

ECHA NEWS

EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR HIGH ABILITY

SPECIAL ISSUE

The successful start of the European Talent Support Network

PETER CSERMELY, HUNGARY

Dear ECHA Member,

The 2014 General Assembly of ECHA accepted ECHA's guidance and help to establish a European Talent Support Network. Enrichment, openness and mutual cooperation are the major hallmarks of this Network. European Talent Centres serve as the hubs of the European Talent Support Network. Centres act as coordinators of talent support-related activities building a contact structure going beyond their own country.

The Accreditation Committee elected in our 2014 General Assembly (led by Lianne Hoogeveen, having Csilla Fuszekas secretary, and Margaret Sutherland, Christian Fischer and Colm O'Reilly as members) did a great job to formulate the accreditation call, application form and scoring criteria of European Talent Centres. Congratulations to their perseverance and high quality, tedious work! To our great pleasure we received 29 European Talent Centre applications from 19 countries. In the first round of applications 14 applications from 13 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Turkey) passed the very strict, 70% threshold of the scores, and became the first European Talent Centres. You will find the description of their work in the following pages. The accreditation certificates of the Centres will be presented at the European Parliament at the end of September. The Centres will consider various means to receive financial support from the EU. EU Parliament members, as well as the



Peter Csermely, president of ECHA

education and research sections of the European Commission are helping us in this process.

The European Talent Centres will invite all organisations contributing to talent support in Europe to become European Talent Points by the end of this year. Please consider your application! The call will be announced on the ECHA website (www.echa.info) and also in ECHA's Facebook group (www.facebook.com/groups/ECHAGroup). There will be a second round of applications to become a European Talent Centre in 2016. This whole process (as we already witness it now) will strengthen ECHA in its education programme, in the efforts to give more to ECHA members and in the increase of its membership.

I very much hope that the European Talent Centres and (later) the European Talent Points will bring a new dimension and excitement to the pan-European cooperation in supporting young talented people. Exchange and adaptation of best

practices, spread and application of scientific results, possibilities of mutual visits of young talents, their teachers, mentors, parents and all the experts devoting their life to talent support will all be expanded in the coming years. I expect many more joint projects and team-work crossing the borders of European countries and enriching us with the cultural traditions and diversity in Europe. I wish the new European Talent Centres and all of us a successful, informal, personal, reciprocal, transparent, consistent, rational and communicative networking full of sharing and giving!

Prof. Peter Csermely, president of ECHA

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www.echa.info

EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – AUSTRIA (ÖZBF)

Name of organisation:

German: **Österreichisches Zentrum**

für Begabtenförderung und

Begabungsforschung (ÖZBF)

English: **Austrian Research and Support**

Centre for the Gifted and Talented

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Current activities:

a. Developing educational strategies and concepts at a national and regional level:

- Member of the inter-ministerial steering committee "Task Force Gifted Education and Excellence"
- White paper "Promoting Talent and Excellence" (2013; German version "Weißbuch Begabungs- und Exzellenzförderung", 2011)
- Quality initiatives for school development, i.e. prototypical development plans for major school quality initiatives on the national level (SQA and QIBB)

b. Supporting school quality development:

- "Seal of quality for vocational schools" for initiatives in gifted education and the promotion of excellence (first awarded in 2012)
- School development: "Handbook for school development through the promotion of the gifted and talented" (in press), "School development through the promotion of the gifted and talented. Milestones and goals" (2012), "School development through promotion of the gifted and talented. Impulses for a stimulating learning culture" (2005)

c. Curriculum development and professionalization of teachers and educators:

- Membership in advisory boards for training courses and degree programmes
- Advisor to various higher education institutions on gifted education modules in teacher training curricula
- Seminars and course modules on gifted education in in-service teacher training programmes
- Individual seminars, e.g. "mBET"-courses, seminars for teachers in elementary education; for educators and school principals, for lecturers in higher education etc.
- Curriculum development for gifted education and the promotion of excellence (iPEGE publication series "Professional Promotion of the Gifted and Talented", 2009-2014; "Basic modules for the promotion of the gifted and talented", 2013)

d. Research in the field of applied gifted education and pilot projects, e.g.:

- Guidelines for school development through gifted education
- Diagnostic tool "mBET" (multidimensional talent support tool)
- Best practices in gifted education and talent support in tertiary education

e. Conferences, networks and co-operations in gifted education and the promotion of excellence:

- ÖZBF-Congress (every 3 years, appr. 500-600 attendees)
- National coordination of gifted education through close collaboration of federal ministries, ÖZBF and provincial coordinating agencies
- iPEGE (International Panel of Experts in Gifted Education, managed by the ÖZBF): regular scientific meetings, iPEGE publications for the professionalisation of educators, research symposia
- Active engagement and/or membership in international networks:
 - World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (country delegate)
 - ECHA corporate member

- Network of Central and Eastern European countries on Gifted Education (CEE-Forum)
- IRATDE membership and participation in ICTDE-conferences

f. Information and raising awareness:

- Journal "news&science. Begabtenförderung und Begabungsforschung" (published twice per year with a circulation of 5000 copies, available free of charge in print or via download)
- Poster "Paths in Gifted Education": information on gifted education measures, adapted to school and preschool settings, in print and online (incl. downloads and materials)
- Extensive website, social media presence and email newsletters

As a European Talent Centre the ÖZBF can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network

The ÖZBF was founded over 15 years ago and has since grown into a significant think tank for gifted education and talent support in Austria and beyond. Being a national centre and directly supported by two national ministries, the ÖZBF is the only institution of its kind in Europe, linking educational policy as well as scientific research with teaching practice and the unique needs for the support of the gifted and talented. As a European Talent Centre, we can enrich the network with their strategic expertise, our practice-oriented research experience, our close-knit national and international network and our longstanding reputation for innovation in the field of gifted education.



