

ECHA NEWS

EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR HIGH ABILITY

AUTUMN 2015

President's Report



Dear ECHA Members,

First and foremost, it is good news that the preparation of our 15th ECHA Conference in Vienna between 2 and 5 March 2016 (<http://www.echa2016.info>) proceeds well. Due to the large interest, the organizers extended the deadline of abstract submission until October 31st.

It is my great pleasure to inform you that according to the decision of the 2014 ECHA General Assembly the **European Talent Support Network** started to work on the 29th September. In the morning the Commissioner of Education, Tibor Navracsics, the Director General of Research, Robert-Jan Smits, the Director responsible for Erasmus+ actions, Adam Tyson and Kinga Gal (HU), Sean Kelly (IRL) and Igor Soltes (SL), members of the European Parliament, greeted the first 14 European Talent Centres at the European

Parliament. The Centres received their certificates from Lianne Hoogeveen. In the afternoon the representatives of the first 14 European Talent Centres elected Lianne Hoogeveen as an interim representative of the European Talent Support Network and Csilla Fuszek as an interim coordinator of the Network. These functions will last until 31st December 2016. Before this date but after the inclusion of the second round of European Talent Centres to the Network during 2016, further discussions will be held to decide the exact form of representation and coordination of the Network followed by formal elections.

ECHA and the European Talent Support Network have different and complementary roles in helping gifted education and talent support in Europe. ECHA is bridging theory and practice, and has mostly individual members, while the Network is for the cooperation of organizations related to

gifted education and talent support. It is a very delicate, gradually changing process, how ECHA and the Network are related to each other and working together. ECHA (as it was defined in the 2014 ECHA General Assembly decision) is supporting, regulating and guiding the formation of the European Talent Support Network. However, ECHA is not directing the Network. ECHA will maintain a strong cooperation and strategic partnership with the Network both in the short and in the long run.

European Talent Centre representatives thanked the ECHA Accreditation Committee for their highly committed, excellent work. European Talent Centres will apply for

>>> page 2

joint Erasmus+ and Creative Europe grants coordinated by Colm O'Reilly's and Csilla Fuszek's Centres, respectively, and agreed to have regular Skype consultations. European Talent Centres will each nominate a talented young person to make regular Skype sessions to give suggestions to the formation and work of the European Talent Support Network. Interested European Talent Centres will nominate an expert to form an ad hoc group, making a feasibility study of the introduction of a European Talent Portal sometimes in 2017, provided a) the study will justify such a Portal; b) there will be funds to start its operation.

European Talent Centre representatives agreed to issue a call of application to be a European Talent Point with a deadline of January 31st. The call for applications will be published on the ECHA website (www.echa.info), but will also be available on the web-sites of European Talent Centres in their mother tongue. Please write to the Network coordinator, Csilla Fuszek accreditation@echa.info, if you have any questions or suggestions.

What are the benefits of networking and cooperation between European Talent Centres and European Talent Points, as well as between the Talent Points? Such cooperation will lead to the

- exchange of best practices;
- increase of the visibility of our issues leading to a better chance to change gifted education policies;
- increase of the stability and robustness of everyday work (due to the increased exchangeability of colleagues in case of maternity/paternity-leave, sickness, personal problems, etc.);
- increase of community-feeling giving emotional and structural help for those participating in the network;
- increase of the effectiveness of using material resources in a region;
- increase of cooperation between talented young people enhancing their creative productivity (e.g. by using peer-pressure to become more excellent);
- extension of the number of gifted/ talented people receiving recognition and support;
- extension of the number of people (teachers, mentors, parents, experts, scientists or business people) involved in talent support;
- creation of better and/or more effective chances to obtain local, corporate social responsibility, national and EU funding;
- establishment of internationally supported / grounded standards of talent management and talent support programmes in a region, country or (finally) in Europe.

All these changes are serving the primary aims of ECHA as declared in our Articles: "to promote research, development and education in the field of high ability". Moreover, all these activities will enhance the bridging role of ECHA between theory and practice, as well as it will increase ECHA membership. (The number of ECHA members increased gradually in the last 3 years, the number of members of ECHA's Facebook group -- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ECHAGroup/> -- doubled in the last year alone.)

I wish for all of our members to extend possibilities in reaching new depths in the quality of their work, as well as in reaching new dimensions and horizons via talent support-related cooperation across Europe.

