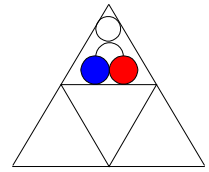




RADBOUD UNIVERSITY NIJMEGEN



Gifted Education in 21 European Countries: Inventory and Perspective

Mönks, F.J. & Pflüger, R.

February 2005





Initiator of the Inventory

Die Studie "Gifted Education in 21 European Countries: Inventory and Perspective" wurde im Auftrag des Deutschen Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF) erstellt. Das BMBF war bei der Abfassung der Aufgabenstellung und der wesentlichen Randbedingungen beteiligt. Das BMBF hat das Ergebnis der Studie nicht beeinflusst; der Auftragnehmer trägt allein die Verantwortung.

The survey "Gifted Education in 21 European Countries: Inventory and Perspective" was conducted on behalf of the German federal ministry of education and research (BMBF). The BMBF was involved in formulating the task and the framework. The BMBF did not influence the results of the survey; the contractor bears sole responsibility.

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Foreword

The support for educating the gifted is booming in many European countries. The generally held opinion during the previous century was that highly able students did not need special attention or extra facilities. Consequently, the task of developing educational and other provisions for the gifted in schools was completely neglected. Only within the past couple of decades has it become more widely recognized and accepted that all children need support that is adjusted to their level of ability, whether low or high, in order to develop their potential to the fullest.

The concept ‘giftedness’ (high ability, giftedness and talent are used synonymously) refers to the individual potential for high or outstanding achievement in one or more areas of ability. The requirements for the development of individual potential are personal dedication and motivation and a supportive social environment. A differentiated and differentiating curriculum is indispensable to the realization of equal opportunities for all. This can only be realized if there is a flexible school organization, a diversity of teaching methods and a richness of content in the subject matter. Under these conditions, gifted children and adolescents can develop according to their developmental and learning needs.

This publication is an updated version of the report in the year 2003 (Mönks et al., 2003; see also Mönks & Pflüger, 2004) which reflects the state of affairs in the area of giftedness as of December 2004.

The authors would like to thank all correspondents for their enthusiastic and efficient cooperation: Friedrich Oswald, Tessa Kieboom, Silvia Grossenbacher, Christian Fischer, Ole Kyed, Javier Touron, Kirsi Tirri, Todd Lubart, Aikaterini Gari, Laszlo Balogh, Colm O’Reilly, Adriano Pagnin, Lony Schiltz, Nina Linde, Willy Peters, Wieslawa Limont, Leandro Almeida, Carmen Cretu, Åke Edfeldt and Johanna Raffan.

Special thanks to Dr. Michael Katzko for bringing the contributions up to a common standard of English.

We hope that this survey will support the exchange of experiences among countries and will enhance mutual learning which, in turn, will contribute to the further development of European networking in this field.

Franz Mönks
Robin Pflüger
Nijmegen, February 2005



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Summary

In 2001 the German ministry of Science and Education gave the authors of this report the assignment to make an inventory of gifted education in European schools. Since the investigation started before the extension of the European Union up to 25 countries, we only included the then 15 member states plus Switzerland, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Slovenia. The results were reported in September 2003 (see Mönks et al, 2003; Mönks & Pflüger, 2004). The present report updates that information to the end of December 2004. The data collection was carried out with the co-operation of correspondents from each of the twenty-one participating countries. All correspondents who participated in the first inventory were also willing to co-operate in the updating of the material.

The inventory includes an investigation of the following six topics:

- 1) School legislation, regulations and guidelines
- 2) Specific provisions
- 3) Identification criteria
- 4) Professional training and/or teacher upgrading and networks of experience exchange
- 5) Research and professional care and counseling
- 6) Priorities and expectations.

The correspondents were asked to relate the information relevant to their own country to the UNESCO 'International Standard Classification of Education' (ISCED-97). In this way it would be possible to compare the data of the various countries with each other. In general, the updated inventory reveals a dynamic development of gifted education in European schools up to the end of December 2004. The legislative status of gifted children and their needs became a reality in some countries. Teacher training and upgrading improved generally in most countries. However, the most progress was made in Switzerland, Germany and United Kingdom. These countries already had a high ranking regarding gifted education in 2002. Substantial progress has continued to be made since that date. Romania and Sweden are apparently also heading in the right direction. No changes were reported from Finland. However, the conclusion made in the first report can be repeated here: Finland already has a high quality educational system, characterised by differentiation of curriculum and instruction from the very beginning of school education.

It is clear that there still remains an important and significant list of expectations and distinct priorities identified by the countries surveyed. Nearly all countries want to see an extension of provisions for the gifted and a better recognition and embedding of the gifted learner within school legislation. But most of all, it is essential that next to teacher upgrading, gifted education becomes an integral part of the basic curriculum of teacher training.



Survey



Introduction

An important contribution to, and to some extent a milestone for, gifted education in Europe was the Educational Research Workshop *Education of the Gifted in Europe: Theoretical and Research Issues*, which was held in Nijmegen in 1991 (July 23-26). This workshop was offered by the Council of Europe and jointly organized by the Centre for the Study of Giftedness at the University of Nijmegen, the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe, the Dutch and German Ministries of Education, and the Institute for Educational Research in The Netherlands (SVO).

All Ministries of Education in Europe were provided with the summary report of this workshop. This report was also the guideline for recommendation 1248 (1994) on education for gifted children by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. This was, for the first time, a political document that emphasized the special needs of gifted individuals and how to cope with these special needs.

In September 2003, assembly member Mr. Varela i Serra, in referring to recommendation 1248, brought a written question (No. 433; Doc. 9953) to the attention of the Committee of Ministers, asking about the status quo of gifted education and the involvement of the Council of Europe. In direct response to this question the Directorate General IV of the Council of Europe organized an educational research workshop on gifted children, and held in Donaueschingen from November 15 to 19, 2004. The results of this workshop will be brought to the attention of the parliamentary assembly.

Apart from these activities of the Council of Europe, the German federal ministry of education and research (BMBF) gave the authors of this report the assignment to make an inventory of education of the gifted in European schools. The assignment was given in the year 2001. The results were reported in September 2003 in a German version (Mönks et al., 2003). The present report updates that information to the end of December 2004.

Method of Data Collection

National Correspondents

To obtain information concerning gifted education in European schools, it was decided to work with national correspondents representing the countries to be covered in the report. As such, a correspondent should be involved in gifted education in his/her home country, from a scientific and/or from a practical perspective. It was a relatively easy task to identify qualified correspondents. As the first author of this report was president of the ECHA association (European Council for High Ability) in 1992, and re-elected in 2006, there was already direct contact with an active network of individuals in various European countries. Consequently, most of the nominated correspondents for this report were also involved in the ECHA network. Names and addresses of the correspondents are provided in Appendix 1.

The following 21 countries are included in the report. The order of the countries is arranged alphabetically, and based on the initials of each country¹: Austria (AT), Belgium-Flanders (BE), Switzerland (CH), Germany (DE), Denmark (DK), Spain (ES), Finland (FL), France (FR), Greece (GR), Hungary (HU), Ireland (IE), Italy (IT), Luxembourg (LU), Latvia (LV), The Netherlands (NL), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Romania (RO), Sweden (SE), Slovenia (SL) and United Kingdom (UK).

ISCED

A frame of reference for the different educational systems of the countries was needed so that the data from individual countries would be comparable. This was provided by the ‘International Standard Classification of Education’ (ISCED-97). Each country’s educational system is represented in four ISCED levels (ISCED levels 0-3). In general, ISCED level 0 represents the “pre-primary education”, ISCED level 1 represents the “primary education or first stage of basic education”, ISCED level 2 represents the “lower secondary or second stage of basic education” and ISCED level 3 represents “upper secondary education”. For a differentiated representation of the educational systems of Germany and United Kingdom see Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

¹ The order will be kept during the report.

Procedure

We developed a questionnaire to collect data covering six main topics:

- 1) School legislation, regulations and guidelines
- 2) Specific provisions
- 3) Identification criteria
- 4) Teacher training and/or teacher upgrading and networks of experience exchange
- 5) Research and professional care and counseling
- 6) Priorities and expectations.

The questionnaire was sent to all correspondents with the request that it be completed and returned by June 2002. However, the evaluation of the questionnaire was not an easy task because the questions were too detailed, with the consequence that no responses were given to many of the questions. To resolve these difficulties it was decided to organize a workshop with all correspondents invited to present their data. With the assistance of the German Ministry of Science and Education, this workshop was held in Nijmegen from June 5 to 9, 2002. As a result, it was not only possible to gather the missing information, but the workshop also served usefully as a venue for exchanging experiences.

The results were published in the report “Schulische Begabtenförderung in Europa: Bestandsaufnahme und Ausblick“ [Gifted Education in European Schools: Inventory and Perspective] (Mönks² et. al, 2003).

From the beginning, it was obvious that there should be an English version of this report. We proposed to the German federal ministry of education and research (BMBF) that, in the preparation of this version, the opportunity be taken to do a follow-up data collection to obtain the most recent information about developments in gifted education in European schools. The correspondents were approached in August and September 2004 and asked to contribute to updating the information in the original report. The new information was integrated into an updated report, and the individual country chapters again sent to the respective correspondents for final verification. This task was completed by December 2004.

² Download PDF file at: www.socsci.ru.nl/psy/cbo → [literatuur]

Results

Topic wise information (Tables)

Legend of tables	
Symbol	Description
●	Yes; this information is based on the inventory of 2002
-	No; this information is based on the inventory of 2002
+	Yes; this information changed in the inventory of 2004 regarding the inventory of 2002
0	No; this information changed in the inventory of 2004 regarding the inventory of 2002

A) School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines about Giftedness

Country	Legislative Recognition		Legislative Regulations
	The term 'giftedness' (or a synonym) is explicitly named in the law of your country?	"Gifted students" are part of a subgroup (e.g. children with special needs ...)	Legislative Regulations and guidelines about gifted education is set by the school inspectorate
AT Austria	●	●	●
BE Belgium (Flanders)	-	●	●
CH Switzerland *	●	●	●
DE Germany *	●	●	●
DK Denmark	-	●	●
ES Spain	●	●	●
FI Finland	-	-	●
FR France	-	+	●
GR Greece	+	+	●
HU Hungary	●	●	●
IE Ireland	-	●	●
IT Italy	-	-	-
LU Luxemburg	-	●	●
LV Latvia	-	-	●
NL The Netherlands	-	-	●
PO Poland	●	-	●
PT Portugal	- ^{a)}	- ^{a)}	●
RO Romania	●	-	●
SE Sweden	-	-	●
SI Slovenia ^{a)}	●	●	●
UK United Kingdom	-	-	●

*Country is divided into independent sub areas. Legislation is made autonomously by provinces. As far as school legislation, regulations and guidelines about giftedness exist in one or more areas, we have marked it in the table.

a) Only in the autonomous region of Madeira.

^{a)}No Update information 2004 available.

B) Specific Provisions

Provisions	ISCED	Austria	Belgium (Flanders)	Switzerland*	Germany	Denmark	Spain	Finland	France	Greece	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Latvia	The Netherlands	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Sweden	Slovenia ⁿ	United Kingdom
	Level	AT	BE	CH	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	HU	IE	IT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	UK
Early entrance	0																					
	1	•	•	•	•		•	•	•			•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	2	+	•	+			•	•	•							•	•	•		•	•	•
	3	+	•	+			•	•	•							•	•			•	•	•
Skipping classes	0		•					•	•							•						
	1	•	•	•	•		•	•	•			•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•		•	•		•	•	•		•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	3	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Shared classes with higher grades	0	+	•					•								•						
	1	•	•	•	•			•		•	•	•				•	•	•		•		•
	2	•		•	•			•	•		•	•				•	•	•		•		•
	3	•		•	•			•	•		•	•				•	•	•		•		•
Groupwise acceleration	0							•													•	•
	1							•														•
	2	•			•			•														•
	3	•			•			•														•
Workshops	0	+						•													•	
	1	•		•	•	•		•						+	•	•	•					•
	2	•		•	•	•		•		•	•			+	•	•	•					•
	3	•		•	•	•		•		•	•			+	•	•	•					•
Cooperation with companies or non-profit organizations	0							•											•			
	1	•		•	•			•						•				•	•	•	•	
	2	•		•	•			•						•				•	•	•	•	
	3	•		•	•			•					•	•	•	•		•	0	•	•	
Extra - curricular	0	•		•	•		+	•									•		•	•	•	
	1	•		•	•		+	•			•			•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•		•	•		+	•	•		•			•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	3	•		•	•			•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Individual mentors	0							•														
	1	+		•				•									•	•	•	•	•	•
	2	+		•				•								•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	3	+		•				•			•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Self study	0							•														
	1	+		+				•							•		•			•		
	2	+		•		•		•	+	•	•			•	•	•	•		+			•
	3	+	•	•	•	•		•		•	•			•	•	•	•		+	•	•	•
School intern competitions	0							•														
	1	•		•	•			•				•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	
	2	•		•	•			•	•		•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
	3	•	•	•	•			•	•		•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Psychological counseling	0	+																				•
	1	•		•	•			•						•		•	•	•	•	0	•	•
	2	•		•	•			•						•		•	•	•	•	0	•	•
	3	+		•				•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	0	•	•
Summer camps	0		•											•							•	
	1	•	•		•			•			•			•	•	•	•					•
	2	•			•			•	•		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	3	•	•		•			•	•		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	+

Provisions	ISCED	Austria	Belgium (Flanders)	Switzerland*	Germany*	Denmark	Spain	Finland	France	Greece	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Latvia	The Netherlands	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Sweden	Slovenian	United Kingdom
	Level	AT	BE	CH	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	HU	IE	IT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	UK
Festivals	0	+												•	•					•		
	1	•		•	•						•			•	•			•	•		•	•
	2	•		•	•						•			•	•			•	•		•	•
	3	•		•	•						•			•	•			•	•		•	•
Exhibition	0	+									•		•						•	•	•	
	1	+		+							•		•				•	•	•		•	
	2	+		•							•		•				•	•	•		•	
	3	+		•							•		•				•		0		•	
School extern competitions	0																			•		
	1	•		•	•		•				•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	2	•		•	•		•	•			•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	3	•		•	•		•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Performances/ Shows (artistic, ...)	0	+												•					•	•		
	1	+		•	•		•				•			•			•	•	•	•	•	•
	2	+		•	•		•				•			•			•	•	•	•	•	•
	3	+		•	•		•				•			•			•	•	•	•	•	•
Following courses at ISCED level 4-6	0													+								
	1													+								
	2	+												+		•						•
	3	•		•	•									+		•			0			•
Special schools	0	•		•	•						•									•		
	1	•	•	•	•		•				•	•			•	•	•	•				
	2	•		•	•		•	•			•	•			•	•	•	•				
	3	•		•	•		•	•			•	•			•	•	•	•				•
Others	0										•											
	1										•											•
	2	+									•											•
	3	+									•											•

* Country is divided into independent sub areas; legislation is made autonomously by Provinces. As far as specific provisions exist in one or more areas, we have marked it in the table.

^{a)} Only in the autonomous region of Madeira.

^{b)} No Update information 2004 available.

C) Identification Criteria

Identification Criteria	Austria	Belgium (Flanders)	Switzerland*	Germany*	Denmark	Spain	Finland	France	Greece	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Latvia	The Netherlands	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Sweden	Slovenia ⁿ	United Kingdom
	AT	BE	CH	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	HU	IE	IT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	UK
School grades	•		•	•					•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
School external achievement (Competitions...)	•			•					•	•	•			•		•		•		•	•
Achievement tests	•		•	•							•				•	•		•		•	•
Psychological tests (IQ-Test, personality test...)	•	•	•	•		•		•		•	•		•		•	•	•	0		•	•
Observation/Checklists	+		•		+								+	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Teacher nomination	•		•		+			•		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Parent nomination			•	•	+			•	•		•	•		•	•	+	+	0	+	•	•
Expert nomination	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•		+	•	•
Nomination by third party (Elementary teacher, other adults; Trainer...)	•		+	•	+			•			•				•	•	•		•	•	•
Self nomination	•		+	•			•		•			•	•	•	•	•	•				•
Institutions-self made criteria	+	•		•			•		•		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

* Country is divided into independent sub areas. As far as identification criteria are handled in one or more areas, we have marked it in the table.

ⁿNo Update information 2004 available.

D) Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Training and Networks	I S C E D L e v e l	Aut s t r i a	Bel g i u m (F l a n d e r s)	Sw i t z e r l a n d *	Ger m a n y	Den m a r k	Sp a i n	Fin l a n d	FR a n c e	GR e c e	H u n g a r y	IR e l a n d	IT a l y	LU x e m b u r g	Lat v i a	The N e t h e r l a n d s	Pol a n d	Por t u g a l	R o m a n i a	Sw e d e n	S l o v e n i a n	U n i t e d K i n g d o m		
		AT	BE	CH	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	HU	IE	IT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	UK		
Teacher training	0			+							•			+								•	•	
	1	•		+	•		•				•			•		•				•	•	•	•	
	2	•		+	•		•				•			•		•			•	+	•	•	•	
	3	•		+	•		•				•			•		•			•	+	•	•	•	
Retraining and further education of teachers	0	+		•	•			•			•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•		•	•	
	1	+	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	2	+		•	•		•	•	•		•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	+	•	•	
	3	+		•	•		•	•	•		•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•		•	•	
Training of other professionals such as remedial teachers, school psychologists ...	0	+		•							•			•	•							•	•	
	1	+		•			•		•		•			•	•							•	•	
	2	+		•			•		•		•			•	•							+	•	•
	3	+		•			•		•		•			•	•							+	•	•
ECHA Teacher training	0			•	•						•					•								
	1	•		•	•		•				•					•								
	2	•		•	•		•				•					•						+		
	3	•		•	•		•				•					•								
Network school intern	0		•	•			•				•				•	•							•	
	1	+	•	•			•				•				•	•						•	•	
	2	•	•	•			•				•				•	•						•	•	
	3	•	•	•			•				•				•	•						•	•	
Network between schools	0		•	•			•				•				•	•							•	
	1	•	•	•	•		•			+	•				•	•						•	•	
	2	•	•	•	•		•			+	•				•	•						•	•	
	3	•	•	•	•		•				•				•	•						•	•	
Network regional	0	+		•			•				•				•	•							•	
	1	•		•	•		•				•				•	•						•	•	
	2	•		•	•		•			•	•				•	•						•	•	
	3	•		•	•		•			•	•				•	•						•	•	
Network provinces	0	+		•			•				•				•	•							•	
	1	•		•	•		•				•				•	•						•	•	
	2	•		•	•		•				•				•	•						•	•	
	3	•		•	•		•				•				•	•						•	•	
Network Europe	0			•											•	•							•	
	1	+		•	•						•				•	•						•	•	
	2	•		•	•						•				•	•						•	•	
	3	•		•	•						•				•	•						•	•	
Network world wide	0			•											•	•							•	
	1	+		•											•	•						•	•	
	2	+		•											•	•						•	•	
	3	•		•											•	•						•	•	

* Country is divided into independent sub areas. As far as Basic Teacher Training, Retraining and Further Education & Networks of Experience Exchange exists in one or more areas, we have marked it in the table.

^{a)} Only in the autonomous region of Madeira.

^{b)} No Update information 2004 available.

E) Priorities and Expectations

Topic	Austria	Belgium (Flanders)	Switzerland*	Germany*	Denmark	Spain	Finland	France	Greece	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Latvia	The Netherlands	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Sweden	Slovenian	United Kingdom
	AT	BE	CH	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	HU	IE	IT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	UK
Legislative recognition of 'giftedness'																					
Is the term 'giftedness' (or a synonym) explicitly named in the law of your country?	•	•		•	•		•	+	•				•	•			•	•	+		
Are gifted people part a subgroup (e.g. children for special needs or other)	+	•					•	+	•				+	•	•	•	•	0	•		
Legislative Regulations and Guidelines, set by the school inspectorate or other authorities																					
Recognition of and respect for individual differences	•		•	•				•	•				•	•				•	•		
Identification of individual needs	•		•	•			•	+	•			•						0	•		
Differentiation (e.g. enrichment, projects ...)	•	•	•	•				+	•			•	+	•		•	•	•	•		
Flexibility within the school system (e.g. early entry, skipping classes...)	•	•	•	•		•		•	•				+	•				•	•		
'Education of the gifted child' as a topic of teacher training	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Basic curriculum (identical national school material...)	+						•	•										0	•		
Special curriculum (special school materials for gifted students...)	+	•	•			•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Release of compulsory education	+	•		•			•									•			•		
Non-intellectual provisions (arts, sports, ...)	+							•													
Specific provisions																					
Early entrance	+			•	•			•	•					•	•				•	•	
Skipping classes	•			•	•			•	•					•	•				•	•	
Shared classes with higher grades	•			•	•			+	•							•	•	0	•		
Groupwise acceleration	+			•	•				•		•					•	•	0	•		
Workshops	•			•	•				•					•		•					
Cooperation with companies or non-profit organizations	+															•		•	•		
Extra - curricular	+			•					•	•				•	•	•	•	+	•		
Individual mentors	•								•					•	•	•	•	+	•		
Self study	•																		+	•	
Competitions	•								•	•				•					+		
Psychological counseling	•								•		•					+	•	•	•	•	
Summer camps	•			•					•	•	•					•			+		
Festivals	•								•					•					+		
Exhibitions	•								•	•			+						+		
Competitions	•								•	•				•					+		
Performances/Shows (Artistic, ...)	+								•										+		



Topic	Austria	Belgium (Flanders)	Switzerland*	Germany*	Denmark	Spain	Finland	France	Greece	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Latvia	The Netherlands	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Sweden	Slovenia ^a	United Kingdom
	AT	BE	CH	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	HU	IE	IT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	UK
Following courses at ISCED level 4-6	+								•		•		+						•		
Special schools	+							•						•							
Modification of identification criteria																					
Special identification criteria in general	+			•			•	•	•					•			•	•		•	
Handicapped minorities	•		+			•	•						+	•	•			•		•	
Ethnic minorities	•		•			•	•		•				+		•			•		•	
Gender specific minorities	•		•			•	•						+					0		•	
Special provisions for underachiever	•		•	•	•	•			•				+				•		0	•	•
Training																					
Teacher training	+		•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Retraining and further education	+		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	0	•		
Other professionals	•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•	+	•	0			
Experience exchange																					
School internally	•		•		•				•		•		•	•						•	
Between schools	+		•		•				•		•	•	•	•				0			
Regional	+				•				•		•	•	•			+			•	+	•
Provinces	+				•				•		•	•	•			+			•	+	•
Europe	•								•		•	•	•			+			•	•	•
World wide	•					•			•		•	•	•			+			•	•	•
Scientific Research & Professional care and counseling																					
Specialists	+		•		•			•	•		•			•			•	•	•	•	
Publications	•		•	•	•			•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	+			
Conferences	+				•	•			•				•	•			0		•	•	

* Country is divided into independent sub areas. As far as priorities as future perspective exist in one or more areas, we have marked it in the table.

^aNo Update information 2004 available.

Country specific information (Full Text)

AT - Austria



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

The recent Austrian school legislation is based on the legislation which was drawn up in the 20th century, mainly during the 60s and 70s. Since 1990, the legislation regarding giftedness and gifted education has been reviewed and the education of talents and gifted students became explicitly part of the system of general education. At present, there is a trend toward adopting even more regulations and legislation regarding the individual needs of gifted students and gifted education.

The school legislation of Austria emphasizes a general ideal of individualized education and an autonomous creation of the individual school career through acceleration and enrichment within the regular school as well as within specific schools. In addition to differentiation regarding intellectual education, school legislation also refers to the educational need of provisions regarding the non-intellectual domains [ISCED Levels 1-3]. There is one special section in the school legislation (SchOG 1962) that refers to provisions in school which are especially appropriate for the gifted (§17). The chapter includes regulations regarding specific provisions like skipping classes (§26) or release from compulsory education in special and reasonable situations, for example, to attend classes at University (§45), which are implicitly aimed at the education of the gifted child. Since 1998 the flexibility of an individual school career from ISCED level 1 to ISCED level 3 is anchored in the school legislation. Skipping classes is possible up to three times (once every school level). An early exit from school, including permission to attend university, can be obtained at an age of 15. A special examination needs to be taken as evidence for the required academic abilities. As a consequence of this legislation the official age level for university students needed to be reduced to the age of 15. Private education/ home schooling is legal.