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – AUSTRIA (Institute TIBI)

Name of organisation:

German: **Thomasianum, Institut für Begabungsentwicklung und Innovation (TIBI)**

English: **Institute TIBI – Thomasianum, Department for Gifted Education and Innovation at the Christian University College of Teacher Education Wien/ Krems**

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Current activities:

- Support of gifted programmes and projects at schools.
- Offer of various teacher training seminars and courses focusing on gifted education (e.g. master programmes and ECHA-courses).
- Offer of counselling for students, parents and teachers concerning giftedness, specific questions of gifted education and the needs of gifted children. Our offers include: diagnosis of talents/gifts, analysis of potentials, coaching and mentoring, academic career counselling, counselling with regard to specific questions of gifted education.
- Organisation of conferences: ECHA Austria Conference 2010, TIBI-Symposium 2013, ECHA-Conference 2016.
- Work on various national and international (research) projects.

The Institute TIBI provides a variety of offers for students, parents and teachers. The team initiate and support concepts, ideas and projects which are dedicated to the development of the many gifts and potentials of young people. The

main objective is to make every child's education a personal success in order to pave the way into an autonomous and responsible life.

In all of our programmes pedagogy and anthropological issues interact. TIBI integrates value discourse as a relevant aspect in an ethically responsible education of the gifted. Due to national and international cooperation with researchers and practitioners TIBI can combine scientific expertise and practical knowledge.

As a European Talent Centre Institute TIBI can offer the following to a European Talent Support Network:

- exchanging knowledge and experience in science, research and practice
- national and international networking
- exchange programmes
- variety of national and transnational (research) projects
- office and rooms for meetings in the centre of Vienna
- highly motivated and skilled staff members



IMPRINT

Editor ECHA News
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Publisher
ECHA News is published by the European Council for High Ability

Layout
Dicks Werbeagentur
49080 Osnabrueck · Germany
info@dicks-werbeagentur.de

ECHA members also receive:
HIGH ABILITY STUDIES
The Journal of the European Council for High Ability
Editor-in-Chief Prof. Dr. Heidrun Stoeger

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EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – BELGIUM

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Current activities:

Exentra has been active since 1998 in the field of gifted children, youngsters and adults. Based on a thorough practical experience with approximately 6000 people, primarily in a curative setting, we now focus on a more preventive approach with a specific goal to reach out to the gifted persons and help them from the earliest possible moment in developing their skills.

Basically this means from toddler to the adult stage of life. During the first years our main goal was to create awareness in a broad social context around the existence of "gifted" people in Flanders. We were in direct contact with schools, educational partners, doctors, psychologists and college professors. During this period we established a broad practical experience over three years with approximately one hundred and fifty (150) personal consultations. Over the years Exentra conducted over 3000 psychological and/or IQ tests for children, youngsters and adults. Professor Kieboom delivered over 1200 lectures during the past 18 years to a variety of audiences, including scientific and medical staff, but also to school staff and management and of course to parents and this is ongoing. After a couple of years Professor Kieboom felt the urge to write a book about this topic to reach out to a larger audience.

This led to the first book "Highly gifted" ("Hoogbegaafd"), providing a more accurate image of the field. Some 15.000 books were sold and a revised version is due to come out by the summer of 2015. A French version was released in 2012.

The second book came a few years later and was called "The highly gifted survival guide" (Hoogbegaafdheid survival gids) and was printed in 8000 copies. The aim of this second book was to inform parents and teachers how a "highly" gifted child feels in a classroom. It was clear that this subject had not been tackled in the past and a good understanding of these children was required, this time with a scientific point of view to support this approach.

The latest book was called "You can do better - underperforming" (Jij kan beter – onderpresteren) and was published in 2011; a reviewed version is due to come out in the summer of 2016. The creation of this book is based on practical and direct contact over a 10-year period with more than 1500 individuals. In the meantime Exentra developed training programmes for parents, schools and external education counsellors. More than 250 lectures were held for parents. More than 750 parents were individually coached. Since 2014 we provide 6 distinctive parental coaching tracks for primary and secondary education levels.

We gave approximately 800 lectures and over the past 10 years accompanied 500 schools individually. Since 2012 Exentra has developed an educational programme for schools, turning these into "Exentra Schools"; this is a 4-year track for kindergarten and primary school differentiation for the strongest pupils as well as school wide enrichment models (aka "Kangaroo classes").

Currently we have 60 schools enrolled in this programme.

Exentra gave over 80 lectures to school psychologists and external educational counsellors (Centrum voor Leerlingen Begeleiding - CLB) over a period of 10 years. We continue to provide all of the above lectures and training programmes. In addition to these we have developed specific tracks to accommodate the various groups of heterogeneous types of (highly) gifted children and adolescents; such as

- "Dolphins" typically developed for toddlers and kindergarten pupils (8 sessions of 2 hours/track)
- "Mind-set" for children between 6 and 12 years old (6 sessions of 2;5 hours/track)
- "Fear to fail" for children between 9-12 years old (6 sessions of 2;5 hours/track)
- "Think-Further-Planet" for children between 6 and 12 years old (9 sessions of 2;5 hours/track)

As a European Talent Centre Exentra can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

Advice through well-documented case studies to colleagues of other institutions in European countries (possible in 3 languages NL; FR; EN). We offer an international training and knowledge exchange programme to selected official partners in their country around the topic of giftedness.

