



HUNGARIAN EU PRESIDENTIAL CONFERENCE ON TALENT SUPPORT AND FIRST EUROPEAN TALENTDAY

7-9 APRIL 2011, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY



CONFERENCE SUMMARY



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Hungarian EU Presidential Conference on Talent Support and First European TalentDay

7-9 April 2011, Budapest

The Hungarian EU Presidential Conference on Talent Support was held in the building of the Budapest History Museum in the Buda Royal Palace on 7-8 April, 2011.

The First European TalentDay was held in the building of the Hungarian Culture Foundation in the Buda Castle District on 9 April, 2011.

The conference organised by the Ministry of National Resources, the Hungarian Genius Programme and the National Talent Programme was attended by some 300 guests from more than 20 countries.

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BUDAPEST DECLARATION ON TALENT SUPPORT:

Conclusions of the Hungarian EU Presidential Conference on Talent Support

On the occasion of the First European TalentDay organised as part of the Hungarian EU Presidency, policy makers, scientists, teachers, other stakeholders and experts discussed the importance, flexible framework and further possibilities of talent support at an international conference held in Budapest on 7-9 April, 2011. The participants of the event agreed on the following.

Although we acknowledge that there are different terminologies and definitions related to talent development, we seek a broad consensus. Everyone may be 'able' – in something. A talented person is somebody who has an excellent gift combined with extraordinary general skills, a high level of special skills, creativity and devotion to a certain field. Talented people are able to perform at a high level in any walk of life.

The concept of talent is understood in a broad sense, embracing all sorts of talents. Talent is a special kind of natural resource that is available in every country. Talent is a real value that should be discovered, explored and utilised for the benefit of talented individuals and the whole of society.

To find gifted people and develop their talents is in the direct interest of any nation and of Europe as a whole. There is no age limit to discovering talents and lifelong learning is an appropriate tool to develop talented people in any age group. Talent support is the common interest, common task and common responsibility of governments, local communities, businesses and non-governmental organisations.

Businesses with Corporate Social Responsibility Programmes and non-govern-

Closing ceremony of the conference





Rózsa Hoffmann and Péter Csermely

mental organisations should be encouraged to endorse talent support in order to help educators, parents and students.

Properly helped talents contribute to the increase of competitiveness and the realisation of the strategic goals of the European Union. For that reason talent support should be an important contribution to the targets of the Europe 2020 strategy that puts innovation and sustainable growth into the focus point.

Talent support programmes may boost self-esteem and facilitate both social mobility and cohesion. They open up new employment options and by discovering participants' inherent values, they also promote perseverance in job-seeking efforts, enhancing long-term job and social security. We strive to balance excellence and the support of the underprivileged. We recognise that there are different underprivileged groups in different countries; support and opportunities for them creates personal, educational, social and economic benefits.

Talent support is becoming an important ingredient in the social-economic progress of the underprivileged including the Roma people, and can serve as the foundation for programmes enhancing social cohesion and increasing economic competitiveness.

The participants appreciate and honour the achievements of Hungary in creating the first network of TalentPoints consisting of closely cooperating organisations in order to achieve maximum synergy. They call all member states of the European Union to study this innovative Hungarian approach. It is vital to create an international network across the EU to support partnership and collaboration among the members.

To focus the attention of stakeholders and the European general public, the participants agree that it is necessary and worthwhile organising a TalentDay annually connected to 25th March, the birthday of Béla Bartók, the great composer, pianist and teacher. The participants join in supporting the Hungarian initiative and call on the European Commission and the European Parliament to make every effort to officially declare the 25th of March the European TalentDay. The participants encourage all member states to organise national TalentDays every spring to celebrate the European Day of the Talented and Gifted.

The participants stress the importance of the above benefits and best practices appearing in documents of the European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament. The people of Europe should make joint efforts to ensure that talented people and talent support schemes receive due public attention and recognition in all EU member states.

To monitor and support that process and to coordinate joint European actions in the field the participants propose to establish a European Talent Resource and Support Centre in Budapest, Hungary.

Finally, the participants agree to invite stakeholders from every country of the European Union to convene annually to discuss the developments and current questions in talent support. Upon the invitation of the Government of Poland the next conference will take place in Warsaw in 2012.

Plenary session in the Baroque Hall of the Budapest History Museum



OPENING ADDRESS



JÓZSEF PÁLINKÁS,
*President of the Hungarian Academy
 of Sciences*

The President of the Academy started his greeting with the idea: „Europe must not lose a single talent”. He acknowledged that this mission is an almost impossible one but it has to be aimed for and our acts have to be in line with that future target. He stressed that the aim of talent support should be that a child with any social background even from the smallest village receives customized support to develop her or his talent and that these abilities serve the community.

Pálkás also emphasized that support from political decision makers is indispensable for successful and long term talent support activities. However it is important to keep in mind that the most important area of talent support is education, the daily activity of teaching.

The President of the Academy pointed out that Europe has been made great by its talents through the arts and sciences and that this makes it especially important to recognize the role of talent support in public education.

