



Montessori Europe Newsletter

December 2018

WINTER NEWSLETTER

Dear Members,

As the year ends, there is a lot for us to reflect upon and we will, but first let's move forward with the exciting news that our 2019 Congress will be held in Dublin. Dublin is rich in history, and both quaint and fast-evolving. We've responded to your survey comments and there will be a cross-section of opportunities for learning, networking and enjoying the city. Mark your calendar and SAVE THE DATES-- 11-12 October.

This has been a busy year for your Montessori Europe, and thanks to your participation it has been a rewarding one. The extra meeting of the March Working Groups helped make the October Congress in Sofia a well-orchestrated success. We owe a great big "Thank you!" to the national team of Bulgaria and all the members that contributed to organizing the Sofia Congress. We are especially grateful to our sponsors Nienhuis (Heutink International), MMI and Waterpark, whose underwriting helped to fund the congress.

As the Sofia conference drew to a close, the members elected three new members to the Board. New Board members are Judith Cunningham, Camilla Miller and Barbara Isaac. In December the Board met in Amsterdam to plan for the coming year and divide tasks. Camilla Miller is responsible for the working group secondary Education and the Montessori Express, Judith Cunningham will contribute to the Congress team, social Media and marketing. Barbara Isaac is responsible for the working group and the Congress. Christian Grune is responsible for sponsorships and Congress. The other members of the Board keep their tasks.

Also in December two Board members visited Dublin to meet the national team and to initiate preparatory activities such as choosing a venue, setting the Congress dates and discussing the title and content of the Congress.

In January we will send a call for proposals and need your help and creative input to workshops. We are looking forward to receiving many interesting proposals!

From all of us at Montessori Europe, we wish each of you a happy holiday season, and personally, I want to thank all of you for all of your support and contributions. You are the heart of Montessori Europe.

Looking forward to sending you the January update and request for workshop ideas.

Mirjam



From NOCME to NOME

During the Sofia congress the AGM approved the proposal to change the status of NOCME as described in the statutes. NOCME is no longer an advisory council to the ME Board, but instead a forum for national organisations to exchange ideas and inspire each other.

The NOCME meeting in Sofia was carried out in this new way. The feedback from the two questionnaires made clear that 'raising awareness for Montessori education' and 'quality issues' were the two topics of greatest interest for the participants. Therefore, the meeting tackled these issues. Jörg Boysen presented the nationwide survey his organisation (MDD) held in Germany to collect opinions on strengths and weaknesses of the German Montessori movement. Nina Johansen from the Norwegian Montessori Association held a presentation on quality management of Norwegian Montessori schools and showed a video that Norwegian schools can use to promote Montessori education.

The participants were very positive about this new approach. Several people reported that they are willing to present something themselves next time.

Two final points of attention:

In the Congress Agenda all the working groups took place at the same time, which was a pity for those who wanted to attend more than one working group. Also, there is sometimes overlap in content between groups. An example is NOME's overlap with the Standards working group. In the future a partly combined session with Standards might solve this problem.

In the past year the coordinator has spent a lot of energy in trying to get people from more countries to come to the meeting. Although contacts were established, so far, no concrete results have been visible. However, the coordinator will continue his efforts so that the diversity in NOME will grow.

Secondary Education and Montessori Express

At the Sofia Congress Secondary Education and Montessori Express held a joint meeting. In the future the two groups will merge into one, making them more effective.

18 attendees were present at this meeting. They established the key interests for this group:

- Forum
- Network
- Exchange on a practical level
- Learn from each other
- Personal network to use
- Pool of expertise/ share common knowledge
- Developmental help
- Professional development

The group will establish a separate Facebook group to exchange and communicate. The ME Newsletter will be used to share information. A directory will be set up to collect questions from schools and learn what they might have to offer.

A plan was launched to set up learning cycles:

- By establishing partnerships between schools from different countries with the same topic
- By creating learning cycles on professional development:
 - Guest lectures
 - Skype meetings
 - Possibility for joining

Montessori Express will continue with its work as a network tool for secondary Montessori schools. From this year's start with 5 schools in the Netherlands and 6 in Germany concrete projects have been generated. In 2019 the Montessori Express will ride again!



MERGe at the ME Congress in Sofia

This is a summary of the MERGe activities during the ME Congress. The full report can be found on the ME website.

