rights at its next meeting.