**TALENT SUPPORT IN HUNGARY,
 PRESENTATION OF THE 20-YEAR
 HUNGARIAN TALENT SUPPORT STRATEGY**



RÓZSA HOFFMANN,
*Minister of State for Education, Ministry
 of National Resources*

The Minister spoke of the contribution great talents have made to our society and culture down the ages. *„Our vocation in any field of pedagogy must be to ensure talents continue to be developed throughout this century and well into the next.”*

Hoffmann emphasised that Talent Support must begin in schools and laid out the three main tasks in this area: identification of talent, individual development, and follow-up of talented youngsters as they grow into young adults. Referring to the Parliament-enacted 20-year Hungarian Talent Support Programme, she stressed that the difficult economic climate will not set back the work of the programme, because it remains vital that all children, from all backgrounds, should have equal opportunities to develop their talents.

HUNGARIAN GENIUS PROGRAMME – TALENT SUPPORT IN HUNGARY FUNDED BY THE EU STRUCTURAL AND SOCIAL FUNDS



PÉTER CSERMELY,
*President of the Hungarian Talent
Support Council*

of NGOs in Hungary and abroad. He informed the audience about the Hungarian Genius Programme that is supported by the European Structural and Social Funds. The most important characteristics of the Programme are the long tradition of talent support in Hungary, the synergic cooperation of the state and the non-governmental organisations, the network operation and the long term scheduling made possible by the twenty year long National Talent Support Programme.

Concluding his speech he stressed the continent wide importance of talent support in relation with the Europe 2020 Strategy.

According to Professor Csermely, the course of an able person consists of three stages and talent support activities have to guide young people through these. The stages are the following: 1. talent potential (a child with ability), 2. discovered talent, and 3. stages of utilising the talent and making it a source of success. The professor stressed that the numbers within each of the above categories are not equal. There are plenty of able children, much fewer are really talented and there are even fewer who fully utilise their talents. Csermely pointed out that a conference like this should aim for a more balanced ratio, in other words, discovered talents should be utilised more extensively.

The professor talked about the history of talent support in Hungary including the National Council of Students Scholarly Circles and the Hungarian National Talent Support Council that coordinates the work

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN THE EU 2020 STRATEGY



STEEFAAN HERMANS,
*Unit Head, European Commission,
Directorate General for Research and
Innovation*

The representative of the Directorate General for Research and Innovation spoke about the role of effective Early Research support programmes in contributing to the aims of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the realisation of Europe's „Innovation Union” through new knowledge creation. „This requires 1million additional researchers if we want to live up to our expectations of a knowledge-based society.”

The European Council has endorsed a European Research Area Framework to increase the mobility and deployment of research talent under favourable terms. The EurAccess Support Network brings together more than 200 service centres across Europe and serves as a one-stop for researchers to gather information about mobility options around Europe.

TALENT SUPPORT IN POLAND



MIROSLAW SIELATYCKI,
*Undersecretary of State, Ministry of
National Education, Poland*

The undersecretary stressed the parallelisms with the Hungarian efforts and made it clear that Poland, holding the next Presidency of the European Council, will emphasize talent support and that it will be an important issue at the EU Conference on Education to be held in Poland in November 2011.

In Poland the 2010-2011 academic year is 'The Year of Discovering Talents' in harmony with the educational priorities of the EU. A talent map visualizes the talent points of the country. This year similarly to Hungary talent ambassadors were appointed to set positive examples to the younger generation. Also a Talent-Day was organised for the first time in March with the participation of several hundred talent-points and the Copernicus Science Centre.

A three-year talent support programme commenced aiming to set the foundations of a long term talent support system in Poland. (*Development and implementation of a comprehensive system for working with gifted and talented pupils and students, 2010 – 2013*)

He argued for a European system of talent support to strengthen the synergic cooperation of national programmes.

TALENT SUPPORT AND INCREASES IN SOCIAL CAPITAL – THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF THE ESF (EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND)

The commissioner summarised the strategies and policies of the European Commission to assist talent support and development and the



LÁSZLÓ ANDOR,
*Commissioner for Employment, Social
Affairs and Inclusion, European
Commission*

utilisation of outstanding talents for the competitiveness of Europe. He pointed out that in a post crisis world the EU aims at increasing growth with a more effective utilisation of human resources. A well-trained, highly educated workforce is a global competitive advantage. That means Europe must identify, support and develop talents more effectively and retain them in Europe. It is indispensable to invest in the development of human resources to avoid or reduce brain drain.

In the *Europe 2020 Strategy* the EU aims at high employment, productivity, innovation, protection of the environment and social cohesion. In that strategy talent support has an important role, especially in meeting the challenges in the lives of individuals, in exploiting the possibilities offered by mobility and in supporting social innovation. Explaining the above he mentioned early school-leavers, inadequate teaching methods, the gap between the knowledge acquired in schools and the expectations of the labour market as well as the lack of openness to life-long learning. To change the situation the Strategy aims at decreasing the rate of early school-leavers, increasing employment and the implementation of the Innovation Agenda. To improve the employment the situation mobility should be encouraged and supported. The Commissioner stressed the importance of discussion, coordination and cooperation on local, regional, national and European levels, creating synergies and sharing best practices.

