

Presidential Report to the ECHA General Assembly 2019 (Including the Vice President's report)

Dear ECHA Members!

This report covers the year from our 2018 General Assembly in last August in Dublin Ireland. ECHA was continuing its more than three decades of traditions to serve its members. Let me highlight a few points of this work from the past year.

- The 17th International ECHA Conference will be in Porto (Portugal) on 9-12 September 2020. The 2nd Thematic ECHA Conference on “Closing the achievement gaps in gifted education” in Budapest (Hungary) on 25-27 March 2021. The 18th International ECHA Conference will be in The Hague, Netherlands between 31st August and 3rd September 2022. With these, the flow of ECHA Conferences enjoys a healthy continuity allowing our annual General Assemblies to take place at one of ECHA Conferences.
- We have a healthy, stable number of paying members of ECHA having more than three hundred members now. Please remember that the General Committee introduced a new understanding of the duration of ECHA membership by dividing the year to four quarters. In this way it is not an economic disadvantage to become an ECHA member e.g. in October, since this membership is not expiring in the end of the year (as in the former system) but in September 30th next year. The growing interest towards the European Talent Support Network helps us to increase our membership (both personal and corporate).
- From January 2019 the General Committee of ECHA appointed the Secretary of ECHA, Colm O'Reilly to become the Treasurer of ECHA. Article 11(1) of ECHA make it explicitly possible that the posts of the Secretary and Treasurer may be held by one person. In agreement with Article 11(2) of ECHA at the same time the General Committee appointed the Vice-President of ECHA, Albert Ziegler as the third member of the ECHA Executive Committee besides the President and the Secretary-Treasurer. Colm succeeded Tessa Kieboom in the post of the Treasurer. We would like to thank Tessa for her devoted work as the Treasurer of ECHA in the last decade! ECHA opened a new bank at the Bank of Ireland and 46500 EUR from the former account has been transferred to the new account (641,35 EUR). We thank Colm accepting the role of the Treasurer of ECHA.
- We started to prepare an Ethical Code of ECHA whose draft text approved by the General Committee will be distributed to all ECHA members asking their suggestions and will be discussed by the 2020 General Assembly of ECHA. An Ethical Committee of ECHA will be suggested to be elected by the General Assembly and will be asked to prepare a guideline for an anti-harassment policy for ECHA Conferences.
- It is my pleasure to report, that the ECHA Education Board has completed the qualification of two Austrian (lower Austria and Styria), a German and a Dutch training program. Further applications are to be considered. The qualification process is detailed at the ECHA website (<https://echa.info/echa-training>), the list of the qualified programs will also be uploaded soon. The Board has now a specific bank account of ECHA (at the Bank of Ireland) which allows the direct collection of the qualification fees of ECHA Trainings. Please note that after 2019 no trainings are able to issue an “ECHA Diploma”, which have not been qualified before. Interested members may contact Lianne Hoogeveen for more information at training@echa.info.
- Our scientific journal, High Ability Studies has an increased impact factor (1.13) circulation number and downloads. Great thanks to all contributors and to the Editor-in-chief, Albert Ziegler!

- We continued the distribution of the spring and autumn issues of ECHA News as a pdf file directly to our members. Many thanks for Annette Heinbokel for her continuous efforts to fill ECHA News with high-quality content! Please help her more in this!
- Thanks to the efforts of Victor Müller-Oppliger, most ECHA National Correspondents have been re-elected, and members were able to read the reports of more than half of them in the last few issues of ECHA News. We will continue this series, and will re-vitalize this key asset of ECHA in other ways, too. From now on we will organize annual meetings of the National Correspondents at each International, or Thematic ECHA Conference.
- The Facebook-Group of ECHA (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ECHAGroup/>) increased its membership 2000 to 3600 and has actively changing and high quality content. Many thanks for those who contribute to the site regularly. Please join our Facebook site (if you have not done so), and follow their example to share your findings, ideas and questions with this growing community.
- Last but not least, following the decision of the 2014 General Assembly to help and guide the formation and the establishment of the European Talent Support Network, I am happy to report that presently the Network has cc. 400 cooperating nodes in more than forty countries in Europe and all around the world. The Qualification Committee of ECHA qualified two new Talent Centres (in Varasdin, Croatia and Mawhiba Centre in Saudi Arabia) in 2018 thus the number of Talent Centres raised to 25. The Network is served by its Council led by Albert Ziegler and by its coordinator and secretary, Csilla Fuszek. In 2019 the European Talent Support Network has become an independent NGO registered in the Netherlands. Congratulations to Albert Ziegler, Csilla Fuszek and thanks for the help of Lianne Hoogeveen in this process! ECHA and the Network are formulating a Memorandum of Understanding about their continuous cooperation in their operation regarding talent support. The Network has now frequent newsletters (TalentWeb), and organizes international cooperation in talent support in various ways. The Network has its Youth Platform which also re-elected its Council currently led by Veronika Deketova. By the great help of ECHA Conference organizers the Youth Platform organized 3 successful European Youth Summits at ECHA Conferences between 2016 and 2019 and had a summit in Budapest as well, the members of the Platform started a number of joint projects.

These were some of the important highlights of ECHA's work in the past year. However, the most important part, the personal contacts, mutual enrichment, the exchange of best practices and the joy of cooperation can not be really described in a report. Many thanks all of you for your contribution and growing the traditional ECHA spirit!

Prof. Peter Csermely
president of ECHA