B. Specific Provisions

A variety of specific provisions as well as educational systems to favor the gifted child have been established during the past 10 years. The ideal of integration as well as segregation has also been practiced.

In Austria, gifted students are kept within the regular class and receive special attention through enrichment, workshops [ISCED levels 0-3] individual mentors [mainly ISCED level 1] or various pull-out programs regarding language, mathematics, science, music or sports (e.g. “Atelierbetriebe” and “Lernwerkstätten”).

More than 60 schools in Vienna are gaining experience with a special teaching style called “free learning” (“offenes Lernen”). At present, identification and individualized education of gifted students is being investigated within this framework.

In addition to enrichment, acceleration is practiced on a regular basis in Austria, but mainly at ISCED level 1. There have been good experiences with a moderated process of skipping grades. After a test period at a course or a class of a higher grade, the students can make a final decision regarding the acceleration or skipping. At ISCED level 3, gifted students can join courses at Universities. If they pass the course examination, they can receive full course credit after they enter University.

Psychological counseling is available at all ISCED levels [ISCED levels 0-3].

Regional, national and international competitions and “Olympiads” in foreign language, natural and social sciences, mathematics as well as sports and arts are organized frequently at all levels [ISCED levels 0-3]. In addition to 15 summer schools, Austria has participated in the “Archimedes” program, a program for gifted students in middle Europe, in 2004.

Some schools have decided to pursue the ideal of gifted education through separation. Gifted students follow special class or even join a specialized school like the “Sir-Karl-Popper Schule” which is specialized in linguistically gifted and socially engaged students, or the “Schumpeter-Handelsakademie” which organizes provisions mainly for talented students with respect to business and society.

C. Identification Criteria

The identification of gifted students lies mainly in the hands of experts such as school psychologists, teachers or scientists who use standardized tests. Information provided by parents is welcome within the identification process.

To identify students for special provisions like skipping classes or enrichment programs, high achievement within the area of talent and teacher nomination are the main criteria [ISCED level 1]. At ISCED levels 2 and 3 experts with a psychological background are also involved in the nomination procedure.

Self nomination and teacher nomination are accepted for competitions and “Olympiads”. An essential criterion is an earlier participation in courses for gifted students.

Specialized schools have their own criteria. Achievement at school is taken as an indicator for high potential. Psychological examinations by school psychologists are integrated into the nomination procedure.

The identification of “Underachievement” is a topic of concern in Austria. Appropriate identification procedures or even guidelines are missing. Within the “free learning” situation (see “Specific provisions” above), the hope is to have a better chance of identifying the gifted student.

D. Professional Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Gifted education has increasingly become part of the teacher training during the last ten years. Nonetheless, only some “Teacher Training Colleges” (“Pädagogische Akademie”) include gifted education as a substantial part of their curriculum. At the university level, seminars, lectures and workshops about theoretical and practical issues of giftedness and gifted education are offered and followed more frequently. The courses are mainly optional during teacher training. At the Austrian “*Pedagogical Institutes*” which are installed in all 9 states (Bundesländer) of Austria, retraining of teachers and upgrading programs regarding gifted education is organized frequently for teachers of elementary and secondary education. Both, the “Teacher Training Colleges” and the “Pedagogical Institutes” organize seminars and lectures for teachers, scientists and other interested people (at least once a

year). The development of the field of gifted education is strongly influenced by the post-graduate program of the “European Council for High Ability” (ECHA) which leads to the ECHA-Diploma “Specialist in Gifted Education”. This program was developed by Prof. Dr. Franz Mönks und Dr. Willy Peters (Radboud University Nijmegen) and is offered by the 9 Pedagogical Institutes. The post-graduate program of ECHA is partly financed by the Austrian ministry of education. Up to now, more than 600 teachers have completed successfully the 500 hour training.

Austria is aiming to provide every school with at least one “Specialist in Gifted Education”.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

In general, many schools are counseled by mentors at ISCED level 1.

Due to the governmental agreement between the governing parties, the ministry of education established several institutes for gifted education and research in giftedness. The ministry of education is highly involved in a range of research and professional counseling services for the gifted.

Since 1999 the Austrian National Center for Gifted Education and Research (ÖZBF) has offered their expertise to schools, teachers, parents and students. The ÖZBF coordinates pilot projects for gifted education and functions as an initiator and as an evaluative authority. Regarding the research assignment, the ÖZBF evaluates programs regarding the effect “Olympiads”, “skipping classes” or “summer academies”. Schools are relatively free in establishing differentiated curriculum and instruction. It is the task of the ÖZBF to evaluate these approaches.

In addition to the ÖZBF, the following institutes can be consulted for advice: the Pedagogic Institute, the Pedagogic Academy including a coordination office for gifted education (each in one of the 16 counties), some Universities, such as the University of Vienna (Prof. Dr. Friedrich Oswald), as well as the ministry of education itself.

Congresses on giftedness and gifted education have been organized on a regular basis since 1996. Every two years the ministry of education finances a congress regarding different topics of gifted education. All coordination offices of the 9 states take part at these

congresses. The ÖZBF functions as the organizational institute. In 2004 the topic “giftedness in mathematics and science” was stressed.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Gifted education in Austria has its roots in political action. The last decennium has been characterized by a consensus among different political parties concerning scientific definitions of giftedness and the educational needs of gifted students. The discussion of “separation versus integration” has changed to “separation and integration” and focuses more strongly on the individual well-being of gifted students.

School initiatives and private activities have also developed strongly in the past few years. Even with this rapid development for the good of gifted education, more explicit legislation and guidelines is still viewed as necessary in Austria. The sensibility of teachers, parents and students in the field of giftedness is obvious, but differentiation within schools regarding gifted education needs to be extended.

A variety of scientific publications about giftedness and gifted educations is available in Austria, but related school materials have not been often enough available for teachers. This needs to be changed.

The major task however, is seen in the qualification of gifted education of teachers as well as of specialized institutes which are associated with gifted education (from Kindergarten to University). Gifted education needs to be integrated into the curriculum of teacher training, not only as an optional but as an obligatory subject.

The post-graduate retraining in gifted education, i.e., the ECHA program leading to the diploma “Specialists of Gifted Education”, should give the opportunity to continue the study on University level. Through cooperation between European Universities a European M.A. program in gifted education should be established.

Teachers with a specialization in gifted education should be recognized at school and should be able to invest more time in the field of gifted education. In this way they can function as “scouts” and “mentors” for gifted students and provide a more successful procedure for the identification of gifted students. In this respect, a special focus on the identification of “underachievers” is needed. Special attention needs to be given to gender differences, including more research.

In general, it is more research needed to investigate the learning and developmental need of gifted children.

The development of gifted education in Austria over the last ten years, from giftedness as an exception to a general policy of gifted education, needs to be developed even further. To reach this goal, and to secure a high quality standard of gifted education, the infrastructure connecting the coordinating institutes of gifted education of the 9 states and the ÖZBF needs to be developed further in Austria.

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BE - Belgium (Flanders)***A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines***

There is no specific definition or recognition of giftedness or gifted education in Belgian (Flemish) legislation. The current Minister of Education is preparing a law concerning provisions for differences among children and in this context gifted children will be, for the first time in Flemish history, considered as a special interest group. This legislative work was expected to be completed by the end of 2002.

There are also no explicitly written guidelines set by the school inspectorate or other relevant authorities. In some cases, a document related to giftedness is prepared by an individual school team for their own school. Such a document includes identification criteria as well as the relevant diagnostic instruments and other specific entrance conditions. In general, schools have complete autonomy in education of the gifted.

B. Specific Provisions

Early entrance and grade skipping is possible in Flanders. Grade skipping is easier in primary schools [ISCED level 1] because skipping a grade in secondary schools means that a state-examination has to be taken in order to start in the higher grades [ISCED level 2 and 3]. In general, grade skipping is rather uncommon in Flanders.

Since the year 2000 primary schools in particular have become interested in how to manage gifted children within a regular school system. During the actual school year some schools (primary as well as secondary) initiated special provisions and experiments for the more able pupils.

Since schools have autonomy in educating the gifted some schools organize experimental programs and others do not. Approximately 10-15 % of the primary schools have founded a “kangaroo-class” of around four hours a week. In these classes, gifted children from different regular classes and different ages come together to work on challenging exercises and projects. Initially this initiative had a cognitive goal. However, after field testing it also seemed to be very important for the social-emotional development of gifted children in that

it allowed them to meet peers. This contact with peers has a positive influence on the self-esteem of the more able. Furthermore, it is possible for them to compete with equals which helps them to develop a more realistic self-concept.

Interest in education of the gifted is also growing in secondary schools. The different experiments that take place nowadays are situated between the existing models of curriculum compacting and school wide enrichment.

Some schools experiment with self study as an enrichment provision for the gifted student. The most important guideline in Flanders for designing specific provisions for the gifted concerns a search for a balance between separation and integration. Separation is really very successful with respect to the social-emotional advantages in building a peer group.

Out-of-school activities are mainly organized through competitions in art, math and sport. Academically gifted students can take part in other activities which are organized on an infrequent and mostly experimental level [ISCED levels 2 and 3].

The parent organization “Bekina” offers summer camps for gifted students on ISCED levels 0, 1 and 3.

C. Identification Criteria

No official procedure for the identification of the gifted exists in Flanders. Each school develops its own identification procedure. Psychological intelligence tests are most often used within an identification procedure to nominate a student for a specific provision. Expert evaluations are rare but accepted by schools and teachers.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

As schools have the autonomy to organize specific provisions for the gifted the key factor is the teacher. However, teacher training programs specialized in gifted education do not exist at the compulsory training level in Flanders. The topic “giftedness” or “gifted education” is not discussed in any way.

In-service teachers can take voluntary classes in gifted education. The demand to follow these classes is increasing. In 2002 the first ECHA course “Specialist in gifted education” started in Flanders with 10 participants.

Furthermore, platforms for both primary and secondary school teachers were founded in order to speed up the knowledge transfer and expertise in education for the gifted. Special attention is given to differentiation materials in order to develop more confidence regarding within-classroom differentiation.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

In the past some research on high ability was done at the Free University of Brussels.

In 1998, the “Center for the Study of Giftedness” was founded at the University of Antwerp. Here, the supervision of dissertations in the domain of giftedness is organized. Furthermore, the “Center for the Study of Giftedness” offers its expertise to parents and teachers, including a specialized procedure for the identification of the gifted student.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Attention for the specific situation of gifted children began in August 1998 when the Center for the Study of Giftedness was founded at the University of Antwerp, changing the climate for this group in Flanders. The only initiative that existed before then was the Parent Association BEKINA. Until now, legislation for the gifted and other political action is missing but the Minister of Education is becoming more aware of the specific needs of these children.

At the moment, gifted education is basically a school initiative.

The biggest obstacle to gifted education in Flanders is the lack of financial aid. Even if some schools do initiate provisions for the gifted, they are not covered financially.

Finally, further research is essential. First, fundamental research is needed. Second, the research on educational experiments and the evaluation of early entrance and grade skipping, as a provision for the gifted, needs to be carried out.



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CH - Switzerland

The educational system in Switzerland is organized in a strongly decentralized manner. Switzerland consists of 26 cantons, each with autonomous educational legislation and school practice. The following information concerns the 19 German speaking cantons which are integrated into the “educational network for gifted education” in Switzerland. Because of a close relationship and cooperation between the educational systems of the German speaking cantons of Switzerland and the “Principality of Lichtenstein”, Lichtenstein is also part of the Swiss network for gifted education. Information about Lichtenstein is included in this report.

A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Most of the school legislation of the Swiss cantons explicitly mentions gifted students, provides information about gifted education or at least recognizes gifted students as part of a group of students with special needs.

Early entrance is possible and regulated in most of the cantons. Every canton allows grade skipping at ISCED level 1. Grade skipping at ISCED levels 2 and 3 is regulated by law in most of the cantons.

B. Specific Provisions

A common provision for the gifted is acceleration, in the form of early entrance and grade skipping. During the regular school day, gifted students can also share classes with higher grades in a specific topic. Other recognized provisions for gifted students are enrichment activities, mainly organized as “within class differentiation” or in cooperation between school and “Schulhaus” [“School House”]. The “Schulhaus” itself offers group activities within the local school house or within a network of school houses.

In special cases release from compulsory education for gifted students is possible to a limited extent.

Less common, but occasionally practiced, is the use of mentors, individual learning contracts, or education within specific, mostly non-intellectual, classes (segregation).

Table 1 presents an overview of the provisions for the gifted within the different cantons.

Table 1: Overview of provisions for the gifted within the different cantons of Switzerland (incl. “Principality of Lichtenstein” (FL))

Provision	Canton																					
	E D K O S t	B K Z	A G	A I	A R	B E	B L	B S	F L	G L	G R	L U	N W	O W	S G	S H	S Z	T G	U R	V S d	Z G	Z H
A: Early entrance	x		x	x	x	x	y	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x
A: Share classes with higher grades in specific topics		x	x		x	x		x	x	y	x	x	x	x				x	x		x	x
A: Grade skipping	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x
B: Enrichment as within class differentiation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			x	x		x	x
B: Cooperation with “Schulhaus”	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	y	x	x	x	x				x	x		x	x
B: Individual learning contracts		x	x	y	x	x			x		y	x		x	x			x	x		x	x
B: Release of compulsory education (partly)		x	x		x	x		x		x	x	x		x				x	x		x	x
B: Workshops			x			x	x		x	x		x		x				x	x		x	x
C: Group activities within the “Schulhaus”	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	y	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x		x	x
C: Network of school houses activities	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		y	x	x		x				x	x		x	
C: Individual mentoring	x		x	x	x			x	x	x	x			x				x	x		x	x
C: Special classes (Music, Arts, Sport)			x			x ¹⁾	x	x	y		y	y	y					x				x
C: financial aid for separate education (private)			y				x	x					y	x				x				x
D: Basic Compulsory Training, Retraining and Further Education		x	x			x	y	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x
D: Advisory Institutes	x	x	x	y		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x			x
D: Experts or specialized institutions	x	x	x	x	x	x	o	x	y		x	x	x	x	x			x	x			x
D: Materials			x	x		x	x	x	y		x	x	x	x	x					x		x
D: Information and public sensibility actions		x	x	x	x	x	o		y	y	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x
E: Priority in integrative education within regular classes	x	x	x	y	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x			x
E: Special attention to special groups (female students, US – students, underachiever)	x	x				x		x		y	x	x	x		x			x				x
E: Gifted education as a topic of school- and quality development	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	y	y	x	x			x	x			x
E: Explicit definition	x	x	x		x						x	x	y	x				x	x			x

Legend:

Appenzell Innerrhoden (AI), Appenzell Außerrhoden (AR), Bern (BE), Basel-Landschaft (BL), Basel-Stadt (BS), Fürstentum Liechtenstein (FL), Glarus (GL), Graubunden (GR), Luzern (LU), Nidwalden (NW), Obwalden (OW), Schaffhausen (SH), Schwyz (SZ), St. Gallen (SG), Thurgau (TG), Uri (UR), Wallis (German speaking area) (VS), Zug (ZG), Zürich (ZH)

A: Acceleration; B: Enrichment; C: Group activities and individual provisions; D: Support by specialists; E: further information

X: available at the canton at least since 2002

Y: available at the canton at least since 2004

O: no longer available at the canton at least since 2004

C. Identification Criteria

The decision to implement individual provisions within the regular classroom is based on teacher nomination or self-nomination. For other provisions, such as skipping classes or sharing classes with higher grades in a specific topic, a psychological examination by a (school) psychologist is necessary.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

The teacher training is organized within the “pedagogical university” [Pädagogische Hochschule]. Gifted education is part of the basic curriculum that every student must follow during teacher training. For teachers in general retraining, gifted education is offered on a regular basis in various forms, from seminars to post-doctoral courses. The pedagogical university Zürich has implemented the study program leading to the ECHA – Diploma [European Council for High Ability].

Local educational and school authorities implement special positions for specialists in gifted education to meet the needs of proper counseling for teachers, parents and students. Teacher retraining can also be organized. Furthermore, information and materials regarding giftedness and gifted education is structurally distributed in the field to increase general awareness of the topic. The “School House” offers internal retraining.

A one week seminar regarding gifted education, called “Wings”, is offered at a private level and organized at different retraining centers in the Swiss cantons.

In general, all cantons are interconnected within a network to guarantee experience exchanges. Both internal and between-school networks are organized mainly within the

context of provisions for the gifted. A special workgroup has been formed for all German speaking parts of Switzerland, financed by 20 cantons (including FL), and provides services and information through the internet.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

In Switzerland, quite a few specialists in gifted education offer their expertise to the field. Each canton has one responsible authority for the field of gifted education. A number of institutes and universities do research in the field of gifted education. Longitudinal studies have been designed to follow gifted students regarding “early reading and calculating as a social reality” or “care and education of gifted students”. Beyond that, provisions are evaluated on a regular basis. Many private counseling centers offer assistance to gifted students.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Gifted education started with private initiatives. Political and school activities followed. At the moment, Switzerland is in a phase of consolidation and realization. Most cantons have developed concepts and have adapted their legislation and guidelines with respect to the gifted.

The largest obstacle to further development concerns the financing of the mainly advanced plans and concepts.

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DE - Germany

Education in Germany is the responsibility of the 16 federal states; education policy is coordinated on a national level by a standing conference of state ministers of education and cultural affairs. A complete representation of the range of each state's offers and school-directive arrangements concerning the education of gifted children in schools cannot be given at this point. For a differentiated account we refer to the report by Holling³, et. Al (2004).

In this account, details on legal regulations, activities for extra-support, criteria for selection, teachers' basic education as well as further education, research and qualified support as well as on the realization process of gifted education are presented. The details of this account are based on information of our correspondent and on the report by Holling et. al. (2004). The authors of this account are responsible for the presentation of facts.

The mentioning, or rather the non-mentioning, of information is not to be understood as an assessment of the importance and quality of the offers. They are rather supposed to give an insight into the variety of gifted education at schools and to serve the European comparison.

A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

The term "giftedness" is explicitly mentioned in the legislation of some states. Furthermore, in a number of states regulations are formulated which present - with reference to gifted education - appropriate measures for extra support and information on how to implement these measures. There are guidelines in all states for the transition to a flexible school system through steps such as early enrolment at primary schools [ISCED Level 1] and skipping classes [ISCED Level 1-3].

³ Holling, H., Preckel, F., Vock, M. & Schulze Willbrenning, B. (2004). *Schulische Begabtenförderung in den Ländern – Maßnahmen und Tendenzen*. In: Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung (Hrsg.). Materialien zur Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung, Heft 121. BLK. Bonn. (pdf-File at: www.blk-bonn.de/download.htm)

B. Specific Provisions

A range of specific support-measures has been put into practice in Germany. In addition to the early enrolment at primary school [ISCED Level 1], the accelerated pass-through of the flexible age to start school and grade skipping [ISCED Level 1-3], inner-school support-measures include the opportunity for pupils to take part in lessons of higher classes [ISCED Level 1-3]. The various measures of acceleration have been tested in most diverse models in the different states, and they have partly been put into practice.

Additionally, working-groups as well as cooperation with universities, business undertakings companies or/and non-commercial companies [ISCED Level 1-3] are organized.

Another common form of inner-school support of gifted children is realized with the aid of extra-curricular syllabus content [ISCED Level 0-3]. Inner-school competitions take place regularly. Additionally, students and parents can take advantage of psychological support at school [ISCED Level 1&2].

Outside school, specific additional courses and summer camps are offered by different providers [ISCED Level 1-3]. Furthermore, talented students are challenged and supported in a number of competitions taking place throughout the states and the whole of Germany [ISCED Level 1-3].

C. Identification Criteria

At the request of the parents, children can start primary school younger than six years of age on the condition that the children's successful participation in school-life can be expected from their cognitive, physical and social development. The school administration – partly in consideration of an expert's report – usually makes the decision regarding early admission.

To be considered for the skipping of a class, a pupil's good achievements in school and apparent motivation are usually taken for granted. Results of psychological examinations are often included in the identification process, although they are not always necessary. In general, the decision to allow a pupil's early move up a class is made in a class conference.

For the participation in further inner-school activity programs for further support, school-specific criteria for selection have to be met. Identification/selection criteria for out-of-school support activities/programs are set by those organizations that offer the activities/programs. Usually, nominations by teachers, parents or even the children themselves are accepted. Extraordinary school achievements are mostly precondition in the selection process.

Other programs of private initiatives most often use identification criteria which are related to the IQ-values of intelligence tests.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Only a few federal states deal with “gifted education” in teachers’ compulsory training. Opportunities for teachers’ retraining and further education are offered occasionally in Germany [ISCED Level 0-3]. The *International Centre for the Study of Giftedness* (ICBF) of the University of Münster coordinates the retraining programs for teachers “Specialist in Gifted Education” (ECHA) and retraining programs for pre-school teachers “Specialist in Pre-School Gifted Education” (ECHA-certificate). Experiences gained from these programs have been put into practice in some federal states, particularly in North Rhine-Westphalia. Some cities take their own responsibility for upgrading their teachers in gifted education. As an example, the Competence Center for Gifted Education of the City Düsseldorf (CCB) started -in cooperation with the ICBF- the ECHA Program for a group of teachers of the city schools. Beyond this, this center provides individual psychological assessment for the students with high potentials. Furthermore, the network for gifted education is organized. These services are partly or entirely financed by the city.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

In Germany, some institutes have devoted themselves to the topic of “research on giftedness” and “Gifted Education”. At some universities PhDs concentrate on giftedness

and on gifted education as well. In a few cities (e.g. Rostock, Marburg, Munich, Münster, Hannover, Erfurt, Tübingen and Ulm) there are university-linked institutes which serve as contact points for ministries, teachers, parents and other persons affected. These institutes, in addition to their own research projects on “diagnostics”, “support measures”, “environment-analysis” and “creativity”, often support state-related school-projects. Furthermore, a number of professional care and counseling centers are available for both diagnosis of giftedness and counseling. These places are usually linked to scientific institutes as, for instance, the Gaesdoncker advisory centre for Gifted Education of the Radboud University Nijmegen (NL). Parent initiatives have been set up in many cities. Projects on Gifted Education are also carried out or supported by associations and foundations such as the Karg-foundation.

F. Priorities and Expectations

The way Gifted Education is realized in the 16 federal states is extremely variable and can thus only be inspected on a state-by-state basis. Thus, we refer in addition to the account by Holling et al. (2004) to the report by Holling⁴ et. al. (2001), which contains recommendations for the realization and organization of support measures, identification processes, further education of teachers, and evaluation of measures, which are mentioned in excerpts in this report as an assessment of the children’s special needs and necessary changes.

In addition to an intensified consideration of the pre-school field more transition to flexibility in the school system is required, particularly the opportunity for early enrolment at primary school and skipping of classes. In addition, the adaptation of the curricula and teaching methods is recommended so that ability grouping (e.g. acceleration for a complete group, working/study groups) can be organized more easily and measures of differentiation (e.g. individualization, extra-curricular syllabus content, participation in higher classes, self-study) can be realized.

⁴ Holling, H., Vock, M. & Preckel, F. (2001). Schulische Begabtenförderung in den Ländern der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. In: Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung (Hrsg.). *Begabtenförderung – ein Beitrag zur Förderung von Chancengleichheit in Schulen – Orientierungsrahmen* (S.27-270). Materialien zur Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung, Heft 91. BLK. Bonn.

Particularly with respect to the process of identifying students for support measures we refer to the need to evaluate the compatibility of skills to a requirements specification/profile. Standardized solutions are rejected, particularly in view of the heterogeneity of the support programs and the individual differences of the students. Instead, multi-method and multimodal policies are preferred, as they are presented in models by, e.g., Heller⁵ (2000). Standardized intelligence test procedures for in-school support programs should only be used for the clarification of concrete questions.

The discussion of “Gifted Education” in teacher education, as well as in the further education of teachers, is also seen as urgently necessary. It is explicitly emphasized that teachers need to acquire diagnostic competence in respect to giftedness, pedagogical-didactical and evaluative competencies as well as the skill to be able to apply the specific giftedness-didactics.

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DK - Denmark



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

The Danish school legislation is presented in the “Folkeskole Act”. Neither the term “giftedness” nor gifted students as part of a subgroup are mentioned in the legislation.