Peter Csermely, President of ECHA

Contact: csermelynet@gmail.com

CONTENT AUTUMN 2015

■ President's Report	1
■ Editorial	3
■ ECHA Conference in Austria	4
■ The First International Conference in My Life	6
■ Promotion of Gifted Pupils in Bavarian Schools	7
■ Talent Care and Talent Support in Hungary	8
■ Summer camp AISTAP 2015 in collaboration with IIT	10
■ Inspiring Pupils to Achieve	11
■ Diane Montgomery: Author of the Month	12

Editorial

ANNETTE HEINBOKEL, GERMANY

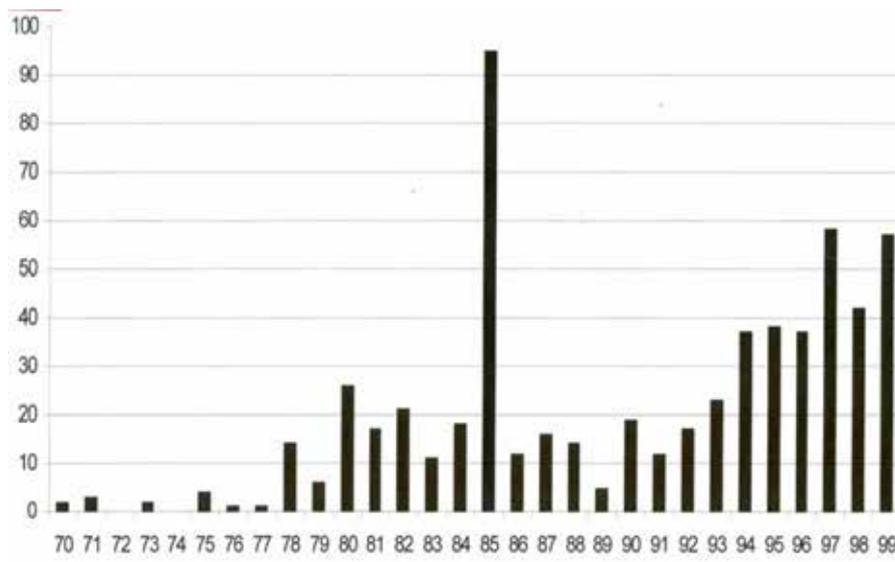
This year the 21st World Conference of Gifted and Talented Children took place in Odense, Denmark. This reminded me of the 6th World Conference in Hamburg, Germany, which took place exactly 30 years ago.

The conference was extremely influential for the development of gifted education in West and finally in the whole of Germany. This can be seen by the echo it had in the media. The graph shows the number of articles only in a couple of selected print media, but the echo was the same in all the media.

Before the conference there had been one modern previous study (Schmidt 1977); in the early eighties it had resulted in the founding of the first special class for gifted children at a private boarding school.

The theme of the conference, the needs of gifted children, was picked up by politicians, representatives of the different teachers unions and students and it was hotly discussed as a political issue, whether Germany needed an elite or whether élitism was a negative concept. During the conference, students demonstrated in front of the conference centre against its theme: Giftedness: A continuing Worldwide Challenge. The result of the conference for individual families and their gifted children could be positive as well as negative.

In the opening plenary session Dorothee Wilms, Federal Minister of Education and Science, who had financed part of the conference, was followed by Joist Grolle, Minister of Education for the State of Hamburg (SPD – Socialist Party). In his speech he warned of 'drill and the delusion of achievement' and compared interest in and caring for gifted children to the élitist and in the end destructive attitude of the Nazis.- According to my memory the speech was not simultaneously translated into English, those who understood German were quite flabbergasted.



Number of articles in selected print media on the theme of the conference (Heinbokel 2001)

Another extremely aggressive text was published by the teachers' union 'Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft' (GEW) and was probably effective among its members.

Basically it can be said that persons with conservative or liberal attitudes were in favour of gifted education – which did not mean, though, that this attitude would quickly turn into action – and persons with socialist / leftist attitudes were absolutely against any extra provisions for gifted children. So if gifted children were taught by teachers with a conservative / liberal attitude they could get support, if the teachers had socialist tendencies they might feel the need to prove to the parents that their child was not as bright as they claimed. Quite apart from the teachers, there were also the parents of the other children and their attitudes, which influenced their children's behaviour towards their classmates. Besides giftedness was not a subject for teachers at university, nor of in-service training, therefore there was a complete lack of knowledge on the part of teachers, who should be educational experts.

Since the 1985 World Conference there has been a wealth of studies, initiatives and reforms. All the German states, east and west, now explicitly mention gifted children in their decrees, but all of them do so individually, so the options for a gifted child can change when a family moves across an inner-state border.

The latest development: In June 2015, that is exactly 30 years after the World Conference, the 'Kultusministerkonferenz' (the body of all the 16 ministers responsible for education) published a paper called "Förderstrategie für leistungsstarke Schülerinnen und Schüler" (Strategy to Promote High Achieving Pupils). The word gifted is not used, but the strategies are clearly meant for very bright and gifted pupils. The paper contains in a nutshell what has been known about the needs of gifted children for decades: Diagnosis, enrichment, acceleration, grouping, inclusive teaching, teacher training, evaluation, ... It will be very interesting to see what ends up on the ground, in the classrooms, not just on glossy papers.

