SUMMARY

EDUCATION AND POLICY

Tamás Kozma: Political Research in Hungarian Education – The Early Years. The author makes the point here that political research into education started long before the political changes of 1989/90 in Hungary. Compared with international developments in political science, Hungarian research nonetheless proves to be a political activity rather than a scientific endeavour. Yet, some of the characteristics of such early research might hold their own in the Hungarian political literature of today. They are: (a) creating a new language of communication for education and educational policies; (b) a new feeling of growing freedom; (c) an intention to identify the real actors in the educational political arena; and (d) the simulation of political activities by using publicity for the research findings. The political researchers went into various careers after the changes – they became politicians, experts or university lecturers. The lessons to learn from these careers are that (a) political research into education has to be institutionalized in order for it to have the necessary influence; and (b) political research in Hungary, as well as in the region, has to become part of the international network of research and researchers in education.

Judit Lannert: Educational research and development today in Hungary. The purpose of this paper is to analyze and evaluate research, development and the innovation system in education in Hungary. One of the conclusions is that Hungary is struggling with the problem of having a limited budget in the field of research into education, and of there being a lack of strategy and of data. At the same time, there are phenomena in Hungary that are more or less characteristic of this region – and some of them can be considered Hungaricum. The Hungarian education R+D+I system has been shaped and strongly brought into line by a development policy financed by the structural fund. While this major amount of money can lead to great opportunities, its recent operations might have had distortionary effects, too. The most serious problem regarding the functioning of the system is that cooperation and coordination – not only among actors located at the three angles of the HELIX triangle but among actors in the same position – is haphazard. This connects with the quantitative and qualitative problems from the human resources of the Hungarian educational R+D+I system.

György Mártonfi: Question marks in the modernisation process – Regional Integrated Training Centres (RITC). The author of this paper argues that some

years ago nobody in Hungary questioned the idea that there were too many initial VET institutions (over 1000 in number). As a result, the system was inefficient and possibilities for quality management were limited. Decision makers in the responsible ministry were aiming at a concentration process that was similar to what took place in the Netherlands in the late 90s, i.e. merging many hundreds of VET-schools into forty-odd ROCs (Regional Training Centres). The article describes the two phases of the development of the RITC system, which had led to 84 RITCs by 2009. Stakeholders are sharply divided as to whether this development is good or bad for the Hungarian VET system because, for the time being, many RITCs are not regional, the majority are not integrated and many RITCs have not even got a training centre. The RITCs established very different organizational structures, which fact makes the unavoidable modifications of regulations difficult.

Anikó Fehérvári: Schoolmasters in competition. This paper presents the results of empirical research into Schoolmasters' work assessment. Research examined the process of the school directors' elections in 223 schools. The resigning directors evaluated their schools and their past job, while the newly appointed directors evaluated their school and presented their plans. Schoolmasters were satisfied with the professionalism of their teachers and their own, and also with the level of education, but they were far from satisfied with the school's educational function, in that inertness and defensiveness were recognized entities. Despite the fact that the directors were satisfied with their subordinates, every third leader did say that it would be necessary to develop a culture of teaching and look at the school's internal transformation. The research also pointed out that the previous cycles of the directors' appointments had failed to see developments being made.

Péter Radó: Governance of Education and Educational Policy in the Balkans. This study compares the educational policy challenges of primary and secondary education systems in South East European Countries with the actual capacity of the respective governments to respond to these challenges. The overview is based on an international comparison in terms of differences among different, larger European regions, and it also analyzes the similarities and differences between countries of the South East European region. The analysis is based on a distinction existing among three European equity patterns: compensative education systems (a high level of equity and a high or medium level of quality), selective education systems (a low level of equity and high selection result in a below-average overall student performance) and the attritive education systems of most South East European countries (an extremely high proportion of failing students both in terms of participation and learning outcomes, which indicates serious equity and quality problems). The study maps out the characteristics of the educational governance systems that seriously weaken the problem solving capacity of governments in the region.

Iván Bajomi: Actors and scenes in the bricolage of public policies. The author – who is also the editor of this issue – presents findings of the synthesis report that summarizes the case studies elaborated within the framework of the "Know

and Pol" European research project. The cases studies provide us with an in-depth analysis of public policies that have recently occurred in the education and health sectors in eight European countries, with special regard being given to the role of different degrees of knowledge and knowledge holders in the policy making process. The research utilized the notion of public action that underlines the participation of numerous actors in the elaboration of public policy. However, the author emphasizes that the analyzed public policies were initiated and carried out by different governmental institutions. Nevertheless, in one case a political reform emerged from the political agenda after a series of media events generated by parents and researchers focusing on the educational integration of children with special needs. It became evident from the case-studies that the bricolage of policy frequently relies on borrowing from across countries, this being facilitated by idea-brokers (researchers, civil-servants or politicians). The author stresses that from the perspective of the success of such borrowing, the adaptation of foreign models to the national context is a crucial issue. The last section of the paper describes how key actors in the political field gain much freedom by constructing new and different scenes (reform commissions, consultative bodies, etc.), which give a possibility for participating in the policy making process to a wider range of actors (civil servants, researchers, delegates of pressure groups, etc.). In the case of the two analyzed educational public 'actions' in France and Hungary – which we should see as a genuine "Coup d'Etat for modernization" – the creation of new bodies enables one to move beyond the traditional group of policy-making actors. Yet a Belgian educational case study shows us that in the context of "consensual" democracy pressure groups delegates are *naturally* included in the work of the new, important bodies (steering committee – Comité de Pilotage).

Eszter Berényi: From schools of measurement to the measurement of schools. The paper analyses the creation of the Hungarian National Assessment of Basic Competencies and its development over the last decade. A conception of "bricolage" is introduced into the analysis so that one can understand the education policy relevance of this process. The paper also addresses the shift in central education policy making from the symbolic, value-oriented processes of policy legitimization of the 1990s to the more knowledge-based legitimization of education policies in the first decade of the 21st century.

Eszter Neumann: A Round Table for Education and Child Opportunities. The paper looks into the recent strengthening of scientific paradigms and strategies to establish legitimacy in policy-making. The activity of the experts' coalition in the Round Table for Education and Child Opportunities is analyzed in relation to other bodies making up Hungarian education policy space and expert knowledge on offer for political usage. The different policy paradigms (sociological, psychological, economic, policy analysis) competing for and cooperating within politi-

cal influence are discussed, and the reorganization of knowledge forms and disciplines informing decision-making as well as strategies of persuasion are analyzed.

Gábor Erőss and Anna Kende: Special Educational Need: Policy, Science, and Practice. The authors emphasize that the meaning and the official definition of SEN has changed on multiple occasions in the last decade as a result of the commonly shared idea of decision-makers and experts; this on one hand sees some Roma and other multiple-disadvantaged children being misdiagnosed as disabled or, on the other, gives us the unintended negative consequences of higher normative support for SEN children, namely segregation. The question for our study is the role of science and disciplinary areas for shaping policy in the field of SEN. Results show that the scientific and policy debates, whose participants represent different disciplines and ideological viewpoints – such as sociological critiques, special educational expertise, reform pedagogical ideas and (neuro)psychological theories of development – could create a platform for establishing an all-inclusive education. However, a more effective and precise diagnosis, and a lessening of segregation, did not come directly from these scientific debates or new psychometric tools – rather, it emanated from classical bureaucratic (regulating) and post-bureaucratic (financial incentives and counter-incentives) measures that had evolved next to and partly in connection with the scientific influences.