DOES TALENT ALWAYS EMERGE? PRESENTATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE TALENT SUPPORT MODEL OF AN EU MEMBER STATE, THE FINNISH EXAMPLE



LEO PAHKIN,
Finnish National Board of Education

In the Finnish school system the autonomy of the teachers, institutions and local governments have increased significantly since 1993, which offers a wide palette of possibilities to foster talent. Besides the learning objectives of the Finnish National Core Curriculum the schools may integrate numerous development programmes into their educational programmes, however the training and informing of the teachers is henceforward

needed so that they can use their possibilities. The results of the international PISA and TIMSS studies show that school education successfully gives useful knowledge to the average student, however from the surveys it also becomes clear that improvements are still needed in the field of supporting the gifted young. We need to face the fact that in the areas of identifying and developing talent the Finnish educational system still needs strengthening. For this, the in-service, talent-fostering training of teachers is needed, We need to acknowledge that talents do not necessarily surface unaided.

The talent-fostering programme, which was christened LEO, was born in the spirit of this recognition, and has been in operation since 2009. This programme has five main objectives: 1. spotting talents in schools and nurseries; 2. more efficient support for talented children in schools; 3. more efficient information for talented children and their parents on their possibilities; 4. helping children to recognize their own strengths and the prevention of underachievement; 5. strengthening tolerance towards gifted children in schools.

To achieve these goals they collect the best Finnish talent development practices, create a national talent-fostering network, organise teacher training, operate a website and participate in international cooperation.

TALENT SUPPORT THROUGH CIVIL EYES IN THE PRACTICE OF THE ECHA (EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR HIGH ABILITY)



JOHANNA M. RAFFAN,
ECHA Secretary, United Kingdom

The ECHA Secretary provided an overview of the organisation's history, purpose and activities. Founded in 1988 it is a membership organisation that is unique in bringing together the whole range of professions involved in education, from teachers and researchers to psychologists and policy makers. ECHA holds a conference every two years and publishes the bi-annual, international refereed journal *High Ability Studies*. There is also an ECHA Diploma and now an MA in gifted and talented education. It has seen great growth in impact over the past eight years in particular and has influenced government policy on gifted and talented education in many European countries.

PRESENTATION OF AN ENGLISH RESEARCH CARRIED OUT ON TALENT SUPPORT, FOCUSING ON EU MEMBER STATES



JOAN FREEMAN,
Middlesex University, United Kingdom

The European talent development, which was examined in the mirror of the experience of the non-European countries, was explored by a survey-based analysis, which was led by the lecturer. This research with the help of earlier data included 10 years' results and its most important finding was that there are enormous differences between the countries of the world in attitudes towards the talented.

The extensive study shows that since the

beginnings of the 2000's, the number of talent development programmes have increased significantly and complex identification-development programmes are offered in many countries. Freeman highlighted that Hungary was the first in Europe to have complex programmes covering all the aspects of talent development at the very beginning of this time period. In many member countries there has been a notable increase in this area in the last ten years.

The study results show that talent development characteristically occurs in an integrated way in normal classes (42%), with approximately 30% of the gifted taking part in acceleration programmes, especially in the USA and 26% participating in enrichment programmes. On the grounds of her personal experience, about which she has written a book, Prof. Freeman remarked that those who took part in acceleration programmes often interpret these methods in their adulthood as a negative experiment, a loss of childhood. Freeman believes that advancing some talents is not a solution, we must think in terms of the whole school system. Teachers need to approach gifted children with a new attitude and they should then be better able to help them develop their skills. This change in attitude can be facilitated by the training of teachers.

PRESENTATIONS OF BEST LOCAL PRACTICES BY THE TALENT SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS OF THREE EU MEMBER STATES: GERMANY



CHRISTIAN FISCHER,
University of Münster

He noted that in Germany educational authorities and decision-making processes are decentralised, with the 16 federal states having diverse traditions and institutional frameworks to cater for the needs of high ability learners. However, they all seem to share a quantity-oriented approach to measuring the effectiveness of the educational system, which openly challenges the quality-driven segment of education: talent support. Fischer summarised the current situation in Germany as having two main trends: making individualised talent development plans and enrichment programmes available more widely to the coming generations and the development of special teacher training courses in order to familiarise teachers with the basic concepts and methods of talent support, enabling them to more effectively identify and support high ability students.

PRESENTATIONS OF BEST LOCAL PRACTICES BY THE TALENT SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS OF THREE EU MEMBER STATES: POLAND



WIESŁAWA LIMONT,
the Nicolaus Copernicus University,
Prof. Limont presented Poland, presented two, very different Polish examples. The Polish Children's Fund has focussed on extracurricular activities for high ability children since 1983. This network coordinates the workshops, summer camps, mentoring activities and grant schemes provided by some 50 higher education or research institutions and cultural centres throughout the country, which have involved some 11 000 young people in all areas of talent throughout the years of its existence. The second example is that of the Nicolaus Copernicus School of Torun, a special talent support grammar school linked to the Nicolaus Copernicus University, operating on the basis of a special curriculum that enables intellectually talented students to follow enriched and accelerated curricula in science as well as in the humanities. Running its own boarding school, the institution welcomes all those talented from any part of Poland. The 300 students enrolled with the Copernicus School are also offered the chance to take advantage of the close ties between the grammar school and its host university, to join laboratory-based research projects or creative art workshops.