Annette Heinbokel, editor

Contact: annette.heinbokel@swbmail.de

REFERENCES

Heinbokel, Annette (2001). *Hochbegabung im Spiegel der Printmedien seit 1950 – Vom Werdegang eines Bewußtseinswandels*. Gutachten im Auftrag des BMB+F www.bmbf.de/pub/hochbegabung_im_spiegel_der_printmedien_seit_1950.pdf

Schmidt, Martin H. (1977). *Verhaltensstörungen bei Kindern mit sehr hoher Intelligenz*, Verlag Hans Huber, Stuttgart



- Additional time slot for international exchanges
- Topics of universal interest in gifted education
- Special travel and accommodation arrangements
- Highlights of Austrian culture, art and history
 - One conference day is combined with a cruise on the Danube
 - Child care facilities

- Gifted education as a contribution to personal, social and cultural development
- Value-based gifted education
- Minority issues, SES and equal opportunities in gifted education
- Giftedness and socio-cultural context
- Talents and ethnic diversity
- Gifted education and mother tongue
- Key competences – Social skills – Personal responsibility
- Trends in research and theory of giftedness

15th INTERNATIONAL ECHA
CONFERENCE

Talents in Motion

Encouraging the Gifted in the context of
Migration and Intercultural Exchange

2 March 2016, 06.00 p.m. –
5 March 2016, 01.00 p.m.

Hall of Sciences
VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Talents in
Motion

TIBI
Thomasianum
Institut für
Begabungsentwicklung
und Innovation

KPH
WIEN/KREMS

SPEAKERS

- Abdullah M. Aljughaiman, *Riad*
Camilla Benbow, *Nashville*
George Betts, *Greeley, Colorado*
Gudrun Biffi, *Krems*
Ursula Boos-Nünning, *Duisburg-Essen*
Heinz Faßmann, *Vienna*
Roland Grabner, *Graz*
Georg Kapsch, *Wien*
Monika Kil, *Krems*
Evelyn Kroesbergen, *Utrecht*
Michael Landau, *Wien*
Béatrice Mabilon-Bonfils, *Paris*
Aljoscha Neubauer, *Graz*
Ari Rath, *Jerusalem*
Claudia Resch, *Salzburg*
Clemens Sedmak, *Salzburg/London*
Margrit Stamm, *Bern*
Heidrun Stöger, *Regensburg*
Rena Subotnik, *Washington*
Thomas Trautmann, *Hamburg*
Haci-Halil Uslucan, *Duisburg-Essen*
Gabriele Weigand, *Karlsruhe*

Opening speech:
Robert STERNBERG
Ithaca/New York

Registration and Information
www.echa2016.info



21st World Conference on Gifted and Talented Children Odense, Denmark

The First International Conference in My Life

VERONIKA SOBANOVA,
THE CZECH REPUBLIC

I became a teacher in 2009, and since 2010 I have worked with talented and gifted pupils in The Ctyrlstek Primary School and Kindergarten. Our school is private and quite small. We have about 130 pupils from 6 to 15. I am very thankful that I can work here. The school offers an inclusive area, integration, and classes are not overcrowded – we have about 15 pupils in one class. That is really wonderful for teachers, pupils and especially for their education. We cooperate with Eva Vondrakova, chair of the Association for Talented and Giftedness (StaN) and Josef Molnar Csc., the Head of the Department of Mathematics Education, the Faculty of Science of the Palacky University in Olomouc. Both of them are very helpful for our teachers.

This summer I got the opportunity to visit the 21st World Conference in Odense, Denmark and I was really excited and full of expectations. I travelled there with Eva Vondrakova who is really good at her work with talented and gifted pupils in our country. We arrived in Odense two days before the conference, so we were able to attend the Parent Day as well, organized by Tina Refning (Denmark). It was a really great experience for our future parent days. I met a lot of inspirational speakers, there were e.g.:

Shirley Kokot (South Africa), who started a private school for gifted children in South Africa. Her speech was about brain, neurons, synapses and the next part was about good motivation.

Julia L. Roberts (USA), her theme was "Advocacy and Education Strategy".

The McClusky family (Canada); Ken McClusky is Vice President of the WCGTC. He and his wife Andrea have a gifted daughter Amber, who already has her own family. Their topic was "Is it ADHD or Just Energy?" They also spoke about their family life with the gifted Amber.

Dorothy Sisk (USA) was present at the first world conference in London in 1975 and has been involved with the WCGTC ever since.

Ole Kyed (Denmark), his theme was "What does It Mean to Be Gifted in the Danish Culture".

The conference was amazing, there were lots of people from different countries. Because I am a teacher, I was interested in practical things, so I chose that kind of presentations. Most of them were very helpful, I could compare education systems, teachers' methods, the number of pupils in the class – sometimes I was shocked, I couldn't imagine a class with 60 pupils, but in some corners of the world they exist. A bow to their teachers.