However, the recognition of individual differences is a basic axiom in the “Folkeskole Act”. As a consequence, internal differentiation is a fundamental guideline in Danish school education. Therefore it is the task of the school to ensure the identification of the individual needs of each student and to offer provisions for the development of potential (Chapter 2, Amendment 4 and 5): “The organization of the teaching, including the choice of teaching and working methods, teaching materials and the selection of subject-matter, shall in each subject live up to the aims of the Folkeskole and shall be varied so that it corresponds to the needs and prerequisites of the individual pupil. It is up to the head teacher to ensure that the class teacher and the other teachers of the class plan and organize the teaching in such a way that it offers challenges to all pupils.”

B. Specific Provisions

Official programs in gifted education do not exist in Denmark.

At the moment, few schools pay special attention to gifted education or provide systematic provisions for gifted students. At the Royal Ballet School, talented ballet dancers are offered provisions to develop their talent in that field. Gifted students in music are trained at the Sct Annæ Gymnasium.

At the Statens Pædagogiske Forsøgcenter (SPF) new views and ideas of educational teaching styles and provisions like differentiation, project oriented lessons, working with portfolio, or the democratic student self-determination are developed, tested and evaluated on an experimental level.

In 2002 a 4 year research study was launched (see “research and professional care and counseling”). In 2004 a special school for gifted children (Mentiqa) started its activities

near Copenhagen. Abt. 100 pupils attend the school at the moment, and the plan is to start branches in Funen and Jutland.

Also in 2004 the lower-secondary boarding school (14-16 years), Odsherred, started special classes in math for gifted pupils.

C. Identification Criteria

No general identification procedures for gifted students exist in Denmark.

Exceptions are the Royal Ballet School and the Sct Annæ Gymnasium that set their own institutional criteria for the fields of dance and music.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Teachers at ISCED levels 0-3 follow a general compulsory teacher training. Retraining is offered on a regular basis. The topics “giftedness” or “gifted education” are not subjects of discussion, neither in compulsory training nor in retraining.

For a couple of years a Gifted Children Network has been run by parents of gifted children. This network was initiated by Mensa Denmark, and is still coordinated through Mensa.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

In 2002 a 4 year pilot research and development project was launched in the Municipality of Lyngby-Taarbaek. The initiative was taken by the project coordinator, Ole Kyed, in cooperation with the two professors of the Danish University of Education, Kirsten Baltzer and Poul Nissen. Abt. 30 pupils have been identified by teachers and parents and will be followed through 4 school years. Identified pupils range from 1st to 9th grade, and 9 Municipal and 1 private school participate. Tests of pupils and parents have been taken, and pupils, parents, and teachers have answered Achenbach questionnaires.

The project is the result of nearly 10 years of debate in Denmark on the topic of gifted children and their education. The debate was started by Ole Kyed, and interest in the topic is growing slowly.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Provisions for the gifted (if they appear) have to be organized through private initiatives. Still, not many teachers are sensitive to the topic of gifted education and there are only a few specially trained teachers. Experts in the field are discussing the lack of political recognition and legislative considerations regarding gifted children.

There is a major need for experiences in the training and retraining of teachers and other educators in gifted education.

Early entrance or grade skipping are seen as necessary provisions for the gifted students.

There is a general desire for experience exchanges for teachers, both within and between schools, at a regional and national level. There is also interest in the European and international networks.

Finally, there are major shortcomings regarding research on giftedness, the number of experts in the field, and professional care. Publications and information, courses and seminars are slowly starting to appear on the scene.

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ES - Spain



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Gifted students are mentioned explicitly in the legislation of Spain.

The “Royal Decree 696/1995” (BOE, June 2) explicitly “regulates the conditions for educational attention to students with temporary or permanent special needs that are associated with educational history, or that are due to the conditions of giftedness, mental disability or motor or sensorial handicap”. The law thus regulates aspects related to organizational structure and resources.

Furthermore, the Spanish school law “Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo” (LOGSE, 1990, article 36) implicitly deals with gifted education by setting guidelines for the identification process of special educational needs and individualized provisions and actions as a result of the identification.

In order to reach the goals mentioned in article 36, the educational system should have access to teachers specialized in pertinent fields of study and qualified professionals, as well as effective didactic means and material resources so that students may participate in the learning process. Schools should possess a suitable educational framework and carry out the necessary curricular modifications and diversifications in order to facilitate students’ meeting the educational goals. Schools should also adapt their physical and material conditions in accordance with these students’ needs. Attention to students with special educational needs will begin from the moment of detection. To this end, educational services that stimulate and foster the optimal development of these students will be in place, and the respective educational administrations will thus guarantee the proper education of these students. The transfer of a student to a special education school will only take place when the student’s needs cannot be met in a particular school. Such a situation will be reviewed periodically so that it may promote greater integration in the system. The educational administrations will regulate and encourage parent and teacher participation in the decisions that affect the education of students with special educational needs “Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo” (LOGSE, 1990, article 37 and Royal Decree 696/1995) [ISCED level 0 – 3].

In April 1996, regulation of conditions and procedures in order to allow flexibility in the acceleration of intellectually gifted students regarding compulsory primary and secondary education were completed (BOE 1996). In particular, the procedures to identify the unique educational needs of intellectually gifted students' in education were pointed out (Resolution, April 29, 1996). Later, the establishment of the deadlines and resolution of application files for students with special educational needs associated with intellectual giftedness were set (Resolution, March 20, 1997) [ISCED level 1 & 2].

The law provides regulations regarding the flexibility of the education regarding acceleration and enrichment as follows (Order, April 24, 1996; BOE, May 3, 1996):

Required schooling may be reduced by a maximum of two years that under no circumstances may belong to the same educational level or stage.

Accelerated progress through required schooling will be subject to a process of continuous evaluation, and may be annulled when the student ceases to meet proposed objectives. In such a case the student will study at the level or stage that corresponds to his or her age.

Early entrance into or accelerated progress through compulsory education will be carried out, in accordance with the Order of April 24, 1996, when the psycho-pedagogical evaluation concludes that the student has reached the objectives of the grade level and affirms that this measure is appropriate for the development of the student's personal stability and socialization.

In any case, the individual adaptation of the curriculum will include the adjustment or expansion of the objectives and content, more flexible criteria for evaluation, and will stipulate the specific methodology that is appropriate considering the student's learning style and school context.

Enrichment is to be carried out when the student demonstrates exceptional performance in a limited number of areas or when the student demonstrates constant exceptional performance generally, but shows affective or social imbalance.

Curricular adaptation will include enriched objectives and content, more flexible criteria for evaluation and will stipulate the specific methodology that should be implemented taking into consideration the student's learning style and school context.

Curricular adaptations that are formulated for these students will encourage full and stable development of the established capacities set forth in the general objectives of required education. [ISCED level 1 - 3].

Generally, schools are free to organize their educational program so that students of the same knowledge and learning-level can be reached together (LOGSE 1990).

Finally, legislation exists for the teacher training concerning "Education of the gifted child" (Royal Decree 696/1995 April 28.; BOE, June 2, 1995):

Since December, 24, 2002 (see BOE nº 307), a new law for the educational system came into force ("Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación, 10/2002" [Quality Education Law]. This law devotes explicit attention to the "intellectually gifted students". Chapter VII, 3rd Section, Article 43 establishes the basic principles as followed:

1. Intellectually gifted students will receive specific attention from the educational administrations.
2. In order to provide a more effective educational response to these students, the educational administrations will adopt the necessary measures for early identification and early assessment of their needs.
3. The government, after consulting with the Autonomous Communities, will establish norms that will make possible accelerated completion of required schooling, independent of the chronological age of these students, will set the criteria for creating intensified learning programs.
4. The educational administrations will adopt the necessary measures for facilitating the education of these students in schools that, because of their conditions, can offer them the kind of attention that their characteristics call for.
5. It is the responsibility of the educational administrations to encourage the teachers that will work with these students to participate in specific training courses related to the treatment of these students. In the same way, they will adopt the appropriate measures so that the parents of these students may also receive adequate individualized advising, as well as the necessary information that will aid them in the education of their children.

The last general legislation covering for the whole country is the Royal Decree 943/2003 from July, 18 (BOE, July, 31, 2003). This R.D. develops the basic principles of the article above and expands the restrictions for curricular flexibility (acceleration) from two years (see Order, April 24 cited previously) to three years or more if circumstances make it

necessary. This makes acceleration, mostly understood as grade skipping, a non-restricted possibility.

B. Specific Provisions

Specific provisions for gifted education are rarely used in school. However, an increasing need for information and a growing interest in provisions for gifted students can be observed. To realize gifted education, curriculum adaptation is applied on a rather experimental level [ISCED level 1 -3].

Some schools support class skipping and stimulate gifted students to make use of this provision. However, administrative processes slow down the planning of this kind of provision and are an obstacle for its realization.

On ISCED level 1 & 2, shared classes with higher grades is offered as a provision for the gifted but the use of this provision is still rather uncommon.

Furthermore, Spain regularly organizes within-school competitions for gifted students on ISCED level 1 -3.

Psychological (school-) counseling is available at all times and can be offered to gifted students if necessary.

C. Identification Criteria

In spite of the legal obligation for the identification of special needs of each individual student, neither identification criteria for the gifted, nor procedures or test instruments have been standardized in the field.

Some initiatives, such as CTY Spain, offer this service to the schools. This Center will establish in 2005 a generalized Talent Search based on the SCAT (School and College Ability Test) previously validated in Spain by the University of Navarra (see references).

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Spanish curricula for teacher training pay little attention to the topic “gifted education” [ISCED level 1 – 3].

Analysis of the curricula for basic primary school teachers’ formation reveals that only 6 out of 57 schools (a mere 10%) have a course on giftedness. Only 3 of these courses are compulsory.

Some Administrations or professional Associations offer courses where giftedness and gifted education is included as a topic.

Some Universities offer retraining and further education of teachers regarding the topics “giftedness” and “gifted education” as well, but these courses are offered only infrequently.

In Spain, it should also be possible to follow the comprehensive training for teachers to gain the European Council for High Ability (ECHA) diploma which entitles to be called ‘Specialist in Gifted Education’. With this qualification, the implementation of existing educational legislation to its full extent is expected.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

A number of universities (University of A Coruña, University of Alicante, University Autónoma of Barcelona, University Complutense, University of Murcia, University of Navarra, University of La Rioja, University of Santiago, among others) as well as the Center for Talented Youth-Spain are working scientifically in the field of giftedness. Some of them also run Ph.D. projects.

Beyond organizing provisions for gifted students, the Center for Talented Youth-Spain also serves as an information center for parents and teachers.

The journal “Fáisca Revista de Altas Capacidades” publishes research work exclusively on the topic of giftedness and gifted education. However, other Spanish journals regularly include articles on these topics (i.e., Revista Española de Pedagogía; Bordón; a list of doctoral dissertations can be found at www.mcu.es/TESEO/teseo.html).

F. Priorities and Expectations

Gifted education in Spain has its roots in private initiatives. Even at present, they still offer an important and valuable contribution to the development of gifted students. Recently, the emphasis on the legislative law and guidelines for the gifted students and the need for individual provisions are increasingly a matter of public interest, although specific school actions for the gifted are still rather rare.

The social awareness of the issues regarding giftedness has increased in Spain, and the sensitivity to the topic “giftedness” has risen generally. However, there is still a great deal to be done in order to guarantee success in the future.

The main priority for the coming years will be to adopt a much more flexible educational legislation so that the exceptional levels of these students can be supported, permitting them to move freely through the curriculum according to their capacity by breaking down the link between age and grade.

To realize this, systematic ways of identification that permit the detection and a program/provision to the specific talents has to be introduced.

Furthermore, specific courses about gifted education should be obligatory in the basic curricula for teacher training and the training of psychologists. In addition, the existence of a permanent teachers training program is necessary, to communicate didactic teaching skills so teachers are able to cater to diversity in the classroom.

Finally, in addition to further legislative developments, there is an urgent need for increased financial support. Specific curricula and school materials for gifted children have to be developed.

Specific kinds of provisions such as “sharing classes with higher grades”, “group-wise acceleration” and “workshops” are required.

The programs and provisions for gifted children that have been developed thus far generally neglect minority groups such as the handicapped and ethnic minorities. Special provisions for female students are also inadequate.

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Council for High Ability (ECHA)
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Sociedad Española para el Estudio de la Superdotación
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AEST - Asociación Española para Superdotados y con Talento
<http://www.asociacion-aest.org>

Centro para Jóvenes con Talento CTY-España (CTYS)
Charter member of CTY International (Johns Hopkins University)
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FI - Finland***A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines***

Curricular redesign characterizes all levels of education in Finland. It is closely connected to other trends, such as decentralization and deregulation. Decentralization implies that decision-making, concerning both the organization and the contents of general and compulsory education, has mostly been transferred to the municipalities. At the national level, only general guidelines provide the framework for steering education.

The new framework curricula for the comprehensive schools and for the senior secondary schools were approved in 1994 (Framework Curriculum for the Comprehensive School 1994; Framework Curriculum for the Secondary School 1994). The school law (1998) acknowledges individual differences and allows the schools to “arrange teaching according to the age-level and abilities of the students” (Law No. 628 3§). Regarding early entrance in school, the child has the right to start school one year earlier than usual if it has the need to study (Law No. 628 §27). Furthermore, the students can receive teaching in subjects other than the ones specified in the national curriculum. This study can be partly voluntary (Law No. 628 §11). In other words, students may study more and different subjects than those listed in the curriculum. The law does not mention gifted students explicitly or as part of a subgroup of students with special needs.

B. Specific Provisions

Educational policy in the 1990s stressed individuality and the freedom of choice. In Finland, pupils usually attend the local elementary school in their neighborhood. However, the current trend of individualism has advocated the right of the parents to choose the school which their children attend.

Within schools, Finland offers a variety of provisions that gifted students can benefit from. In addition to early entrance to school (parents can decide whether their children will begin school at the age of six or seven; earlier the age was seven) [ISCED level 1], skipping

classes [ISCED levels 1-3], shared classes with higher grades, group-wise acceleration, workshops, cooperation with companies or non-profit organizations, extra-curricular activities, individual mentors and self study, Finland follows a strong direction toward individualization. As a result of this trend, schools have been encouraged to draft more individual curricula. The curricular redesign allows teaching in schools to be more differentiated. This differentiation of education is a general policy issue and therefore for all students, but it can be seen as providing an advantage for the gifted and talented pupils.

In recent years some elementary schools have arranged voluntary groups where pupils can advance in those skills in which they show talent. These groups have had teaching in thinking skills and mathematics, project-oriented working, computers and art.

In Finland the new trend of individualism allows flexible decisions in acceleration. Another possibility for acceleration is the “un-graded” school which allows pupils to advance in their studies with a flexible schedule. This “un-graded” system has been in use in most of the upper secondary schools [ISCED levels 2 and 3]. Some school are experimenting with the possibility to also attend “un-graded” school at the elementary level.

Special schools for gifted students exist on ISCED levels 1-3.

At the secondary level [ISCED levels 2 and 3] gifted students can take part in different national academic competitions. These competitions are arranged annually in, for example, mathematics, physics, computer science, philosophy and economics. Those students who rank well in the competitions are trained to compete in the international Olympics in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology or computer science. Separate programs exist in each of these subjects. University teachers of these subjects and senior students who have taken part earlier in these competitions usually give the training.

In recent years, several enrichment alternatives have become available to gifted learners on a voluntary basis. For instance, in mathematics and physics talented high school pupils have met at the University of Tampere during the evenings and weekends to be more challenged in these subjects. As part of the same project, intensive courses and summer camps in mathematics have been arranged. Some of the pupils have even participated in summer courses offered under the Open University program and have gained university credits in linear algebra and in physics. The project has received support from the Ministry of Education and from industrial sponsors. [ISCED levels 2 and 3].

Most of the special schools in Finland nurture creative talents in art and sports [ISCED levels 2 and 3].

C. Identification Criteria

In general, no other official identification procedures or nomination procedure for gifted students and the specific provision exist in Finland. One exception is the early entrance to school, where psychological and medical tests are needed. The selection of a student for a specific provision is based on different criteria which are used by the school.

As an example, one reason for selecting a school other than the local one for their child is the parents' desire to emphasize foreign languages. In Helsinki it is possible to attend a special elementary school where a child receives teaching both in Finnish and in some other language (for example, English, French, German, or Russian). These are either private schools or schools supported by the state; they select their pupils according to their own criteria. These schools can just as well be called schools for the gifted and talented because it is very hard to get permission to study in them. The special schools usually select their pupils based on their grade point average, and they may also have an admission examination.

In addition to these special schools, Finland has several special music classes in the comprehensive school. Admission to such music classes is not only based on musical talent, but also focuses on a particular interest in music.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

In Finland, there is no special program for the teacher regarding "gifted education". In general, teachers' knowledge of gifted education is based on their own interests. The current trends of individuality and freedom of choice for teachers to plan their curriculum is expected to help them in finding more appropriate ways to differentiate teaching with both elementary and secondary school pupils. However, in most of the teacher education departments, pre-service teachers study some literature concerning gifted learners as part of

their education. The in-service teachers can take some voluntary classes in gifted education that are arranged according to the interests of the teachers. Such classes are offered at the University of Helsinki and the University of Tampere.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

The University of Helsinki and the University of Tampere are doing research on the topic of giftedness and gifted education and offer their expertise through teaching and lectures. Research areas include “creativity”, “cognitive skills” and “morality and high ability”. Research results are frequently published in international journals.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Finland lacks specific legislation concerning gifted education. However, the law acknowledges differences in students and allows teachers to differentiate their teaching according to the needs of their students. According to the empirical research, pre-service teachers have had more negative attitudes toward gifted education than the in-service teachers. This trend reveals a need to provide more education for pre-service teachers. Finland needs more programs and opportunities for teachers to acquire knowledge concerning gifted education. Furthermore, Finland needs to establish a social climate that approves gifted education to be an important way to provide differentiation of education for the students.

Beyond this, special identification criteria for minorities such as handicapped students, students with different ethnic backgrounds as well as for gender-specific minorities have to be developed.

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FR - France



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

There is no specific legislation in France that defines giftedness or provides for particular educational provisions for gifted children. There is a national curriculum that guides educational programs for all students at each level and defines nationally recognized diplomas.

The general philosophy of the national educational guidelines is to identify individual and specific educational needs (Décret n° 90 – 788; 6 Sept. 1990) and to provide equal educational opportunities for all (Law 10 July 1989). This approach favors strongly the idea of heterogeneous classes at each academic level, with children having special needs being integrated in the regular classrooms. Until recently, children with special needs were considered to be those with learning difficulties, handicaps or a history of school failure. However, in 2001, The Ministry of Education organized a commission to examine the situation of intellectually precocious children and to propose measures for this population. Following the Delaubier report (January 2002), intellectually precocious children (or more widely, gifted children) are considered to be part of the special needs group (C. n° 2002-074 du 10/04/2002, C. n° 2003-050 du 28/03/03 et C. n° 2004-015 du 27/01/04).

A national school curriculum exists for all school levels [ISCED level 1 – 3]. Several decrees and official circulars from the Ministry of Education note that the French school system should respond to the diversity of students and allow each student to receive specific provisions at his or her individual level (Décret, 90 – 788; Sept. 1990, allowing students to skip one grade at ISCED level 0- 1) to develop his or her potential (Décret n° 96 0465; March 1996). This leaves open the possibility for provisions that are relevant to the gifted: recognition and need to adapt the pace of learning, different paths for learning and possibilities of content enrichment in elementary and secondary school (ISCED 2, art. 5 du décret 96-465 du 20 mai 1996 ; C. n° 98-144 du 9/07/1998), aid for scholastic difficulties, evaluation of competencies (C. n° 2000-091 du 23/06/2000) and the development of individualized programs (C. n° 98-144 du 9/07/1998).

In the “Lycée” (for students aged 15 to 18), the program content of various sectors and the possibility to take a greater number of options allows gifted children to be confronted with a stimulating environment. Pupil selection and streaming, in certain cases, has led to “pools of excellence”, located in specific schools and based on admission policies that select students with very good academic results. These special classes may be one or two years in advance of the regular curriculum.

B. Specific Provisions

According to existing legislation, the French school system strives to provide provisions for students to develop their potential. The most frequently used provisions are early entrance and grade-skipping. These provisions are offered in elementary school [ISCED level 0 – 1] and at the secondary level [ISCED level 2-3] (C. n° 2003-050 of 18/03/2003, 2002-074 of 10/04/2002).

A few public schools have tried to implement the idea of individualized academic programs to address the diversity of students’ needs. For example, an elementary school near Nice implemented special classes for gifted students; the class size was smaller than usual, teachers were highly motivated and favored individualized programs of study within each class, and the possibility of skipping up to 3 grades was offered.

On a more experimental level, some secondary level schools (mainly ISCED level 3) provide gifted (high IQ) students with various combinations of the following options: (a) enriched learning experiences (e.g., project-work) that correspond to topics in the regular curriculum, (b) allowance for one grade to be skipped, (c) close contacts between teachers and parents, (d) support from psychologists for teachers who have gifted students in their classes, (e) regroup gifted students at each school level in a class that also has 50 % “non-gifted” students, (f) allow students to join more advanced classes for specific subject matters (e.g., science) and to remain in their normal grade level for others, (g) provide a special class for the gifted at the start of secondary school, then integrate these students progressively each year into regular classes while maintaining individualized activities that continue to enrich their secondary school experience. The development of individualized educational projects and personalized paths in the school system organized by schools after

consultation with students and their families is specially recommended in a recent administrative circular (C. n° 2003-050 du 28/03/2003 et C. n° 2004-015 du 27/01/2004). Also, since September 2004 in the Parisian “Janson de Sailly” junior high school, an experimental pedagogical unit has been opened that seeks to integrate gifted children with scholastic difficulties (7th and 8th graders, the “collège” level in France). This unit provides support through a reference teacher for 12 gifted students who were having problems integrating into the school system. These students follow individualized programs which are composed of classes offered in school, potentially drawn from different years of study, to fit the students’ needs. Personal projects and a room for students affiliated with the special unit to allow students to meet each other and receive special guidance is also part of the experimental program.

Other specialized public secondary schools providing special arrangements for talented students in sports, music and artistic domains exist in most areas of France. These schools are part of the regular panorama of the educational system. Students’ schedules are arranged in ways that allow them blocks of time to pursue their special interest area, sometimes in collaboration with public or private centers that specialize in sports, music or art [ISCED level 2 & 3]. There is a possibility to implement other individualized scholastic activities that can supplement or replace parts of the regular national curriculum, but this is rare in France.

Within-school competitions are organized on a regular basis and represent another provision for the gifted. Outside of school, some extra-curricular programs like the “Jeunes Vocations Artistique, Literaire et Scientifiques (Young artists, writers and scientists)” in Paris are organized, mostly through private initiatives.

C. Identification Criteria

Early entrance and grade skipping is usually based on the judgment of parents and teachers or other relevant participants. There is no official identification procedure for the gifted that is nationally recognized. In a recent position paper from the Ministry of Education, the criterion of an IQ equal to or greater than 130 (two standard deviations above the average) was proposed as a consensually accepted cut-off, based on the practices in some pilot programs for the gifted in France, as well as gifted programs in other countries. The IQ is

usually evaluated with the Wechsler test (WISC, WAIS) administered by a psychologist in private practice or by a school psychologist.

It should be noted, however, that the Delaubier report (2000) proposes to reconsider the instruments used to evaluate intelligence and to move towards a multidimensional approach to intelligence.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

There is no systematic training that concerns the gifted however the goal exists to sensitize teachers to the diversity of the student population with gifted students being explicitly mentioned (Bulletin officiel n° 15 du 11/04/2002). In addition the report on pedagogical experiences concerning gifted children in secondary schools ("Bilan des expériences pédagogiques dans le second degré sur la scolarisation des élèves intellectuellement précoces") , Dugruelle & Le Guillou, for the Ministry of children, national education and research (May 2003, n° 2003-018) emphasizes the importance of teacher training and proposes that actions be taken. In 2005, a training workshop on giftedness for educators involved in teacher training programs is planned. This program is organized by the Parisian area school system in collaboration with parent associations. Some private associations for the gifted organize occasionally conferences that teachers and specialists attend on an individual basis.

