



CONTINUITY  
IN EDUCATION

Hospital Organisation of  
Pedagogues in Europe

# HOPE

## NEWSLETTER

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## 7<sup>th</sup> HOPE Congress

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in retrospective



Editor and  
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number

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Dear Members of HOPE, Friends and Colleagues,

Well, we made it! The 7<sup>th</sup> HOPE congress took place and - judging from all kinds of feedback we received - it was quite a successful event.

We had started working towards the event about 3 years ago. Now, after countless preparatory meetings, thousands of e-mails, many sleepless nights, computer crashes, car breakdowns, telephone failures, website moves, internet troubles, even personal tragedies, we are happy that the participants enjoyed their days in Munich. We had so been looking forward to 'the world' coming and to the extraordinary atmosphere which is the hallmark of a HOPE congress.

About 380 participants represented 33 countries:

*Armenia, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, The Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Venezuela.*

There were about 20 speeches and 60 workshops and several poster presentations. On the following pages you will find a few examples of the wide range of presentations.

Our first aim was to provide a **platform for scientific and professional exchange**, for passing on ideas and examples of best practice, possibly coming away with some very practical new skills, and - not least - for networking.

Our intention was to highlight the interconnectedness between medical structures and the various professionals working within them, and the educational needs of children and adolescents who are patients, inside or outside of hospitals, as well as the changing roles of the teachers working in this field.

However, in our view, it is not enough to propagate that ill or injured children and adolescents, have every right not to be disadvantaged, and so every right to education - rights need to be reflected in laws and regulations if they are to count. - So the organizing team made special efforts to **engage politicians** and other 'movers and shakers' to participate and speak, and to listen and learn, and come away with stronger motivations to support us; not least the then-First Lady of the country had agreed to be our patron.



Dr. I. Lukšič, Minister for  
Education and Sport, Slovenia



Dr. L. Spaenle, Minister for  
Education and Culture in Bavaria

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The field of teaching ill and injured students may be a small area in the education landscape, but it is situated at a critical junction in personal biographies. It is also linked to all other branches in our education systems. It may even be a kind of early warning system for developments in society.



In that context there were also two **debating circles 'Perspectives'** which ran parallel to the afternoon programme. Participants were politicians, representatives of school authorities, professional organisations, schools, universities and university hospitals. Topics discussed were e.g. counselling, educational follow-up, adapting legal educational requirements to individual cases, professional training, premises of hospital schools, etc.

Our final reports will be given to the EU, the Council of Europe, national and state ministries.

When embarking on such a big project there are more questions than answers for a long time, e.g. about necessary and available funds, about 'official' support, about the number of participants to expect, how many rooms might be needed, etc. To keep costs low we decided to have most of the events at the two hospitals where the schools are located. It meant, however, that participants had to shuttle between locations and plan their programme options accordingly. That *was* an inconvenience compared to having everything at a single location. On the other hand, some participants told us it made them feel 'at home', they liked the real-life setting, e.g. having lunch in the personnel cafeteria together with regular hospital staff.

Possibly a novel aspect in the organization of this event was that 4 entities came together to form one congress team: two Munich schools, the German section of HOPE, and the 'Förderverein', a charitable organization; it served as our common legal representative.



Together we submitted an application for EU-funding. This way we were able to re-

imburse for travel and hotel expenses and to keep registration fees low, especially for HOPE members. The response from many country representatives was that finally there was a tangible benefit to being a member of HOPE.

At this point let me express my deep gratitude to all team members, to our colleagues, supporters and friends, for unlimited energies, good-will, courage, optimism, patience and understanding:

Lisa Meixner-Mücke	Anne Kohtz-Heldrich	Maria Schmidt	Dolores Waldschmidt	Nina Röchling
Alto Merkt	Sissi Fuchsberger	Wolfgang Huber	Erhard Karl	Philipp Röchling
Bernhard Ruppert	Rita Wagner	Mona Meister	Günter Wieching	Verena Rometsch
Uli Kalmes	Axel Orlovius	many national	Elisabeth von Langen	Gerrit Mazzarin
Evi Friedl	Ms Kunert	and international		
Ralph Peters	Michael Metzger	members & friends of HOPE		

... and many more colleagues and friends who covered for us when we were busy with congress preparations, or who helped during the congress days (remember the orange scarves?), all secretaries, drivers, caretakers, medical directors, hospital staff, volunteer translators, and many more, not least the donors. Thank you! ms

## Committee Meeting 2010

It seems increasingly hard to get members to be actively involved and take



New Committee Members and Contact Persons - Experienced CMs and some Board Members

on a 'public' task and responsibility. Most organizations are even losing members. HOPE, however, lately has been growing! And so there are also new Committee members (country representatives). There were so many CMs present in Munich that the group split in two for part of their meeting so as to let the 'old', experienced CMs discuss their ongoing business, while the new CMs could debate what their first steps in their new role might be. - One idea debated was to try and organize a special CM meeting lasting one or two days. The When?-Where?.How?(financially) will need to be carefully researched and prepared.

## General Assembly 2010

The available time slot for the GA in Munich was fairly short. Most 'reports' had been published beforehand to speed up the proceedings. The most important item on the agenda was the stepping down of the President, Gerd Falk-Schalk, after 6 years at the helm of the organisation, and of two other Board members, Paula Hicks and Michel Kleuters. It is regrettable to lose their talents and experience. All the more since it proved hard to replace them.