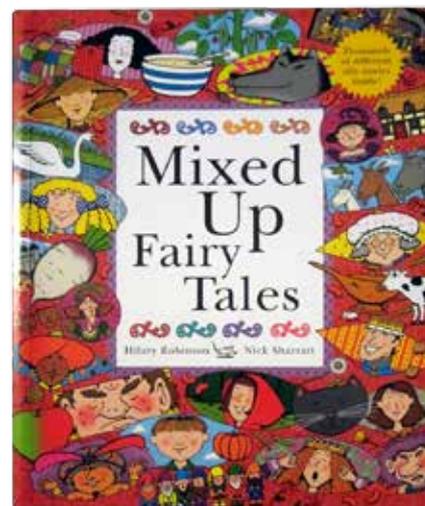
My favourite speaker was Margaret Sutherland from Scotland, maybe because she is a teacher, too. She has 33 years of teaching experience in schools and

higher education. She had a workshop about Gifted and Talented in Early Years, it was about practical activities for children aged 3 to 6. Storytelling was one of her recommendations. The next day during the conference she had a presentation called "A Collaborative Approach to Building the Bridges between Research and Practise", she was one of the keynote speakers.

I can recommend visiting conferences like this to every teacher! Every single day I heard a lot of interesting and important things. I met great people – teachers, headmasters, psychologists, scientists.

Thank you - my headmistress Vera Olsakova - for this opportunity and experience.

*Veronika Sobanova is a biology teacher.
Contact: veronika.sobanova@zscyrlstek.cz*



Promotion¹ of Gifted Pupils in Bavarian Schools

MARISSA-JULIA JAKOB, GERMANY

Germany has a federal system of governing the country. That means that the school systems in the 16 German states can differ considerably. In the following text the Bavarian school system and its provision for its gifted pupils is described.

In the summer of 2014, the "Regionalverein München/Bayern", a branch of the German Association for the Gifted Child (Deutsche Gesellschaft für das hochbegabte Kind / DGhK) presented a list of five suggestions on the promotion of gifted children in Bavarian schools to the Bavarian Ministry of Education. Fortunately, the proposals were widely put into action: For example, in the coming two years the eight Bavarian grammar schools with special classes for gifted pupils are going to be transformed into centres of excellence for the promotion of gifted pupils. Based on the widespread skills in the promotion of the gifted these schools have already gained, they are going to support other schools in this area and initiate new regional impulses. Thereby, principals and staff receive local professional support for development. Furthermore subject-specific concepts and materials on the promotion of the gifted are available for the latest "LehrplanPlus".

The selective school system² in Bavaria favours individual promotion, meeting the needs of gifted pupils in relatively homogeneous groups of standards of achievement. In addition, there is a widespread set of special arrangements for the development of gifted pupils, including acceleration and enrichment.

1. Acceleration arrangements possible at all types of schools

In all types of schools skipping a grade can be permitted to especially bright pupils. Moreover, by providing extracurricular lessons and voluntary project groups the schools enable pupils to immerse themselves in additional fields of knowledge beyond the age-appropriate

learning workload. On top of that, regional and national competitions in numerous subjects are a popular intellectual challenge for children and adolescents who want to be competitive and to experience confirmation of their abilities. During holidays, special courses and academies take place. They are arranged by the State Ministry, several universities or education and science organizations who address motivated and gifted pupils from the seventh grade on. They offer inspiring and enriching knowledge beyond school lessons in presentations and excursions and establish opportunities to conduct conversations with famous people from the areas of culture, politics, economy and administration. Furthermore, gifted pupils from grammar schools as well as from a 'Fach- or Berufsoberschule'³ can enrol as students at universities without any formal admission in order to take part in modules and gain appropriate credits. Such performances are accepted in the particular subject in line with the regular matriculation after the submission of the A-level certificate. Beyond that, scholarships and foundations are accessible to gifted pupils in Bavaria. "Talent in Bayern" for example supports gifted pupils from disadvantaged families, especially those with a migratory background.

2. Promotion measures at particular types of school

Next to the early entry into the four-year primary school, which is possible one to two years before regular compulsory schooling, the Bavarian school system already offers individualizing and differentiating measures. Therefore, partial attendance at a higher grade as well as a temporary or occasional participation in courses at a grammar school while still attending primary school is possible. Within classes individual promotion suitable for the pupils' distinct abilities is intended, for instance with extra lessons for bright children, phases of autonomous learning, individual worksheets and project-related courses. Furthermore, in multi-grade entrance classes⁴ bright

children are particularly challenged because they can pass through two grades in one year. Especially in primary school we would welcome further initiatives and the implementation of successful pilot projects in all schools like the bilingual primary school or the multi-grade entrance classes mentioned above.

At grammar schools, pupils can pass their A-level exams after eight years. In addition, numerous grammar schools also enrich their pupils with (extracurricular) art, music or sports classes. Moreover, in each of the eight administrative regions of Bavaria there is a grammar school with one special class for gifted pupils. There, excellent pupils are promoted in their cognitive, emotional and social development with special lessons complementing curricular tutoring and mentoring programmes. However, the offers for promotion do not only address children with outstanding abilities mentioned in their school records. Instead, this is also considered as an option for pupils with moderate grades who show special creativity and originality in problem solving or if tests show a child is intelligent high above average.

Furthermore, inter-school enrichment programmes (so-called "Pluskurse" – plus courses) for gifted children and adolescents are organized in their respective school districts. These courses offer pupils challenging additional arrangements beyond the particular curriculum, for example more than the usual two foreign languages and subjects like psychology, philosophy, marketing or computer science. From a methodical point of view, the focus is on interdisciplinary classes, project work, bilingual lessons or involvement of mentors from economy and university.

