



**SLOVENSKÝ VÝBOR SVETOVEJ ORGANIZÁCIE
PRE PREDŠKOLSKÚ VÝCHOVU**
ORGANISATION MONDIALE POUR L'EDUCATION PRESCOLAIRE
WORLD ORGANISATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL PARA LA EDUCACION PREESCOLAR
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2024 The World Annual Report

1. Major Conferences and Seminars

A. Preschool Is for All Children 2024

On October 24–25, 2024, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of Kindergarten Day in Slovakia and commemorated the 195th anniversary of the founding of the first daycare center in Banská Bystrica at a professional conference in Nový Smokovec Spa. The conference was opened with a ceremonial address by PhDr. Viera Hajdúková, PhD, a representative of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport and the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, and Jozef Štefaňák, mayor of Vysoké Tatry. PaedDr. Monika Miňová, PhD, chairwoman of the Slovak OMEP Association, presented the origins of the holiday celebrating all kindergartens in Slovakia.

Mgr. Jarka Kreškóciová gave us an overview of the World Organization of OMEP, its main challenges, and provided insight into the European and global OMEP meetings.

Special thanks go to the keynote speakers: PhDr. Vierka Hajdúková, PhD., Dr. h. c. Prof. PhDr. Miron Zelin, DrSc., Prof. PhDr. Eva Šmelová, Ph.D., PaedDr. Eva Sobinkovičová, and Ing. Igor Stavný for the information, perspectives, and challenges they shared from the various areas covered in the main presentations.

In the afternoon a discussion forum on current developments in early childhood education was led by PhDr. Viera Hajdúková, PhD., and a workshop on the topic of “Art and Educational Activities in Fairy Tales” was led by doc. PaedDr. Dana Kollárová, PhD.

On this festive day, we honored experts in the field of early childhood education, launched the book by author Mgr. Michaela Vargová, PhD., “A Teacher’s Diary,” and unveiled the 2025 calendar featuring illustrations of children’s rights.

The program of activities on October 25, 2024, was very interesting, stimulating, and inspiring for conference participants, as we were able to visit various parts of the High Tatras, such as the Vyšné Hágy Preschool, Poliankovo – Digital Gallery, Tatranská Polianka; Dobrá hračka, the TANAP headquarters, the TANAP Museum + Botanical Garden in Tatranská Lomnica; and the Tatra Mineral Water plant in Starý Smokovec. The program was of a high professional standard, combining practical activities, relaxation, and pleasant conversations with the lecturers and conference participants.

B. Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes, or the Holistic Development of the Child (Not Only) in Preschool

SC OMEP participated in organizing the 6th International Professional Conference in collaboration with the publishing house Infra Slovakia, titled HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES, AND TOES, or THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD (NOT ONLY) IN PRESCHOOL, which took place on April 19, 2024, in Bratislava.

C. Active School

Active School is a concept developed by the Ministry of Education, Research, Development, and Youth of the Slovak Republic that addresses the society-wide problem of physical inactivity and the associated rising trend of obesity, chronic noncommunicable diseases, and mental health issues. We held an informative seminar on April 17, 2024, in Košice, on April 18, 2024, in Prešov, and on June 20, 2024, in Banská Bystrica.

The project was presented to seminar participants by Mgr. Pavol Smutný—project manager of the “Active School” project at the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic. In each city, examples of best practices were presented by active elementary and preschool schools, as well as by Mgr. Jarka Kreškóciová and Ing. Katarína Lukáčová.

In Banská Bystrica, the seminar was also organized to celebrate the milestone birthday of Dagmar Lapšanská. In addition to the aforementioned lecturers, the event also featured presentations by PhDr. Viera Hajdúková, PhD. (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic), PaedDr. Ilona Uváčková (State School Inspectorate), and Mgr. Juraj Kremnický, PhD., from the Faculty of Physical Education, Health, and Sports at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica.

D. The 21st-Century Teacher, Colors of Life

On October 5, 2024, to mark International Teachers’ Day, the Nitra Region Chapter of OMEP organized a regional conference with international participation, attended by Dr. Art Maria Vassiliadou, , President of OMEP Cyprus, under the title “The 21st-Century Teacher, Colors of Life.” 180 minutes of expert lectures on the topics of burnout prevention, mental health support, nuances of aesthetics, and the impact of colors in classrooms on the well-being of children and educators were led by experts from Slovakia and Cyprus.

Presentation on OMEP around the world—Bangkok, Singapore, Australia—and practical workshops— Circus Pedagogy, Heart-Shaped Preschool, Journey into the World of Color Fantasy, The Colorful Meadow of Your Mind, Art Therapy—Colors of My Soul.