Before the Congress started core members of MERGe organized a meeting on Friday morning, to talk about the organization of our activities during the conference. Also, we discussed the need for writing a practical-oriented manual for Montessori teachers on *Action* research in the Montessori classroom.

Our first activity during the ME congress was a symposium consisting of two parts. Firstly, Montessori teachers from different European countries briefly presented their research findings and ideas followed by a dynamic and lively discussion. The second part involved a short presentation of a forthcoming study conducted by Montessori researchers. The symposium was attended by twelve attendees from New Zealand, Ireland, Germany, Bulgaria, Poland and the Netherlands.

The second part of the meeting was devoted to the idea of engaging in a collaborative research on executive functioning in Montessori education. Thus, teachers' partnership with scientists was established. Patrick Sins and Jaap de Brouwer presented in a very clear and interactive manner the plan of conducting research that addresses the question: Does Montessori Education enhance Executive Functions? Patrick and Jaap asked whether attendees were interested in participating and contributing to this study. Each MERGe participant declared to be willing to take part in the initiative.

At the end of the meeting, MERGe participants valued the idea of posting research reports written by Montessori teachers on ME website: "Stories from Montessori schools". These will be put under the MERGe link. The participants of the meeting in addition stated that it would be worth taking into account that in the program of subsequent congresses of Montessori Europe workshops are organized to improve teachers' research skills

“Think big, start small”

On Saturday evening, MERGe organised a panel discussion under the title: *Research behind Montessori best practices – how can ME support teachers in conducting research for their professional development?* Ginni Sackett (AMI Director of Pedagogy, trainer, lecturer, consultant), Tania Hurter (Assistant to Infancy at La Maison des Enfants), Dorota Zdybel – (Akademia Ignatianum in Kraków - MERGe member) Jarosław Jendza – (University of Gdansk - MERGe member), Jaap de Brouwer (Saxion University of Applied Sciences -MERGe member) were the panelists. Patrick Sins (Saxion University of Applied Science - MERGe member) moderated the discussion between the panelists. During the discussion the audience could digitally react on some of the questions posed by Patrick. Their reactions were projected on a screen so panelists could reflect on the responses of the audience during their discussion.

Beata Bednarczuk and Patrick Sins



Join the first Global Montessori Games 2019

Looking for an unforgettable and fun international event for your pupils - aged 12 - 16? Join the first Global Montessori Games in Nijmegen - The Netherlands - from 16 September until 21 September 2019.

This activity is not about winning prizes, but about connecting and meeting people in a fun way. By attending this event pupils will learn more about different cultures and have their worldview broadened. It will help them develop communication, social, and interpersonal skills. An experience they will never forget!

Would you like to know more about this event?

Visit our [website](#)

Join our [facebook group](#)

Or send us an email: globalmontessorigames@gmail.com

You are free to share this with other Montessori schools from all over the world. Hope to see you in September 2019!

Jeroen Gremmen & Roelant Wijngaards

ME Congress 2019 in Dublin

Save the dates!

The Montessori Europe Congress 2019 will take place on 11 and 12 October. Thanks to your survey comments, we have made some changes in the congress from 2018.

- We will have two full days: Friday and Saturday. The congress will start Friday at 9 am and end on Saturday around 5 pm. There will be keynote lectures, workshops and forums during these days.
- Thursday and Sunday can be used for extra activities such as working group meetings.
- School visits will be on Thursday.
- There will be a full-scale dinner on Friday night.
- We will once again integrate a MMUN workshop into the congress. This will start on Thursday 10 October.

Congress theme

The working title of the congress is:

Montessori from the inside out – Communicating with the wider society/community

The theme will focus on the impact of Montessori pedagogy. How can we explain the value and the core of our pedagogy to the world around us – to parents, teachers and authorities?

This brings up topics such as:

- Explaining Montessori basics and finding a common Montessori language.
- Empowering Montessori teachers and administrators to be confident when dealing with parents, teachers and authorities.
- How do we work with our students on social and environmental impact?
- The relationship between Montessori and mainstream education.

As stated above, the title is at this point just a working title. We need your help to find a catchy title.

Please send your suggestions by 9 January 2019 to office@montessori-europe.net

ME is working with local Montessori groups coordinated by [St. Nicholas Montessori Society](#) to ensure convenient venues and opportunities to explore the flavours and sites of historic Dublin.

In February we will give you more detailed information regarding the venue and programme. We will then also invite you to send in your proposals for workshops and forums.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Stay tuned for the next issue!

The Board of Montessori Europe

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