In general, teacher training in France involves two to three years of university study (often in psychology or related fields) followed by a two year program of study and practical training at one of the national teacher training institutes (IUFM). For high school teachers some advanced studies in the chosen subject area (e.g. history, math) are part of teacher training.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

Reports by the Ministry of Education note that research on gifted children is a priority, and that this research should help to specify their specific profiles and offer adapted programs. It is also noted that France is well behind other countries in work on this topic. Currently, some universities and institutions, such as the University of Paris (Paris 5 and Paris 10) do research on the topic of giftedness. At the Université René Descartes (Paris 5) several studies are being conducted, funded privately by the Inkermann Fund (Fondation de France). These cover topics such as early identification of the gifted, intra-individual variability in gifted children's ability profiles, creative giftedness, and the image of gifted children that other children may have in school settings. Additionally, there was a survey conducted in 2003 by the Ministry of Education (Dugruelle et Le Guillou) on ways that secondary schools provide support for gifted students in France.

In addition to the universities, a few professional counselors (mostly private), organizations such as Inetop or Eurotalent and mostly parent-based associations, such as AFEP, serve as specialists.

Research results and experiences of various initiatives are published frequently.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Gifted education in France started basically through private initiatives. As giftedness came more to the attention of the public, gifted education became a political issue and so the sensitivity to gifted education also rose in schools. In spite of the fact that gifted education in France is at an early stage of development, schools are starting to react to the situation, although mostly on an experimental level. The situation of the gifted has been explicitly and systematically considered in official documents since 2002. Gifted children are included in the category of children with specific needs. This category of students must be handled within the general French educational system which has the goal of providing, without exclusion, for all students an educational program that can bring each person to the highest level of development.

In this perspective, several orientations are proposed for gifted students: 1) integration of these students in heterogeneous classes rather than special classes, (2) individualized education programs to fit each gifted student that combine elements present in the regular school system. Thus, to take into account the heterogeneity of the gifted student

population, the response to gifted children's needs consists of multiple options, such as individualized help, enriched activities, and the possibility of skipping a grade.

Further university-based research on the topic of giftedness is necessary. A nationwide study should be conducted to obtain a better idea of the needs of gifted students, the problems that they experience with the regular educational program that is available, and the extent to which these problems concern a limited part of the gifted population. Initiatives that have been implemented need to be evaluated for their costs and benefits. The identification of children with "heterogeneous" ability profiles should be enhanced, especially through an information campaign to sensitize the different participants in the school system (e.g. teachers, parents, psychologists). The widely-practiced exams at the end of elementary school, prior to the move to secondary school, are a good opportunity to identify gifted students. However, the identification would be better conducted earlier, toward the beginning of elementary school. Related to the last point, better evaluation tools need to be developed. These tools should cover a broader range of giftedness domains than that measured by IQ. Families of gifted students need to be partners of the educational system and their questions need to be answered by a competent unit in the national educational system. Teacher training programs and psychologist training programs that specifically address issues of giftedness are being developed. Finally, proposals for gifted children at elementary school need to be articulated with coherent options for follow-ups at the secondary level. Of special note is the need for elementary and secondary schools in a region to be linked, to provide coherent trajectories for the gifted in the educational system.

In the current situation, the realization of gifted education in France should be classified as difficult. Other national priorities, such as reducing violence in school and achieving a higher basic level of education, delay the focus of the ministry of education on the topic of "gifted education". In addition, the current lack of teachers makes it hard to strengthen the field of gifted education and foster further development.

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GR - Greece



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

The first provisions for children with special needs were officially implemented at the beginning of the 1970s. At the same time, special education started to become part of the curriculum of teacher training and a few schools for “special education students” were opened. Prior to Greece becoming a member of the European Union in 1979, the new constitution indicated that “all Greeks are entitled to visit public schools of all grades of education. The State encourages eminent students as well as students who need support or special care, in regard to their abilities” (1975, Article 16; 4). The first law (1143) of Special Education was accepted by politicians and citizens in 1981. In a revision in 1985 (1566/85), the law explicitly acknowledged the individuality of each student and the need for individual provisions suited to the individual’s general potential and creativity as well as for specific talents and interests. Furthermore, to provide a perspective for a cooperative social living environment, a diversity of musical and social experiences should be organized. This law addressed both primary and secondary education.

However, the main goals of the Education of Special Needs have up to now been applied exclusively to disabled students. The establishment of special schools and special classes, the development and implementation of educational programs and professional training is rarely, if ever, associated with gifted students and their special educational needs. In general, gifted education has remained a rather unknown topic. On the 29th of October 2003, the Greek Parliament voted for a change in the Law 2817/2000, article 1, paragraph 2, as follows: “Special educational provision may be offered to those individuals who have special mental abilities and talents”.

By law, the implementation of sport gymnasia [ISCED level 2 & 3], the “Sport-Lykeio” and special classes for sports as a supplement to the general academic education has started. Special provisions for the excellent student in sports were taken into account (1588/85).

In 1998, education in music was mentioned explicitly by law (3345 / 2.9.98, Paragr.1 & 3). Special schools for music (Gymnasium and Leykeio) prepare students to become professional musicians [ISCED level 2 & 3]. At the same time, a basic curriculum is

offered to ensure a professional reorientation in another subject. At ISCED level 1 of a music-school, courses in music are offered on a voluntary level to identify students with high potential.

B. Specific Provisions

No specific provisions are made for the intellectually gifted student in Greek schools. Specific provisions for talented students in sports or music do exist, although mainly in specialized schools.

At ISCED level 1 some specialized schools in music offer music courses on a voluntary basis. At ISCED level 2 & 3 special classes in music are obligatory at these schools.

At the moment, 26 Greek schools specialized in music offer self-study as a form of special provision on an experimental level [ISCED level 2 & 3].

Schools which are specialized in sports have, since 1995, arranged separate classes regarding the different majors so as to increase efficiency in education [ISCED level 2 & 3]. Since 1995 “Lykeio” schools form profile-classes for sports [ISCED level 2 & 3].

C. Identification Criteria

The lack of provisions for intellectually gifted students runs parallel to a lack of identification procedures for giftedness.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Gifted education is neither a topic in basic compulsory training for teachers, nor is retraining or any kind of further education available on the topic of giftedness.

In addition, there are no official networks which provide for experience exchanges between individual teachers or between schools.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

Gifted education is a subject for specialist training in only a few institutes. At the Faculty of Philosophy, the Department of Psychology of the University of Athens, in collaboration with the “Center for the Development of Creativity” founded in 1995, Aikaterini Gari & Anastasia Kalantzi-Azizi as well as John Paraskevopoulos & Kostas Mylonas are doing research on “identification of gifted primary school students”, “motivation and adaptation of gifted primary school students”, “attitude and educational value judged by teachers, students and parents of gifted students”, “development of creativity”, and “convergent and divergent thinking”.

At the Faculty of Primary Education, Department of Educational Studies, of the University of Athens Prof. Elias Matsagouras deals with the education of the “High Ability Students” in his graduate courses as well as in his courses offered at the “Marasleion Didaskaleion”. The Faculty is considering the possibility of offering the ECHA Diploma.

At the Faculty of Teacher Training at Primary School level, at the University of Thrace, attitudes and beliefs towards giftedness as well as the gifted children characteristics are discussed through optional courses and research studies by Aggeliki Davazoglou–Simopoulos and Sofia Theodoridou.

M. Giannakou–Kitsou (medical faculty of health science, University of Thessaloniki) did doctoral research on the identification and social behavior of the gifted.

The Arsakeia Schools of Philekpaedefiki Etaereia, a distinguished private non-profit educational organization in Greece founded in 1836, uses an enrichment program every year that provides opportunities for challenging the exceptional and talented students.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Provisions for the intellectually gifted student have been organized by private educational organizations (i.e., I. M. Panagiotopoulos School of Athens), and up to the present this situation has not changed.

The present educational situation of the gifted in Greece seems to be characterized by a lack of any organized provision and psychological support. The biggest obstacle for the future is the lack of recognition of the Greek ministry of education and other official institutes of the need for special provisions for the gifted.

However, the gifted students' families and teachers are gradually realizing the need for educational support and encouragement for the gifted. The general atmosphere among some educators, psychologists and researchers is shifting towards greater familiarity with and acceptance of the idea of planning and implementing educational programs for the gifted.

Nonetheless, a great many changes still need to be made.

First of all, gifted students and their special educational needs have to be recognized by law. Gifted students as well as provisions for gifted education in and out of school need to be mentioned explicitly. Specific provisions concerning early entrance, skipping classes, workshops and other extracurricular activities such as competitions (i.e. the already existing Pan-hellenic Mathematics Examination organized by the Hellenic Association of Mathematics) and exhibitions need to be formulated.

Beyond this, it is necessary to set up guidelines and criteria for the identification process, and should include ethnic minorities and handicapped gifted students. Special provisions are needed for the underachiever.

Finally, the implementation of the topic "giftedness" into the basic curriculum of teacher education as well as at retraining sessions and further education is rated as extremely important, not only for teachers but also for psychologists and professionals in the public health sector.

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HU - Hungary



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Gifted education has a long tradition in Hungary. Nurturing the talented was a priority in the early 20th century. After the Second World War, politicians, teachers and experts in the field began to pay special attention to the development of the gifted. The past decennia have witnessed a systematic development of innovation and, as a result, there has been significant progress in gifted education.

Today, several legislations and regulations exist for educational provisions of gifted children with the laws explicitly mentioning and recognizing their special needs.

In 1993 the law of public education points out that “every child, every student has the right of education, which corresponds to its interest, abilities and potential and which will enable him/her to continue the education on a higher level as far as he/she is capable of”. Furthermore, artistic ability has to be identified and developed at primary school [ISCED level 1] (LXXIX. Törvény a Közoktatásról, lo. Par./3.p.). “At elementary art school, the level of art education serves as a basis for artistic expression, moreover, it prepares the pupil for further specialized education” (1993.n.LXXIX. Law of Public Education, par 31. p.1).

“It is a fundamental task of the teacher to take into consideration the pupil’s individual abilities and talent, the pace of his development, his socio-cultural background and also his handicaps to assist him in developing his talent to the highest possible level, and, moreover to offer every deprived pupil the chance to catch up with the others” (1993.n.LXXIX. Law of Public Education, par 10. p.7 and par. 48, p.1)

In other words, regarding ISCED levels 0 – 3, the responsibility for specific provisions basically lies with the teachers and schools. They are explicitly responsible for the identification and recognition of individual differences and students’ individual talents and potentials. Beyond this, the law explicitly offers the opportunity for specific provisions, such as differentiation in the classroom regarding the basic curriculum, offering special curricula, both implementing compulsory education and taking into account non-intellectual education. It is also dictated by law that giftedness has to be a topic in the basic compulsory training for teachers. The school regulations which are set by the government

stress the requirements of the teaching profession, including the main topic “gifted education in theory and practice”. This topic has to be a part of the curriculum in teacher training (n.111./1997).

“Next to the basic curriculum, schools have to organize extracurricular activities like day- or afternoon study periods, literature circles, conversation- and debate classes, art/acting courses, academic, cultural or other competitions. Group activities, such as excursions or education in nature which can not take place within the school, have to be organized as well”. (1993. Law of Public Education, 53. par. 1., 2.p).

Hungarian government regulations give preference to homogeneous learning-groups with respect to same interests and level of knowledge level. If necessary, shared classes with higher grades is possible (Regulation of the ministry about the Frame-Curriculum, 28./2000; 5.par 1.p).

“It is the task of the student’s dormitories to ensure that the student’s personality develops in a humane atmosphere, so his/her talents can evolve according to the abilities and interests. Help for homework has to be provided” (1993 n. LXXIX. Law of Public Education., par. 32, p. 2.).

B. Specific Provisions

Prior to the 1980s, schools developed some organizational frameworks for talented students regarding special faculty groups, workshops and special classes. Today, the provisions are much more advanced.

Acceleration is not common in Hungary. Class-skipping and shared classes with higher grades [ISCED level 1 – 3] is practiced in only some private schools. As an example, the Genius School for Talented Children in Budapest has offered talented students in art or music and other students with high intellectual potential the chance to join higher grades and to skip a grade since 1990.

Enrichment is the preferred format for making provisions for the gifted.

Workshops and self-study activities are widely organized on ISCED levels 2 and 3 during the morning and as extra-curricular activities, which is very popular in Hungary [ISCED levels 2 & 3]

In addition, several schools offer afternoon workshops on topics as extensions of the morning classes. Especially at ISCED level 2, the students' morning and afternoon lessons are organized into a single unit. The main goal is that children should carry out the requirements of the curriculum at the highest possible level while they develop and extend their abilities during extracurricular activities in subjects as math, mother-tongue, foreign languages, science, visual arts, music, sport, firing glaze, folk and classical dance, wood carving and other folk arts such as weaving, pottery, dyeing and textile work. The most successful schools in this field are the Bethlen Gábor Reformed Primary School in Törökszentmiklós and the Móricz Zsigmond Primary School in Mátészalka.

On ISCED level 3 there are more complex programs for the 14-18 year old students. The extra-curricular subjects in the afternoon include foreign languages, history, philosophy, social sciences, mother-tongue, science /chemistry, biology, geography, computer science/, fine arts, literature, film, music, drawing, history of arts, and physical education. The most successful special fields are arts, mathematics, sciences and sports. This complex system is very successful in the Kossuth Lajos Secondary School in Debrecen.

Experience has shown this system to be very promising.

Since the late 1980s the so-called complex developmental programs have been implemented in schools. These have focused not only on skills and abilities development but also on the personal background of the individual. Basic arts schools (e.g. fine arts, music, dance) have a special position in gifted education with many music –schools in the country. A very successful school of this type is the Sárvíz Basic School of Arts in Aba. Those with talents in sport are catered to in special classes in elementary and secondary schools and also in the regionally-based sports schools. High ability is also advanced by the existence of special colleges, whose activities facilitate equal rights in education.

The extra-curricular activities are held once a week and last one to two hours.

The Szilágyi Erzsébet Secondary school in Eger and the Árpád Vezér Gymnasium in Sárospatak are two of 22 schools in Hungary with an established five-year program. In addition to the basic curriculum, additional courses focus on the improvement of the students' self-knowledge and self-development, communication and cooperation skills, learning techniques and will power [ISCED level 2 & 3]. The name of this nation-wide

program is the “Arany János Program for Developing Talents of Socially Disadvantaged Students” and is organized by the Ministry of Education.

These courses and the students’ development in particular are frequently evaluated with pedagogical and psychological tests to ensure an optimal individual development.

Many schools organize extra-curricular activities by themselves, some even as summer courses during the vacation period. As an example, the Bolyai János Primary School in Szerencs has developed provisions for gifted students on the topic “science” since 1990.

The tutorial system, or individual “out of school mentors”, is becoming an established format for nurturing talent.

Since 1995 professors, outstanding researchers or other professionals become mentors of individual students and help them to participate in research work [ISCED levels 2 & 3]. These activities are organized by the larger universities. Following four national conferences of all involved mentors, teachers and students a national society was founded in 1999.

The school system has a long tradition of local, regional and national competitions. One of the most significant competitions is the National Academic Competition of Secondary Schools, where the winners gain admission to universities. The number of competitions for elementary schools is increasing as well. More than one hundred competitions were organized by the Hungarian Ministry of Education and in addition to the regional competitions the local institutes of pedagogy organize competitions for students with many types of abilities.

Many summer camps, festivals and exhibitions are organized by regional institutes as provisions external to the regular within-school activities.

Since 1995 a 10-day summer camp has been run in Budapest. It aims to support the development of the individual gifted student.

The summer camps provide the opportunity to experience personal freedom to experiment, play with and study physiological and astronomical phenomenon.

Psychological counseling, especially for the gifted, is not common in Hungary. Only one Center for Gifted Children in Miskolc offers psychological counseling for the gifted. It is specialized in the “identification of special needs”. Counseling involves proving parents with useful information.

In addition, some psychologists at the University of Debrecen help schools to develop their own programs regarding gifted education.

C. Identification Criteria

The selection and identification of gifted students are based on several criteria.

In addition to within-school achievement and external achievement (e.g. winner of a competition) teacher nomination is a widely expected selection criterion. Previous teacher nomination (third party nomination) can also be useful for a specific provision.

Another possibility for the identification of the gifted students is expert nomination, mainly psychologists. Standardized psychological tests are usually used.

For a differentiated psychological test, teachers and parents can attend the faculty of psychology of the University of Debrecen. General identification attributes like attention, reasoning, memory and problem-solving are explored with such a test. The report (in most cases) is accepted by schools as a nomination for a specific provision.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

The Regulation of the Hungarian Government /111./1997./ regulates the teacher training program. One main area of the teacher curriculum is “education of the gifted”. It includes the following topics: identification; giftedness and age; giftedness and creativity; school-programs for gifted children; the cooperation of school and family; underachievement of gifted children; the special role of the teachers in the gifted education; special fields of gifted education (e.g. sport, music, math) and the international horizon of gifted education.

The students deal with these topics generally in 20 - 30 contact-lessons during teacher training at university level.

Since 1997/1998, the University of Debrecen has offered a “Teacher of Gifted Education” Program. This is a four-semester postgraduate in-service training of more than 600 hours. The program is based on the training program of the ECHA Diploma of the Radboud University Nijmegen. The program started on the basis of the Regulation of Ministry of Education /29./1997.

So far, more than 400 teachers and psychologists have finished the program, and more than 50 teachers are currently taking part in this training. More recently the same program has started at 3 other universities: Budapest, Szombathely and Kaposvár.

Schools organize internal retraining sessions two or three times every academic year. One of the most popular topics is “gifted education”.

In Hungary two organizations arrange conferences for gifted education specialists: The Hungarian Association for High Ability and ‘The Workshop of ECHA-Diplomas’. The current problems and practice of gifted education are the most common topics of these conferences. The conferences are very popular. In one conference 100-150 specialists from all over Hungary took part.

Furthermore national and international conferences are organized.

In addition to frequent internal and external school experience exchange, Hungary takes part in the exchange program of the European Union. The University of Debrecen and 4 schools took part in the Comenius-HOBE Program from 1998 to 2001. England, Germany, Hungary and The Netherlands also participated. The aim of the program was to promote gifted programs in Europe, to prepare multilingual readers and to organize exchange visits for teachers. Several international and national conferences have been organized in these countries. The next Comenius program “Comenius-BEGA”, running since 2002 in Hungary, includes schools from Germany, Spain and Romania. Participating schools: Móricz Zsigmond Primary School - Mátészalka, Szilágyi Erzsébet Secondary School - Eger, Kossuth Lajos Secondary School - Debrecen, Bocskai István Secondary and Vocational School - Szerencs, Bethlen Gábor Reformed Primary School - Törökszentmiklós, Árpád Vezér Secondary School - Sárospatak.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

The dynamic developments in gifted education over the last decennia is also reflected in research work. An increasing number of publications of research studies are available at universities, colleges and research institutions all over the country.

There are three institutes which are specialized in the study of giftedness on an academic level: Department of Educational Psychology, University of Debrecen; Psychological Institute of Hungarian Science Academy, Budapest; Department of Education, Teacher Training College, Szombathely.

The main research topics regarding gifted education are “school-programs for gifted children”, “identification”, “self-concept of gifted children”, “extracurricular activities”, “gifted children in foreign languages” and “underachievement and counseling”.

F. Priorities and Expectations

The last decades have been a successful period for the development of “provisions for the gifted child” in Hungary.

Political recognition, establishing legislation, school actions and private initiatives have all been on a high level. Thanks to the interaction of all involved parties the development of “gifted education” is extraordinary. All relevant topics of gifted education have been improved: specific provisions, identification, training and retraining of teachers, experience exchanges of teachers and other relevant professionals, as well as research and counseling.

But still, there are some obstacles to overcome.

More and more teachers take part in further training, but even more would be desirable. In every school it would be good if one "specialist in gifted education" could coordinate the work in this field.

The Government invests more and more money in gifted education but more is required. More research needs to be financed as well.

If this dynamism remains the same in the coming years, gifted education will become comprehensive in Hungary and will eliminate the gaps which still exist in the country.



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IE - Ireland



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Gifted students and their educational needs are not explicitly mentioned by law.

However, the Education Act 1998 section 7 subsection (1) states that provisions should be made available to each person resident in the State, including a person with a disability or who has special educational needs, support services and a level and quality of education appropriate to meeting the needs and abilities of the person. This statement is in line with the 'Report of Special Education Review Committee (1993) Section 6.3.2' which mentions, as a guideline for education, that "each pupil needs to be provided with the kind and variety of opportunities towards stimulation and fulfilment which will enable them to develop his own rate to the fullest capacity". The 'Special Education Review Committee, 1993, Section 6.3.5' even stresses the recognition of and respect for individual differences: "Class organization is to include class group and individual activities in effort to enable each child to go forward educationally at a pace and depth of individual capacity... enrichment and acceleration should depend on ability related output".

In August 2000 the Minister for Education, responded to a letter regarding the position on the education of exceptionally able students, and declared: "in some cases where a pupil of exceptional ability may present special educational need, additional support is given by a remedial or resource teacher".

However, parents trying to implement this decision were met with opposition from various schools who believed that they did not have enough resources or facilities to allocate a special needs teacher to an academically talented student. In November 2001 the Minister placed the responsibility for providing the academically able back on the individual Board of Management in each school: "It is the duty of the Board of Management to ensure that appropriate education services are made available to such students".

B. Specific Provisions

The Special Education Review Committee in 1993 identified three areas where a school may make provisions for exceptionally able students. These usually take the form of combinations of enrichment, acceleration and ability related outcomes.

However, most schools do not have the resources or facilities to offer enrichment or effective acceleration programs. Enrichment may well depend on the level of expertise and the amount of free time a particular teacher may have. Acceleration policy varies from school to school. While some schools allow students to skip a grade, particularly at an early stage in school, others feel that the perceived negative social effects of acceleration outweigh the academic benefits.

In general, provisions for the gifted are rather rare. No official programs exist. The lack of financial support and teachers' lack of practical experience constrain the power of provisions.

Provisions for the gifted students are mainly organized out of school, often by Olympiads, summer camps or weekend courses [ISCED levels 1 – 3].

The IBM/DCU Irish Science Olympiad (ISO) established at Dublin City University challenges Post-Primary School Students throughout the country to enhance their knowledge and understanding of Biology, Chemistry, Computer Programming (Informatics) and Physics by participating in Olympiad activities [ISCED levels 2 & 3]. A series of events is organized starting at school level and building up to National and International standards. Students are offered the opportunity to represent Ireland at one of the International Biology, Chemistry, Informatics or Physics Olympiads. The syllabus for each Irish Science Olympiad is based on that laid down for the respective International Science Olympiad. Many regard the International Science Olympiads as the “Olympic Games of Science”.

Each year every Post-Primary School in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland receive a package that includes the ISO rules and regulations, the round one questions, an application form and posters. The top 250 students are invited to participate in the two day final at Dublin City University in February.

For those with a taste for math, training programs for the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) take place each year at a number of centers around Ireland. The program

consists of a series of lectures and tests held in University Colleges in Dublin, Cork, and Galway and in the University of Limerick. These are held during the period December-May each year, usually on Saturday mornings. The program culminates each year with a test called the Irish Mathematical Olympiad. Normally over 100 students participate in this competition. It is on the basis of this test that a team is selected to represent Ireland at the annual IMO.

This year Ireland participated in the International Junior Olympiad for the first time. The criterion was to send students who do not exceed fifteen years of age on October 31st 2004. Ireland sent a team of four students to Jakarta to compete in this competition.

Funding for participation in these competitions comes from the Department of Education and is usually around €40000 per annum.

The Irish Centre for Talented Youth (CTYI) was established at Dublin City University in 1992 to meet a long-felt need in Irish education by providing recognition, encouragement, and challenge for intellectually talented students, in addition to guidance for their parents and teachers. CTYI programs for gifted students are designed to address the talents most closely associated with academic accomplishment and professional attainment in society. The program has grown from an initial summer program in 1993 with 177 students to now cater to 2600 students identified in various nation-wide talent searches. Originally the program offers places for 12-16 year olds. [ISCED levels 2 & 3] but now caters for students aged from 6-16.

Some courses on offer are fast-paced and cover material in more depth and at greater levels of complexity than is usual at post-primary school. Students also have access to subjects they would not normally cover, and the courses are of first-year university standard under the tutelage of an experienced instructor with an expert-level knowledge of the subject.

Government funding for this project is currently €86,000 per annum.

C. Identification Criteria

Different identification criteria are used for the admission to specific provision programs. Teacher nomination is widely accepted within schools, as well as expert or a third party nomination. Parent nomination is possible but not very common.

Out-of-school achievement, achievement tests and psychological assessments are widely used for the selection of out-of-school activities.

