



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)

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## European Newsletter - Boletín - Bulletin

### *These are extraordinary times!*

The Corona crisis has shown how connected we are around the Globe. This crisis overshadows for some time the climate crisis, however, both crises show that we are not living in a sustainable way. The corona crisis can be seen as a health crisis, the climate crisis as an environmental crisis. Both, however, are linked and proofs of an existential crisis for our whole civilisation.

The strong actions taken to stop COVID-19 show that change is possible. There are ways to continue decreasing the carbon dioxide levels and to restrain global warming, to implement the ecocentric/biocentric rights. Our generation is probably one of the last that based on the complexity of the situation accomplish the challenging changes. It is of highest importance to strengthen a sustainable and just road, in the best interests of the children, for humankind and for the planet.

*Ingrid Engdahl*

### THE WORLD IS OF CHILDREN.

At the end of the path as a Preparatory Committee for our country and on the eve of the presentation of the request for recognition as a National Committee, we had planned meetings throughout the national territory to tell the general work of OMEP and to present some specific projects for Italy. Due to the global medical emergency and the particularly critical situation that has affected our country, we have had to readjust our plans. However, we managed to keep the collaboration active for a special event in which we particularly wanted to participate.

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These were the 50 anniversary celebrations of the **International Mother Earth Day April 22**

We strongly wanted to say that investing, at this moment, in quality education and care, coincides directly with taking care of the Planet: it is, in fact, demonstrated to be the best investment for the future. It is no coincidence that in the OMEP logo little girls and little boys are represented who, holding hands, make a tour around the world in the act of embracing and protecting it.

*Matteo Corbucci*

President of OMEP Prep Com in Italy



## UN International Days Peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet

At Mother Earth’s Day, April 22, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said: [“We must act decisively to protect our planet from both the coronavirus and the existential threat of climate disruption.”](#)

Mother Earth is clearly urging a call to action. Nature is suffering. Australian fires, heat records and the worst locust invasion in Kenya. Now we face COVID -19, a worldwide health pandemic link to the health of our ecosystem.

Climate change, man-made changes to nature as well as crimes that disrupt biodiversity, such as deforestation, land-use change, intensified agriculture and livestock production or the growing illegal wildlife trade, can increase contact and the transmission of infectious diseases from animals to humans (zoonotic diseases) like COVID-19.

From one new infection disease that emerges in humans every 4 months, 75% of these emerging diseases come from animals, according to UN Environment. This shows the close relationships between human, animal and environmental health.

Visible, positive impact– whether through improved air quality or reduced greenhouse gas emissions – are but temporary, because they come on the back of tragic economic slowdown and human distress. A healthy ecosystem helps to protect us from these diseases. Biological diversity makes it difficult for pathogens to spread rapidly. If we fight climate change and biodiversity loss turning to sustainable models will help not just nature, but human health.

Let’s remind more than ever in this International Mother Earth Day that we need a shift to a more sustainable economy that works for both people and the planet. Let’s promote harmony with nature and the Earth.

Source: UN,

read more at <https://www.un.org/en/observances/earth-day>

UN International days are occasions to educate the general public on issues of concern, to mobilize political will and resources to address global problems, and to celebrate and reinforce achievements of humanity. The existence of international days predates the establishment of the United Nations, but the UN has embraced them as a powerful advocacy tool.

Each international day offers many actors the opportunity to organize activities related to the theme of the day. Organizations and offices of the United Nations system, and most importantly, governments, civil society, the public and private sectors, schools, universities and, more generally, citizens, make an international day a springboard for awareness-raising actions.

### OMEP pays attention to the following International days

I have just gone through the Annual reports for 2019 from the National Committees in Europe and based on them written my Annual report as VP for Europe. In Europe, many committees pay attention to the OMEP international days as shown in the table below:

World Play Day (28 May 2019)	9 countries
International Day of Peace (21 September 2019)	9 countries
World Teachers' Day (5 October 2019)	9 countries
Global Handwashing Day (15 October 2019)	12 countries
Universal Children's Day (20 November 2019)	18 countries

Looking at the list of International days recognised by UN, there are plenty, however, there is not one day dedicated to early childhood education. Maybe it is time to discuss which days to celebrate jointly within OMEP, and when the time is right, to advocate for a UN ECE day.