2. Activities Carried Out in Regional Sections

SC OMEP focuses its efforts on activities organized in seven regional sections:

Banská Bystrica, Bratislava and the surrounding area, Brezno, Hlohovec, Košice, Nitra Region, Prešov.

These activities are divided into seven areas:

A. Activities aimed at improving educational work in preschools

- professional and methodological seminars on the topic: “Crazy veggie ” (all OMEP regional sections);
 - Active School (Košice, Prešov, Banská Bystrica); Teachers’ Day and topics: Artistic Techniques and Alternative Approaches in Preschool Education, Media Literacy in Preschools, Musicians in Preschool—Music Education (also) for non-musicians, Chalúpkovo Brezno and topics: Always in the Right Position, Colorful Fall – Music Education in Preschools, What’s Next? Discussion on Current Developments in Education (Brezno); Inclusion and Children with Special Educational Needs, Mental Health Prevention for Children, Education for Tolerance and Goodness – Project: Heart-Shaped Preschool (Nitra Region); Mental Arithmetic in Preschool Education (Hlohovec).
- Participation of SC OMEP members in online conferences and webinars offered by various institutions and organizations.

B. Activities with and for preschool-aged children and for the general public

- Exhibitions of children’s literary creativity: “Preschooler” (Banská Bystrica);
- Exhibitions of visual and craft creativity: How I Spent Christmas, Spring Creative Paper Crafts, Lively Autumn (Banská Bystrica); Art Exhibition (Košice); Spring/Fall/Christmas Creative Workshops, Žitnoostrovské Pastelky, Little Chalupkovci (Brezno); Zelenka’s and Zelenka’s Christmas Ornaments (Hlohovec); Rainbow Carousel (all OMEP regional participated—organized by Banská Bystrica);
- Music creativity showcases: Bystrický Slávik (Banská Bystrica);
- Children’s motor skills competitions: Winter Games in Preschools, Sports for Health, Preschool Sports Olympics (Banská Bystrica); Children’s Sports Olympics (Brezno); Movement for Health (Košice);
- From Advent to Christmas – children’s Christmas performance (Banská Bystrica);
- “Get Your First Kids’ Driver’s License” (Banská Bystrica);
- Drumming Workshop “So Children Can Be Heard Better” (Banská Bystrica, Brezno);
- Participation in the “Little Logic Olympiad” project (Brezno);
- Participation in the TAKE ME OUT WEEK campaign (Brezno, Prešov);
- Participation in Kindergarten Day in Slovakia (all OMEP regions)

C. Activities aimed at improving management practices and continuing education

- Kindergarten Principals’ Club;
- Professional meetings: for kindergarten principals and teachers on current issues in early childhood education (all OMEP regions);
- Professional development training for members of the OMEP Executive Board through courses offered by NIVAM and other organizations;
- Online meetings with trainee teachers (Prešov);
- participation of OMEP SV members in a professional conference in Nový Smokovec Spa, the SPV conference in Bardejovské Kúpele and Martin; and the INFRA conference in Bratislava;

- online webinars, conferences, and training sessions offered by various organizations and institutions.

D. Friendship and Study Activities – Educational Trips

International meetings took place both in person and online. An educational trip to Brno (Czech Republic) was planned for members of the SC OMEP, but it did not take place.

E. Activities within the RS OMEP

- Preparation and implementation of the nationwide art competition “Rainbow Carousel” (Banská Bystrica).
- Preparation and organization of a professional conference – Nový Smokovec.
- Preparation and organization of the “Active School” informational seminar—Košice, Prešov, Banská Bystrica.
- Visits and exchange of experiences at preschools in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic—including online meetings.

F. Significant Activities Carried Out in the RS and SC OMEP

- Participation in the healthy nutrition project – the “Crazy Veggie ” project.
- Participation in research studies for the Faculty of Education at the University of Prešov (Cooperation between families and kindergartens).
 - Participation in various projects and programs: Let’s Score a Goal Together, Heart on the Palm, Nivea Bear, Klnka, klnka, Rainbow Carousel, The World Around Us.
- Participation in activities for Kindergarten Day in Slovakia.
- Participation in the World Play Day challenge—A Suitcase of Toys for Africa.
- Participation in the preparation of a calendar on the theme of Children’s Rights.
- Celebrations and activities at RS Hlohovec: **April 2** – International Children’s Book Day: reading and creative workshops to promote children’s literature. **May 15** – World Family Day: activities focused on cooperation between children and parents. June 18 – International Picnic Day: group outdoor activities. **September 22** – European/World Car-Free Day: promoting environmental awareness. **October 20** – International Tree Day: environmental activities.