As an example, the qualification for a CTYI 12-16 year old program is based on participation in the Scholastic Aptitude (SAT) test. Eligibility for the SAT is determined by one or more of the following criteria. The student must: provide a recent standardized aptitude or achievement score falling within at least the 95 national percentile score in mathematical or verbal reasoning or present evidence of notable achievement at regional or national level in a competition reflecting high ability in Mathematics, Science, Literature, or provide a reason why he or she would expect to score in the top 5% of the existing school population. This application should be supported by a parent, guardian or teacher.

The model has been successfully applied in the Irish context.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Gifted education is in general not a topic covered in compulsory training or retraining for teachers in Ireland.

Symposia or lectures are occasionally held by the Irish Association for Gifted Children. The CTYI organizes retraining for interested teachers.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

Professional help is offered by the Irish Association for Gifted Children and the Irish Centre for Talented Youth (CTYI).

The Irish Centre for Talented Youth has a five-fold mission, with the following aims:



1. To identify through national and international talent searches pre-college children who reason extremely well mathematically and/or verbally;
2. To provide talented youth from Ireland and overseas with challenging and invigorating coursework and related educational opportunities through an annual summer program, and selected experiences during the school year;
3. To provide teacher training and support services to schools participating in the CTYI program;
4. To assist parents in advancing talented students by providing access to information and resources;
5. To research and evaluate talent development and the effectiveness of program models and curriculum provision.

In 1999 the Department of Education made a funding commitment to the CTYI.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Provision for the gifted are mainly organized through private initiatives. Gifted education in school is on a low activity level, but first activities are experiences and modification of provisions for the gifted students can be observed. On the political level, the special needs of gifted students are being increasingly recognized. However, the image of gifted education is still seen in the context of elitism and this hinders the development of essential changes in education for the gifted. Overall, political action is not satisfactory and legislations regarding the special needs of the gifted is still absent.

Most important, a general lack of educational provisions is criticized by experts in the field. The shortage of trained teachers and other educators in primary schools and in secondary school [ISCED levels 1 – 3] is seen as a major obstacle for gifted education. Therefore, the topic ‘gifted education’ needs to be part of the basic curriculum of compulsory training for teachers. Retraining of teachers and other educators regarding gifted education is seen as essential. In this way, teachers learn how to deal with high ability students in the regular classroom and special curricula for the gifted can be launched. Special provisions, such as group-wise acceleration, are required.



Beyond that, Ireland still has a great need for out-of-school activities for the gifted. Competitions, summer camps and the chance to attend higher level courses [ISCED levels 4 – 6] are required.

Both internal and external school experience exchanges for teachers should take place on a regular basis.

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IT - Italy



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

There is no law in Italy concerning gifted students. They are officially ignored. The general educational philosophy is that provisions must allow everybody to reach the minimum standard. Further achievement depends on a person's own abilities, without other aid from the community. Communities can, on the other hand, verify the acquired capacities at the end of various periods of education and development, and allow qualified persons to attend the more eminent educational or professional institutions.

In any case, the law (and also school regulations) speaks only of handicapped persons, not of persons with special needs (i.e., a more general term) and thus does not mention giftedness in school.

B. Specific Provisions

According to the social-educational philosophy in Italy, no official educational provisions for gifted pupils are available. Some local or private institutions (companies or banks) offer grants to children of local citizens, but they usually require only a minimum performance.

In general, young children can be allowed early entrance to school, but this is only an option at private schools [ISCED level 1]. In public schools, two years can be completed in one [ISCED levels 2 & 3]. Exceptional pupils can take final examinations in advance but only as an individual initiative or if they attend a private school [ISCED level 3].

In fact, there is a real and effective strategy for parents who want to ensure a good school for a gifted child: to select the best schools or sections. These are well known to educated people and are well established locally. This strategy becomes increasingly effective when children progress from basic education to the superior high schools. Here the choice is wide, and the selection is quite strong. The entrance is unlimited (there is no test for entrance) but, due to higher level of education, the selection is based on achievement. The



students who can keep up with the curriculum can stay. So, only the best students go to the prestigious lyceums like Parini or Manzoni in Milan.

A special option which could be called a provision for the gifted is an international exchange with European program or World program. This is an option based on voluntary initiatives. The organization requires involvement of students, their families and teachers. Therefore mainly educated families with brilliant children take advantage of these opportunities.

For gifted students, unrelated school curriculum provisions are available. There are events, provided by private or group initiative, such as the so called “Olympiads” of Mathematics, of Physics, of Sciences, organized by scientific associations; poetry competitions, organized by local committees and also on national basis; theatre or other initiatives organized by some schools on the basis of a single special project financed or approved by school or local authorities; sports activities organized by CONI (national institution for sports), but usually maintained by all schools, that lead to local, then regional and finally national competitions.

In Italy only some schools are open in the afternoon. This creates an opportunity to bring a child to supplementary forms of education. There are, in this way, many supplementary activities for children provided as private initiatives in music, sports, and language schools.

There had been a private initiative some years ago to establish a pre-school and primary school for gifted children in Milan, but this failed. The costs were too high and only a few parents were interested in it. Parents think that it is better for their children to stay at schools with their “natural” mates, as they see school mainly as a social occasion and a way to introduce yourself into your society.

A special initiative was undertaken in the last few years for the transition from superior high schools to the University in Pavia, stimulated by our department. Tests were administered to students in the second to last year of school, and the best students of any school were invited to a residential week during which research activities of the University faculties were presented by eminent professors, discussion groups were organized and in this way a social community of special students began to form. This was a unique case. But

there are also situations where students are invited to visit the University, or where lessons are given to school students who may acquire credits toward their university curriculum.

C. Identification Criteria

Due to a neglect of gifted students and their special needs in general, there are no official selection criteria for this group with respect to special provisions.

Selection is only allowed for the final stages of education, such as for the nomination to university [ISCED level 4]. Selection is not only made on the basis of ability, but also on the basis of family resources.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Up until recently in Italy there has been little concern for special training for any teachers at all, let alone for teachers of gifted students! Only for primary school have there been some courses available in pedagogic and didactic methods and some very limited practical training. Even here the courses were within a quite short curriculum (end at 17-18 years, without University), and were usually not chosen by the best students. For other levels of schooling there has been no education outside of the specific disciplines. The philosophy was: “if you know your subject matter, you can also teach it”.

There are now specialized schools in Italy for Teacher Training. Following four or five years of University there are two years of specialization in teaching [ISCED levels 2 & 3]. However, the norms are provisional and have to be reformed.

In Tirol, the northern province of Italy (mainly German speaking), the Pedagogical Institute (Pädagogisches Institut) offered an upgrading course for teachers to specialize in gifted education. This course runs for two years. Until now, 26 teachers from kindergarten up to secondary education participated in the course and received their certificate in August 2004. In addition, eleven of them received the ECHA-diploma.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

There are only a few specialists in giftedness and gifted education in Italy.

At the faculty of psychology at Pavia University (Università degli Studi di Pavia) Prof. Adriano Pagnin has organized weekend seminars on the topic of “excellence” since 1994.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Provisions for the gifted are mainly organized by private organizations. School activities are still missing as is the political recognition of and respect for individual differences and special educational needs of the gifted student.

Recent research reveals that teachers who work in superior schools, experience a great need to know psychological principles for teaching. They have great desire to work with psychologists specialized in school psychology and counseling. Guidelines for the identification of the special needs of gifted students are needed.

Only with this perspective, we believe, can we introduce a healthy interest and attention for gifted students, especially for those who are not adequately supported by their families or who are not so socially endowed as to be able to discover for themselves their opportunities for intellectual growth. In other words, only the rich and educated families can meet the requirements of a gifted child.

A big obstacle for gifted education is seen in the current policies of Italy which tend to extend free time for children and reduce full time schools. The aim is to ensure a “good” family time. But what is really needed for the gifted is a fundamental differentiated curriculum.

Finally, a major shortcoming can be seen in teacher education, specifically in the absence of compulsory training, retraining and further education that includes the topic “giftedness” and “gifted education”.

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LU – Luxembourg



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Luxembourg legislation recognizes the special needs of children suffering from a handicap, from learning disabilities, or from other developmental impediments, but there is no legislative regulation for specific educational provisions for the gifted or talented child. From a legal point of view the only provision made for the gifted is the possibility to enter primary school one year earlier or to skip classes if the parents request it, and if a competent orientation service agrees to it after a psychological examination.

This regulation has existed since 1912, predating the scientific research on the distribution of intelligence in the general population, and without any reference to the special needs of highly gifted children. It is based only on the pragmatic knowledge that the course of development is not the same for everybody.

A new law, reorganizing the entire secondary education system, has been adopted in 2003. Article 16 contains a paragraph on special classes which may be created by the minister of National Education in order to respond to the specific needs of some subgroups of pupils. Among these subgroups, adolescents highly qualified in sports and music and pupils with special learning abilities are mentioned. There is no other provision, but the new law allows for the consideration of introducing a special curriculum for highly gifted children and adolescents.

B. Specific Provisions

In general, early entrance to school and grade skipping are the only official provisions which meets the needs of gifted students [ISCEWD levels 1-3].

There is no special curriculum for the gifted in Luxembourg, nor is there any specific adaptation of teaching methods. But, as the normal curriculum contains special streams and sections that are far more difficult than others, the children with high intellectual ability tend to occupy these.

Within the general curriculum it is possible to take optional courses such as special mathematics, introduction to experimental research methods, literary workshops and so on. Furthermore, it is possible for any school to develop special projects, called “projet d'établissement”, which could be considered to fall within in the realm of provisions for the gifted. However, this option is not common in Luxembourg. Until now, there have been three projects focused expressly on the highly gifted.

Self-study as a provision for gifted students is mainly offered at ISCED levels 2 and 3. Other than this, schools seek co-operation with companies or non-profit organizations as a way to develop gifted education.

Another form of provision which can meet the needs of gifted students is competitions organized within kindergarten/school as a way to prepare children and students for competitions out of kindergarten/school [ISCED levels 0-3]. There are many possibilities for competitions in scientific research, literature, short stories and novels, painting, photography, dance, music and theatre. Thus, up to now there appeared to be no need for the stimulation of artistic abilities within schools, because there are better opportunities elsewhere. The artistic and physical education in schools is not adjusted to the talented, but is only aimed at general education. On the other hand, the stimulation of intellectual creativity and development of the potential of the highly gifted pupils are explicitly part of the educational aims of the specialized sections.

Psychological (school-) counseling is available at all times and can be offered to gifted students if necessary.

There are many opportunities for the gifted outside of school in the realm of artistic activities, sports, journalism, and other social activities. Up to now the public authorities have relied on associations, companies, and non-profit organizations. Courses in music, dance, theatre, and painting are offered everywhere at low prices and the talented are selected through special competitions and exams [ISCED levels 0-3]. There is a wide range of opportunities in sports training, and there are many facilities for the talented undertaking a career in sports. Summer camps, Festivals, Exhibitions and Performances or Shows are frequently organized

However due to the problems of linguistic integration, the children of immigrants and refugees are not always in a position to take advantage of these opportunities. For these children, the school system fails to take its responsibility to develop their special talents.

C. Identification Criteria

During primary education, children and their parents can go to consulting centers, called “commission medico-psycho-pédagogique” for any kind of developmental, educational or psychological problem. These centers provide an opportunity for a thorough examination by medical, psychological and educational specialists and also for educational tests and for psychotherapy. Thus, on the individual level, there are very good opportunities for the identification and for an appropriate follow-up of highly gifted underachievers as well as members of minority groups.

During secondary education, participation in extracurricular activities and in special optional courses depends on the desire and interest of the pupils themselves. They can rely on the “Service de Psychologie et d’Orientation scolaire” (SPOS), integrated fully into each secondary school, where psychologists and specially trained teachers offer a consulting service and psychological diagnostic work and psychotherapeutic services. The existence of these services is especially important for the identification and treatment of highly gifted underachievers during adolescence. Psychological tests may reveal the discrepancy between the intellectual potential and the school results. School services can then offer educational and psychological measures to remove the emotional and/or cognitive impediments from which the underachievers may suffer (Schiltz, 2003, 2004a).

The selection of children and adolescents for the special streams and sections of the normal curriculum is based on school results and on pedagogical and psychological testing. When they are 12 years old, the children are oriented towards either the general secondary or towards the technical secondary education. The more able students go to the general secondary education, called “lycée classique”. When they are 13 years old, the pupils of the “lycée classique” choose either the Latin or the modern orientation. Again, the more able tend to go to the Latin section, which offers all the opportunities of the modern section but with the addition of Latin. At 15 years of age students must once again choose between

different sections. The most able tend to go to the mathematical section (B classique). This was not the legislative intention of the sections but, in practice, things have developed this way because the highly able students tend to choose a section that offers them the best chances for entering university. The combination of mathematics and Latin allows them to choose any direction in their future higher education.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Pre-school and primary school teachers are trained for three to four years at the “Université du Luxembourg, Campus Walferdange”. Their initial teacher training and their retraining and further education include some theoretical subjects linked to the education of the gifted and talented children, such as the development of motivation and intellectual creativity. However, they receive little practical know-how in this area, as there are no special curricula.

Secondary education teachers are trained for four to five years in their specialty; they may take the B.A. level at the “Université du Luxembourg” and the Master in foreign universities. Alternatively, they might complete their entire study outside of Luxembourg, where they have to acquire a “maîtrise”, “Magister”, or “Diplom” in their specialty. They then continue training for three years in pedagogy and psychology at the “Université du Luxembourg”. Within this curriculum, the special needs of highly gifted children may eventually be approached, but this subject could be further developed if there were more practical implications.

The mission of the SCRIPT, an institute of the Ministry of National Education charged with the organization of the further education of the teachers, is to propose seminars in this direction. Among the courses offered during the last years, there were some themes related indirectly to the situation of the highly gifted underachievers, such as pedagogical methods of cooperation, intrinsic motivation and creativity. In 2003 one workshop focused on the conceptualization and the selection strategies of gifted pupils was offered. In 2004 several workshops studied the development of creativity in different fields.

There is an extensive within- and between-school network in Luxembourg that provides opportunities for experience exchanges related to a wide variety of topics, mainly at ISCED levels 2 and 3.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

Some specialists in the field of giftedness and gifted education offer their expertise to the field. As an example, Lony Schiltz has a long experience in the assessment and treatment of gifted students. She is doing research on the treatment of gifted underachievers suffering from borderline personality disorder (Schiltz, 2002b). At the “Centre de Recherche Public-Santé” she is directing a large research project, funded by the “Fonds National de la Recherche”, called “Application de l’art thérapie à quelques problèmes cruciaux de la société luxembourgeoise”. In this project the efficiency of art therapies with highly gifted underachievers will be evaluated with a quantitative and qualitative research methodology. This project will take place from 2004-2008 and will include 5 secondary schools.

The institution of the “projet d’établissement” gave one lyceum the assignment to develop a special teaching methodology and an enriched program to some selected classes of pupils with high intellectual potential. This initiative still remains at an experimental level. But, as the scientific evaluation has shown that the experience was positive (Schiltz 2002a, 2004b), this initiative could be expanded during the coming years. The introduction of a differentiated curriculum will be possible once a larger number of individual and school initiatives of this kind are carried out and accompanied by scientific research and evaluations.

The “Service de la Coordination de la Recherche et de l’Innovation Pédagogique et Technologique” supports research projects and offers retraining in gifted education for teachers.

School psychology activities are coordinated by the “Centre de Psychologie et d’Orientation scolaire”.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Gifted education in Luxembourg basically started with school initiatives. Private initiatives have also been established. Political recognition in the form of legislation regarding the special needs of gifted students was rare in the past.

The new law now provides a good opportunity to make the responsible authorities aware of the problem. The situation will probably change in the coming years, as the new law allows for the introduction of special classes for children with high learning abilities. Furthermore, programs for within-school differentiation and special curricula as well as materials to organize individual provisions for the gifted students are needed. In this context much more experience is needed.

In addition to legislation, the recognition of and respect for individual differences should be expressed more clearly.

The exchange of research results with colleagues from other countries should be increased.

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LV - Latvia



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

There is no specific legislation in Latvia that defines giftedness or provides for particular educational provisions for gifted children. Gifted students are also not defined as part of a subgroup of students with special needs. But, in general, the Education Act includes the statements that education has “... to guarantee everybody the possibility to develop mental and physical potential to become an independent and creative person...” and has “... to develop individual differences of children”. Regarding the recognition of and respect for individual differences and identification of individual needs, the law states that “... educational establishments have the right to realize programs according to the interests of children” (Article 28; 5) [ISCED levels 0-3].

The “Standard of Education” (1998) includes comments concerning individualism (“... every child is unique ... and with personal style of learning”) and motivation of students (“... children have different needs and different motivation”).

Regarding flexibility in schools, children can start school at the age of six, can skip classes and, in special cases, home schooling is an alternative.

B. Specific Provisions

Specific provisions for the gifted are mainly organized on ISCED level 3 in Latvia. They are fully or partly financed by the state. Some schools, like the Riga Commerce School, organize “creative groups” in various disciplines like choir, dance, drama, arts, video, photography, handicraft, discussion clubs, language clubs or music bands. At some schools, a subject can be studied in greater detail than would usually be covered in the general curriculum. Some schools offer extra curricular activities in languages, psychology or other subjects. These provisions depend on the interests of the students.

Cooperation with companies or non-profit organizations is organized [ISCED level 3].

Other educational provisions for gifted students are Olympiads or competitions in “public speech”, “music”, “arts”, “photo arts” or “handicraft” [ISCED levels 1-3].

There are some specialized schools that cater to the talented in “music”, “math”, “language”, “economy”, “sports” or “arts”. [ISCED levels 1-3].

“Pupils’ centers” have been established in 22 counties for children with an interest in out-of-school education. Competitions and festivals for the gifted are also organized as out-of-school activities, [ISCED levels 1-3]. In addition, summer camps and cultural or sport activities are offered as a challenge for gifted students [ISCED levels (0)/1-3].

A special elective school for gifted children exists in Riga.

C. Identification Criteria

There are no specific identification procedures or methods for the identification of gifted students and their special needs in Latvia.

Gifted children are mostly identified by their achievement in competitions, Olympiads, cultural events, creativity groups or in other extra-curricular activities.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

There is no specific training for teachers or other professionals concerning the gifted. Teachers involved in educating the gifted either acquire some relevant knowledge at colleges or develop their own approach and methods.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

At the moment, Natalija Ilisnazova represents the ministry of education regarding the topic giftedness.



At the level of scientific research, some Master's and Ph.D. theses are written on the topic of intellectual giftedness. The number of Ph.D. dissertations has been increasing in the last two years.

The "Creativity Center" was established in Rettema in 2001. They do research and organize international conferences on the topic of giftedness. But more and more private institutes established within the last two years.

F. Priorities and Expectations

At the moment, gifted education in Latvia is organized by a small group of enthusiastic people.

Gifted education suffers from a shortage of specialists, research institutes and lacks fundamental financing. The absence of specific legislation in the Education Act hinders the development of gifted education.

As a priority, the explicit recognition of the gifted as part of a subgroup of students with special needs should be established by law. Legislative Regulations and guidelines regarding the recognition of individual differences among students should be marked more explicitly by the school inspectorate. The topic "gifted education" should be integrated into the compulsory training of teachers. Regular seminars, conferences, and exchange of experiences among the teachers and other professionals as well as among schools must be organized. Research publications should increase.

Concerning specific provisions, extra-curricular material must be developed or translated where available. Individual mentoring is desirable. Furthermore, special schools for gifted education need to be established.

A modification of identification procedures that includes handicapped students is needed.

Finally, a Holland-Baltic Center for talent development must be established.

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NL – *The Netherlands*



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Kindergarten and elementary school have been integrated into primary education in the Netherlands [ISCED levels 0 & 1] since 1985. Officially, compulsory education starts at the age of five and ends at the age of 16, but it is possible to enter school at an age of four. More than 95% of families make use of this possibility. Compulsory education can be waived in special cases. Neither age-related classes nor obligatory curricula are a legislative requirement for schools. Instead, school legislation determines an educational target/achievement. Although a school inspectorate monitors the educational results at each school, the realization of the educational goals is the responsibility of the individual schools.

Gifted students are not mentioned explicitly in the national legislation. However, there have been some reforms in the educational system during the 1990's that affected education for the highly able. In the elementary schools [ISCED levels 0 & 1], the movement toward integration took shape in the form of 'Together to school again' (Weer Samen Naar School). In this reform, the schools were required to work together on a regional basis and to take care of children with special educational needs. This structure was imposed upon schools in the form of a law. The definition of children with special educational needs is laid down in regulations from the ministry. Since 2001, highly able pupils are considered to be a group that has special educational needs [ISCED levels 0-3]. The school legislation states that "an undisturbed development of each child has to be guaranteed. The education needs to realize an emotional, intellectual and creative development and has to lead to essential social, cultural and physical knowledge and abilities. Students with special needs have to be offered an individualized education regarding their special need" (WPO, Art. 8, sub 4).

Regarding gifted education, skipping classes is regulated by law [ISCED levels 1 – 3]. The ministry of education is in charge of the development of materials for gifted education.

B. Specific Provisions

Because of the integration of kindergarten and elementary school, children can easily enter school early [ISCED level 1]. Even if entering school before the age of four is technically not permitted, it is still practiced on a “tolerated basis” (Hoogeveen, 2001).

Skipping classes is a provision which is practiced on a regular basis [ISCED levels 1-3]. In general, skipping classes and other acceleration provisions are very common.

Workshops within schools are mostly practiced in reform schools like Montessori, Jenaplan, Dalton or Freinet. These schools can be found all over the Netherlands. However, workshops are also part of gifted education in regular schools [ISCED levels 1-3].

Cooperation with companies or non-profit organizations with respect to gifted education is rather uncommon. The non-profit organization “Vierkant voor Wiskunde” organizes provisions for students interested and gifted in mathematics. “NOVIB” is a non-profit organization which offers developmental aid for schools in general, but not specifically for gifted students.

Some schools offer extra-curricular activities, mainly in sports and music. There are a few special schools that place an emphasis on sports and music [ISCED levels 2 & 3]. These schools normally cooperate with special institutes in sports and music to ensure adequate provisions for the students. This format has been extended in the so called "bagaafdheidsprofiel scholen". These are schools [ISCED levels 2 & 3] that offer special counseling for academically gifted students, just as other schools provide services in the areas of sport and music. This initiative has just been started with six pilot schools and should develop into a network of schools that cover every region in the country. In special cases the student can be released from compulsory education.

Individual mentors are uncommon and function only as a private initiative of parents.

At ISCED level 3, gifted students are allowed to take university level classes, such as the master classes at the University of Amsterdam or classes at the Radboud University Nijmegen. Test results are accepted by the university and count as credits if and when the student enters university.

Psychological and pedagogical counseling is available at all education levels [ISCED levels 0-3].

At the moment, there are no provisions or curricula adaptations which focus on social or economic minorities. Some special provisions are organized for gifted females in mathematics, science and IT. Some schools have begun to focus on underachievers and have launched programs for these students (for example, Stedelijk Gymnasium Nijmegen).

Out-of-school provisions for gifted students are mainly focused on competitions [ISCED levels 1-3]. The 'Toptoets' is offered at ISCED level 1. At the end of ISCED level 1 and in secondary education [ISCED levels 2-3] national and international competitions are organized, such as the "Kangoeroe-Competition" or Olympiads in mathematics, physics, or IT.

Other activities for students are offered regionally. These activities focus on creativity or innovation and are organized with local organizations or public libraries. These provisions are not only open to gifted students but nonetheless serve to trigger their interests.

Summer camps, summer academies and other kinds of vacation programs are rather uncommon in the Netherlands but are offered occasionally.

C. Identification Criteria

Identification criteria for giftedness are not explicitly determined. Schools, institutes and organizations which offer provisions generally define their own criteria.

When there is occasion to consider such matters as early entrance to school or the release from compulsory education, authorities of the local school and the community and parents are all involved in the process.

A psychological or pedagogical examination is desirable or even necessary for most of the provisions for the gifted. Grade skipping can be organized by schools themselves. Teachers and parents usually make this decision together but, in reality, a psychological examination generally needs to be made available. In other words, in the Dutch 'culture of consensus', a test procedure is only part of the decision making process. The opinions of parents, teachers and students are taken into account and the decision reached will in general have to be a joint decision of all parties involved.

An increasing number of schools with provisions for the gifted have introduced a screening procedure for the identification of children's interests and special needs and to be used as a

guide for the determination of provisions. However, there are no official criteria or guidelines. At the Radboud University Nijmegen, the Center for the Study of Giftedness, with a reputation for expertise in individual assessment, has developed a group test procedure to identify students with special needs within the class. This procedure is becoming more popular and accepted by teachers, schools and parents in the Netherlands, because of its efficiency and effectiveness.