We would like to organise once every 2 years a conference in Belgium to exchange information and experiences on the topic of giftedness at home, in an educational environment and in the business context. Speakers of the various partners would be invited to explain their benefits. In cooperation with colleagues in the scientific field as well as practitioners we would like to exchange information during these conferences and examples of best practices from all our European partners.



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – CZECH REPUBLIC

Name of organisation:

Czech: **Talentcentrum Národního institutu pro další vzdělávání**
 English: **Talent Centre of the National Institute for Further Education**

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Current activities:

Talentcentrum developed, runs and coordinates a national-scale project called Talent for talented children and youth aged 13 – 19. It offers on-line courses, meetings for talented youth and children, student research activities and other things. It started in 2003 and is supported by the Czech Ministry of Education.

In Talent there are over 200 students registered yearly. The courses cover some of the natural sciences and technology topics, other activities are designed to increase the learning capacity and potential of the students as well as to harmonise a student's personality. Talent cooperates with psychological advisory centres and Talent's students can use psychological testing and consultation.

Talentcentrum organises the national component of the following contests:

- Programming Contest
- High school Scientific Activities
- Pythagoriáda
- Contests on Literature and Art
- the Czech Language Olympiad
- the History Olympiad
- the Literary Contest 'Our World'
- Daniel – a contest on literature, history and photography
- Foreign language contests in English, German, Spanish, French, Russian and Latin

Furthermore Talentcentrum organises the participation of Czech national teams at international contests.

Other activities of the Talentcentrum are directed at building a talent support network within the Czech Republic. As the first of them SIPON – Talent Support Network – was established in 2014 in the PERUN project. At present it has 20 members in eight regions of the Czech Republic. The main activities of the network are: sharing information and sources; improvement of quality and increase of capacity; development of common projects. The main aim is to support initiatives and organisations which develop and organise any type of talent identification and talent support systematically and purposefully.

In 2014 Talentcentrum took part in composing a new Conception for the Support of Talent Development and Care for the Gifted 2014 - 2020; which was approved by the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic and is a basic document of the Czech government regarding talent support. Besides Talentcentrum was appointed as a manager for the building and coordination of regional talent support networks, which will be established in every region of the Czech Republic. This is being processed at present by regional departments of the National Institute for Further Education.

As a European Talent Centre the Talentcentrum Národního institutu pro další vzdělávání can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

- visits to schools, talent support centres and organizations in the Czech Republic
- results of research on the topic of talent support in the Czech Republic
- organisation of international meetings and conferences
- sharing good practice examples of talent support activities
- partnership in international projects



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – GERMANY

Name of organisation:

German: **Internationales Centrum für Begabungsforschung (ICBF) der Universitäten Münster, Osnabrück und Nijmegen**

English: **International Centre for the Study of Giftedness (ICBF) of the Universities of Muenster, Osnabrueck and Nijmegen**

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Current activities:

The expertise of the ICBF is focussed on three major areas of activities with different projects in the field of talent support:

1. Talent research is conducted on the developmental conditions of special talents and the implementation and evaluation of diagnostic tools; counselling approaches and support frameworks for gifted children, adolescents and adults.

2. Gifted education comprises the diagnosis and the promotion of talent; learning skills and personal development of gifted children, adolescents and adults. In addition it deals with counselling for parents, educators and teachers in a curricular and an extra-curricular context (e.g. 'Learning Strategy Courses', 'Challenge and Support Projects', 'Math for Little Aces')

3. Teacher training & further education is the design and implementation of an interdisciplinary and international education as well as training curricula, symposia, conferences and publication series for research on talent and gifted education (e.g. ECHA Diploma: 'Specialist in Gifted Education', ECHA Certificate: 'Specialist in Pre-School Gifted Education', ECHA Coach 'Specialist in Coaching the Gifted')

As a European Talent Centre the ICBF can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

The ICBF – supported by the ICBF-Foundation – provides expertise and experience in the domains of Gifted Education, Talent Research, Teacher Training & Further Education. The combination of these fields has been successfully realized during the last fourteen years. Over 7.500 pupils from 200 schools have participated in the talent support programmes and over 2.300 students of teacher training accompanied the projects of the ICBF. Regarding the domain of further education, 1.020 participants from ten countries passed the long-term qualifications like the ECHA-Diploma or other ECHA certificates given by the ICBF and its partners.

The establishment of the "Münstersche Bildungskongresse" (Education conferences in Muenster) in the years 2003; 2006; 2009 and 2012 has been very successful with over 3.000 participants and speakers from 43 countries and all five continents. The 4th "Münsterscher Bildungskongress" in combination with the 13th International ECHA Conference in 2012, "Giftedness across the Lifespan", was awarded the Muenster's Conference Prize. The next conference will be organised by the ICBF in September 2015 as a further important step towards a European Talent Support Network.