PRESENTATIONS OF BEST LOCAL PRACTICES BY THE TALENT SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS OF THREE EU MEMBER STATES: SCOTLAND



MARGARET SUTHERLAND,
the University of Glasgow
Prof. Sutherland summarised the Scottish legal background as a set of regulations acknowledging that as other groups require support, highly able pupils may require additional support for their learning too. This Scottish approach moves away from the „deficit” model of pupils with special educational needs to a holistic, inclusive model. In this framework it is not the students who should fit into a planned system, but the educational system, which should be designed to cater for the needs of a varied student population. Speaking of the research results of her home institution, the Scottish Network for Able Pupils (SNAP) she emphasised the synergies that may derive from the mutual effects of formal school methodology and extracurricular approaches. SNAP also puts effort into advocacy: they firmly believe that the topic of catering for high ability youth should not be restricted to conferences on gifted and talented, but should be brought to wider audiences.

THE JÁNOS ARANY HUNGARIAN TALENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME



ZOLTÁN GLOWICZKI,
Deputy Minister of State for Compulsory Education

Mr. Glowiczki provided information about one of Hungary's most well known best practices, the János Arany Hungarian Talent Support Programme, which supports gifted and disadvantaged children aged 14–19 from predominantly rural areas. This programme started in 2000 with 600 students joining the scheme every year. Participants undertake a 5-year programme in one of 23 boarding-secondary schools. The programme is financed by the state and partly top-down managed by the Ministry of National Resources. One of the core aims is to prepare the students for higher education. According to the results of the programme about 80% of participants are admitted to higher education institutions.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ABOUT CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE ROLE OF BUSINESS LEADERS IN TALENT SUPPORT

Moderator: Norbert Kroó, Vice President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Invited guests: Hans van der Loo, Vice President, European Union Liaison, Shell International; Ágnes Rudas, Human Resources Director, OTP; Tamás Lovassy, President of the Sándor Demján Foundation; László Szűcs, Human Resources Director, MOL; Éva Somorjai, Chief Human Resources Officer, Hungarian Telekom; László Kerekes, General Manager AkzoNobel Coatings CES, Chairman of HEBC

Attracting and retaining talents is a great challenge to companies in the 21st century, as young people with novel values and attitudes, the so-called „Generation Y”, are about to fill middle-management positions. This is why multinationals and other large companies develop corporate talent strategies to cater for the needs of these talented young people, whose abilities are vital for the future success of these businesses. It's not only current employees, however, who are the focus of attention, as companies are understandably very much interested in recruiting the very best professionals from the coming generations. Corporate Social Responsibility programmes and other non-profit initiatives within the education sphere contribute to meeting these goals. A highly important area is the gap between the talent concept of educational institutions and that of business ventures. Closer ties between universities and business firms should be built to bridge the talent gap, in order to secure high quality professionals for the business world in the future.

Participants of the roundtable discussion on Corporate Social Responsibility



SESSION I

Social Cohesion through Talent Support

Chairs: Csilla Fuszek, Csányi Foundation, Hungary; Kata Kerényi, Zöld Kakas Líceum, Hungary; Tim Dracup, consultant, United Kingdom

The session chairs shared their practice and experience of programmes creating opportunities for underprivileged social groups, developing talents and increasing accessibility to talent support programmes in the practice of the governmental and civil sectors of Member States.

Csilla Fuszek of the Csányi Foundation focussed on the issue of poverty. This is a European problem; 16.5% of the population live below the poverty line placing more than 20 million children at risk of poverty, which obstructs their personal development and impacts their health, education and future, thereby increasing the risk of marginalisation. Hungarian educational psychologist Éva Gyarmathy's work highlights the 'Self-perpetuating circle of disadvantage': a stimulus poor environment leads to problems such as poor verbal communication skills, which can mislead people into assuming low ability and this attitude discourages the child



Csilla Fuszek, Csányi Foundation, Hungary

from achieving at school, resulting in a loss of interest in education and personal development and a long-term negative effect on their life.



Working with disadvantaged talents cannot be the sole task of schools; it requires additional programmes. These children are more vulnerable and may require other types of psychological support and management in addition to talent support. Mentoring programmes are particularly important. It is vital to note that good talent support is not an integration programme; the goal is not to turn children into 'good students' who fit well into the school system, but the development of the individual child's talent. We have to think in the long-term, gradually building development from nursery through to the labour market. Social cooperation is needed between the public education system, non-governmental sector, big capital and corporate social responsibility.

Kata Kerényi from the Zöld Kakas Líceum discussed children excluded from the state education system. The Líceum's students have been expelled from all other educational institutions and are considered „unteachable”. These children are not necessarily 'disadvantaged' in the sense of being poor, disabled, or otherwise underprivileged. At the same time, the obstacles and rejection they face today will fundamentally affect their whole lives and their future prospects. The key question is what sort of help can benefit both these children and society. What role can talent support have here?

We have to understand society's view of 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' forms of talent. We accept artistic, scientific and other 'creative' talents – but not creativity that appears in unconventional forms such as graffiti, hyperactivity and so on. We also consider those who promote the values of our society well and fit in well as valuable people. Children who don't fit the mould are considered deviant and delinquent. The irony is that 'delinquency' and 'talent' can both be seen as different – that is deviating – from the average. If we can accept that talent is a form of deviance then other forms of 'deviance' could also be treated similarly. We should give space to talent support programmes where we find 'deviance' from the norm.

Tim Dracup, independent consultant from the United Kingdom discussed the issue of the 'excellence gap', its impact on so-

cial mobility and related economic considerations. European countries are seeking a balance between 'excellence' in education (high quality for all irrespective of background) and 'equity' (reducing the gaps between those from advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds). It is vital that equity is sought by raising the disadvantaged, not depressing the advantaged. Most countries struggle to secure a gifted population representative of their national population – this is called the Excellence Gap.