More than 95% of Dutch schools take part in the annual achievement test “Cito-toets” which covers the main school subjects. Based on a child’s results, a recommendation concerning the appropriate type of secondary education is made to the parents. The best students are invited to the ‘Toptoets’ and are invited to join one of the few summer activities.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

There is very little attention given to the highly able in the initial teacher training and it depends on the specific institution whether the topic is dealt with at all. It is not obligatory in the curriculum. However, students are generally interested in the topic and if no course is given, they will use optional courses to learn about the highly able. This is the case for the training of both elementary and secondary school teachers (kindergarten teachers are trained as elementary school teachers). The situation is very much the same for psychologists and other professionals. Until now, the Radboud University Nijmegen has been the only place where the Special Education curriculum includes an obligatory course on highly able children. Other institutions typically offer optional courses on this subject.

The Ministry of Education appointed two institutes to serve as official information centers (“Informatiepunten Hoogbegaafdheid”), one for primary education (CPS) and one for secondary education (SLO). These institutes collect information, offer training and organize a network among schools, other institutes and psychological and pedagogical specialists. Furthermore, they organize annual “expert meetings” and report the state of affairs and new developments to the government. This conference is sponsored by the Ministry. The conference was held twice in 2001, as there was so much interest in the topic that the enrolment was about twice the expected number.

A regional network of elementary schools which offer provisions for the gifted (Samenwerkingsverbanden WSNS) has been implemented to optimize cooperation among schools and to organize provisions for gifted students with special needs [ISCED level 1].

In 1990, the postgraduate program “Specialist in Gifted Education” was developed at the Center for the Study of Giftedness (Radboud University Nijmegen) in cooperation with the European Council for High Ability (ECHA). At the end of the course, the students are entitled to carry the title “Specialist in Gifted Education” (ECHA-Diploma). About 100 teachers in the Netherlands have successfully taken this course. The same program has proven to be successful in other countries, such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, Peru and Chile.

The extension of the program to an international MA program in gifted education is currently in a developmental stage.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

There has been little scientific research since the 1980’s, as the Ministry of Education has invested very little in projects related to “giftedness” and “gifted education”. As a consequence, scientific work has mostly been restricted to Master’s theses and PhD dissertations, mostly promoted at the Center for the Study of Giftedness, Radboud University Nijmegen. Some of the topics examined include ‘the self concept of able young adolescents in China and the Netherlands’, ‘psychological development of gifted adolescents’, ‘evaluation of provisions for the gifted’ and ‘skipping grades and the attitude of teachers towards this phenomenon’. In 2003 the European Inventory of Gifted Education in Schools was coordinated by the Center for the Study of Giftedness.

More recently, the Ministry of Education’s interest in giftedness and gifted education seems to be changing. Considering the large number of activities taking place in the field, there is clearly a need for a Ministerial re-evaluation and goal-setting.

Some conferences have been organized.

For counseling professionals, the CBO has taken the initiative to have regular ‘inter-vision’ meetings, in which colleagues (psychologists, pedagogues) exchange experiences and knowledge, to fill the lack of training in this field. A specific course for this group is currently starting. With the likelihood that the higher education systems throughout Europe

will adopt the Bachelor and Masters structure, a Master's program concerning the highly able will probably be established in Nijmegen and carried out in cooperation with the University of Münster (Germany), Debrecen (Hungary), Vienna (Austria), Athens (Greece) and Santiago de Chile (Chile).

Parents and teachers can obtain information at the two "Information Centers" (CPS and SLO) officially designated by the Ministry of Education. These two institutes organize several activities such as conferences and workshops, publish information, and try to organize all activities in the field into a structured network.

An increasing number of private organizations are gaining knowledge in the field and offer their expertise to schools, teachers and parents. Their work is sometimes financed by health insurance companies.

Only one institute is officially connected to a University. The Center for the Study of Giftedness (CBO) is incorporated into the pedagogical faculty of the Radboud University Nijmegen.

F. Priorities and Expectations

The realization of provisions for the gifted began with private initiatives and efforts within the scientific environment at the Radboud University Nijmegen and the University of Utrecht. Although an explicit legislative anchor for the rights of gifted students and their special needs has not yet been realized, since 2002 gifted students have been recognized as members of a group of students with special needs. So, in general, a pathway for provisions for the gifted has been opened. The political acceptance of and openness for activities in the field has increased rapidly within the Ministry.

The situation in the Netherlands seems positive, because practitioners in the field of education are open to the concerns of highly able students. Teachers and parents are interested in the topic and, as a consequence, the official and bureaucratic institutions behind them are following suit. Nonetheless, an explicit chapter on giftedness and gifted education is needed in the legislation. The topic "gifted education" also needs to be implemented into the teacher training and into the training of other experts. Special curricula for gifted students need to be developed. Early entrance to school, before the age of four, should be permitted. A modification of the identification criteria and nomination



procedures for gifted students is required. There is a great need for better evaluation procedures and more basic research. A final but major point of concern is the lack of coordination of activities related to giftedness.

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NOVIB

PL - Poland



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Documents relating to education fail to provide an official definition of abilities, although there are a number of acts and regulations which mention *abilities, aptitudes or potential capacities*.

The Act of 7 September 1991 related to the educational system, makes some provision for gifted students by enabling them to pursue individualized learning plans and accelerated completion of school. It also points to the importance of competitions, Olympiads and tournaments as methods for diagnosing students' abilities and stimulating creative thinking. A curriculum in one or more obligatory subjects may be tailored to the abilities, interests and educational capacities of a gifted student. Gifted students may participate in university classes consistent with their abilities. If a student with exceptional abilities in one field cannot meet the requirements for school subjects not covered by individual learning plan, the educational requirements for those subjects may be adjusted to the student's individual capabilities, subject to the educational requirements within the core curriculum. The Act also points to the need to support the development of gifted students and ensure pedagogical and psychological supervision, as well as the need to identify educational needs of gifted students and to offer support in the form of scholarships.

Poland is currently undergoing a transformation of its fundamental structures and social systems, including the education system. An education system reform was initiated in 1998.

The objective of the new school system is to raise the society's education level by promoting secondary and university education, leveling out educational opportunities and fostering the improvement of the quality of education understood as an integral process of upbringing and schooling.

These objectives are being implemented with a view to extending common education up to the age of 16, restructuring compulsory education so that it can offer assistance for fast re-qualifying to meet the labor market needs, introducing tests and examinations to allow for

greater comparability of school certificates, and assigning diagnostic and guidance functions to examinations.

B. Specific Provisions

The documents relating to reform stress the need to satisfy the educational needs of exceptionally gifted students. Exceptionally gifted pupils may pursue individual learning plans and courses of study and receive the assistance of an individual mentor. Moreover, an experimental form of education has been established – academic gymnasiums which provide a shortened five-year educational program instead of the regular six-year program. The first Academic Gymnasium (secondary lower and upper) was established in 1998 in Toruń.

Pre-school education is not compulsory. Pre-school education aims to develop in a comprehensive and harmonious manner all aptitudes of children. Children in the nursery school, apart from classes provided for in the curriculum, may receive further education in such areas as the English language, music (rhythm education), chess, and sports. At the pre-school level, children with musical abilities are identified, and are subsequently referred to the 1st level music schools. Children with a high IQ may enter primary schools earlier, after obtaining a positive evaluation of their abilities and school maturity by a psychological and pedagogical counseling centre [ISCED level 0].

At ISCED level 1, pupils with artistic (music, ballet) and sports abilities may pursue education in specialist schools. Children with a high IQ may begin their education earlier (at the age of six), with the option of individual schooling. They may skip one or two grades. The pupils are supervised by individual mentors and take part in various extracurricular activities on the school premises, organized within the framework of interest circles, as well as in other circles, workshops and interest centers outside school run by educational institutions and centers (mathematics, arts, music, biology, sports and other topics, depending on students' educational needs).

Exceptionally gifted students at the primary and secondary level undergo psychological counseling. Mathematically gifted students participate in mathematical competitions, the

artistically gifted in contests and exhibition, and students with abilities in music and performing arts in competitions and performances.

After passing final examinations in primary school, pupils continue their mandatory education in gymnasiums (from the age of 13 to 16). Students with exceptional abilities in mathematics and the social science may apply for admission to the Academic Gymnasium in Toruń, which offers two broad fields of study: the humanities and science subjects. The Academic Gymnasium accepts students from all over Poland (the school has boarding facilities). It accepts those students who have achieved excellent results in primary school, high scores during a multi-stage qualification procedure, and who have received a positive evaluation from a psychological and pedagogical counseling centre. Education in the Academic Gymnasium is pursued under individual learning arrangements, correlated with comprehensive extracurricular classes held in school, and co-operation with university teachers and pupils' participation in classes held at the university.

After completing the gymnasium, students may develop their abilities in general education secondary schools or in profile secondary schools. Education in lyceum lasts from the age 16 to 19. Gifted students continue their education, depending on their abilities and interests, in teacher training or foreign language colleges or at institutions of higher learning (universities, academies, technical universities with courses running for five to six years). Most gifted students complete their education with doctorate studies leading to a Ph.D. degree (four years).

The educational needs of gifted students are provided for at different levels of education at schools catering to field-specific abilities. A large group of such schools is made up of schools of arts, supervised by the Ministry of Culture. There are many arts schools in Poland, the majority of which (ca. 500 schools) are music schools of the 1st and 2nd level. The 1st level involves basic training running for four or six years. Children between the age of six and nine are accepted for the six-year training cycle, while children between the age of 10 to 16 for the four-year cycle. The 2nd level is designed for young people and adults. Some music schools also offer teaching in nursery section, which accept children between the ages of three to six. There are also about 50 arts lyceums and nine ballet schools in Poland.

Other schools addressing field-specific abilities include sports schools (primary, secondary and post-secondary) which train children and young people in football, fencing, skiing,

sports gymnastics, sports acrobatics, swimming, and rowing. At the secondary level, the development of field-specific abilities is significantly enhanced by a system of national and international competitions and music festivals and subject Olympiads (there are 32 Olympiads) [ICED level 2].

Another very important structure in the education and care of gifted students at the secondary school level [ISCED level 3] is a network of 64 secondary schools associated within the Creative Schools' Association (since 1983) and the Active Schools' Association. The associated schools support one another, introduce educational innovations and create an in-service teacher training system. Gifted young people attending these schools rank high in international subject Olympiads, while in Poland the associated schools rank first in terms of numbers of Olympiad-winning students (in 2002, out of 50 schools achieving successes in international Olympiads, 29 belonged to the CSA).

The development of the abilities of children and young people is supported by the Polish Children's Fund (since 1983). Numerous specialist workshops are organized within this framework, as well as consultations throughout the year, summer camps for children and young people with high abilities in the humanities and science subjects, integrated open-air artistic events for those with artistic and musical abilities, and summer camps for musically gifted students. The network of non-governmental foundations in Poland is relatively well developed and some of them aim to help gifted people, particularly in areas such as music and the visual arts. One of the more interesting foundations is the *Talent Promotion* Foundation, established in 1995. The Foundation's objective is to organize performances, shows, exhibition and to grant national and foreign scholarships to young people with exceptional abilities in arts. Funds obtained by the Foundations are earmarked primarily for paying for the education of young people in renowned foreign schools.

C. Identification Criteria

There are many forms of identifying abilities in children and young people. At an early stage of the child's development, the main identification methods are parent nomination and psychological examinations conducted in pedagogical and psychological counseling centers.

In primary and secondary schools, an additional form of the diagnosis is performance in contests and tournaments. Secondary school and university students participate in national and international subject Olympiads, which also serve diagnostic and selective purposes. Olympiad finalists do not take university entrance exams and are accepted to university courses relating the Olympiad subject. There are also numerous national and international musical and artistic contests. At each level of education, psychological counseling centers examine referred students for IQ level and for field-specific abilities. The counseling centre co-operating with the Academic Gymnasium in Toruń also evaluates a student's cognitive style, creative attitudes and abilities, interests, and motivation. Information gathered in the counseling centre supplements the information provided by parents and teachers. The Polish Children's Fund, for example, uses nominations by parents, teachers, peers, third persons and self-nomination. A subsequent stage of the diagnosis involves experts' evaluation of a work-project submitted by gifted children and young people in the area relating to their abilities. Yet another stage involves observations carried out at camps, and a regular assessment of the student's progress in a field relating to his/her abilities.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

There are no special schools offering full-time training in teaching gifted students in Poland. Only at the Special Education Academy in Warsaw can students in the teacher training program choose a specialization in gifted education with computer science, or psycho didactics of creativity.

Prof. W. Limont at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń trains teachers of gifted students and has offered a 300-hour/two-semester postgraduate courses since 1999 (Postgraduate Course Training of Education of the Gifted and Creative Children/Training of Education of the Gifted Children in Rural Areas). Topics such as, philosophy, sociology,

psychology, learning techniques, and identification and provisions for the gifted child are discussed during the training. Creativity training is also included.

Five groups have been completed so far; with around 340 teachers from all over Poland now specialized in gifted education.

The course is financed by the Ministry of Education and Sport with teaching grants, awarded each time under national competition arrangements. Individual contributions are low.

Numerous training sessions are organized in Poland for teachers, covering issues relating to giftedness.

Teachers of schools associated with the “Creative Schools’ Association” (CSA), “Active School’s Association” (ASA) or the “Association of Teachers of Olympiad-winning Students” (ATOS) [ISCED levels 2 & 3] can follow retraining courses at one of the 64 CSA or ASA schools.

Dr. Danuta Nakoneczna has organized intervention and supervision for teachers since 1983 to encourage individual development, student-specific curricula, and to establish an extensive teacher network.

Tutors of gifted students meet once a year to nominate students for the grants of the “Polish Children’s Fund” (PCF).

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

Several specialist organizations in giftedness and gifted education are available for information and assistance: Ministry of National Education and Sport, Methodical Centre for Psychological and Pedagogical Assistance, Polish Children’s Fund, Creative Schools’ Association, Active Schools’ Association, Association of Teachers of Olympiad-winning Students, Ministry of Culture, Centre for Gifted Children at “University for Parents”, Superintendent Office in Bydgoszcz, External Department in Toruń and the “Centre for Psychological and Pedagogical Assistance” in Toruń.

In addition, scientific institutes such as the Nicolaus Copernicus University Torun, Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Warsaw University, and the Kazimierz Wielki Academy in Bydgoszcz offer their expertise to interested parties.

Most of these institutes also run research programs on a variety of topics, such as imaginal techniques, creativity, learning techniques with new media, psychological predispositions of gifted students, intellectual abilities, and the academic career of mathematical gifted students.

F. Priorities and Expectations

The development of provisions for the gifted child began with school initiatives. The first steps involved a system of competitions and Olympiads (1950's and 1960's), which allowed for the identification of gifted students. Teachers and mentors working with students at school also took initiatives. In the late 1970's schools began to introduce innovations and educational experiments relating to the education of students

The first half of 1980's witnessed some private initiatives, such as the establishment of non-governmental structures, the most important being the Polish Children's Fund formed in 1983. Under pressure from people acting in support of gifted children, the issue regarding provisions for the gifted child found its way to the Polish parliament and the first structures were created, providing for the care and education of gifted students. However, dynamic changes in the political system prevented these ideas from being put into operation. It was not until 1991 that legal provisions and regulations concerning the care and education of gifted students were adopted. Since 1998, a reform of the education system has been implemented and which also takes account of the special educational needs of gifted students.

The main obstacles relating to further provisions for the gifted child include:

1. Lack of properly educated teachers of gifted students. There is a possibility for training larger numbers of teachers of gifted students by establishing an appropriate system-wide structure, incorporating university teacher training programs with obligatory modules relating to the education and care of the gifted student, postgraduate courses and a training system at various levels and stages of teacher education. It is also necessary for Polish teachers to be able to participate in courses leading to the ECHA Diploma.

2. The lack of an established *Centre for High Abilities*. This obstacle could be overcome within a very short period of time
3. The lack of funds for the implementation of projects related to the removal of the above-mentioned obstacles. The funds in question cannot be obtained in Poland because of the large number of needs in all facets of life which have arisen during the current period of change and transformation. Yet, it would be possible to create appropriate conditions with sufficient support from the EU under joint research and implementation projects.

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PT - Portugal***A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines***

The term “giftedness” (and synonyms) does not exist in educational legislation in Portugal. However, the “General Basic Law” (1986) refers to curriculum differentiation as a way to create equality of opportunities for different students. Gifted students are viewed as belonging to the group with special needs.

In general, the Portuguese educational system is guided by the Law-Decree (319/1991) which defines the educational measures to be taken for students with special needs, specifically, curriculum adaptations, special conditions and evaluation, flexibility, and differentiation or management of classes and groups of students in a class. In other words, the Portuguese educational system follows the ideal of total integration and supports flexibility within the school curriculum.

The Law-Decree (115-A/1998) states that “the school can identify tutors (teachers) to support, in a special way, the educational process of students groups”.

The legal disposition 173/ME/1991 refers explicitly to “developmental precocity” and “exceptional learning ability” in school and therefore permits early entrance into school for highly able students. Children can attend first grade if they are 5 years old before 15 September (i.e., the start of the school year). Both a psychological and a pedagogical evaluation are required to justify the decision that early entrance is an appropriate measure. Skipping classes from first to fourth grade, as a provision for differentiation, is regulated in the legal disposition (6/SERE/1988) [ISCED level 1].

Students can skip one class at first level of basic school [ISCED level 1] and one more time during the second or the third level of basic school [ISCED level 2]. Skipping classes more than twice during basic school must have special permission from the Secretary of Education/Lisbon (Legal Disposition 30/2001).

Madeira, as an autonomous region of Portugal, has its own specific regulations. Here, gifted students are recognized by legislation. The school guidelines map out enrichment programs for gifted students after identification [ISCED levels 1 – 3].

B. Specific Provisions

Early entrance is widely accepted [ISCED level 1]. Skipping classes and shared classes with higher grades is possible but rather rare [ISCED levels 2 & 3] In fact, there are only a few options available in the regular classroom for stimulating gifted students, even if an extended curriculum can be offered [ISCED levels 1 – 3]].

Individual or group mentoring is common at all school levels in Portugal.

Co-operation with companies or non-profit organizations are maintained so as to organize provisions for the gifted.

A few schools are working intensively on programs for gifted students. As an example, the Paulo VI School (Gondomar) launched an enrichment program called “Portas Abertas” (open doors). Twice a week, for two to three hours, enrichment activities are offered during the regular school day. However, these programs are more common in private schools and parents are expected to pay extra tuition fees.

Special schools exist for talented students in music/dance from basic to secondary education. Special arts and sports curricula are also available in some secondary schools.

The curriculum at music/dance schools is quite similar to regular schools [ISCED levels 1 & 2], but there are more classes in music, playing instruments, and composition, while some other subjects of the national curriculum are reduced. At ISCED level 3 students have a very specific curriculum in music, preparing themselves for university level courses in music.

There are some schools specifically involved in artistic studies as preparation for university [ISCED level 3].

In schools specialized in sport, students can join special teams in “school sport”. This is an extracurricular activity and involves different modalities. These students have special conditions of class frequency and examination. These same conditions are applied to adolescents who are members of a team of “desporto federado” [ISCED levels 2 & 3]. At

ISCED level 3, students can choose studies in sport, as preparation for a program in sport and physical education at university.

Gifted students can participate in competitions (such as Olympiads) in a variety of subjects in science and literature. Schools are mainly involved in these programs but they are organized as out-of-school activities.

Psychological counseling is available in some of the regular schools, especially at ISCED levels 2 and 3.

Out-of-school provisions are organized by private associations such as ANEIS (enrichment programs and teachers/parents counseling in Braga, Oporto, Coimbra, Lisboa, and Évora). A two week summer camp is organized by ANEIS for gifted students at ISCED level 2, covering several topics like astronomy, biology and history.

An “Adolescent Meeting of Science” is organized once a year by the Ministry of Education and the Gulbenkian Foundation.

Festivals and exhibitions related to music, dance or sport are activities within which gifted students can develop and present their potential.

In Madeira, as a result of teacher and other professional training in academic subjects, sports and arts, a systematic attendance program in regular schools has been developed and implemented [ISCED levels 1 & 2] and comprises part of the educational process of gifted students, once they are identified (DREER, Funchal).

C. Identification Criteria

Selection criteria for programs are generally autonomously regulated by schools.

A psychological examination is necessary for early entrance to school. In addition, pre-school reports and parent interviews are included in the selection procedure.

The decision to permit class skipping is based on teacher, school and parent evaluations. Special test results, such as achievement tests, can be included in the decision process.

There are special evaluation/selection criteria in schools specialized in music/dance, arts and sports. The student's skills in the specific fields are evaluated prior to school admission, and selection includes a general interview and motivation assessment.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Gifted education is neither a compulsory nor an optional topic in the teacher training curriculum. Gifted education can be discussed if there is any interest in the subject.

Some years ago the Secretary of Education organized a training course on the topic of giftedness for teachers at schools in different parts of Portugal (Manuela Esteves Da Silva). However, gifted education is not a popular topic in training and retraining of teachers or other professionals.

Those interested in the topic can attend small workshops which are organized by private associations or groups of schools.

In Madeira, there are more specific teacher and psychological training for those taking part in the enrichment program implemented in some regular schools.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

Filomena Pereira belongs to the Direcção Geral de Inovação e Desenvolvimento Curricular, a Governmental Department for Basic Education (Lisbon) and is the political contact for gifted education.

In 1992 and 1999 the Ministry of Education published a manual on gifted students: "CRIANÇAS SOBREDOTADAS: Intervenção Educativa (1º ciclo)" [ISCED levels 1].

The following research institutes offer their expertise to interested parties, mainly through publications.

There are researchers in several Portuguese universities involved in giftedness studies (Beira Interior, Évora, Lisboa, Porto, Minho, and Coimbra). To give a representative picture of the research done, topics include underachievement, social

intelligence/competence, cognition and learning styles, creativity, identification and psychological assessment procedures, and self concept and other personality traits. Other fields of interests include teachers' perceptions of giftedness, the impact of early entrance and class skipping on educational and psychological development, vocational guidance for gifted students, and indicators of precocity at 3-5 years old.

ANEIS publishes twice a year the journal "Sobredotação", specialized in giftedness, and organizes a congress twice a year on the topic of giftedness and gifted education, as well as other more informal meetings for teachers, parents and psychologists. ANEIS also makes use of mentors as a provision and counseling aid for families of gifted students, as part of students' enrichment programs.

Some other Portuguese associations, like APCS, CPCIL or APPEPICTA, serve as information centers and they also organize similar activities.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Gifted education was initially based on private initiatives in Portugal. Once the topic of giftedness found its way into political discussions and gained political recognition, school initiatives began, resulting in more provisions for the gifted students. The political recognition is encouraging. However, legislation must be generalized and applied to gifted students. Even though a legislative focus on gifted education is needed and viewed as a priority, the major obstacle which has to be overcome is the general lack of teacher experience and training.

Second, teacher training including the topic of giftedness needs to be developed at graduate and post-graduate levels. University of Minho (Braga) approved a program for teachers' continuous education on gifted topic.

Reliable identification instruments and methods concerning giftedness need to be developed and made available.

The need for implementing advanced and individualized enrichment school programs for the gifted, including evaluation, is rated as a high priority.

Finally, efforts should be made to eliminate the misconceptions about giftedness at professional and community levels.



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RO - Romania



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Since 1995, the Romanian Law of Education (modified in 1998 and 1999) has included several articles concerning the gifted student's educational status.

The Romanian Law of Education recognizes giftedness but the significance of the concept is restricted to one dimension only. The terms which nominate gifted students in the current law are "students with very high school results and outstanding abilities" (title 1, art.5(6)), "students able for performance"; (title 1, art.10(4)) and "students with aptitudes and exceptional school performance" (title 1, art.16(2))

In other words, the student who is generally successful in terms of school performance standards or performance in international academic competitions like school Olympiads, is considered gifted. Gifted underachievers are not included in the group of gifted students.

The New National Curriculum, which was largely implemented since 1998, represents the most important normative frame of improving educational provisions for able children and youth. The principles which shape the curriculum frameworks include: the recognition of individual differences, identification of individual needs, differentiated/special curriculum, flexibility within the formal curriculum, and non-intellectual provisions.

