OMEP FRANCE
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Editorial

'Funding early childhood education and care to promote genuine equality'

One of OMEP's key campaigns is to advance young children's right to education. Much remains to be done: whilst primary education is free and compulsory in almost all countries (95 per cent), one year of free pre-school education is only legally guaranteed in 47 per cent of them, and only 21 per cent guarantee three years of pre-school education.

Beyond the legal framework, the issue of funding is essential for an equitable, inclusive and high-quality education.

The work of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group, established by the United Nations to draft a fourth optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, bears this out: the aim is to extend the right to education to pre-school, for at least one year, and to secondary education.

During the last session in Geneva, the issue of resources was raised by States. Low-income countries fear they will be unable to secure the necessary funding; others, with high incomes, oppose this, sometimes so as not to call into question existing funding models, for example due to the existence of a private sector supported by family contributions.

Beyond the cost of formal education, children's representatives emphasised the associated expenses borne by families: transport, textbooks, school supplies, meals and uniforms. These costs constitute barriers to the effective realisation of the right to education.

For the youngest children, OMEP representatives emphasised that their education involves as much care as it does teaching, highlighting the concept of 'educare': supporting their development requires caring for them in a comprehensive manner and implementing a holistic approach to education.

Achieving early childhood education and care (ECEC) that is genuinely free for all is therefore essential. OMEP must continue to campaign to ensure that ECEC is not driven solely by the ambition to be 'affordable', which would exclude the most disadvantaged and widen inequalities from the outset.

International discussions are also focusing on diversifying sources of funding. The forthcoming UNESCO/UNICEF/OECD report on the follow-up to the Tashkent commitments, due in November, will focus in particular on innovative funding mechanisms: contributions from businesses, foundations or associations, via tax incentives or grants. It is important, however, not to lose sight of the essential: that an inclusive, equitable and high-quality education, inspired by humanist values, is guaranteed for all.

OMEP emphasises that the primary responsibility for guaranteeing the right to education lies with the state. Where non-state actors are involved, robust public regulation and coordination must ensure the equity and quality of the policy implemented.

For OMEP, genuinely free early childhood education remains key to ensuring that everyone benefits from equal opportunities, thereby helping to build more peaceful societies.

We must continue, everywhere, to mobilise our efforts to advance this vital cause.

Gilles Pétreault,
President of OMEP France
OMEP Representative to UNESCO
and the United Nations in Geneva.



OMEP France

- Participation in the 99th AGEEM conference, '_ ' (Early Childhood Education and Care), in Poitiers, and support for its 'Erasmus+' project involving visits to explore other pre-school systems in Europe.
- Tribute to Janusz Korkzak in Treblinka (PL)
- Participation in the World Assembly in Poznań



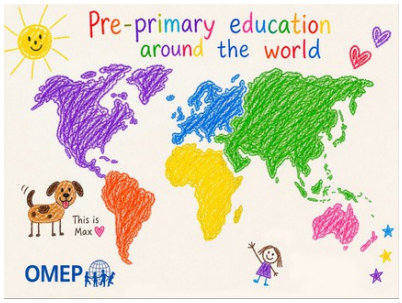
- OMEP France website: available in English or Spanish (at the bottom of every page)

OMEP Worldwide



OMEP statement: "When children speak out, do we know how to listen to them in these times of global uncertainty?"

Launch of the compendium on pre-school systems around the world by OMEP Australia.



UN and UNESCO



- Presentation of OMEP's activity report to UNESCO at the OMEP Assembly in Poznań
- OMEP in Geneva to support a new optional protocol to the

International Day of Peace

- OMEP Worldwide joins forces with a group of NGOs. The declaration is entitled 'Investing in children, investing in peace: advancing children's rights in conflict and displacement'
- A coalition of NGOs represented at UNESCO, including OMEP, is organising an event as it does every year. This year, it will focus on "Creativity in the Service of Peace" and will take place in Seville on 8 October in a hybrid format.

OMEP Francophone Commission

- Presentation of the activity report and projects at the OMEP Assembly in Poznań
- Djibouti has been admitted as a preparatory committee and is participating in the Francophone Commission
- Survey on joint OMEP/UNESCO webinars



Upcoming events

- **5 October:** International Teachers' Day – Programme
- **7 October:** 228th UNESCO Executive Board – Consideration of OMEP's request for a change of status – Background information
- **8 October:** Event on the Culture of Peace organised by UNESCO NGOs (in Seville) – Register
- **13 and 15 October:** Francophone Commission webinar (Arts and Early Childhood Education and Care – Register)
- **19–20 November:** Launch of the UNESCO/UNICEF/OECD report on the funding of ECCE (at UNESCO – Register).
- **23 November**: OMEP France Board meeting
- **1 December:** OMEP France General Assembly (partial renewal of the Board of Directors)
- **15–17 December:** International NGO Conference at UNESCO

Join OMEP France

Further information on our website: www.omepfrance.fr