Ingrid Engdahl

## OMEP VIRTUAL CAFÉ – the first in Europe on April 15

By invitation from OMEP World President Mercedes Mayol Lassalle, the national committees in Europe were invited to a virtual café on April 15. Mercedes wants to establish new forms for communication, and this first café became a great opportunity to share information between European committees. 13 countries participated and we discussed the situation due to the present corona pandemic, and the role OMEP and ECE can play in these times. Dorit Aram from Israel also presented some ideas of surveys and projects on the effects of quaranteens on children, e.g. time in front of a screen. We agreed that it is important to share good initiatives, and after the meeting some contributions have been posted on the OMEP Europe facebook site. You are all most welcome to join as members and to contribute and share your experiences of what children do and what ECE teachers do during these times. We also decided to continue these cafés.

## OMEP VIRTUAL CAFÉ – the second in Europe on June 8

The next European virtual café will be on June 8, at 5pm (London), 6pm (Stockholm) and 7 pm (Athens). The invitation will be sent out by the World Presidency, and it will give you a link to connect for the café. WE hope for most of the 28 European OMEP committees to participate.

On the agenda for discussion during the European Virtual Café:

- European Regional meeting 2020
- OMEP World Assembly 2020
- Budget – how to increase the income
  - membership fees – possible new system?
- Any Other Business



## OMEP REGIONAL MEETING 2020

The OMEP Regional Assembly is stipulated in the OMEP Constitution:

**10.3 Regional Assemblies**, comprising Members of the National Committees of the Region concerned, are held at least once a year upon convening by the Regional Vice President or by a decision of two thirds (2/3) at least of the National Committees belonging to the Region concerned.

**10.4** The venue, date and agenda of a Regional Assembly are sent in writing to the Members of the Region prior to the meeting.

**10.5** Regional Assembly meetings are aimed at:

- (1) determining the programmes and projects of the Region in accordance with the programme set by the World Assembly,
- (2) reviewing the work of the regions and determining future activities,
- (3) appointing when necessary a candidate for the Regional Vice Presidency.

I must admit being ignorant about this, because over the years, I have only been to Regional **MEETINGS**. Furthermore, I have been told about a tradition saying: When there is a World Conference in the region, there is no separate regional meeting the same year. During discussions about how to handle the World Assembly 2020, as the Athens conference is postponed, I became aware of the 10§ of constitution prescribing an annual Regional **ASSEMBLY**.

After discussions in the ExCom of OMEP, Mercedes and me have decided to invite to a European café (see invitation above) to discuss the Regional and the World assemblies for 2020. Due to the Corona pandemic, our plan is to arrange both these assemblies on-line, as virtual meetings, in September and October.

## OMEP WORLD ASSEMBLY 2020

The ExCom are planning to hold a virtual World Assembly, probably in October. Following the Constitution, the Call and Agenda will be sent out in June/July 2020. Preparations include the Regional Assemblies.



Please, for more and updated information, visit [www.omep2020.org](http://www.omep2020.org)

## ATHENS 2021

After a long and careful evaluation of the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, and in consideration of our commitment with the health and safety of our members and colleagues, the OMEP Executive Committee (EXCO) has decided to **postpone the 72th World Assembly and Conference** to be held in Athens from 13 to 17 July 2020, to **12 to 16 July, 2021**. 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 OMEP2021, s/he will have the possibility to withdraw it, sending an email at [info@omep2020.org](mailto:info@omep2020.org) and stating 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.

### *Important dates during 2020*

**May 31** **OMEP New Scholar Award** is a new world project initiative of OMEP to promote study and research related to early childhood education and care to facilitate broad understanding of the needs of early childhood worldwide. Submit your research abstract by May, 31 as an email attachment to: Min Young Jang([omepnewscholar@gmail.com](mailto:omepnewscholar@gmail.com)). Inquiries should also be sent to this email address

**May 31** Last date to send in reports on the OMEP World project ESD Rating Scale project to me at [vpeurope@worldomep.org](mailto:vpeurope@worldomep.org). More information is about to be sent out to the national project leaders.

**December 18** Due to the postponement of the World Assembly and World Conference, to July 2021, the deadline of the project **Colour Your Rights** has changed. The selected artworks shall be sent to the World Project by the latest December 18th 2020, via email to [vassiliadoum@omep.com.cy](mailto:vassiliadoum@omep.com.cy) For further information, please, contact Maria at [pre.vm@frederick.ac.cy](mailto:pre.vm@frederick.ac.cy)



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