The New National Curriculum principles are: decentralization and flexibility, reducing the formal curriculum requirements in the pupils' timetable, effectiveness, compatibility of the Romanian compulsory and secondary education with the European quality standards, coherence, equal opportunities, and links with social issues.

Since the start of the 1998-1999 school year the national curriculum has covered two main divisions: the core-curriculum and a school-based curriculum. In order to complete the core curriculum, each school may choose one of three versions of a school-based curriculum, these being the in-depth core curriculum, the extended curriculum and optional courses (school-made curriculum). This new and flexible structure of the national curriculum determines a series of new dimensions within the curricular system in favor of differentiated education.

B. Specific Provisions

Explicit guidelines regarding provision for the gifted student refer only to early entrance to school and grade skipping.

The new 1998 national curriculum makes new actions regarding gifted education possible. In addition to acceleration in the form of early entrance to school and grade skipping at all school levels [ISCED levels 0 – 3] preference is given to extra curriculum-based enrichment. The implementation of extra curriculum in schools is rising [ISCED levels 1 – 3]. Provisions for the gifted are organized by schools in cooperation with companies or non-profit organizations. Schools are particularly involved in the organization of competitions like the Olympiads.

In general, the national system of competitions is very popular. Olympiads, especially in science subjects, have a long tradition. After a long period of both positive and negative experiences in the Olympiads Romanian teachers have become very skilled in organizing competitions. Involving teachers in such contexts is still highly appreciated, both formally and informally, within the teacher community.

Recently, many other competitions have been initiated by non-profit associations of teachers or other NGOs in parallel with the national system of academic Olympiads (e.g., Physics; Math & Physics; national competition: Chemistry).

But, even if the new national curriculum provides the opportunity to organize individualized provisions for gifted students, parents still complain that the formal state education is not good enough to meet the special needs of their children in order to reach the levels required for graduation or admittance to university.

Provisions for the gifted, including underachievers, are still mainly out-of-school activities rather than being integrated into the regular school curriculum.

The Individual Mentors system for regular students is functioning in Romania, but primarily as a private parallel-education system. Parents are making serious efforts to pay extra money for private classes. Also, teachers having very small salaries are willing to hold a second job. Individual mentors are paid to meet the needs of both gifted underachievers and very able students.

“The Centers of Excellence for Youth Able of High Performances” (Centre de Excelență pentru Tineri Capabili de Performanță - CETCP) were initiated in 2001 by hard-working

and interested teachers with long experience in students' training for international school Olympiads.. These Centers of Excellence are organized in the country's main cities: Bucuresti, Cluj, Ploiesti, Iasi, Galati, Constanta, Timisoara, Craiova, Sibiu. Most of them represent the scientific areas of the curriculum: physics, mathematics, chemistry, informatics, and biology

Here, teachers provide two to four hours of special classes per week, usually during weekends, for students who have outstanding school results and who are willing to improve their performance. Students are selected by teacher nomination from all the schools in the area. These courses represent an extra-curricular activity, offered mostly in the scientific fields, and only for students aged between 13-18 years. The main challenge for these students and for their teachers is to compete in national and international academic competitions. For instance, 90% of the winners of national and international Olympiads in 2003 were trained in such centers during the 2001-2002 school year.

CETCP aims to extend their activities to all curricular areas and the entire ISCED levels 2 and 3.

Each year the Ministry of Education and local school inspectorates organize several summer camps for winners of national and international competitions. Such camps are usually offered for free to a certain category of winners (e.g., in informatics, mathematics or physics) but there are also heterogeneous camps. It is not yet a systematic national program and not all domains of interests and excellence are covered.

RO-TALENT (Romanian Association of education and psychological support for talented students) was established in 1992 in the city of *Iasi*, with branches in the towns of Suceava, Craiova, Onesti, Piatra Neamt. Its main goals are to promote public policies to encourage able people, to develop an educational context in order to improve research on giftedness, to provide specialized identification, to offer support for gifted students from disadvantaged social groups (handicapped children, underachievers, gender minorities etc.), to increase social responsibility towards high ability people and to provide in-service teacher training on giftedness.

RO-Talent has organized several international summer camps for talented students (1997, 1998, 1999), aiming to stimulate and develop academic, social and artistic talents.

“ProCollege” is a private school promoting a long-distance educational program, supported mainly by a private TV channel. Its mission is to identify and support gifted and talented students. It provides special courses and projects for a few students selected from all over the country using IT educational strategies. To become a ProCollege student, it is necessary to send an application with academic records and to pass a psychological and a knowledge examination. The grants include courses and hardware facilities. Usually, a gifted child attends two-year courses at his/her own individual pace, meeting his/her personal needs. The main goal is to integrate gifted children in national and international networks.

Artistically gifted students also have big competition challenges at the national level. In 2001, several NGOs supported national artistic competitions for gifted children and youth in national music festivals. Festivals and exhibitions are organized at local and national levels, involving artistically gifted children and youth from artistic vocational schools and high schools. There are regular artistic events, especially at local levels, but also at a national level.

C. Identification Criteria

The final responsibility for identification and provisions for able students is, in general, with the school. Results and evaluations of student performance are the main criteria regularly used in schools for identifying the gifted. The new national curriculum established national standards for students’ performance, but few teachers are trained to use or to refer to these standards.

Specialists from schools, local psycho-pedagogical school centers, NGO’s and other private institutions occasionally apply psychological assessment techniques. However, no specialist is officially certified in gifted identification at pre-university levels. Parent nomination and a psychological test are necessary for early entrance to school. Psychological instruments are very rare and have not been revised for a very long time.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Educational guidelines include initial teacher training in gifted education but the implementation of such courses depends only on the university's decisions regarding curriculum content. Thus, only a few Romanian Universities provide such courses, such as the university "Al.I.Cuza" from Iasi, University of Bucharest, and University "Stefan cel mare" from Suceava.

Some universities and some local Education Authorities (Inspectorate) officially introduced in-service teacher training in the field of giftedness (ISCED levels 2 & 3).

Within the framework of the initial teacher training program, a one-term course in gifted education is offered in the 3rd year of the psycho-pedagogic module at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of Iasi.

The applied seminars are organized in cooperation with RO-Talent. No extra fees are charged.

At the University of Iasi, the curriculum for primary school teachers and the curriculum for undergraduate students in the Education and Special Education Departments include a compulsory one-term course in education for the gifted and talented during the second and third academic years respectively. Some universities and other institutions such as the CCD (Centers of Teacher Training) or NGOs offer optional in-service teacher training courses in this field. West University of Timisoara provides an initial training course for primary school teachers.

Teacher exchanges concerning gifted education takes place mainly at ISCED levels 2 and 3.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

The Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the University of Iasi is heading the field of research in gifted education in Romania. It offers courses on gifted psychology and education.

The "Center of Education Resources and Applied Research" (C.R.A.I.) at Iasi has developed an identification program for gifted primary school children in cooperation with the RO-Talent Association. The project will continue with implementing counseling sessions for children, parents and teachers.

The “Henry Coanda” Foundation works on fund-raising for gifted and talented children from disadvantaged social groups. They provide special funds primarily in order to promote artistic talents. This organization, as well as “PRO College” and the “PRO Foundation”, serve as information points for parents, teachers and other interested people in Bucharest.

Several Ph.D. projects related to “fundamental” giftedness research on topics like “giftedness and gifted education”, “gifted underachievers”, “gifted (early) identification” and “counseling” were developed, defended and published in national professional journals and books (see “Ph.D. Reports”). Several regional research projects concerning socially and economically disadvantaged gifted children from rural areas have been organized. Several papers on giftedness have been presented at regional and national conferences on educational issues.

Ph.D. Reports, 2004

- Cosmovici, E.M. Aptitudinal excellence in contemporary research.
- Cosmovici, E.M. Selection strategies for high ability children. A practical investigation.
- Cosmovici, E.M. Problems in identifying special categories of gifted children. A practical investigation.
- Cosmovici, E.M. Problems in adapting and standardizing tests in Romania.
- Popa, N. Teachers of the gifted. Characteristics and professional development.
- Ignat, A. Theoretical and methodological evolutions in counseling for social and emotional development.
- Popovici, I.M. Theoretical models in giftedness. Illustrations in the area of sport talent.
- Popovici, I.M. Aptitudinal excellence and extraordinary performances in Romanian sports. Case studies.
- Popovici, I.M. Optimum stress and anxiety levels displayed by high performances sportsman. A practical investigation.

F. Priorities and Expectations

In spite of the legal recognition of individual differences, gifted education is still only infrequently realized in practice. At present, schools are becoming increasingly active in gifted education. Private institutions are undertaking fruitful initiatives and offer a valuable contribution to the field of provisions for gifted students.

Nonetheless, there is an obvious need for legislation regarding gifted education. In particular, the recognition of individual differences, flexibility within the school system, and compulsory teacher training in gifted education should be regulated more explicitly by law. The basic curriculum and special curricula, non-intellectual provisions for the gifted, and the release of compulsory education should also be regulated.

Within-school provisions for the gifted have to be made more generally available in the near future. The influence of teachers on school curriculum has to increase.

The lack of teachers for small-group students, as well as the absence of financial rewards for motivated teachers willing to develop provisions for the gifted, continue to be major obstacles to development in the field. Provisions such as grade-skipping, shared classes with higher grades, group-wise acceleration, and co-operation with companies or non-profit organizations should be implemented with greater frequency.

Psychological counseling by specialized experts should be made available.

Regarding the identification of gifted students, nomination criteria have to be modified to include gifted students from minority groups, such as handicapped students and students of different ethnic backgrounds, as well as female students in programs for the gifted. Special provisions for the “underachiever” are also needed.

Finally, the training and retraining of teachers and other relevant educators needs to be greatly expanded. Experience exchanges between schools on a regional, European and a wider international level should be included into the teacher training program.

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SE - Sweden



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Historically, there have never been any nationally acknowledged guidelines or legislation for gifted education in Sweden and high achieving students have never been the subjects of special educational provisions. The recommendation no. 1248 (1994) on education for gifted children from the 1994 Parliamentary Assembly session of the Council of Europe had no noticeable effects within the Swedish School System. Only locally, at the Jönköping Teachers Training College, has a shorter course been given, introduced and supervised by the former Swedish ECHA representative, Roland S. Persson. However, there have been some local developments of guidelines regarding gifted education.

During the 2002 ECHA summer conference in Nijmegen the Swedish representatives prepared an introductory activity plan for the next three years, i.e. 2003-2005, keeping as close as possible to the successful Austrian model. The resulting plan was sent to the Ministry of Education together with a proposal that national funds should be used to pay for such an educational experiment located to two relatively new universities, one in the North of Sweden – Luleå Technical University (LTU) – and one in the south – University of Växjö (UV). The Ministry of Education agreed. This educational experiment has been in force since 2003. The experimental efforts in the North, however, are the result of a joint venture between the Luleå Technical University (LTU) and its Medial and Musical Faculty at the Piteå School of Music (PSM).

B. Specific Provisions

The existing specific provisions in Sweden are connected to technically ‘under-cover’ forms aimed at elite classes or even groups of elite classes. This state of affairs needs to be changed: the task of developing specific provisions for the gifted has to take place within a more appropriately defined educational context. But in order to do so it is necessary to have a sufficient number of appropriately trained teachers working in connection with the two

research centers. Until we have managed to fulfill this prerequisite it will not be possible to take any further measures within the field.

C. Identification Criteria

A guiding document of specialists in gifted education states that all pupils in the Swedish School System are in principle eligible for gifted education provisions, as long as they have sufficient interest in a certain school subject or group of subjects and receive positive assessments from his/her own teacher and/or known expert(s) in the subject area in question. But there will always be a preparatory phase for all pupils who register for gifted education provisions, during which time they will have to learn to develop their own study goals and procedures. For example, pupils should be able to demonstrate an increasing improvement in their ability to plan their own studies by means of minor curricula. These are to be used as stepping stones from an existing level of knowledge to a reasonably distant goal, e.g., defined in terms of the intended use of that knowledge or level of ability.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

The first step has been taken for the procedures for the necessary teacher training and retraining and for the relevant educational research.. The plan was developed by a group of specialists in gifted education in 2003 to serve as a guideline for a national endeavor within the field of gifted education . The plan includes drawing up a curriculum for the first official Swedish teacher training course which will lead to an internationally accepted ECHA certificate

The necessary compulsory training and retraining has to be carried out by the teacher training staff proper at the University of Växjö. There has to be a continuously increasing output which has to meet with the requirements for the Växjö University's own teacher training and research activities. In time, it should also be progressively possible to fill the needs for the rest of the country, although this process must be thought of as a step-by-step outsourcing procedure. Provisions for giftedness and teacher training in gifted education

started at the Luleå Technical University/Piteå School of Music but the teacher training facilities in the North are still rather small, at least in comparison with those at the University of Växjö.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

From the very beginning the members of a Swedish project group in giftedness has been equally interested in both relevant research and teachers training applications. As they felt that two central subjects matter (music from Luleå/Piteå and mathematics from Växjö) showed interesting similarities as to their internal structuring as well as to their didactical appearances, it was decided to integrate them to form a single subject matter for research purposes. Thus, the group calls their specific research subject matter math/music in Växjö and music/math in Luleå. At the University of Växjö the Department of Mathematics and Systems Sciences (MSI) functions as the primary organizer of the scientific training for the doctoral candidates. In addition to Professor Dr. Inger Wistedt, there are three senior research fellows available for instruction and supervision. In addition to the doctoral candidates in mathematics/music (maximum three) the group of trainees also consists of two advanced MA-students with similar aims and goals. Three additional senior researchers are provided from the Department of Education (OPED), one of which will primarily supervise and examine the limited research tasks included in the gifted education courses for the Swedish ECHA certificate.

At LTU the Luleå Media and Music Faculty (MMF) functions as the primary organizer of the scientific training. At MMF they have set the maximum number of doctoral candidates at two with two supervising senior researchers, Professor Dr. Christer Wiklund and Professor Dr. Sture Brändström, both with backgrounds in education and musicology. A third senior researcher, Professor Dr. Rudolf Strüsser, covers the other part of the new subject matter as his background is in mathematical didactics. A young researcher who recently defended her doctoral thesis in musicology has also decided to join this new group of researchers.

The Swedish research foundation recently provided funds for a three year project which will investigate mathematical giftedness, starting in 2005. In addition, the Växjö University



decided to start a course in gifted education for teacher students. This course will be offered for the first time in the spring term 2005.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Gifted Education has at last arrived in Sweden and has become established on a national basis. This is the most important feature of the current situation. We have been given starting money through the ordinary “in budget” channels. Our first priority is thus to see to it that the money keeps coming that way. But even in this respect: “Nothing succeeds like success”. So this first priority means that we have to be successful in reaching the goals that we have already set.

In March 2005, there will be a Nordic Seminar on Gifted Education to establish a Nordic Research Network for Gifted Children. The short term aim is to collect funds for networking this upcoming field of research on a broader scale than just within each Scandinavian country alone.

However, the promising new development in the area of giftedness research and gifted education needs a legal basis. It is essential that the Swedish legislation includes explicit references to giftedness and gifted education.

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SI - Slovenia

No Update information on gifted education in Slovenian schools could have been provided. The following information is based in the report of 2003 regarding the period between 2002 and 2003.

A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

The school legislation represents an important starting point for the development of the whole system for working with the gifted in Slovenia.

Among the basic aims of the educational system the 2nd article of the Primary School Law (PSL) [ISCED levels 1& 2] and the 2nd article of the Law for secondary education (HSL) [ISCED level 3] pay special attention to the importance of developing all student talents.⁶ The 11th article of the PSL defines gifted children as those with special needs and the 12th article states that schools are obliged to adapt teaching and learning methods to the gifted pupils and to provide extra lessons and other forms of individual and group support. Schools at ISCED level 3 are also required to adjust their programs to the gifted students (HSL: 36th article), as are the secondary vocational and professional schools (VPEL: 10th, 56th, and 71st articles)

The primary schools organize extra lessons and other activities within the limits of the wider program [ISCED levels 1& 2]. Pupils participate in all extra activities on a voluntary base (PSL 20th article). The state enables primary schools [ISCED levels 1& 2] to devote a part of the extra lessons meant for children with special needs to gifted pupils (0.5 hour a week per class). The legislation allows pupils and students to progress faster (Acceleration; PSL:79th article; HSL: 19th article; VPEL: 49th article). High schools and other secondary schools are obliged to allow talented students to follow parallel studies at appropriate schools (e.g., music schools) and, in accordance with the law, adjust the study obligations of top athletes and students preparing for international competitions in different fields of knowledge (HSL: 18th article; VPEL: 46th article).

The process of the development and implementation of individualized program for children with special needs includes the collaboration of a school's counselor, as defined in the 67th

⁶ Primary School Law, High School Law, Vocational and Professional Education Law, Ur.l.RS, 12/96

article of the School Organization and Financing law⁷. The 62nd article of this law also states that it is the class teacher's responsibility to organize a board of teachers and counselors to construct the individualized program for each identified gifted children.

Despite the fact that the legislation puts a premium on the concern for gifted students at all levels of the public school system, the concept of recognizing and working with the gifted during the 9-years of primary school has only recently been passed by the Professional Council of general education.⁸ The chapter 'Educating the gifted pupils' states the basic principles and methods of work as well as the anticipated task carriers. The Concept was shaped in accordance with some important definitions, among which the following is of special importance: the notion 'recognizing gifted pupils' defines the whole process including record-keeping, identification, informing the parents and getting their opinion. As a rule, recognizing is normally carried out in the first and second triad of the nine-year primary school and, if needed, can be repeated in the third triad. Thus all gifted pupils are given an equal chance of being recognized.⁹

The procedure of recognizing gifted pupils is not the same through all three periods of primary school. As a rule, record-keeping and informing the parents of potentially gifted pupils and getting their opinion are only carried out at the end of the first triad. The parents' approval for identification is acquired at that moment. Identification is generally done at the beginning of the second triad. The parents are again informed of the findings again and asked for their opinion.

From November 2001 the introduction of the new Concept in the 9 year primary school has been followed by the National Education Institute commission "The extended program group for recognizing and working with the gifted". It consists of scientists from Slovenian universities, experts from the National education institute and from some other public institutions, and school representatives.

⁷ Law about organisation and financing of the education, Ur.l. RS, 12/96

⁸ Concept – Recognising and work with the gifted in the 9 year primary school, Professional Council RS of general education.

⁹ *ibid.*,str.7.

B. Specific Provisions

The following methods and special procedures for the gifted are applied within the Slovenian school system : Early admission to ISCED levels 2-3; Internal differentiation (ISCED levels 0-3); Class Skipping (ISCED levels 1-3); Extra lessons in various subjects (ISCED levels 1-2); Partial external differentiation (selective subjects and interests, ISCED levels 2-3); Interest activities and projects (ISCED levels 1-3); Enrichment programs – clubs, circles (ISCED levels 0-3); Individual learning (ISCED levels 1-3); Youth research work (ISCED levels 2-3); Competitions in knowledge, sports and art (ISCED levels 2-3); Psychological and pedagogical counseling in each school; The possibility to be awarded the special status of sportsman, researcher or artist (ISCED levels 2-3).

The following activities are organized outside the school, but free of charge for parents: Summer schools and research camps in science, sports and art (ISCED levels 2-3); Music festivals (ISCED levels 1-3); Art exhibitions (ISCED levels 1-3); Competitions in different subjects, sports, art, organized at the municipal, regional and state level (ISCED levels 2-3); Educational and psychological counseling within the Job Centre and other regional and local counseling centers.

In order to stimulate the development of talents in musical and dance fields there are public music schools [ISCED levels 1 & 2] as well as the high schools [ISCED level 3]. There is one sports high school and ‘sports classes’ in some general high schools. There are an increasing number of private schools related to music, dance, art, and theatre [ISCED levels 1-3].

In Slovenia, intellectually and artistically gifted students can be awarded a Zois scholarship (Zoisova štipendija), which is financed by the state [starting at ISCED level 3]. The selection for this scholarship is primarily carried out in the 1st grade of the secondary school (ISCED level 3). There are also special private funds offering scholarships to talented students.

C. Identification Criteria

At present, identification is only carried out for the purpose of selection for special scholarships (Zois scholarship – ability tests and achievements at the state level; various fund scholarships – different criteria used to define giftedness in the fields of art and sports). Otherwise, pupils are free to choose from special programs on the basis of their own interests, achievements and teachers' and parents' suggestions. The specific obligations with regard to the school program involves following the law adjusted to the pupils' needs, provided they fulfill certain criteria (achievements of the gifted pupil/student in the field of science, art, sports).

A different screening procedure is used when the first 9-year primary school students enter the 4th grade. Keeping a record of potentially gifted pupils is then carried out on the basis of different criteria, without testing or using different marking instruments. The following information is noted in the record-keeping process: study results, pupil's achievements in various activities, results in competitions, above average results in extra school activities, teachers' evaluations and the school counselors' evaluations.

All pupils who meet at least one criterion stated in the Concept are included in the process of identification if this is approved by their parents.

The identification is carried out with various instruments such as a special marking scale for teachers¹⁰, and ability and creativity tests. School psychologists perform the testing. The board of teachers teaching in a certain class must approve the finding that a pupil is gifted. Cooperation between the school counselor and the school coordinator for working with the gifted is obligatory, unless this is the advisor himself. The pupil is provisionally identified as gifted when he/she achieves an above average result on one of the criteria. The last phase in the identification process involves informing the parents to obtain their own evaluation of the child.

The development of the gifted in accordance with the legislation is constantly stimulated as early as in the first triad. Once identification and parental approval takes place, the school is obliged to prepare an individualized program of education for the child.

¹⁰ Adjusted marking scale for teachers. Author: Ivan Koren, PROFNAD, Zagreb, 1989, translation in the in the collection of scientific papers: Gifted, school, school counselling work, Institute RS of Education, p. 40-47.

There are also special private funds offering scholarships to talented students. They have their own selection criteria.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

At both Slovene Pedagogical Faculties, in Maribor and Ljubljana, and at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, the problems of children with special needs, and thus the gifted, are included within the pedagogy and psychology curriculum. All faculties offer Master's courses in the field of recognizing and working with the gifted. The National Education Institute has been organizing seminars for six years, training teachers and other specialists (social workers, school pedagogues, psychologists) in how to educate the gifted.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

The Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education of the University of Ljubljana and the Educational Research Institute at Wubana are doing research in the field of giftedness. Research topics include talented in sports, neuropsychological factors of giftedness, the validity and reliability of identification of gifted students and provisions for them gifted.

The Employment Service of Slovenia, the Regional Counseling Centers in Maribor and Ljubljana, the National Education Institute in Maribor and the Association for Technical Culture of Slovenia all offer their expertise in giftedness and gifted education to teachers, parents and other interested people.

The special Extended Program Commission at the National Education Institute dealing with recognizing and working with the gifted was founded in November 2001. Its task is to observe the introduction of the Concept into the 9-year primary school. At the moment the group is doing research evaluating the implementation of the Concept thus far.

There is only one civil association (Novo mesto) in Slovenia which is dealing with the gifted, the "Club of gifted students", but it has no official state support.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Gifted education in Slovenia began with school initiatives. Even though giftedness and gifted education is explicitly mentioned in legislation, political recognition is still rather low. There are a growing number of private initiatives in the education of the talented (sports, theatre schools, music schools, art schools, dance schools).

A national program to recognize and stimulate the development of the gifted at all school levels and in society as a whole is needed. A program which would connect separate partial initiatives and provide systematic observation and evaluation of the efficiency and development of the new system needs to be established. A national network of specialists and mentors is urgently required.

Opportunities for international cooperation among various institutions and specialists need both moral and financial support. Scholarships for training abroad are necessary.

Finally, a special identification methodology for the gifted within minorities has to be developed and study materials needs to be adapted for the gifted.

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UK – United Kingdom



A. School Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Even if giftedness or gifted education is not explicitly mentioned in the legislation in United Kingdom, a variety of legislative regulations and guidelines about gifted education are published.

The current UK Government came to power in 1997 on a platform of “Education Education Education”. This led to an increased profile of the needs of Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils and the publication of various policy documents, statements of intent and working papers.