The underrepresentation of different social groups may be the result of any one or a combination of factors, including confusion between achievement and ability. The underachievement of disadvantaged talents must be tackled if we hope to close the excellence gap, because whether or not ability is evenly distributed within a population, opportunity – access to good quality higher education and the best jobs – is not.

Providing gifted education for disadvantaged children can increase social mobility, unfortunately it can also produce a backlash in the established, advantaged population. Achievement gaps, however, have a significant economic cost (as shown by a recent McKinsey Study). While studies based on national benchmarking focus attention on low achievers, there is also a significant cost attributable to the excellence gap and international benchmarking studies, such as PISA, suggest that 'high equity' education systems tend to be higher performers.

So what can we do? If we are convinced of the need to support talented youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds, we should specifically target the most under-represented populations, identify the different needs of learners and design interventions that provide long-term holistic support, not short-term quick fixes, ideally from an early age. This approach should seek to: increase achievement, aspirations and self-esteem; develop social and cultural capital; provide information and support at key transition points; and engage the parent/carer, family and wider community. Such programmes have a significant cost, but bring significant economic and cultural benefits that outweigh these costs.



Erika Landau, Tel Aviv University

SESSION II

Talent, Creativity, Innovation – the relationship of the gifted young and the mobility

Chairs: Erika Landau, Tel Aviv University, Israel, Gábor Szabó, Hungarian Association for Innovation, Péter Tordai, Tempus Public Foundation, Hungary

The section surveyed the factors, which support the development of gifted youngsters' creativity. The parental and pedagogical attitudes, which accept and help the gifted were mentioned as well as the importance of the flexibility of the school system through the example of a Slovakian talent-fostering school. The challenges created by competitions such as those initiated by The Hungarian Society for Innovation aimed at young talents and the importance of the European mobility of teachers and students were also discussed.

Gábor Szabó as the President of The Hungarian Society for Innovation highlighted that a tolerant, talent friendly social and pedagogical environment is needed, which not only accepts but encourages the gifted young. Innovation is needed in order to improve the competitiveness of the European Union. The main goal of the EU 2020 Strategy is to create a creative and innovative Europe, which can only be realised by the work of innovative and creative young people able to work in a team.

Professor Erika Landau of Tel-Aviv University dedicated her speech to the topic of creativity. On the basis of her studies, which dealt with the possibilities of the development of creative thinking and lasted for several decades, she believes that talent can never be defined only as intellectual ability. This view is also supported by her personal experience.

The development of creative thinking always aims at the whole personality. In addition to the intellect, emotions and the attitude play an important part in the development of creative abilities. This holistic approach is indispensable in talent development.

Jolana Laznibatova the Director of the School for Exceptionally Gifted Children (Slovakia) and later her deputy Milan Bujnáč outlined the complex talent development programme which has been in progress in their school since 1993. This programme served as a model for talent development classes, operating in several Slovakian Schools since 2008 as part of a national programme fostering talent in the fields of art and sport. In the APROGEN programme, 3000 students selected on the basis of psychological testing, learn in special talent development classes.

In his contribution Péter Tordai, Director of the Tempus Public Foundation highlighted that the educational programmes of the European Union are especially suitable for fostering talent in the wider sense, because the project themes, which are creatively chosen and are realised in an international environment, require skills which are unique and different from the ones used in school situations. This process, supported by mentoring from teachers, will uncover new talents. On the other hand, in higher education, internationalisation strategies have to be created by educational institutions in order to exploit the opportunities to be found in European mobility and to compete against non-European regions in the competition for the most gifted students.

SESSION III

Decision makers – Science – Professional realisation



János Győri, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest

Chairs: János Győri, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest; Tapio Säävälä, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission

The session discussed the possibilities and limits of the EU and national administrations, legislation and of science in relation to the support and utilisation of talents.

Tapio Säävälä from the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission informed the participants about the 2006 Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council on the key competences for lifelong learning. This recommendation on key competences set out the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that everyone should learn. It also provides a good basis for the education of children with abilities. He spoke about the effects of the European Year of Creativity on education. He stressed the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to the development of competences and the need for integration of different learning disciplines. To meet the challenges of the present and the future we need more teaching and learning that covers not only individual areas of knowledge but skills, attitudes and motivation to pursue learning too.

János Győri Associate Professor of ELTE (Budapest) stressed the importance of mobility as one of the basic principles of the European Union. He referred to the Blue Card system created a few years ago that aims to attract the most outstanding talents to Europe similarly to the American Green Card system. He mentioned the processes of brain drain, brain circulation and brain gain, indicating that for countries similar in size and state of development to Hungary brain circulation can be an effective approach. Part-time education abroad is virtually indispensable for Hungarian students and for the country it is also very important that they return to their homeland to utilise the knowledge obtained abroad. He spoke about the international Erasmus Mundus and Marie Curie programmes that foster the international mobility of students, teachers and researchers. He also stressed the necessity of closer cooperation with industry and the economy and talked about the Patent Citation Index, a new tool to represent the practical utilisation of the results of scientific research.