Finally, schools of all types provide increased advancement in particular facultative subjects for pupils talented in one specific field like sports, arts, music or languages.

In addition to the schools, the *Regionalverein München/Bayern* provides a manifold offer

of seminars especially for gifted children and teenagers. Furthermore parents, teachers and educators can attend many lectures and training sessions organized by the DGhK. Besides there are meetings for parents of gifted children in a lot of towns in Bavaria. Last but not least families with gifted children, who need advice can ask qualified DGhK-consultants in various languages.

The Kultusministerkonferenz⁵ of the Federal Republic of Germany recently made far-reaching decisions on the "Förderstrategie für leistungsstarke Schülerinnen und Schüler" (Strategies to Promote High Achieving Pupils), in which most of the demands of the educational policy of the DGhK are fulfilled. It is hoped that these measures will be put into action as soon as possible for the welfare of gifted children. This and further information on the advancement of talented pupils can be found on the homepage of the Bavarian ministry of education:

<http://www.km.bayern.de/eltern/lernen/hochbegabung.html> (in German)

Marissa-Julia Jakob is a psychologist B.Sc. for the München/Bayern branch of the German Association for the Gifted Child

Contact: SeidIDGhK@gmx.de

¹ In German the words 'Förderung' (noun) and 'fördern' (verb) are used, which belong to a number of untranslatable words. The words mean to support a person to improve her / his intellectual and/or physical ability. 'Promotion' and 'promote' seem to fit this description the best.

² In Bavaria, the four-year primary school is followed by a three-tier system: the 'bottom' tier (Mittelschule), the 'middle' tier (Realschule) and the 'top' tier (grammar school). Whereas successfully passing grammar school can lead straight to university, it is possible to achieve that aim from all these schools with detours. Access to the different types of school is decided by the final grades in primary school. This can mean that gifted 'temporary underachievers' in the final year at primary school can be found at the other two types of school as well.

³ Pupils who attended a 'Mittelschule' or a 'Realschule' will later attend a 'Fach- or Berufsoberschule' to be trained for their future jobs. If they are high achievers at these types of school, that can also lead to university.

⁴ In multi-grade entrance classes, grades one and two are taught together. That means that bright children can pass the first two years in one year.

⁵ The body of all the ministers responsible for education of the 16 German states

Talent Care and Talent Support in Hungary

CSILLA FUSZEK, HUNGARY

In the last two decades of the 20th century and in the early 21st a positive turn took place in the legislative environment of talent support parallel with the increasing number of the public and civil society initiatives in talent support which reformed the content and structure of the traditional approaches of talent care in the country.

Perhaps the first milestone on the side of the civil society was the formation of the **Hungarian Talent Support Society** in 1989 to provide an extensive social basis for bringing professional expertise and political will together, so that Hungarian talent support could be taken up again. Laszlo Balogh has immense merits in the success of this Society, and thanks to the help of Franz Mönks the Society was able to establish international contacts.

The concept of talent support soon appeared in the legislature. Act LXXIX of 1993 on public education declared that *"children and students shall have the right to receive education and teaching in conformity with their abilities and interests, to pursue further studies, in accordance with their abilities and to receive primary art education in order to discover and develop their artistic talents"*.

In 2006, the growing number of talent support activities were brought under an umbrella organisation, a network, thanks mainly to the activity of Péter Csermely. The **National Talent Support Council** (The "Council") started its work with six member organisations, mainly NGOs, currently it has 45 members, domestic and cross-border ones, it has more than 100 partner organisations and their number keeps rising. The 10 years since the formation of the Council have demonstrated that the creation of the umbrella organisation, on a civil society initiative, was actually a historical feat, another milestone along the way to the typical Hungarian talent strategy of our days.

By early 2008, under the management and co-ordination of Péter Csermely, the members of the Council managed to compile jointly the so-called **Genius Integrated Talent Support Programme**, serving as the professional basis for the national talent strategy planned for 20 years (2008-2028).

With the help of MP Dénes Kormos, the bill on the 20-year strategy was passed in Parliament in December 2008 with almost no negative votes¹. During 2009, Parliament passed the decrees on the institution of the financial bases of the talent programme as well². Thus in 2008, with the Parliamentary Decree referred to above, Hungarian talent support reached another milestone, since Parliament raised it to the level of a public programme, motivated by the revelation that the talent support efforts of the profession and civil society could achieve their goals much more effectively with public support, and that might become measurable already in the successes of the next generations.