G. UNESCO and OMEP World Days

UNESCO and OMEP have recommended the following days for celebration:

April 2: International Children’s Book Day

May 10: World Day – Movement for Health

May 28: Preschool Games Day

October 1–7: World Nutrition Week

October 15: Global Handwashing Day

In 2024, we prepared an official call for kindergartens to participate in World

Play Day and International Children’s Day (May 28) under the title “A Suitcase of Toys for Africa.”

Kindergartens celebrate other days in various ways at the local level. A collection of activities for Global Handwashing Day was prepared for kindergartens.

3. Preschool Day in Slovakia

Preschools planned art exhibitions, sports events, and parades through their cities and towns as a way to promote Preschool Day. They participated in the following challenge:

Art Contest—creating a 2025 calendar featuring children’s artwork on the theme of Children’s Rights. The kindergartens’ activities were also covered in the regional press, on the radio, and on television. To mark this day, the publication Inspiration for World Handwashing Day and the conference proceedings Kindergarten Is for All Children 2024 were released.

Both publications are available at www.omep.sk

4. Institutio infantium

A peer-reviewed scientific journal focusing on the theory and practice of early childhood education and care was founded in 2023. It will be published online twice a year and has been assigned the ISSN 2989- 381X. The journal is registered with the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, is indexed in ROAD, and has been assigned a DOI. The peer-reviewed journal Institutio infantium focuses on issues in preschool pedagogy and pre-primary education. The journal’s mission is to contribute to the scientific and professional discourse on issues in preschool pedagogy and the practice of pre-primary education, which currently lack a regular publication forum in Slovakia. The journal’s goal is to disseminate current knowledge from project implementation and research findings, from pedagogical practice in institutions, schools, and universities, and from systemic changes in school policy and legislation in Slovakia as well as in the international discourse, with a focus on:

- early childhood education (including special and inclusive education),
- pre-primary education and legislation,
- early childhood pedagogy,
- educational assessment,
- psychology of early childhood and preschool-age children,
- alternative educational concepts,
- trends in educational sciences,
- comparative preschool pedagogy,
- and related topics.

For more information, visit <https://omep.sk/institutio-infantium/>

5. Major Challenges and Activities in 2024

The Slovak OMEP Committee has 450 registered members and is registered as an association. Our members are actively involved in the development of important strategic documents related to preschool education.

In 2024, our members participated in:

- providing feedback and engaging in discussions regarding Act No. 245/2008 Coll., Act No. 596/2003 Coll., Act No. 597/2003 Coll., and Act No. 318/2019 Coll.,

Our member, Mgr. Jarka Kreškóciová, attended the OMEP European meeting on April 24–26,

2024 in Sweden and the World Assembly on July 15–16, 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand.
International conferences in Poland—Poznań and Warsaw.

Humanitarian aid was provided to:

- OMEP Kenya (fundraiser), Ukraine (toy drive).
- Uganda and Kenya – A Suitcase Full of Toys.
- Christmas Drive – How Much Love Fits in a Shoebox.

This year, the following events were key and significant for SC OMEP:

- A professional conference with international participation marking the 10th anniversary of Kindergarten Day in Slovakia.
- Publication of the first issues of SV OMEP's own scientific journal—*Institutio infantium* (www.omep.sk)
- Toy Library Slovakia—the opening of the first toy library to support children's education and play in Moldava nad Bodvou, in collaboration with OMEP colleagues in the region.

Our members play a vital role in the process of approving and adopting new concepts and legislation. They are members of key projects: Active School – Ing. Katarína Lukáčová, Compulsory Pre-primary Education and a member of the Slovak National Section for Pre-primary Education (under the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport and the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic). – PaedDr. Monika Miňová, PhD. (Chair of the National Council of OMEP)

6. Major Challenges and Activities in 2025

In 2025, SV OMEP plans to organize:

- an educational and sightseeing trip (as agreed),
- World Play Day and World Handwashing Day,
- Preschool Day in Slovakia,
- A professional conference on the occasion of Preschool Day in Slovakia,
- A professional seminar on a current topic.

In 2025, we also consider the following to be key priorities, and SV OMEP will participate in and strive to:

- developing and providing feedback on policy documents and legislative proposals,
- participating in national projects and projects of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport and the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic,
- signing a Memorandum of Cooperation with faculties of education in the Slovak Republic,
- ensuring cooperation with universities and other institutions in research in the field of early childhood education,
- conducting various research studies and surveys focused on early childhood education,
- actively partnering with a research team collaborating on research projects for the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVV) and the Ministry of the Interior (M SR), NIVAM, and other organizations,
- providing humanitarian aid,

– active participation in the European and global OMEP meetings and conferences, which will take place July 14–18, 2025, in Bologna (Italy).

Further information at the national level is available at <http://omep.sk/>

and <https://www.facebook.com/OMEPSlovensko>. Information at the global level is available at <https://omepworld.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/WorldOMEP>