There are a lot of national and international partners who will help networking in the field of talent support, such as the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the National Centre for Gifted Education 'Bildung und Begabung' and different foundations (e.g. Association for the Promotion of Science and Humanities in Germany; Robert Bosch Foundation; Joachim Herz Foundation; Bertelsmann Foundation; Karg Foundation; German Telekom Foundation; Dr. Hans Riegel Foundation; Foundation for Education to Promote the Gifted) and companies (e.g. Volkswagen AG; Finanz Informatik) who enabled the ICBF to realise its different activities in talent research, gifted education, teacher training and further education.



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – HUNGARY

Name of organisation:

Hungarian: **Budapesti Európai**

Tehetségközpont

English: **European Talent Centre**

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Current activities:

European Talent Centre – Budapest was formed as the joint organisation of two sub-organisations (NTP and EUTC) of the Association of Hungarian Talent Support Organisations (Hungarian abbreviation: MATEHETSZ). NTP was formed in 2011 and EUTC in 2012; but the range of activities of both go back to 2009.

Activities (development, supporting, organizing):

- Development of teacher training course programmes of 10-30 hours relating to talent theories or specific talent areas and publication of talent-development-related study volumes
- Preparation/publication of volumes of international best practices compiled for talent support professionals.
- Maintenance/development of talent databases including the talent map of the Carpathian Basin
- Accreditation and operation monitoring of talent points in Hungary and in the ethnic Hungarian areas of the Carpathian Basin (in Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia and Serbia)

- Organisation and support of national and international conferences; workshops; roundtable discussions; talent days since 2011

Future plans

The Centre will keep operating its customer service, expert and accreditation boards. It will provide assistance to students/parents in diverse fields (talent identification; referral to talent programmes) and provide information and quality professional assistance to the representatives of organisations. It intends to organise excursions and visits to talent points / best practice sites in Hungary for foreign talent points / centres to foster joint projects and cooperation. It will keep expanding the talent library and the talent workshop publishing the most recent studies and displaying books and working pages on the website. ETC intends to have further accredited teacher training courses dedicated to theoretical and practical fields of talent support. The centre plans to maintain the Hungarian (Carpathian Basin) and international talent map prepared over the years and expand its activities by organising and supporting international research projects. The Centre is willing to organise national and international conferences, workshops, roundtables, talent days and cooperation with other European and non-European centres in the future, too. The European Talent Centre in Budapest would be glad to provide an on-line forum for the presentation of European programmes and they can offer their networks for the purpose of online information dissemination concerning talent nurturing.



As a European Talent Centre the Budapesti Európai Tehetségközpont can offer to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

Hungary accumulated abundant experience in the past period (from 2007 to the present day) while establishing the national talent support network. Besides the successes, they were faced on several occasions with basic networking and operational difficulties. Similar problems may occur in other countries as well or at the level of the European talent network, so it may be a good idea to take the Hungarian experience into consideration, as it may promote progress and planning.

*Hungary has a long tradition of curricular and extra-curricular talent support programmes, and, besides, several talent nurturing programmes and best practices have emerged recently, in particular in connection with the talent development of underprivileged students. They support the presentation and exchange of best practices, and are in a position to contribute to a significant extent to the European-level launch of the same process by organising **workshops and conferences, hosting interested persons, setting up research groups** and presenting our best practice or the operation of the talent points for that matter. They would gladly take part in the organisation of common practical further training for teachers active in talent development or the sharing of their experiences. They would be glad to provide an on-line forum for the presentation of European programmes.*

Their European talent centre has already induced lots of contacts: the applicants, experts interested in talent support etc. have been brought together partly directly (workshops etc.) and partly indirectly, through the Talent Support Activity Map that has been expanding steadily since 2013. They could offer the map, too, to the network under construction. They can offer their networks for the purpose of online information dissemination concerning talent nurturing.

EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – IRELAND

Name of organisation:

Centre for Talented Youth - CTY

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Current activities:

CTY Ireland was established at Dublin City University in 1992 as a not for profit organisation designed to work with high ability children from Ireland and overseas. CTY Ireland ran its first talent search to identify high ability children in early 1993 and its first summer programme in Dublin City University in the same year. In the first year of the programme some 179 students attended the summer programme. Since then over 50 000 students have attended courses run by CTY Ireland. In 2014 some 5 000 students attended over 250 academic courses run by CTY Ireland.

CTY initially started at Dublin City University but since then it has established regional centres at University College Cork, University of Limerick, NUI Galway, Athlone Institute of Technology, Carlow Institute of Technology, Tralee Institute of Technology, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and Sligo Institute of Technology. Each Saturday these regional centres as well

as Dublin City University hold classes for academically talented students run by CTY Ireland and last term 1,000 students participated in weekend classes. Each year CTY Ireland runs a summer programme for academically talented students aged 6 to 16 from Ireland and overseas. In the summer of 2015 some 2,500 students attended over 125 different academic courses.

In 2005 CTY Ireland established the Centre for Academic Achievement (CAA) at Dublin City University. The CAA programme provides opportunities for high ability students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This programme identifies primary school students from local schools that have designated disadvantaged (DEIS) status and offers them Wednesday afternoon classes at Dublin City University. This programme has been hugely successful and to date over 2 000 students have participated. The CAA programme has won numerous awards including the Google Rise award, The Irish Times Living Dublin award, The DCU president's award for Civic Engagement and The Irish Government award for Public Service. In 2014 CTY Ireland launched an early University Entrance programme at Dublin City University for high ability second level students. 200 students participated in the first year of this programme.