The so called **National Talent Fund** was created pursuant to the Parliamentary decree, its source is mainly the 1% talent support contribution of the citizens based on their Personal Income Tax. The number of people offering their 1% to promote the National Talent Programme has been rising year on year and thus insures the realisation of this national strategy. The so called **Talent Co-ordination Forum** gives a recommendation of how to allocate the funds (the sums received by the National Talent Fund). The president of the Forum is the minister responsible for education, and its co-presidents are the President of the National Talent Support Council, of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the parliamentary committee of education. However, the minister responsible for education is entitled to take the final decision. To provide for the professional management of the National Talent Programme, the **National Talent Support Programme Management Office** assuming responsibility for the operational management of the

programme was set up as well. The fundamental values of the National Talent Programme are the following: long-term approach, value preservation, diversity, creating opportunities, continuity and inter-operability, selection in the active and passive sense and self-development, efficiency, the gradual approach, responsibility and social commitment, appreciation of the talent support staff, sustainability and social support. The operational objectives are broken down into **action plans of 2 years**. This programme provides a stable and permanent framework for the implementation of many talent support programmes all over the country.

Meanwhile in 2011 the Public Education Act defined for the first time whom the effective legislation regarded as a particularly gifted or talented student³: It *“means children / students requiring special treatment, who are highly creative and possess above-average general or special skills, and strong motivation and commitment may be generated in them towards the task”*. The Act defines care for the particularly gifted or talented students as an obligation of the secondary school, integrated into the everyday educational processes⁴. Decree No. 15/2013 quoted above, on the other hand, makes it a compulsory task of the Hungarian pedagogical services, comprising at least one public institution per county and in the capital, to care for such students, instituting the job of talent co-ordinator to that effect. The national talent co-ordinator network is under formation at the moment, but its functions⁵ expressly relate to finding the optimum support arrangement for each and every talented child.

We can say that the National Talent Programme was the result, actually, of a civil society co-operation under the National Talent Council and it greatly influenced the effective legislation. The other great achievement of the council was to create a national talent support network based on co-operation. The process has not been terminated yet. In the network the concept of the Talent Points was introduced and an interactive map comprising more than 1400 Talent Points from all over the Carpathian Basin was displayed on the website (<http://tehetseg.hu/>). To date, the website already provides for exceptionally fast communication concerning the talent support issues, as witnessed by the hundred of thousands of visitors to its 11500 pages annually. By 2011, the emerging network called to life the so-called **National Talent Point (NTP)**, dedicated essentially to the development of the website of the network and the storage and maintenance of the network data (talent map, database of best practices).

The youngest NGO founded by the Council is the **European Talent Centre (EUTC)** based in Budapest, formed in mid-2012, it became accredited by the ECHA Accreditation Committee in 2015.

Probably one of the key messages of the Hungarian talent care and support is that the national talent support issue can be made a success through long term thinking and efficient cooperation among the different stakeholders and institutions.

Csilla Fuszek is the director of the European Talent Centre – Budapest, lecturer at ELTE Pedagogical Psychological Faculty, and ECHA Correspondent.

Contact: fuszekcs@gmail.com

REFERENCES:

Talent Bridges Program (www.tehetseg.hu)
 National Talent Program (<http://www.nefmi.gov.hu/kozoktatás/nemzeti-tehetseg-program/nemzeti-tehetsegugyi>)
 National Talent Program (<http://www.tehetsegprogram.hu/rolunk>)
 Official Collection of Hungarian Laws and Decrees - (http://njt.hu/cgi_bin/njt.doc.cgi?docid=162281.246012)
 „Teaching and Learning International Survey” TALIS (2009) - http://www.okm.gov.hu/letolt/kozoktat/talis_090618.pdf

¹ Decree No. 78/2008. (VI. 13.) OGY of the National Assembly on the National Talent Programme; Decree No. 126/2008. (XII. 4.) OGY of the National Assembly on the adoption of the National Talent Programme, the principles of its financing and the guidelines for the establishment and operation of the National Talent Co-ordination Forum

² Decree No. 152/2009. (VII. 23.) of the Government on the financing of the National Talent Programme; Decree No. 1119/2009. (VII. 23.) of the Government on the establishment and operation of the National Talent Co-ordination Forum.

³ Act CX of 2011 on National Public Education

⁴ Act CX of 2011 on National Public Education

27. § (5) Making use of the difference between the number of weekly compulsory lessons of the student and the approved weekly time frame for classes, primary schools and secondary schools shall organise sessions for up to three students aimed at developing talents, aiding the inclusion of disadvantaged students and of students diagnosed with adaptive, learning or behavioural disorders, furthermore, activities aimed at the successful preparation of lower grade students. For developing talents and for promoting inclusion, at least one additional hour is ensured for both categories, in excess of the time frame of classes specified in Annex 6.

⁵ a) in contact with the school/kindergarten psychologists of the institutions of education/instruction concerned,

b) in contact with the National Talent Point,

c) familiar with/monitors the National Talent Database,

d) familiar with/monitors the tender announcements of the National Talent Programme,

e) in contact with the National Talent Development Centre operating within the Institution for Educational Research and Development.