Tapio Säävälä, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission

SESSION IV

Social Responsibility – European Responsibility



Roland S. Persson, Jönköping University, Sweden

Chairs: Roland S. Persson, Professor, Jönköping University, Sweden, Gábor Varjasi, Head of Competence Development & Strategic HR, Mol Group

With the three invited presenters having addressed different aspects of social and European responsibility in the light of Europe and its talents, there was a chance for questions and discussion between the panel and participating conference delegates.

A divide amongst the assembled delegates on the issues of social responsibility became quite obvious. One faction represented the tangible and very pragmatic need for advanced competence in the private sector, whereas the other faction represented the more general concerns of society in terms of meeting the individual and socio-emotional needs of the talented as framed by education. A need for considering cultural and environmental issues when focusing on societal development was also raised. Hence, social and European responsibility had different meanings to the two factions:

◆ The private sector is in dire need of ICT-competent individuals. Statistics presented suggested that 50% of Europe's growth is directly dependent on such competence. Bridget Cosgrave of Digital Europe made it very clear that without a development in this direction Europe's growth will also stagnate.

◆ The private sector also expressed the considerable need for profession-specific competence of which ICT-competence is only the foundation. Gabor Varjasi, representing the Mol Group, commented on how important it is for the private sector to already attract young talents from the age of 15, using the internet as an educational and selection tool to reach individuals particularly suitable for various functions in, for example, the Mol Group. It was also inferred that the required competence is currently not adequately provided by the current education systems in Europe.

◆ The faction representing cultural and environmental concerns responded to the private sector's expressed needs by highlighting the general shortage of funding in education systems at all levels, especially in the wake of the recent financial crisis where budget cuts as a result of austerity measures have adversely affected national education systems.

◆ The faction representing cultural and environmental concerns also addressed budget issues in a more pragmatic way by admonishing the European Union to better facilitate the bureaucracy by which funding is provided via application. This would seem to be an imperative measure in the light of European talent support in a time of economic stringency where the European Union has itself expressed a most urgent need of talent in large numbers for future sustainable welfare.

SESSION V

Research Results and Decision Making



Participants of the panel, László Balogh, University of Debrecen, Hungary

***Chairs: László Balogh, Debrecen University;
Franz J. Mönks, Radboud University,
Nijmegen, Holland***

The speakers gave an overview of the impact talent psychology and talent pedagogy research has had on policy issues and teacher training over the past decades in Hungary and Europe. They concentrated on the following five aspects:

1 Within what framework is talent development taking place; what are the main current topics; and how are they supported financially?

After World War II, no essential research was carried out in this field in Hungary until the end of the 80s. In the years before and around the regime change, talent development became the focus of attention in Hungary too. Financial support for talent research has made a big step forward in the last two decades in Hungary.

2 What kind of contact is there between the researchers and the experts working

in the field of practice? Since the end of the 1980s there has been intensive contact between the research centres and the institutions engaged in the practice of talent development. Research has mainly been boosted by the practical problems of talent development spotted by schools. Cooperation meant not only that these schools became places of experimentation where traditional forms of talent support could be explored, new development procedures tried and effectiveness measurements carried out, but also that conferences were held on a regular basis with the aim of discussing the latest research results. Since 1987 there have been 3–4 such conferences annually, organised by the various sections of the Hungarian Society for Talent Support. In addition, the Hungarian research results and their application in practice have also been presented at international conferences (1990, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2006) with the cooperation of the ECHA.

3 How do research results influence the decisions made on the regulation of education?

After the regime change educational leaders tried hard to build professional contact with the non-governmental organisations participating in talent development. The first organisation of this kind, the Hungarian Society for Talent Support was set up in 1989 and the Ministry of Education consulted it in every important issue. In 2006, The National Talent Support Council (an umbrella organisation) was set up by Prof. Peter Csermely and now plays the main role in these consultations. The government's education department has consulted more than 10 non-governmental organisations on talent support in the bill for a new public education law. We appreciate that there is a separate chapter in the bill dedicated to talent support in schools, and the details also

guarantee a considerable advance in this field.

4 To what extent do „higher” educational aspects and research results play a role in decision-making?

As the laws and regulations referred to in the previous part prove, thinking about talent support underwent a change on the political front following the regime change. The development of the practice of talent support was supported by every single parliamentary party. However, no such consensus emerged in the implementation of the laws and regulations among the decision-makers of education policy. This can be explained by two determining factors. One was the educational ideology of the governing party(ies). According to this there were different preferences in the practical pedagogical work. There was a time when the practical development of talent support was among the preferred areas; the best example of this being the János Arany Talent Support Program launched in 2000, which has involved several thousand students in the secondary school age group and has proved extremely successful, especially among the socio-culturally underprivileged. However, during other governmental periods when integration was one-sidedly dominant in education policy, practical support for talent development declined. Naturally, no-one questions the importance of integration in school practice, but the development of talent support in our schools was slowed down by this one-sided emphasis on theory.

The other factor considerably influencing the practical implementation of talent support legislation was the prevailing budgetary law. However, budgets to finance school talent programmes were often planned tight.