Recently CTY Ireland has been actively involved in research and has just published a commissioned study on Irish Educator's beliefs towards gifted students. They have also recently published a joint research book with the centre for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary entitled Gifted Education in Ireland and the United States: examples of best practices for parents and teachers.

As a European Talent Centre CTY can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

CTY Ireland believes that they have a lot to offer to a European talent support network. They have a high level of expertise in the area of gifted education with a proven track record of involvement in programmes for gifted students. They have a highly trained staff with specific qualifications and knowledge of this area. Three of the staff have doctorates in gifted education and they have two full time doctoral students in gifted education. Every year their programme has become slightly bigger and at the moment they are one of the largest community based outreach programmes in Ireland. CTY Ireland is based at a university with access to the best resources and facilities and have the full backing of the university in this regard. They believe they can offer excellent learning opportunities for gifted students and training facilities for teachers of gifted students. They believe collaboration with other European talent centres will be of benefit to everyone to raise awareness of this important area to a wider group of people. They are committed to research in this area and feel this is an integral part of any movement like this one. They are excited about this project and believe they could offer an important voice at any table for discussion in the future and they could learn from their European counterparts.



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – ITALY

Name of organisation:

Italian: **Associazione italiana per lo sviluppo del talento e della plusdotazione (AISTAP)**

English: **Italian Association for Gifted and Talented Students**

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Current activities:

Since 2011 the association has been organising a summer camp for gifted students aged 6 to 18 years. Their activities were based on STEM topics, with some moments dedicated to art-therapy and creativity.

In 2014 its summer camp was in Genoa and it also cooperated with the University of Genoa (Faculty of Engineering) with activities related to a sustainable world (Blue Economy concept). Students were also involved in activities such as producing a video, music technology, molecular biology (in collaboration with the Edgerton Center of MIT; Boston).

In 2015 the summer camps were in Genoa, Milan and Verona. For the older ones (14-18) it has just signed an agreement with the Italian Institute of Technology (Milan and Genoa) and students will spend two weeks in activities related to nanotechnology, robotics and producing hydrogen. At the University of Verona (where in 2015 they opened a centre for the study of giftedness) its students will be engaged in activities related to Thinking and Reasoning.

Since 2013 it has had an open cooperation with the Aloysius College (The Netherlands) for the exchange of students.

Since 2011 it has had monthly activities in Genoa, Milan, Pavia, Rome and from next year in Verona and in the Marche region for gifted students and parent support, covering different fields of interest: maths, critical thinking, electronics and computing, philosophy, journalism, logical thinking, augmented reality, science, creativity, etc.

It offers many teacher education courses in different regions of Italy.

It has an open collaboration with the Edgerton Center of MIT (Boston; USA) for promoting their MIT DNA Learning centre kit and during the past two years has had some 20 meetings in different parts of Italy during an activity named Talentiingiochi (Talent-in-game) where students that are interested for example in molecular biology, journalism, critical thinking or in mathematical games can spend one Saturday with our experts on their preferred topic. This activity is hosted in schools. In 2013 it had a conference in Genoa during the Science Festival and for the first time in Europe it presented, together with Prof. Kathleen Vandiveer (the inventor of MIT DNA Learning centre kit), their product to the general public.

It has an on-site and on-line tutoring system and is on the way to start a platform for e-mentoring.

It has just signed an agreement with the Italian Institute of Technology and during the year has some of its highly gifted / high-school students spending some weeks inside their laboratories.

It organises many conferences during the year in different parts of Italy and in 2013 had an international conference in Milan.

During the previous years its research group has participated in national and international conferences, presenting the results of its activities with particular

attention to general activities for gifted students, twice-exceptional students, underachievement and early-school-leavers.

It has also organised conferences on talent and sports during some sport events.

As a European Talent Centre AISTAP can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

As a European Talent Centre the association can offer a wide European network of contacts, including schools and other associations as well as universities. In Italy, it has already got six potential talent points (Genoa, Pavia, Milan, Rome, Verona and Bari) and is on the way to open collaboration with Florence and perhaps other cities. What is more, its students live all around Italy and so have many contacts with schools located in the majority of the Italian regions. It has also got expertise in organising activities, the exchange of students, educational training and parent support, using also e-tutoring and in the near future e-mentoring. It has a group of people (psychologists, psychiatrists, press agents, educators, parents, etc.) that is now growing and who are becoming more expert in gifted education. For that reason, it can also offer the possibility to organise events in different parts of Italy. It is now also a research centre, opened in cooperation with the University of Verona, where it will concentrate more on research activities.



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – LITHUANIA

Name of organisation:

Lithuanian: **Nacionaline moksleiviu akademija**

English: **National Student Academy**

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Current activities:

The National Student Academy (NSA) is a unique and successful organisation still being improved by Lithuanian people in education, science, business and art. It is unique because NSA is an organisation that unites these people of different activities for a common purpose, teaming professionals from different subject areas, the best students aiming to become professionals in certain fields.

It has been successful for ten years because of the concentrated support of leading and publicly responsible Lithuanian people, who helped financially and provided human resources investing in the future of Lithuania – gifted and talented children. The investment gave the following results:

- 2005 – 2007. „Academic Progress of Children and Youth – National Student Academy“, a project financed by the EU and the Lithuanian government was completed. Outcome: educational materials for six school subjects, more than 800 gifted children from all the counties of Lithuania participated, 216 teachers were trained.

