

SUMMARY

TALENT SUPPORT

Talent support has had long traditions and has achieved significant results in Hungarian higher education, especially as for centuries only those with the most excellent abilities could enter higher education, so higher education equalled talent support. In the past decades, however, mass education characterized institutions of higher education worldwide and after the change of regime similar changes have started in Hungary as well. In such circumstances there is a danger that gifted students do not always get into the focus of attention, they cannot develop all their talents and therefore a movement has started recently to make talent support in higher education more organized and more efficient. In Hungary a favourable situation facilitates this movement as a programme – the “Hungarian Genius Programme” – has been initiated with the professional guidance of the Hungarian Talent Support Council directed by professor Péter Csermely, drawing up plans for improving talent support for each age group in higher education and outlining the possibilities for improvement. With the help of this programme talent support in higher education has got into the focus of attention and now more and more institutions of higher education seek new ways, contents of and organisational frameworks for talent support in order to renew the talent support programmes. On the one hand it is clear that the traditionally well performing students’ research societies and professional colleges remain a firm basis for talent support in higher education. On the other hand, however, international experiences show that by making selection more comprehensive and by introducing new forms of professional support talent support in higher education can become more efficient. Guided by these principles the studies published in this volume aim to facilitate all the work carried out at the institutions of higher education in Hungary to reform talent support and make it more efficient. In the studies the major elements of talent support in higher education are presented.

The values and activities of the oldest and most widespread form of talent support, those of students’ research societies are presented in the study written by Péter Szendrő and Szabina Cziráki. In their essay the authors present the local and national system of students’ research societies, the work of the National Council of Students’ Research Societies, the role of local and national conferences, the re-

lated publications, the system of honours and awards and more broadly the social role of students' research societies.

The basic features of professional colleges in higher education and their values related to talent support are presented in the study written by László Takács. The author presents the activities of the Eötvös József Collegium, which has achieved excellent results in talent support for more than a hundred years, and analyzes in a comprehensive way the selection mechanism, the inciting and supporting activities of the workshops, the programmes preparing for a career in scientific research, the role of competitions and fellowship opportunities in talent support. This comprehensive and deep analysis reviews the major features of not only one professional college but those of the whole system of professional colleges.

The elements of a complex talent support system that has become widespread worldwide are presented in the essay written by László Balogh, reviewing the nearly one-decade-long activities of the Talent Support Programme of Debrecen University (DETEP), and outlining the new version developed on the basis of experiences that has been introduced recently. The main feature of this new system is that talents are sought by using new selection methods and in a wider context and systematic development is carried out in a more comprehensive and systemic way involving all branches of the university – naturally with a focus on students' research societies and professional colleges. At the same time and as opposed to the old practice this system opens its doors and as a Regional Talent Point it aims at preparing gifted secondary school students for higher education studies.

In their study Gábor Neuwirth and Marianna Szemerszki analyze in a comprehensive way the talent support in secondary education laying the foundations of talent support in higher education. The essay focuses on the National Academic Competitions for Secondary School Students but foreign language proficiency exams, the level of academic achievements of those admitted to higher education institutions, grouping by courses, proportions of training areas and the socio-demographic data of admitted students are also analyzed. This analysis is very instructive and proves that talent support in higher education cannot be effective without appropriate foundations laid by public education.