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 Cork, Ireland. The World Assembly and Congress were really excellent. All the Assembly documents, the annual reports, photos and World Declaration 2014 have already sent by World Secretary in the Google Drive.

We are grateful to Irish Committee of OMEP, to University College Cork, to volunteers, to teachers in the kindergartens, to parents and children of Cork for their great job. Special thanks to President of OMEP Ireland, Patricia O'Connor, for her efforts throughout the last year, the days of the Assembly and Conference and the following time. Thank you, Pat!

The baton is passed to Washington; where on July 27 to August 1 2015 is going to be held the 67th World Assembly and Conference.
Current issues

1. Time to act

In late July I forward you a message from World President as well as a template letter in order to communicate with national leaders, urging them to insist that early childhood be included as a visible and unambiguous priority in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since this is VERY time sensitive since the SDGs will be finalized in September, I kindly ask you to continue your efforts. Thanks to those of you who have already informed me about this issue. Please, do not hesitate to contact me for any information or possible support.

2. Next European Regional Meeting and Conference

As you already know the next European Regional Meeting Conference is going to be held in Moscow the fall of 2015. When the exact date is determined, I will inform you about. During the World Assembly I discussed with OMEP UK the possibility to organize the European Regional Meeting and Conference in 2016. Moreover, Czech Republic and Croatia have expressed their willingness to organize World Assembly and Conference the following years and the Executive Committee has already expressed its positive attitude for the 70th Anniversary of OMEP to be held in Prague, the town in which our Organization was born.

3. Bosnia and Herzegovina: New Preparatory Committee

During the World Assembly a new Preparatory Committee in Bosnia and Herzegovina under the leadership of Tamara Pribisev Beleslin, Assistant Professor in University of Banja Luka, was accepted. In order to offer them a good start, I am going to cover their annual fees and the new Committee will invest this small amount in the region of the country which suffered from floods. Especially thanks to Croatian Committee for its support in establishing communication with Bosnia and Herzegovina and warm wishes to the new Committee and its leader.

4. OMEP is a full member of Eurochild network

During the General Assembly of Eurochild, which was held in Brussels on 25 & 26 June 2014, officially endorsed OMEP in full membership. You can see our logo in “Members” section of Eurochild in the address: www.eurochild.org

You are kindly requested to use the logo of Eurochild in your official papers and participate in its activities.
5. Cooperation with African Committees
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, especially after the latest unfortunate outbreak of the ebola virus. Please, contact VP for Africa, Abimbola Are (arebimbo@yahoo.com) and discuss possibilities.

6. Water Ecoculture: A European Educational Project for Preschool Children

A new project supported by educators and specialized scientists from the Natural History Museum of the University of Crete, Greece. Please, find more information in the website: [http://www.worldomep.org/en/water-ecoculture-a-european-educational-project-for-preschool-children/](http://www.worldomep.org/en/water-ecoculture-a-european-educational-project-for-preschool-children/)

Deputy World President, Judith Wagner, welcomed this project and she stressed its connection with Handwashing Day.

7. OMEP ESD World Project for 2014-2015
Development of Teacher Training Resources for Education for Sustainable Development in Early Childhood Education and Care
Please, notice that the deadline for mentioning your interest is on October 15th.

E-mail: nekstel@upatras.gr, nekstel@worldomep.org
Websites: [www.euromep.org](http://www.euromep.org), [www.worldomep.org](http://www.worldomep.org)
8. European project on multicultural education
   The first phase is now finished but more countries are welcome to join (Contact person: Adrijana Višnjić – Jevtić, President of OMEP Croatia: avisnjic.jevtic@gmail.com)

9. Visit to Bulgaria
   Soon after the World Assembly and Conference, the World President and I invited by OMEP-Bulgaria and went to Sofia to attend a forum and meet with key policymakers. There, we submitted our first appeal letter to the Mayor of Sofia and Chairperson of Children, Youth and Sports Committee for the inclusion of early childhood development in the post-2015 agenda. It was a great experience and we thank Elena Roussinova, the President of Bulgarian Committee, and her team for their hospitality.

10. Ukraine: Asking for support
    National Committee of OMEP in Ukraine wants to enrich the equipment in a center for children with compensating type groups. The equipment includes A folding metal massage table, a dry pool, a solitude corner, etc. The total amount needed is 2,320 €. Please, think about supporting this initiative.

11. A new President in Israel
    Tamar Erez succeeds Tuca Yalin-Mor in the Presidency of OMEP Israel. Our warmest thanks to the later and our wishes to the new President.

12. Two members of French Committee participated in “One for all, all for water” second International Forum of UNESCO’s official NGO partners in Cote d’Ivoire.

Danièle Perruchon, the President of French Committee and Lisbeth Gouin, representative at UNESCO participated at this meeting (more information: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/one_for_all_all_for_water/#.VBgqrRadicc)
13. Celebration of Kindergarten Day in Poland

Next week I am going to visit Warsaw in order to participate in the celebrations of Kindergarten Day.

On 23 September in the Royal Baths Museum in Warsaw will host the ceremony Celebrations organized by the World Organization for Preschool Education OMEP together with fellow nursery. The ceremony will be referred to the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in a multicultural dimension.


The International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September and the second is celebrated on October 15th (more information: http://globalhandwashing.org/ghw-day)

As everybody can see this period is very vivid in our region. I apologize for the information that I have forgotten to include in this long letter of communication. I am waiting for your news.

With my warmest regards and looking forward to hearing your news

Nektarios Stellakis

Vice President of OMEP for Europe
Minutes from the European Regional Meeting

2014 World Assembly – Cork, Ireland – 1 July 2014

Present at the meeting: 40 delegates from 15 countries, Please, see attachment

Minutes: Taken by Dorothy Selleck, Honorary Member, and Ingrid Engdahl, president OMEP Sweden

Even though we had just 90’ the European Regional Meeting was very fruitful.