New candidates for the Board were Anja de Jong, Agneta Grunditz and Mary McCarron. As for the function of President, none of the current Board members were willing to take over the task by him-/herself; so the Board had decided to propose a solution which is common already in political parties, i.e. a 'double-tip' presidency:



Michele Capurso and Mojca Topic were going to share the tasks and responsibilities. They stressed that they intend to facilitate improved communication among members. They also noted that new, simplified statutes should be prepared for Amsterdam. - There was a debate about why it was not possible to find a single candidate for the presidency. The candidates

were all approved by the GA. The issue of organizing a 1- or 2-day Committee Meeting was mentioned again.

## The Programme

This is not the place to talk about the programme at length. It is, after all, still accessible on the congress website. Here, in this newsletter, let me just line up a few quotes (very brief ones!) from some of the speeches and workshops. I apologize for not representing more of them.

We are (after processing hundreds of reimbursements) going to start compiling, checking, transcribing, translating, laying out, etc. all and workshop results submitted to us. They will be made available to you, so you will have the opportunity to read up on those lectures and workshops you missed:



[Dr. Hoanzl - 'Involvement and Entanglement ...'] Every child has the urge to get bigger, to grow. Development is always a forward movement and thus oriented towards the future! Learning and progress in learning are the basis of all development and intimately connected with school! ... Schools in hospital seem to follow the motto: 'Not the system shows us the way, but our students do.'... Hospital teachers don't work within a given system only, they also work at changing the system! ...

[Oelsner - education in extreme situations] Participating in the experiences of others and acquiring them by one's own abilities prevents students from focusing on their own helplessness. ... .. A chronically ill child in their home class ... always presents also a chance for the emotional cohesion of the peer group. In confronting divergence from our media-, model- and advertising messages and from the ideas presented by models of how a man or a woman ought to look and be, the students get to know other conditions of life.

[Polzer - education unhurried] We must therefore realize that no amount of diagnostic data, however scientifically justified, will help us when we need to understand the existential conditions of the life of a child or adolescent whom we meet. Understanding is set before 'knowing about'.



[Dr. Spindler - Allergies ... in everyday school life'] Which ideas, experiences, possibly problems do you associate with 'sports'?  
"The other children call me 'asthma idiot' when I cannot run as fast or dive as long."

[Häcker - supporting grieving classes] If we let the wishes and needs of our students guide us, then it may also mean that some of them do not want to be in touch with their school class any more. Many times they withdraw, and want to see only family and close friends. In that case it is important to make their classmates understand, but still to find a way for them to express that they are thinking of their ill friend - and to create a space for their grief.

[Lantzsch - magic tricks with children in hospital] When the hospital teacher teaches a sick child magic tricks, the illness temporarily fades into the background. The learning becomes important, because magic tricks require focus and practice. Above all, magic is fun.



Part of the fun of a HOPE congress is to savor some local culture and atmosphere. So in Munich one destination *had* to be the Hofbräuhaus, the famous beer hall. About 280 participants took the opportunity to spend an evening drinking German beer,

## The Social Programme



eating a Bavarian dinner, listening to live Bavarian music and - who would have guessed it – some even taking to the dance floor.

Friday night the lobby of the Heckscher-Klinik was the site of a loud and happy party. The jazz-



rock band 'Extra-Dry' got everyone rocking. And, boy - did those teachers rock! It must have been very hard for the young patients to stay in their beds that night. - Luckily, there were some breaks to cool off and watch magician Fedor Lantzsch entertain the crowd with magic tricks.



## A Sampling of Feedback

We wish to thank everybody who sent us their feedback. It was overwhelmingly positive. Your messages are a reward for many months of hard work. - Following are a few excerpts which are particularly meaningful to us:

*We all enjoyed the congress. I felt elated and vibrant, with joy in my work renewed ... .. Now I regret not having traveled to Finland two years ago ... but we will meet again in Amsterdam!!*

*All the participants from ... felt a new impulse; so we are launching a new initiative at our ministry ...*

*I had a great time at the congress. I am glad I met so many nice people and heard many interesting topics .... I really enjoyed the evenings and I didn't expect you to organise so much fun time.*

On behalf of the organizing team we wish to give some feedback to the participants as well:

*We were happy and proud to have you as our guests; some of you are old friends, others we met for the first time in person in Munich; thank you for all your valuable contributions and the productive setting you helped create. You brought along open minds and a good spirit. It was a joy having you.*

## The Next Congress



will take place in **October 2012 in Amsterdam.**

Our Dutch colleagues have already formed a team. On the last day in Munich they presented a charming invitation to their country and the city of Amsterdam. A Dutch colleague surprised the assembled participants by walking through the rows wearing a Dutch hat and ringing a bicycle bell. Other Dutch colleagues offered a taste of the Netherlands: Dutch cheese cubes and strawberries to everybody present. They

showed a video of Amsterdam and outlined their ideas for the next HOPE congress in a short speech . They [still 😊 ] seemed fresh and energetic and the Munich team passed on the baton to them with very good feelings.