IMPRINT

Editor ECHA News
Annette Heinbokel

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 Heidrun Stoeger
heidrun.stoeger@ur.de

Copy ECHA News

Please send contributions to:
Annette Heinbokel
Bismarckstr. 100
28203 Bremen Germany
Phone: +49 421 69675131
annette.heinbokel@swbmail.de

Published by:

Carfax Publishing,
Taylor & Francis Ltd.
Customer Services Department
Rankine Road
Basingstoke, Hants RG24 8PR,
UK
www.carfax.co.uk/has-ad.htm

Summer camp AISTAP 2015 in collaboration with IIT

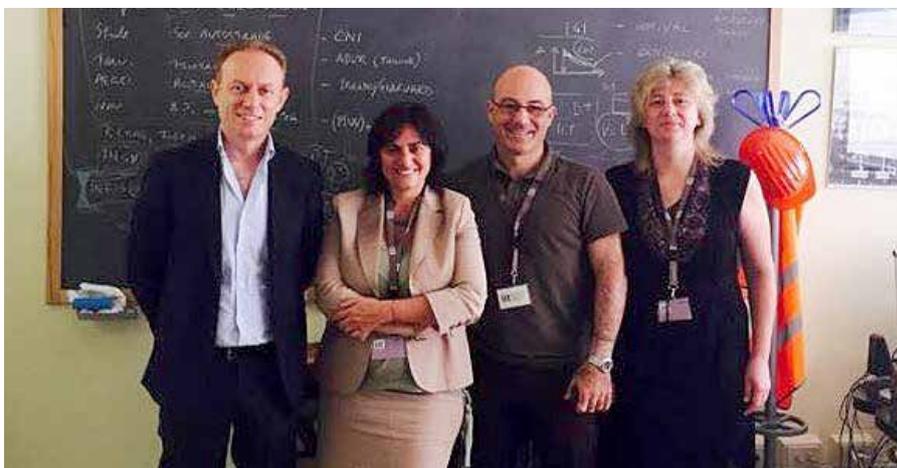
**JACOPO LORENZETTI AND
ANNA MARIA RONCORONI, ITALY**

Since 2011, AISTAP (the Italian Association for Gifted and Talented) organizes a summer camp. The idea is to offer not just an opportunity for families, boys and girls, to meet new people but mostly to organize stimulating workshops and lectures where gifted students of different age can learn new things and satisfy their curiosity directly through experts of different fields. This year we conducted activities for 125 students, divided by age and interest.

This year, we had four different locations and activities, but here we want to share the fruitful collaboration with the IIT (Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia - Italian Institute of Technology), that is a modern research institute located in different cities, divided in several departments. In these two weeks' programmes, 17 gifted students, aged from 13 to 17 years old, from all around Italy, joined the departments of robotics and nanotechnology for two different projects:

- How to produce hydrogen in a different way, considering that hydrogen can be considered the future for a sustainable world
- Building and programming a robot capable of performing basic soccer-related actions, such as recognizing a ball and hitting it.

In this second project, the method of cooperative learning was employed to organize the boys into teams, each one with a set of tools and freedom of creativity to plan their robot structure and action.



From left to right: Dr. Versace, Italian Institute of Technology; Dr Viale, Vice-president of Liguria Region; Dr. Cingolani, Scientific Director of the Italian Institute of Technology; Dr. Roncoroni, President of AISTAP

The students used a kit that included a special version of Arduino prepared by the IIT. Before starting to code, they were introduced to coding (though some of them already were educated) with lectures, entertaining videos and a very special visit of the structure.

During the visit, the boys shared their enthusiasm and unloaded all of their questions and curiosities onto the researchers of the IIT - not only about their projects, but also inquiring on how the job of the scientist is perceived these days and what may be the best learning paths, for them, to grow up as researchers.

The IIT is a very advanced centre that recently did quite well in the DARPA Robotics Challenge, with the robot "Walkman", a huge 120 kb beast with a 2.8 KW engine, created in a record time window

of only 10 months. The AISTAP students had their chance to meet Walkman, take pictures with him, as well as the famous iCub, a humanoid robot designed to look like a child and have sensitive hands and skin.

This summer camp wasn't just an opportunity to learn, because it never is just about robotics or electronics. It was about sharing, knowing each other and fulfilling the need of friendship that every person has - and that, also, is "growing up".

Jacopo Lorenzetti is a psychologist, responsible for AISTAP

Anna Maria Roncoroni is a psychologist, PhD, President of AISTAP, member of the Executive Committee of ECHA and ECHA correspondent for Italy

Contact: gifted@roncoroni.eu

Inspiring Pupils to Achieve

MARIANNE ETTLIN, SWITZERLAND

Half a year after the first international Conference on Gifted Education in Switzerland in 2014, a group of distinguished teachers, education experts and authorities in the field of education from all over Switzerland gathered once more for a symposium on promoting gifted children.

At school, achievement is often considered as "uncool". When it comes to fields such as music and sports, as well as the professional life, however, accomplishment is approved and recognized. The symposium discussed how school can inspire gifted children to achieve.

On Saturday, 21st March 2015, approximately 120 participants were attracted by the topic "Inspire to Achieve".

