

June / July 2019 Newsletter

Dear members and friends,

Just before the start of the summer holidays we send you the final newsletter of this school year. First and foremost you will find the latest news about our congress in Dublin. I would like to urge you to register before the start of your holiday.

You can also read a short survey about the board's recent activities, such as dealing with future Congresses, and our thoughts on partnerships, sponsorships' and relationships in general.

There is also a short report on the conference of the Polish Montessori Association that I attended. As well as a report from the working group Secondary education and Montessori Express 2020 and an invitation to participate in Montessori research from our working group MERGe.

After the summer holidays we will be back with more news about the Congress, but for now I wish you all a lovely summer!

Mirjam

Board update July 2019

The board met in June in Dublin at the Congress venue. One part of the meeting was devoted to the congress – see the congress update in this newsletter for the latest information. There was also a meeting with the Irish team from St Nicholas to complete an onsite inspection and finalize planning details.

Other items that were on the agenda:

Preparing a paper on sponsorships, partnerships and relations

It has become clear that ME needs more clarity on how to deal with partnerships, sponsorships and relations in general (our "friends"). Three small groups within the board are each preparing a paper on one of these items. Together they will form a framework for future actions. We aim to present this paper at the AGM in Dublin.

Deciding on congresses after 2019

In 2020 we will once again face strong competition in organising a congress in the autumn. Therefore we propose to move our congress to February 2021. This has led to the next question: should we then, in the future, organise all our congresses in the late winter? And, while we were at it, another proposal came up as

well: not to choose a new location each year, but rather work in cycles, alternating between fixed and new locations, of course bearing in mind that we still will have congresses all over Europe.

The board will present a plan in the AGM in Dublin.

Focus group

In discussing the future of our congress, we sent a survey to our members and to all those who attended at least two of our latest three congresses. We used the reactions in our discussion of the future of the congress, but also asked the responding members if they wanted to be part of a focus group, so that we can send them surveys on a regular basis and meet with them at our yearly congress. We hope that this will lead to a more permanent dialogue with our members. A pilot meeting will take place during the Dublin congress. If you would like to be part of the focus group, please send a mail to michael.rubinstein@montessori-europe.net

Congress update



Special Forum: Foundations for life

By special request, the Congress will include a Forum in the form of a conversation between friends about the importance of Montessori nursery education today.

The forum will explore the fundamental principles that underpin our practice in the Children's House led by Barbara Issacs, Mina Walsh and Vanessa Fichtl. These three practitioners bring a wealth of experience with the young child across Europe, the UK and Ireland.

Group discounts

Since we were asked several times about group discounts, we have added the following group discount tickets, applying until October:

- 10 or more tickets: €305 each
- 20 or more tickets: €260 each

All registration information is available on our [website](#).

Hotel Information

[Crowne Plaza Dublin-Blanchardstown](#) is just off the M50 motorway, 20 minutes' drive from Dublin International Airport and Dublin city centre and with plenty of complimentary parking.

With the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre, Ireland's biggest shopping centre next door, the Crowne Plaza Hotel Blanchardstown offers shopping, cinema, bars and leisure facilities. There is a bus that departs a few minutes from the hotel to downtown Dublin.

Accommodations

To book a hotel room at the Congress Hotel, please click [here](#).

From the Airport

Take a taxi or an Uber from the Dublin airport to the hotel. There is no convenient direct public transportation available.

Polish Montessori Association celebrates its 25th anniversary

Recently the yearly conference of the Polish Montessori Association took place in Lodz. The conference celebrated the 25th anniversary of the association and that did not go by unnoticed!

In summary, Lodz workshops offered the opportunity to exchange thoughts on theory and practice.

On behalf of Montessori Europe, I addressed the members of the association, especially Malgorzata Miksza, president and former ME board member. 25 years ago she took the initiative to found both a school and the Polish Montessori Association. In my speech I mentioned that the Polish organisation and ME have organised three ME congresses together: in Lodz, Krakow and Lublin. Both in Lodz and Krakow Malgorzata was the leader of the national congress team. In 2018 she was made Honorary Member of ME.