- 2005. One of the founders of NSA, Associate Professor Bronė Narkevičienė, chaired the working group formed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania to develop the strategy for the education of gifted children and youth. The strategy was approved 29th December, 2005. Nr. ISAK-2667
- 2007. The first International Scientific Conference in the Baltic States „Gifted Children: Challenges and Possibilities“ was organised by NSA in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania, Kaunas University of Technology and the Mstislav Rostropovich Support and Charity Foundation „Support for the Children of Lithuania“. Venue: Kaunas, materials published in the book „Gifted Education: Sharing Experiences“ and in a scientific magazine.
- 2008. NSA was recognised as the best national project in education and science and was nominated for innovation by the Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania.
- 2008. NSA launched the first National Talent Search Programme, run every September ever since.
- 2008. Close collaboration with the Deutsche Schüler Akademie (Germany) started.
- 2009. Second International Scientific Conference „Gifted Children: Challenges and Possibilities“ held in Riga, Latvia, scientific magazine published.
- 2011 – 2013. „Enhancing the Efficiency of Gifted Education“, a project financed by the EU and the Lithuanian government was completed. Outcome: 9 publicly available educational materials at www.gvu.lt, 100 teachers were trained.
- 2011. NSA was given a prize for innovation in the competition „Discover e-volunteering“ that was held for the first time in Europe, Poland <http://www.fundacja.orange.pl/evolunteering.html>
- Currently, the Academy includes 9 sections for different subjects: bio-chemistry, chemistry, economics, computer science, history, physics and astronomy, Lithuanian philology, mathematics and music. The Academy now has 350 students (7th – 12th forms) from all around Lithuania, who are

taught by 21 educators from Lithuanian and British (Cambridge) universities and schools.

- Every year students of the Academy win medals in international competitions and are among the best in competitions and contests in Lithuania.

A special achievement of NSA is that its highly-rated alumni studying at world famous universities (Cambridge, Oxford etc.) keep cooperating with NSA and help other gifted children develop and improve, thus not only continuing to advocate relations with Lithuania but also strengthening the intellectual potential of the country

As a European Talent Centre the Nacionaline moksleiviu akademija can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

- *international scientific and practical conferences;*
- *seminars; workshops for teachers and parents; for gifted children;*
- *research;*
- *educational and creative projects;*
- *publications;*
- *training and e-training for students and teachers;*
- *summer camps;*
- *contests;*
- *student and teacher exchange;*
- *help for the countries with less experience in gifted education;*
- *publicly shared insights and experiences.*



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – THE NETHERLANDS

Name of organisation:

Dutch: **Centrum voor Begaafdheidsonderzoek (CBO)**
 English: **Talent Centre for the Netherlands (TCN)**

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European Talent Centre data

The Talent Centre for the Netherlands (TCN) is a collaboration between the Centrum voor Begaafdheidsonderzoek (CBO) and the Stichting Leerplanontwikkeling (SLO).
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 Website CBO: <http://www.ru.nl/its/cbo>
 Website SLO: <http://www.talentstimuleren.nl>

Current activities:

The CBO combines scientific research, education (for parents, teachers, and professionals) and practice (including psychodiagnostics, counselling, and organising talent development programmes) to promote evidence-based best practices for parenting and educating intellectually gifted individuals.

The core activities of CBO

1. Client care (i.e., diagnostics, counselling, and guidance)
2. Training teachers, parents, and professionals
3. Organising accelerated out-of-school programmes (Vooruitwerklab, Radboud Challenges)
4. Developing teaching materials and teaching methods
5. Scientific research.

More details about these activities can be found on the CBO website: www.ru.nl/its/cbo

The National Information Centre for Education and Talent Development (part of SLO) gathers information on good policy and practice in the area of giftedness and talent development, and shares this information with those involved in gifted and talented education, such as experts in the field of talent development and giftedness, researchers, educational advisors, tutors, teachers, foundations, interest groups, parents and individual learners.

The core activities of SLO

1. Facilitating an interactive digital platform www.talentstimuleren.nl for professionals involved in gifted and talented education (such as experts in the field of giftedness, researchers, educational advisors, tutors, teachers, foundations, interest groups, parents and individual learners), and for those interested in the field of talent development and gifted education.
2. (Regional) talent networks with online working groups (professional learning communities)
3. Organising conferences on gifted education, and regular expert meetings and exchange meetings regarding specific themes related to talent development and education
4. Advising the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science on gifted and talented education.
5. Expertise, activity and success in developing/coordinating/organising talent support activities of a region or a country in Europe.

More details about these activities can be found on the SLO website: www.talentstimuleren.nl

Future plans

In the future, the Talent Centre for the Netherlands will continue all the activities listed above. In addition, the TCN will collaborate with other European Talent Centres to exchange knowledge and know-how about best practices in gifted and talented education.

Representatives, scholars, practitioners, experts, and talented young people from other European countries are invited to participate in our activities. They are welcome to visit, learn, and give feedback on the Dutch best practices.

As a European Talent Centre the TCN can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

- Expertise and know-how in training teachers and professionals in the field of educating gifted and talented children (CBO & SLO)
- Examples of good practice in the Netherlands (SLO)
- Contributions in scientific research (CBO)
- Exchange of researchers, representatives, teachers, graduate students, and trainees (CBO).
- The SLO interactive platform (www.talentstimuleren.nl) might be an inspirational example for sharing information and collaboration between professionals (SLO)
- Exchange of gifted pupils for summer and weekend programmes (CBO)
- Coordinating the application process for financial resources from the EU (CBO)



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – SLOVAKIA

Name of organisation:

LEAF

is a fantasy name which does not stand for anything.