At the beginning of the conference a gifted high school pupil, a young skier, a trainee hair dresser and a young violoncellist reported on their passion, their achievements, and their moments of success, but also the setbacks that come hand-in-hand with success. These highly-gifted young individuals were accompanied by their mentors, coaches and parents, who support them. The discussion, moderated very thoughtfully by Cornelia Kazis, demonstrated the importance of mentors in supporting young talents to achieve success.

In the subsequent presentation, Victor Müller-Oppliger, co-initiator of the conference, professor at the University of Teacher Education Northwestern Switzerland and member of the ECHA Executive Committee, made connections between the statements of the podium discussion and the Swiss education system. Müller-Oppliger suggests that in order for a child to reach excellence in a certain domain, three things need to exist: talent, interest and will, respectively perseverance. Victor Müller-Oppliger still sees a large need for improvement at both the primary and secondary areas of schooling. "The ideal system would consist of half a day



Young gifted people report about their talents



Victor Müller-Oppliger in discussion with participants

classes in core subjects, and the other half on education programmes to support students in their preferred topics."

After the lunch break, the participants discussed the subject "achievement" on four different "creative platforms":

The school and teaching staff...

- inspire and initiate: What awakens interest?
- enable and facilitate: How does school inspire?
- coach and accompany: Who encourages you? How do we accompany?
- recognize and share: How is success celebrated?

The conference concluded with a presentation detailing the implementation

of educational programmes to support pupils at a state school, illustrating how this school manages to inspire the children to achieve.

It took place for the 10th time and was organized by the University of Teacher Education Zug, in collaboration with a small group of interested experts in gifted education.

Further information in German is available under: www.symposium-begabung.phzg.ch

Marianne Ettlin, specialist in gifted education ECHA, MAS iBBF FHNW, is coordinator of the group of experts, who organized the symposium.

Contact: marianne.ettlin@bluewin.ch

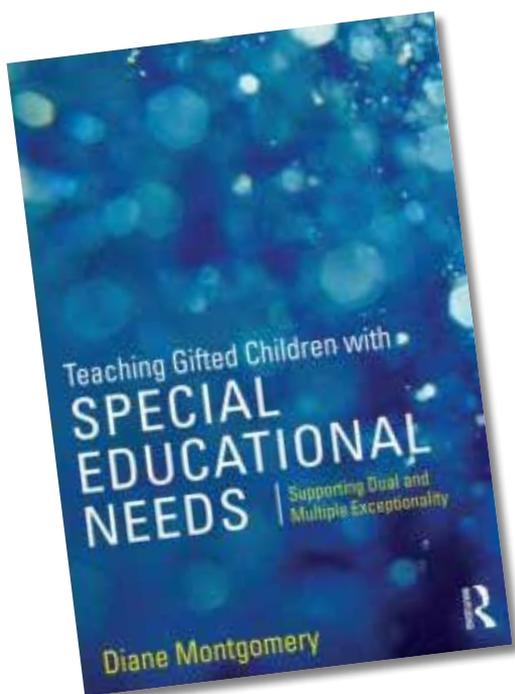
Diane Montgomery: Author of the Month

Routledge Education July 2015

Routledge Education is delighted to announce that Diane Montgomery, author of the recently published *Teaching Gifted Children with Special Educational Needs*, is our July 2015 Author of the Month.

Diane Montgomery, PhD is a Chartered Psychologist, trained teacher and Professor Emerita at Middlesex University, London. She is also Director of the Learning Difficulties Research Project in Maldon that she had first established at Kingston Polytechnic, now University, in 1981 with School's Council Funding. She is a qualified and experienced teacher, teacher educator and chartered psychologist specializing in research on underachievement and dual and multiple exceptionality.

The LDRP has as its focus teachers as researchers in their classrooms. Diane wrote and tutored the first completely distance MAs in education for Middlesex from 1993 to 2010. They were MA SEN, MA SpLD (Dyslexia) then MA Gifted Education. They attracted students from around the world and feedback from their researches and experiences are incorporated into Diane's new book. The programmes were built on the cognitive principles explained in the final chapter on inclusive teaching as applied to teacher education.



Interview

Why did you decide to write this book?

I felt that teachers confronted with the many complex needs of children in education today needed a manual that would help them by having all the main points under one roof or between two covers.

What's the one thing you hope readers will take away from this book?

I can do this!

Is there anything you'd like to highlight about this topic or your book in particular?

I want teachers to assert their professionalism not having to act as technicians following prescriptive routines laid down by well-intentioned administrators. Teachers need to be flexible in their thinking and classroom action and forever in pursuit of knowledge about how children learn, their subject and pedagogy.

What's a common misconception about this topic that you'd like to clear up?

There are so many. 'This topic' is multifactorial and so the misconceptions are multifarious. They include misconceptions about the nature of teaching, learning, special needs and giftedness. Perhaps in summary it would be better to say that it is a misconception to think that we can produce truly effective teachers and learners by most of the methods in common use today, not just in this country but world-wide... The time currently given to train our UK teachers is too short and no one has addressed the problem of training the trainers. Good teachers, advisers and head teachers do not automatically morph into good teacher educators - trust me!