To emphasize our cooperation, I have attended the Polish conference over the past five years and have given workshops also. This year's workshop was titled "I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony". Doing this is a pleasant way to meet the Polish members.

After all the speeches, an enormous birthday cake (30 kilograms!) was cut and shared with all attendees. All attendees also received a ceramic snail – the symbol of the Polish Montessori Association.



On a roadtrip with “Montessori Express 2020”

The second Road trip with the Montessori Express took place May 6-10. Small groups of interested teachers and pupils visited secondary Montessori Schools in the Netherlands and Germany: Amsterdam, Wageningen, Nijmegen, Düsseldorf and Utrecht.

The voyage started with visit to the former house of Maria Montessori in Amsterdam on May 6th, the day of death of Maria Montessori in 1952. Our next stop was Secondary Montessori-school [Pantarijn](#) in Wageningen, where team of teachers and pupils showed the visitors all kinds of different lessons and learning activities in the school. Then at [Montessori College Nijmegen](#), Roelant Wijngaarts showed us the beautiful building and presented the concept called [the Agora-project](#), where pupils of different ages learn by participating in all kind of ‘challenges’, set by themselves. Roelant also reminded us about the project called [first Global Montessori Games](#), that he is organising with Jeroen Gremmen from 16 to 21 of September 2019. Secondary school Montessori College in Groesbeek is a nice school in village where once again we could see how innovating the Agora-project works in practice.

Michael Lucht from [Leibniz Montessori Gymnasium](#) in Düsseldorf explained how they are working hard to develop a Montessori Plus model. Exchange of views, challenges and experiences about Montessori Development and creation of an open learning environment during the “Frei-Arbeit” for the pupils was highly valuable.

[Jordan Montessori Lyceum Utrecht](#) is one of the oldest secondary Montessori schools in Netherlands. By visiting several classes and speaking with the pupils and teachers of this school, one could feel that the Montessori-identity is in the genes of this school.

This year the Montessori Express 2019 roadtrip ended with a visit to the [Maria Montessori Gesamtschule](#) in Aachen with 15 of our Pantarijn pupils. An ‘e-twinning-project’ with the German pupils, initiated by English teacher Dorienn de Jonge, offered opportunity to pupils meet each other in real life through The Montessori Express.

After this inspiring roadtrip, plans for a very interesting trip in October 2020 with the Montessori Express for teachers have already been made. More information about this project will soon be published. We hope the Montessori Express Bus will be fully booked by the time of the next congress in Dublin! More information will be published on our website and social network pages shortly.

Gabriel Enkelaar (genkelaar@pantarijn.nl) and Eva Baekkel (eva@bambini.no)



Invitation to participate in Montessori research

Montessori teacher: how do you apply the Montessori concept into your classroom?

Montessori education has been in existence for over 100 years in many different countries all over the world. The ways in which the Montessori concept has been internationally implemented vary widely due to its adaptations to the local culture, government policies or as a result of new educational insights.

The aim of our research is to investigate how Montessori teachers implement the Montessori concept in their own classroom. Montessori teachers who are currently teaching early childhood (3-6) or an elementary group (6-12) are invited to complete this questionnaire by responding to a number of statements about how they apply the Montessori concept in their classroom. Completing the questionnaire takes no more than 15 minutes of your time.

To complete the questionnaire please follow this [link](#).

We will present the results of our survey at the Montessori Europe Congress 2019 in Dublin. The results of our study will give you an impression of how the Montessori concept is implemented in Montessori schools in Europe.

Patrick Sins and Jaap de Brouwer

Professorate Alternative Education - Saxion and Thomas More Universities of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands and the Montessori Europe Research Group (MERGe)

Have a great summer and don't forget to register for our Congress in Dublin, places are limited.

Warm regards,

The Board of Montessori Europe

(Mirjam Stefels, Michael Rubinstein, Jörg Boysen, Barbara Isaacs, Judith Cunningham, Bojana Mikarić, Camilla Miller, Christian Grune)