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Current activities:

LEAF was set up in 2012 to build a 'portfolio of initiatives' aimed at supporting the development of talented young individuals across their different life-stages; from 15 to 35 years of age. The areas covered include world-class education for high-school students; "brain gain" activities aimed at aiding the return of talented young Slovaks; and development of talented young professionals at companies.

LEAF's activities for high school students include:

- Scholarships that allow talented young students to participate in international educational activities such as online and summer programmes of the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University; a summer programme at the International School of Asia; Karuizawa or the Global Scholars' Programme at the African Leadership Academy.
- LEAF Summer Leadership Camp and LEAF Summer English Camp for talented high school students; bringing together Central European students and students from partner schools in Europe, Asia and Africa.

- A mentoring programme "TalentGuide" connecting talented high school students with successful university students and young professionals, aimed at discovering their passions and coaching the students in their future goals and current activities.
- A "Science Camp" week long residential seminar aimed at winners of regional or national middle school science Olympiads and similar competitions
- In September 2016; LEAF also intends to open LEAF Academy; an international co-educational boarding high school focused on entrepreneurial leadership, character development, and humanities leveraging on opportunities in Central Europe.

In the area of "brain gain" LEAF organises a volunteer give-back programme, helps to offer internships, work experience programmes, and work opportunities in Slovakia to talented young Slovaks who study at higher education institutions abroad. LEAF also organises annual Christmas gatherings of Slovaks working or studying abroad.

For talented young professionals; LEAF runs an expert volunteering programme that seeks to provide development opportunities to talented young professionals by participating in volunteer expert work in partner NGOs.

LEAF also runs a small teacher mentoring programme.

Because LEAF was established relatively recently, most of the above activities have been running only for 2-3 years. Data collection efforts therefore currently focus primarily on programme assessment by participants, and they observe universally high participant satisfaction rates and some anecdotal evidence of student success in their higher education applications and performance.

As a European Talent Centre LEAF can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

In the immediate future LEAF intends to focus its activities and resources on the LEAF Academy project and our current programme portfolio.

LEAF would be happy to act as a contact point between the network and our partners in Slovakia. We also believe some of our programmes might be of interest to talented youth participating in activities of European Talent Points.

In the longer term, we believe LEAF's youth programmes and the LEAF Academy will provide a great opportunity for joint research into impact measurement for activities aimed at identifying and working with talented youth.

We are very interested in finding research partners with whom to share and compare our results and approaches.



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – SLOVENIA

Name of organisation:

Slovenian: **Center za raziskovanje in spodbujanje nadarjenosti na Pedagoški fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani (CRSN)**
 English: **The Centre for Research and Promotion of Giftedness at the Faculty of the Education University of Ljubljana (CRSN)**

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Current activities:

From its establishment, CRSN has participated in different work domains following its main aims. The main contributions of CRSN involve:

- A chapter on gifted education in the White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia was published in 2011. CRSN is still very actively involved in developing a national educational policy on gifted education.
- A national survey on the context of gifted education in primary and secondary schools in Slovenia was conducted in 2011-2012.
- From 2012 CRSN has organised annual meetings for psychologists and school counsellors on different topics, i.e. the role of psychology in gifted education, psychological support to teachers in gifted education, the identification of giftedness in children and youth.

- CRSN is active in translating foreign teaching and learning materials and publishing their own resources for supporting teachers and other educational professionals in gifted education. CRSN members integrate the topic of giftedness and creativity into the lectures of pre-service and in-service teacher education (core and elective subjects).

- In September 2014 CRSN members collaborated in the organisation of the 14th ECHA conference in Ljubljana with 250 participants from all over the world; the conference was co-led by one of the CRSN members.

Plans for the future

CRSN future plans relate to the following activity areas, namely, CRSN is willing to:

- provide high quality information on theoretical and practical issues of gifted education and talent support to potential European Talent Centres and potential European Talent Points; participate in discussions with other European Talent Centres and help to design the formulation of proposals and joint actions at a European level;
- plan and coordinate joint actions and other support of highly able young people (i.e. regional, national, international events, Talent Days, etc.);
- develop training programmes for teachers and parents of gifted children and to coordinate potential research projects in this area;

As a European Talent Centre CRSN can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

CRSN has the ability to activate a number of highly motivated and educated professionals and researchers for international cooperation in gifted education.

CRSN is active in publishing research monographs, journal articles, teaching materials and other resources necessary for the provision of the gifted, and thus contributing to the common expertise on gifted education.

As CRSN members are employed at the largest faculty of Education in Slovenia, they are able to disseminate the ideas of the European Talent Centre among pre-service and in-service teachers as well as other stakeholders involved in gifted education.

CRSN member have been involved in a number of national commissions and bodies, e.g. the National Commission preparing the National Strategy for Gifted Education, the National Council on Education, the National Committee for the National Assessment of Knowledge and the National Commission for the Contest in the Slovene Language, etc.

CRSN members are very experienced in organising national and international events on different educational issues.



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – SWITZERLAND

Name of organisation:

German: **Paedagogische Hochschule der Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz**
 English: **Swiss Centre for Gifted Education and Talent Development¹ University of Education and Teacher Training, Northwestern Switzerland**

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<http://www.fhnw.ch/personen/victor-mueller>

Current activities:

Studies

359 students in Gifted Education in advanced teacher studies (152 Certificates of Advanced Studies, 172 Master Diploma of Advanced Studies, 35 Master of Arts in Gifted Education) since 2003.