5 What is the role of teacher training in the implementation of new policies?

In the past two decades a great number of favourable decisions have been made on developing talent support nationwide, which have relied heavily on Hungarian and international research results. Teacher training and further training play a decisive role in spread-

ing the new research as well as methodological results. The first gifted education course was launched Kossuth University, Debrecen (today the University of Debrecen) in 1997. This training programme was based on Nijmegen University's programme adapted to Hungarian circumstances, and applicants completing the programme are also awarded the ECHA Degree. In Hungary several other universities and colleges have training courses similar to Debrecen's. Moreover, a new advance was made in further training in Hungary in 2010, when the Hungarian Genius Program set its aim to make further training available for a great number of talent development experts. Currently there are more than 10,000 experts who have already completed some of the training programmes, and the number is expected to rise by the end of 2011.

To the question „is it possible to ensure that research results in the field of talent development and the good practices built (in part) on them can really be incorporated into the decision-making process regarding both content and methodological procedures and, if yes, which pedagogical research results they should be built on?”, the answer is positive in the light of the situation in Hungary. However, the situation of talent support nationwide is not optimal due to the disunity among decision-makers, which we have witnessed so far. There is still a lot to do to make decision-makers take research results and good practices into consideration more systematically than before. It is certain that the new Public and Higher Education Bill offers great opportunities in this respect.

Participants of the panel, Franz J. Mönks, Radboud University, Holland



SESSION VI

The role of networking in the practice of talent support



Chairs: Mónika Réti, Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development; Doris Jorde, University of Oslo, Norway

The main aim of the session was to emphasize the need for networking in gifted education and talent support – and also to raise awareness of the different expectations of stakeholder groups. Networking can provide means to link these different approaches and connect a diversity of groups. Virtual environments supporting such networks can contribute to a clearer, more accessible and equity-balanced system.

Following introductory remarks on the various approaches to talent development by Mónika Réti, Prof. Doris Jorde presented a case on European networking in science education, which may serve as an exemplar of joint action, where all partners learn from the diversity of the European educational systems. Finally, three exemplary networks were presented: Máté Oláh introduced the Network of Youth Excellence (emphasising how it contributes to the long-term support of outstanding young researchers), Katalin

Sulyok gave a talk on the Hungarian talent development network (with special regard to how it supports diversity), and Edit Lippai pointed out the need for systems that view and support teachers as the main actors in talent development through the example of the Hungarian Research Teachers' Association.

The discourse of the session focused on the following leading questions:

- How can equity be addressed through talent support networks (with reference to recommendations of the EU Platform against poverty and social exclusion)?
- How can talent care networks contribute to the maintenance of motivation and the continuity of careers (considering the aims of the Innovation Union)?
- How can we balance promoting mobility with attracting young talents to Europe (referring to Youth on the Move)?
- In what way is science education different in talent support (with a special focus on the European Agenda of Employment Strategies)?
- Can our society value school education

Participants of the panel



(with attention to research results on shadow education)?

- What are the hot spots in talent support with respect to daily work as well as the national/European perspectives? How can networking improve these?

The visions of gifted education and talent support are different throughout Europe. Some groups challenge certain approaches and claim the need for equity balancing or on the contrary, for focussing more on excellence. But the diversity of definitions and terms as well as the diversity of actors in the talent support scene also reveals a great opportunity to enhance the European educational system in general. Europe's strength is in education – therefore Europe needs talented and able people and cannot afford to lose gifts. Linking already existing talent support groups and systems can mean an outstanding opportunity to treasure this diversity – through which gifted students and experts can find a way for meaningful collaboration, giving all a chance to develop. MST careers enjoy a priority on European agendas, but also face serious challenges. Sharing experiences is crucial for the future of all such initiatives. It is also vital to empower teachers and to keep talented teachers in the talent development system. Networking can be a way to cope with the challenges Europe faces and can contribute to attracting young talents to fields where their competencies are needed. The participants agreed that there is a need for joint European efforts supported by a European network for talent development and welcomed the Budapest declaration.

Artworks by talented youth were on display to accompany the conference programme



The conference participants were invited to listen to performances by young talents



Renáta Konyicska (age 20) playing Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6.



Abigél Králik (age 12)



Gergely Devich and Bence Temesvári (age 12)



Folk tunes from Kalotaszeg performed by students of the Liszt Music Academy

FIRST EUROPEAN TALENTDAY: April 9th 2011, Budapest

Honorary Guest, Professor François Gagné, University of Québec in Montréal, Canada

The two-day conference, focussing on the theoretical aspects and the policy implications of talent support issues at a European level, accepted the Budapest Declaration on Talent Support published in this booklet. The Budapest conference was then followed by more colourful and festive events to mark the First European TalentDay. TalentDays are occasion that place young talents, their mentors and talent support institutions centre stage in any community. This time the event was conceived to symbolically represent the whole European talent support community with a dozen satellite events held on or around this day throughout Europe.



Levels of effectiveness within Europe's DMOs

Levels	Labels	Prevalence	ROI	S.D.
1	Extremely	1 / 100,000	165	+4.3
4	Exceptionally	1 / 10,000	155	+3.7
3	Highly	1 / 1,000	140	+3.0
2	Moderately	1 / 100	130	+2.3
1	Mildly	1 / 10	110	+1.0



Well-known Hungarians – among them: Béla Bartók. A display of leading figures of Hungarian science and culture was first shown at the European Parliament in Brussels

The First European TalentDay commenced with an opening address by Hungary's Minister of State for Education, Ms. Rózsa Hoffmann, who had advocated the idea of creating a European TalentDay in her speech to the EU Commission's Committee meeting in Brussels earlier this year. The keynote speech of the event was given by the TalentDay's Honourary Guest, Professor François Gagné, University of Québec in Montréal, Canada: „The D. M. G. T.: a clear answer to fuzzy concepts about talent development.”