Welcoming and opening:
Nektarios Stellakis welcomed all delegates (16 countries plus 3 proxies) and proposed for everyone to visit and send in contributions to the European OMEP web site www.euromep.org

Approval of the agenda
Yes.

Minutes review:
European Regional Meeting, Shanghai (July 2014) No comments or amendments.

Information and announcements from the European member countries
- Current floods in Balkan countries, many schools are gone. Enthusiastic work in Croatia after the European meeting last year, interested in organizing an OMEP World conference. (Adrijana Višnjić – Jevtić)
- In Germany, OMEP is working with others on a national committee with the Government, striving for the right for all children aged 1-6 yrs to preschool education (Norbert Hocke)
- Russia is continuing working with the OMEP sustainability projects, and preparations for the OMEP European meeting 2015 (Natalia Rhyzova)
- Czech Republic invites preschools and schools to work with the sustainability project and has arranged an open seminar on this (Milada Rabusicova).
- Norway has arranged a successful national conference on sustainability, and was supported financially by the Norwegian UNESCO committee to do this (Eli Bergsvik)
- In Latvia, OMEP continues as usual (Ruth Kanepeja)
- In Cyprus, the play workers have reached out to involve parents and pushed for learning through play activities (Mariana Efstathiadou)
- A new national committee for OMEP will be elected in Switzerland in September 2014, and there are political changes coming up within the national framework (Ulla Grob-Menges)
- France is participating in the ESD projects, for the fourth successive year (Danielle Perruchon)
- Turkey has been active with member seminars and also as participants in the OMEP rating scale project for sustainable preschools (Arif Yılmaz)
- Sweden is trying to attract new members, developing an OMEP-Preschool-Diploma for the schools that have participated in OMEP projects, and are participating in the OMEP Rating Scale project (Ingrid Engdahl)
- Poland has organized a study trip to OMEP France, Paris, with study visits to schools, UNESCO and cultural places. Thanks to OMEP, September 20 will now be celebrated every year in Poland as the Preschool Day (Anna Wrobel).
- OMEP Ireland edit a yearly scientific journal The Young Child, much appreciated in Ireland, and they have been busy organizing this year’s world conference (Pat O’Connor)
- In Finland, the annual assembly was more frequented than usual and OMEP Finland is re-thinking the goals for the coming years (Satu Järvenkallas)
- Finally, Nektarios reported from the difficult situation in Greece, living through the economic crisis, but OMEP work as usual with in-service training and also some political actions towards the government. Nektarios also reminded of a request from Ukraine, where there is a huge need in deprived areas for humanitarian aid.

Report of the regional Vice-President (news from the region)

Nektarios referred to his report during the annual conference about:
- the International Labor Organization meeting Policy on Guidelines on the promotion of decent work conditions for early childhood educators (12 – 15 November 2013)
- OMEP participates as a member now in Eurochild Network and assembly in June 2014
- Social Platform’s Conference on the Social Dimension of the Greek EU Presidency (December 2013)
- European Conference on Early childhood education and care: For more and better quality for all (June 2014)

A New preparatory committee will be suggested this year: Bosnia Hercegovina

Serbia and the Netherlands are beginning some OMEP activities. All connections in these countries would be helpful to pass on to Nektarios.

Current stage of the European projects:
- ESD project, part 3 will be discussed in an upcoming article and Parts 1, 2 and 3 will be reported in an article in IJEC (Ingrid Engdahl and Milada Rabusicova)
- ESD project Part 4 is still ongoing and more initiatives are welcome, information will be sent out (Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson)
- European project on multicultural education (Norway, Poland, Croatia, Czech republic, Slovakia, Russia and Greece), the first phase is now finished, a report will be made available on the project web site, more countries are welcome to join (Adrijana Višnjić – Jevtić)

Proposals for next European Regional Meetings and conferences

2015: Moscow, Russia, probably during the last week of September with the theme International trends in early childhood care and education
2016: Open for consideration, Interested committees should contact Nektarios.

Any other business...
- Following up on last year’s decision: ‘Every European country should establish a strong partnership with a less prosperous country in Africa or elsewhere’, the responses have been varied, France has been active, but more could be done. Ivory Coast is in great need of financial support to meet their annual fee.
- A proposal for a European project Water Ecoculture was distributed during the meeting from the Greek Committee.

OMEP: Europe
E-mail: nekstel@upatras.gr, nekstel@worldomep.org
- Study visits between OMEP committees open for members are very fruitful and are highly recommended by Poland and France

- **New ideas for next year:**
  - Continuing working for sustainable preschools and schools, we can reach out to more schools with the same project ideas, and we can try out the OMEP Rating Scales for ESD (Sweden)
  - Work on the agenda for the UN top Summit in Nagoya in November, 2014. An online forum will be opened that will decide what to bring up during the meeting (Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson)
  - Work on the 10 challenges for sustainability that have been pointed out by the UN advocating for ECE in many different ways (Russia):
    - end extreme poverty including hunger;
    - achieve development within planetary boundaries;
    - ensure effective learning for all children and youth for life and livelihood;
    - achieve gender equality, social inclusion and human rights for all;
    - achieve health and wellbeing at all ages;
    - improve agriculture systems and raise rural prosperity;
    - empower inclusive, productive and resilient cities;
    - curb human-induced climate change and ensure sustainable energy;
    - secure ecosystem services and biodiversity and ensure good management of water and other natural resources; and
    - transform governance for sustainable development.
Attachment

List of participants European meeting, July 1, 2014, in Cork, Ireland

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