Cooperation

- Cooperation with the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, USA and the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development, CT/USA since 2003.
- International master programme in cooperation with universities of education in the USA, Austria, Germany.

- Co-initiator at the establishment of IPEGE (International Panel of Experts in Gifted Education) in cooperation with the ÖZBF (Austria) in 2007. The panel associates programme leaders and experts of Austrian, German and Swiss universities in gifted education and talent development. Their goal is to develop recommendations and documentations for basic studies and further education for teachers in gifted education.

School improvement and Research

- Numerous school improvements in different schools from divers regions of Switzerland. Studies in differentiated and personalized learning architectures for potential based learning and talent development. Studies on the relation of high achievement and self concepts and mentoring.
- Publication of several talent development related volumes for students, teachers and educational authorities; expert reports for universities, schools and educational boards.
- Collaboration with the Swiss school award for Gifted and Talented (LISSA) and member of the jury (since 2004). Member of the board of the Swiss Network for Gifted Education of the Swiss Conference of Ministers of Education, and longtime collaboration partner of the annual «Symposium Begabung».

Conferences

Organising university of the Swiss Conference for Gifted Education and Talent Development (2014, 2017) within the German speaking conference panel (ÖZBF, Salzburg; IZBF, Muenster; SZBF Switzerland).

As a European Talent Centre the Swiss Centre for Gifted Education and Talent Development can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

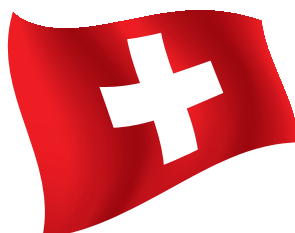
The organisation is a member of ECHA and delegate for Switzerland of the WCGTC and will continue its efforts to promote international cooperation, knowledge sharing and expert discourses as well as the ongoing actualization and contextualization of gifted education and talent development. The institution has already taken part in European talent support research programmes and is ready to continue these activities in the international context.

The institution can bring in profound experiences and expertise, such as:

- talent identification, gifted education and talent development (in schools and beyond)
- competencies in school development and study programmes for teachers and further education
- experiences in international cooperations with universities and schools, international shared study programmes and international policies
- curricula knowledge of study programmes for gifted education and talent development
- our international network (from IPEGE to NRCGT)
- information and contacts to Swiss gifted education and ongoing transfer to all Swiss stakeholders in gifted education.

The Swiss Talent Centre is ready to serve in every function where there is a need in the forming and sustainability process of the European Talent Support Network.

¹The Swiss Centre for Gifted Education and Talent Development is located at the University of Education and Teacher Training, Northwestern Switzerland



EUROPEAN TALENT CENTRE – TURKEY

Name of organisation:

Turkish: **ÜYEP MERKEZİ (Anadolu Üniversitesi Üstün Yetenekliler Eğitimi Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi)**
 English: **EPTS Centre (Centre for Research and Practice on Gifted Education at Anadolu University)**

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European Talent Centre data

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Current activities:

Since the start of the EPTS Centre in early 2007, it has had activities in five areas: 1) programme development, 2) teacher training, 3) teaching, 4) identification, 5) parent support

Programme Development: For the last eight years, the EPTS team has developed after-school programmes for gifted students at the middle school level, such as advanced mathematics, sciences and character education.

Teacher training: As a component of EPTS, we systematically train teachers. The entire training takes three graduate-level courses: a) conceptions of giftedness, b) curriculum development and differentiation, and c) teaching models, techniques and strategies. Embedded

in the graduate level-courses, teacher training includes: a) observing, learning and application of the EPTS skills and teaching techniques used in the EPTS lessons (e.g. Creative Reversal Act and Selective Problem Solving); b) developing and piloting lesson plans using the EPTS skills and teaching techniques; and c) developing comprehensive unit plans by integrating the EPTS skills and the national curriculum standards at a particular grade level.

Teaching: EPTS offers after-school programmes at the weekends and in summers for gifted students from 5th to 8th grade. In the last eight years, they have taught over 200 gifted students from 28 different cities in Turkey. They also organise an Olympiad for gifted students every year.

Parent support: They regularly offer seminars for parents of gifted students about raising and educating gifted students and characteristics of gifted students. They also counsel parents of gifted children about their children's social-emotional and academic development.

Identification: As a centre for gifted children and youth, they use intelligence, creativity and aptitude tests to identify gifted students who have high general ability or domain-specific abilities. They administer intelligence tests to about 5 to 6 children each week who are referred to them as having high potential. They carry out both individual identification on a daily base and group identifications each year. More than 400 students apply for their group identification each year.

As a European Talent Centre ÜYEP MERKEZİ can offer the following to the forming of a European Talent Support Network:

First of all, they can share their experience in teaching and identifying gifted students. As a team, they have worked on developing curriculum programmes for the gifted for the last eight years and they developed over 10 course programmes for the gifted. They can provide training in developing education programmes for teachers of the gifted who are connected with the European Talent Support Network. They can also translate some of these programmes into English and share them with the members of the Network.

Secondly, they can host gifted students and their teachers at their centre and the university, and offer them international summer programmes.

Thirdly, they can support the Network in carrying out research with gifted students in their programmes.

Lastly, they can work on assessment instruments to identify gifted students and measure creativity and disseminate outputs within the European boundaries.