Talent development is the progressive transformation of gifts (outstanding aptitudes) into talents (outstanding achievements). Most people do not show the talent to be in the top 10%, they are merely competent, but the expressions used to refer to talented people, such as „he/she excels in...” or „is eminent in...”, show that there are levels of talent, just as there are of giftedness. In arts and sports judges can assess levels of achievement or we can use data such as

speed, ranking, number of wins, etc. In academia, teachers can use customised exams, homework, projects or state exams to identify talent.



Roya Klingner, The Bavarian Centre for Gifted and Talented, Germany

Mapping the talent development process enabled him to reach a definition that is appropriate to all fields: a process that is the systematic pursuit by talented students, over a significant period of time, of a structured programme of enriched activities, leading to a specific excellence goal. His 'Seven characteristics of excellent talent development programmes' shows that bright students are currently not being challenged and do not have access to real academic talent development, because current programmes do not meet all these requirements: enriched (K-12) curriculum; long-term excellence goal, selective access, long-term continuous investment, full-time grouping, performance-based assessment, and personalised pacing.

Within the DMGT model there are two important catalyst groups, environmental



Zsuzsanna Demarcsek, Vásárhelyi TalentPoint, Hungary

and interpersonal, which will intervene and impact the development process either positively or negatively. The interpersonal group is in the foreground, because people (i.e. teachers, parents, or the students themselves), always control which of the environ-

Guests arriving at the venue of the First European TalentDay: Hungarian Culture Foundation



Teaching the Csárdás: Sándor Molnár Folk Ensemble





Attila Gajda, Bolyai TalentPoint, Serbia

mental catalysts will be focussed on during a student’s development. (It should be noted, that the DMGT borrows from the theoretical work of two German theorists that differentiates ‘pre- and post goal attainment’.) Looking at the environmental catalyst components, you can see that Hungary’s 20-year Talent Programme fits into ‘Milieu,’ while people’s decision to participate belongs to ‘Individuals,’ and ‘Provisions’ includes any services fostered to further this development, such as the Genius Network Programme or the Friends of Talent Club.



Marikki Lappi, Päivölä School, Finland

The various factors combine to create the whole DMGT model mark 2.0. It would be imprudent to simplify the talent development process, because talent behaviour results from a complex interplay of influences between and within all components. Professor Gagné interpreted the invitation to speak



Aleksandra Kowalik, Polish Ministry of Education



Karola Krassói, Messzehangzó TalentPoint, Hungary



Máté Urbán, photographer

at the conference as a sign that the DMGT has a role to play in participants' work in Europe. It is a useful framework to help define talent and promote better communication between professionals and educators.

After Prof. Gagné's speech, the stage was offered to representatives of some eight talent support institutions from various parts of Europe as well as the host country, Hungary, to share their best practice initiatives with the audience. Presentations included:

- The Vásárhelyi TalentPoint of Nyíregyháza, Hungary (Zsuzsanna Demarcsek)
- The 3-year talent support programme of the Polish Ministry of Education (Aleksandra Kowalik)
- The Bolyai TalentPoint and Bolyai Grammar School in Vojvodina, Serbia (Attila Gajda)
- The „Messzehangzó” TalentPoint, Hungary (Karola Krassói)
- The Mathematics Programme of the Päivölä School, Finland (Merikki Lappi)
- The Bavarian Centre for Gifted and Talented Children, Germany (Roya Klingner)
- The Hungarian Research Teachers' Association (Mónika Réti)
- The Shell Eco-Marathon Race (Hans van der Loo, Mihály Bagány)

TalentDay participants were asked to promote any best practice initiatives of their home countries: 24 participating states distributed leaflets, booklets, CDs and DVDs covering a wide variety of European programmes at the so called „Talent Fair” – a marketplace of ideas and initiatives to share among participants.

The Talent Fair





BEST PRACTICES FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION: PRESENTATION OF A BOOK PUBLISHED ON THE OCCASION OF THE CONFERENCE

János Győri,
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest

This book of essays, summarising the best international practices in talent development, was published on the occasion of the conference and was introduced by its editor, János Győri, at the plenary session on the second day of the conference. The research, which was carried out as part of the Hungarian Genius Programme, spread over nine countries of the European Union and the world. It popularises nearly 50 good practices which were collected with the help of nearly 100 researchers. The most important finding of the international investigation is that in accordance with the words of Prof. Freeman, there is not a single best practice, which should be followed by all the countries in the EU. All over Europe there are many excellent, successful programmes, which deal with the exceptionally talented young. These programmes are worth knowing and it is advisable to learn from the experience of others, but to borrow whole programmes is only useful in terms of local adaptations. The international research confirmed that talent development must be present at a high level in the formal educational system in every country, meanwhile it also highlighted that formal education cannot satisfy every need. In other words, in well-functioning educational systems the talent support possibilities offered by the non-governmental sector are always present as well. Complementing and fortifying each other, the two sectors can undertake talent support work, which can spread over every area. It is an internationally common phenomenon that talent-fostering initiatives work in isolation, which is why it is an important goal to develop cooperation and integration between institutions and to shape healthy competition, which promotes quality.