The first government “White Paper” (Department for Education and Employment 1997) includes highly able *and the topic “Excellence in School”*:

“We plan to develop a strategy for the early identification and support of particularly able and talented children that links several strands, including accelerated learning, specialist schools and partnership with independent schools . . . We want every school and LEA to plan how it will help gifted children. All schools should seek to create an atmosphere in which to excel is not only acceptable but desirable. (Excellence in Schools, July 1997)”

In 1999 the “Office for Standards in Education international research survey” was published (Freeman, 1999). A national “Gifted and Talented Advisory Group” was established. The Select Committee enquiry shaped the agenda (although modified in the process) of the ‘Gifted and Talented’ strand of Excellence in Cities and was the precursor of a national strategy to support individual LEAs and schools in developing their provision for able pupils.

The revised National Curriculum ‘access’ and ‘inclusion’ statements (Department for Education and Employment/Qualification Curriculum and Assessment, 1999) makes it a statutory responsibility to ‘provide for all pupils’ according to their abilities [ISCED levels 0-3].

In particular, recognition of and respect for individual differences, the identification of individual needs, differentiation in school, flexibility within the school system and 'Education of the able, gifted and talented child' as a topic in the training of teachers is written into the guidance of governmental agencies.

The approach in UK is inclusive and holistic.

In England the term used is Gifted and Talented and includes 5 to 10% of pupils in every school.

In Wales the terms More Able and Talented are used and the cohort is 20% in any school; and the policy and guidance covers all schools.

In Scotland the term Able is used and from 2006 they will have legislation to cover an inclusive approach.

B. Specific Provisions

A wide variety of provisions for the able, gifted and talented is offered in United Kingdom. In school provisions include early entrance to school and some limited grade skipping [ISCED levels 1-3], shared classes with older pupils, whole group acceleration, extra-curricular activities, and individual mentoring are available at all school levels [ISCED levels 1-3]. These provisions are recommended by the governmental guidelines.

In secondary school [ISCED levels 2 and 3], self study and study in other institutions can be organized for able, gifted and talented students. However it is still rather uncommon.

Psychological (school-) counselling is available and can be offered to students if necessary. At the present time, this service is most often associated with special education excluding giftedness. Therefore, counselling for gifted students is often not available in schools.

The government school improvement programme Excellence in Cities includes a Gifted and Talented strand. The EiC Gifted and Talented strand requires schools to appoint a Gifted and Talented Coordinator, to identify 5-10% of their pupils as the 'gifted and talented' cohort (as representative of the school population) and to demonstrate the provision of a 'distinct teaching and learning programmes' for such pupils, to include enrichment and extension opportunities. The guidance to schools also suggests that

schools should ensure that adequate support is in place for all pupils – particularly those at risk of underachievement. The use of ICT is highlighted as a means of support as well as of accessing further curricular opportunities. Importance is placed within Excellence in Cities on working with a range of partners, to include the ‘networks’ of schools specific to the Gifted and Talented strand, higher education institutions and independent schools. Other aspects of the project include mentoring, study skills, and schools are also asked to consider acceleration in e.g. Mathematics or early entry to examinations. To date 40% of Secondary Schools (approximately 1300), 15% of Primary Schools (approximately 1800), and 100 post-16 institutions have EiC Programmes. The Government’s investment to date is over £100m. There will be further investment until 2006 with the vision that, by 2007, every school in England will have an able, gifted and talented programme. Recent HMI reports (Office for Standards in Education) have commended the quality of work which is being undertaken in out-of-hours and enrichment activities and the progress made in other areas in Excellence in Cities schools, but recognises that the challenge now is to ensure that this quality is part and parcel of sustained, everyday classroom practice.

Out of school activities are included in the recommended provisions for able gifted and talented pupils.

Summer schools have been organised on a regular basis since 1999 [ISCED levels 1 and 2]

At ISCED levels 2 and 3, gifted students can attend classes at University.

In 2002, an ‘Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth’ was established.

A number of “Master Classes” are organised at ISCED levels 1 – 3.

National performances/shows are organised at a local level.

C. Identification Criteria

In general, schools devise their own nomination criteria, often based on the EiC or other national guidance, e.g., QCA. The most common nomination procedures are teacher-nominations including nomination based on school achievement and out of school achievement. There is some peer-nomination, parent-nomination and self-nomination.

Students can be nominated by their teachers for summer schools or “Master Classes”, although self-nomination is also accepted.

To participate in the “Academic for Gifted and Talented Youth” students must present a portfolio and have a CAT score of 120.

D. Teacher Training and/or Teacher Upgrading and Networks of Experience Exchange

Giftedness and gifted education is a topic in teacher training programmes. Newly qualified teacher status competencies include a focus on teaching able, gifted and talented pupils although the extent to which this is formally addressed in Teacher education varies from one training institution to another. There is an increasing amount of training and professional development for teachers in this area.

In addition to teachers, other relevant educational professionals like psychologists, advisors, school inspectors, local authority personnel and governors can access training and development in giftedness and gifted education [ISCED levels 0-3].

The Westminster Institute of Education at Oxford Brookes University runs the EiC national training programme for school Gifted and Talented co-ordinators as well as an extensive programme of Continual Professional Development in other aspects of gifted education.

Master’s degrees in gifted education have been established at other Universities and are gaining in popularity.

E. Research and Professional Care and Counseling

Several organisations are working on the topic of giftedness and gifted education in the United Kingdom.

In addition to the “National Association for Able Children in Education” (NACE), the Westminster Institute of Education and Middlesex, Worcester and Brunel have centres of expertise in the field. Some of the universities are running Ph.D. programmes in giftedness and gifted education. In addition, a number of Action Research projects are undertaken by teachers.



In addition to organisations a number of web sites provide information, resources and discussion groups, e.g., NACE, HAF, CPD Gifted.

The “High Ability Forum” was set up to accelerate the development of quality of gifted education in the United Kingdom.

F. Priorities and Expectations

Able gifted and talented education is now firmly on the Government’s agenda and increasingly on all school agendas. The expectation is that by 2007 all schools in England will have a school policy and a coordinator for able gifted and talented pupils. The inclusive approach, the increased provision of Continual Professional Development plus the increased number of members of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth shows a consistently improving situation.

In Wales the development of provision in all schools and Local Education Authorities is well underway.

In Scotland we wait to see what the impact of legislation will have from 2006.

The emphasis across UK continues to be improvement of classroom provision and the development of personalized learning for able gifted and talented.

There is still a need for more research, especially in the area of school provision and its impact on pupils.

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Final Comment

This report on gifted education in European schools is an update of an earlier investigation which was made up to the year 2002 (see Mönks et al, 2003; Mönks & Pflüger, 2004). The present report updates that information to the end of December 2004. Twenty-one of the present twenty-five member states of the European Union participated in this investigation. The inventory includes an investigation of the following six topics:

- 1) School legislation, regulations and guidelines
- 2) Specific provisions
- 3) Identification criteria
- 4) Professional training and/or teacher upgrading and networks of experience exchange
- 5) Research and professional care and counseling
- 6) Priorities and expectations.

What has changed during the period 2002 to 2004? Legislation has been introduced in France and Greece that recognises gifted individuals. In Sweden, positive political attitude towards gifted education came up in Sweden. Educational legislation in 14 of the 21 European countries in this inventory now refers explicitly to gifted children. Provisions for gifted students were improved in the following countries: Austria, Belgium-Flanders, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Ireland, Luxemburg, Romania and the United Kingdom. In Switzerland and Sweden criteria and procedures of identification have been adapted to the needs of gifted individuals. Substantial improvements in professional training and/or upgrading has been reported in Switzerland, Germany, France, Hungary, Italy (the German speaking area of northern Italy), Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Sweden and United Kingdom. Research activities were seldom mentioned in 2002. However, during the past two years there has been an increase in research related activities in Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Romania, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

At first glance, Finland appears to be an exception to this trend, since no changes were reported to have been made during the past two years. However, the first inventory showed that the education from kindergarten up to university level in Finland already had a special structure. Teachers at all levels receive an academic professional training. In addition, an



educational program of differentiation is standard from kindergarten onward. This means that all children are already educated according to their individual developmental and learning needs. This, of course, is the core principle of gifted education. In this respect, the Finnish educational system is highly developed with regard to gifted education, even though it is not referred to in such terms.

These general trends are promising, and demonstrate that there is a dynamic growth of gifted education in Europe. A closer examination of the results of the inventory reveals a number of other noteworthy observations. The United Kingdom has made outstanding improvements in the field of gifted education. The development of provisions, professional training and/or upgrading of teachers as well as research has expanded during the last two years, in spite of the fact that no specific legislation exists in the United Kingdom. Nonetheless, it is believed that the situation would be even better if there were school regulations and guidelines.

Germany has a federal structure of sixteen states, each with its own educational system, and each with different approaches to gifted education. One might expect that such a situation would result in uneven progress across the country. However, a recent report (*Schulische Begabtenförderung in den Ländern: Maßnahmen und Tendenzen*, Holling et al, 2004) provides a differentiated overview of gifted education in each of the sixteen federal states. In general, the report shows that Germany as a whole has made promising and clear progress in all five topic areas mentioned above.

During the past two years promising growth can be observed in Romania and Sweden, particularly in the areas of teacher training (Romania and Sweden) and provisions (Romania) for gifted children. This has been achieved in Sweden largely because of the fact that gifted students and their needs finally received some recognition at the political level. Such recognition, if not actual legislative change, seems to be extremely important for the development of appropriate educational provisions, and for teacher training. The importance of giftedness is also underscored by the Swedish Research Foundation, which supports a three year project (2005-7) on mathematically gifted children.



In 1900 the Swedish teacher and journalist Ellen Key published the book *The Century of the Child*. This was actually the beginning of a programmatic change in school education. In the 19th century children were always viewed as individuals who have to adapt to schools and their rules. In contrast to this tendency, the intention of Ellen Key was to make schools more child-centred, to transform schools into institutions where children could satisfy not only their intellectual needs, but their social and emotional needs as well. In the twentieth century, the efforts of the reform education (e.g. Stern, Petersen, Decroly) contributed substantially to the realization of Key's goals.

Advancement in the area of gifted education is always dependent on input from policy makers, practitioners, scientists, teachers and, of course, parents. Progress can only be made if there is a mutual understanding and co-operation among these groups. The dynamic growth of gifted education since the beginning of the twenty-first century gives hope that this century is on the right track to becoming the century of the gifted child.

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Appendix 2: Germany - International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-97)

ISCED-97 level	Programme orientation	Cumulative duration at ISCED 5	Position in the national degree/qualification structure (Intermediate, First, Second, etc.)	Notes on programmes that span across ISCED levels or sub-categories	Descriptive name of the programme	Main diplomas, credentials or certifications	Typical starting ages	Theoretical length of the programme	Typical length of the programme	Cumulative years of education at the end of the programme	Minimum entrance requirement	Programme specifically designed for part-time attendance	Reported in the UOE	Enrolment 1996-97	Other relevant information
Germany															
0					01 Kindergärten (kindergartens)		3	3	3					2261100	Centre-based institutions for children aged 3 to less than 6. The programme includes educational activities. As a rule, the staff have special educational qualifications, which are officially recognised.
0					02 Schulkindergärten (school kindergartens)		6	1	1					42995	School-based programme for children of at least compulsory school age (6 years) who are not yet ready to attend primary school. They prepare for entry into primary school. As a rule, staff have teaching qualifications. Most are attached to primary schools.
0					03 Vorklassen (pre-school classes)		5	1	1					39425	School-based programme designed for children from the age of 5 to under 6 who are capable to attend school but who have not yet reached compulsory school age (6 years). As a rule, staff have teaching qualifications. Mostly attached to primary schools.
1					04 Primary schools		6	4	4	4				3859490	Programme is marked by the beginning of systematic studies characteristic for primary education. Start of compulsory education (first four years of schooling) at age 6. Prepares children for secondary schools.
2A	G				05 Lower secondary schools, no access to general	Hauptschul-/Realschulabschluß	10	6	6	10	1			3292601	Programme (grades 5 to 9 or 10) following 4 years of primary school, which is marked by the beginning of subject presentation and enables students to enter education in the Dual System (17) or to attend different programmes at vocational schools.
2A	G				06 Lower secondary schools, access to general	Realschulabschluß (Gymnasium, Integrierte Gesamtschule, Freie Waldorfschule)	18-35	6	6	10	1			2033063	Programme (grades 5 to 10) following 4 years of primary school which is marked by the beginning of subject presentation. Successful graduates are entitled to enter studies at upper secondary general schools (22) which qualify for ISCED 5A programmes.



2A	G				07 Kollegschen, die einen mittleren Bildungsabschluß vermitteln (Kollegschen: intermediate school certificate)	Realschulabschluß or equivalent	17-18	1	1	11				1032	General programme attended by students after completion of compulsory full-time schooling. Awards a certificate equivalent to the intermediate school certificate. Graduates qualify for ISCED 3A or 3B.
2A	G				08 Lower secondary schools evening schools	Hauptschul-/Realschulabschluß	18-35	2	2	12	1			14586	Programme (of 1-2 years of duration) especially intended for adults with no or lower graduation (e.g. Hauptschulabschluß) who want to obtain a higher qualification at lower secondary education (mostly Realschulabschluß).
2A	G				09 Berufsaufbauschulen (vocational extension schools)	Realschulabschluß/Fachschulreife	18-22	1	1	14	2			2851	Gen. programme (1 to 2 years) designed for students with Hauptschulabschluß only who want to obtain an intermediate school certificate. Students undergo at the same time vocational training or pursue an occupation. Graduates qualify for ISCED 3A or 3B.
2A	P				10 Berufsvorbereitungsjahr (pre-vocational training year)	Abschlußzeugnis Berufsvorbereitungsjahr	16-18	1	1	11				65198	1-year pre-vocational programme designed for students with 9 or 10 years of general education who did not obtain a contract in the Dual System. It prepares students for vocational training (ISCED 3B).
3B	V				11 Berufsfachschulen, die einen mittleren Bildungsabschluß vermitteln (specialised vocational schools: intermediate school certificate)	Realschulabschluß or equivalent	16-17	1	2	11	2			121467	Vocational programme attended by students after completion of compulsory full-time schooling. Awards a certificate equivalent to the intermediate school certificate. Successful completion may lead to a reduction of the duration of training in the Dual System (ISCED 3B).
3B	V				12 Berufsgrundbildungsjahr (basic vocational training year)	Abschlußzeugnis Berufsgrundbildungsjahr	16-18	1	1	11	2			39966	1-year vocational programme with both general and occupational field-related basic education. This programme substitutes the first year of the Dual System (ISCED 3B). Students must have successfully completed ISCED 2.
3B	V				13 Berufsfachschulen, die berufliche Grundkenntnisse vermitteln (specialised vocational schools: basic vocational knowledge)	Abschlußzeugnis Berufsfachschule (Berufliche Grundkenntnisse)	16-17	1	1	11	2			55733	Voc. programme which includes both general and occupational field-related basic education. Attended by students with intermediate school certificate (Realschulabschluß). Successful completion may lead to a reduction of the duration of training in the Dual System.
3B	V				14 Schulen des Gesundheitswesens, 1 jährig (health sector schools, 1 year)	Abschlußzeugnis für medizinische Hilfsberufe	19-20	1	1	14	2			4955	School-based vocational education (1 year) for auxiliary medical occupations. Often these schools are associated with hospitals where training is provided in theory and practice. Students must have completed ISCED 2. Designed for direct labour market entry.
3B	V				15 Kollegschen, die einen Berufsabschluß vermitteln (Kollegschen: occupational qualification)	Beruflicher Abschluß	17-18	2	3	12	2			62878	School-based vocational programme for special occupations which awards a qualification equivalent to the Dual System. Students must have completed ISCED 2. Graduates qualify for Fachoberschulen (ISCED 4A), Fachschulen (ISCED 5B) and for entry into the labour market.
3B	V				16 Berufsfachschulen, die einen Berufsabschluß vermitteln (specialised vocational schools: occupational qualification)	Beruflicher Abschluß	16-17	3	3	13	2			90855	School-based vocational programme for special occupations which awards a qualification equivalent to the Dual System. Students must have completed ISCED 2. Graduates qualify for Fachoberschulen (ISCED 4A), Fachschulen (ISCED 5B) and for entry into the labour market.
3B	V				17 Berufsschulen (Duales System) (Dual System)	Lehrabschluß	16-18	3	3	13	2			1247465	Special form of apprenticeship which comprises education and training both at a vocational school and in an enterprise. Students must have completed ISCED 2. Graduates qualify for Fachoberschulen (4A), Fachschulen (5B) or for entry into the labour market.



3A	G				18 Fachoberschulen, 2 jährig (specialised vocational high schools, 2 years)	Fachhochschulreife	16-18	2	2	12	2			73776	Upper secondary general programme (2 years). Students must have the intermediate school certificate. Graduates have equivalent qualification as in programme 24, i.e. they are entitled to start studies at Fachhochschulen (ISCED 5A).
3A	G				19 Berufsfachschulen, die eine Studienberechtigung vermitteln (specialised vocational schools: qualification for ISCED 5A)	Fachhochschulreife/Hochschulreife	16-17	2	3	12	2			39893	Upper secondary general programme (2 or 3 years). Students must have an intermediate school certificate or equivalent. Graduates are entitled to start studies at ISCED 5A (equivalent to programmes 20 and 21).
3A	G				20 Kollegschen, die eine Studienberechtigung vermitteln (Kollegschen: qualification for ISCED 5A, also in some cases occupational qualification)	Fachhochschulreife/Hochschulreife and Beruflicher Abschluß (in some cases)	17-18	2	3	12	2			17493	Upper secondary general programme (2 or 3 years). Students must have an intermediate school certificate or equivalent. Graduates are entitled to start studies at ISCED 5A. In some cases students also obtain additional qualifications equivalent to the Dual System (ISCED 3B).
3A	G				21 Fachgymnasien (Fachgymnasien)	Hochschulreife	16-17	3	3	13	2			90179	Upper secondary general programme (3 years) with a large part of vocational courses. Students must have an intermediate school certificate or equivalent. Graduates are entitled to start studies at ISCED 5A.
3A	G				22 Upper secondary schools (general)	Abitur (Hochschulreife)	16-17	3	3	13	2			691124	3-year upper secondary general programme comprising grades 11 to 13. It is attended by students who have successfully completed programme 06. Successful graduates of this programme are entitled to enter ISCED 5A programmes.
4B	V				23 Berufsschulen (Duales System) (Dual System)	Lehrabschluß	19-21	3	3	16	3B			185064	Special form of apprenticeship (second cycle) which comprises education and training both at a vocational school and in an enterprise. Students must have completed ISCED 3B. Graduates qualify for Fachoberschulen (4A), Fachschulen (5B) or for entry into the labour market.
4A	G				24 Fachoberschulen, 1 jährig (specialised vocational high schools, 1 year)	Fachhochschulreife	19-20	1	1	14	2, 3B			7903	Second cycle general programme (1 year). Both the intermediate school certificate and the successful completion of education in the Dual System are entrance requirements. Graduates are entitled to start studies at Fachhochschulen (ISCED 5A).
4A	G				25 Berufsoberschulen/Technische Oberschulen	Hochschulreife	19-20	2	2	15	2, 3B			3743	Second cycle general programme (2 years). Both the intermediate school certificate and the successful completion of vocational education (ISCED 3B) are required by students in this programme. Graduates are entitled to start studies at ISCED 5A.
4A	V				26 Berufsfachschulen, die einen Berufsabschluß vermitteln (specialised vocational schools: occupational qualification)	Beruflicher Abschluß	19-20	3	3	16	3A			22072	School-based vocational programme (second cycle) for special occupations which awards a qualification according to the Dual System. Students must have completed ISCED 3A. Graduates qualify for Fachschulen (ISCED 5B) and for entry into the labour market.
4A	V				27 Berufsschulen (Duales System) (Dual System)	Lehrabschluß	19-21	3	3	16	3A			192897	Special form of apprenticeship (second cycle) which comprises education and training both at a vocational school and in an enterprise. Students must have completed ISCED 3A. Additionally graduates qualify for Fachs. (5B) or for entry into the labour market.
4A	G				28 Upper secondary evening schools	Abitur (Hochschulreife)	19-35	3	3	16	2, 3B			30496	3-year general upper secondary programme for adult students. Admission requirements include: minimum age of 19, completion of vocational training or at least 3 years work experience. Successful graduates of this programme are entitled to enter ISCED 5A programmes.



5B		Short	1st	Short or medium	29 Fachakademien (Bavaria) (specialised academies)	Abschluß der Fachakademie/ Fachhochschulreife (in some cases)	19-20	2	2	15	2, 3B			7919	Tertiary dual programme which prepares for entry into a advanced vocational career. Requires both the intermediate school certificate and completion of the Dual System or practical experience which served the occupation. Designed for direct labour market entry.
5B		Short	1st		30 Schulen des Gesundheitswesens, 2 jährig (health sector schools, 2 years)	Abschlußzeugnis für medizinische Assistenten	19-20	2	2	15	2			17807	School-based vocational education (2 years) for medical assistants. Often these schools are associated with hospitals where training is provided in theory and practice. Designed for direct labour market entry.
5B		Short	1st		31 F412, 2 jährig (trade and technical schools, 2 years)	Fachschulabschluß, Meister/Techniker, Erzieher	21-23	2	2	15	2, 3B			75923	Advanced vocational programme (2 years). Attended after completion of the Dual System and several years of work experience to obtain master's/technician's qualifications or to qualify for occupations in the social sector. Aims at direct labour market entry.
5B		Medium	1st		32 Fachschulen, 3 jährig (trade and technical schools, 3 years)	Fachschulabschluß, Meister/Techniker, Erzieher	21-23	3	3	16	2, 3B	Yes		53421	Advanced vocational programme (3 years), mainly part-time. Attended after compl. of the Dual System and several years of work exp. to obtain a master's/technician's qualific. or to qualify for occupations in the social sector. Aims at direct labour market entry.
5B		Medium	1st		33 Fachschulen, 4 jährig (trade and technical schools, 4 years)	Fachschulabschluß, Meister/Techniker	21-24	4	4	17	2, 3B	Yes		21856	Advanced part-time vocational programme (4 years). Attended after successful completion of the Dual System and several years of work experience to obtain a master's/technician's qualification. Aims at direct labour market entry.
5B		Medium	1st		34 Schulen des Gesundheitswesens, 3 jährig (health sector schools, 3 years)	Abschlußzeugnis für Krankenschwestern/-pfleger	19-20	3	3	16	2			111927	School-based vocational education (3 years) for nurses, midwives, etc. Often these schools are associated with hospitals where training is provided in theory and practice. Designed for direct labour market entry.
5B		Medium	1st		35 Berufsakademien (Schleswig-Holstein) (vocational academies)	Abschluß der Berufsakademie	20-22	3	3	16	3A			m	Tertiary dual vocational programme (at academies and in enterprises) which prepares for higher-level positions in business. Students must already hold a qualification for ISCED 5A programmes. Designed for direct labour market entry.
5B		Medium	1st		36 Berufsakademien (Baden-Württemberg) (vocational academies)	Diplom (BA)	19-20	3	3	16	3A		No	9850	Tertiary dual programme (2 to 3 years) which comprises both science-oriented and practice-related vocational education at academies and training enterprises. Students must already hold a qualification allowing entry to an ISCED 5A programme. Designed for direct labour market entry.
5B		Medium	1st		37 Verwaltungsfachhochschulen (colleges of public administration)	Diplom (FH)	19-20	3	3	16	3A			42603	Special type of "Fachhochschulen" run by the public administration to provide training for the medium-level non-technical career within the public sector. Students must already hold a qualification allowing entry to an ISCED 5A programme. Designed for direct entry into civil service.
5A		Medium	1st	Medium or long	38 Fachhochschulen	Diplom (FH)	19-24	4	5	17	3A			397192	Programme (4 or 5 years) at the university level which prepares for occupations which require the application of scientific findings and methods. Students must at least have completed Fachoberschule (18, 24) or equivalent. First degree.
5A		Long	1st	Long or very long	39 Universitäten (university studies)	Diplom oder Staatsprüfung	19-24	5	6.5	18	3A			1398304	Programme of universities (i.e. in academic disciplines) of 5 to 7 years which prepare for occupations which require the application of scientific knowledge and methods. Students must have completed ISCED 3A. First degree. Graduates may enter ISCED 6.



6			Short, medium or long	40 Promotionsstudium (doctoral studies)	Promotion	25-29	2	4	20	5A (1st, L)	No	m	Doctoral studies programme (2 to 5 years). In most cases students must have successfully completed programmes at universities. A doctoral degree is awarded to successful graduates.
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Appendix 3: United Kingdom - International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-97)

ISCE D-97 level	Program orientation	Cumulative duration at ISCED 5	Position in the national degree/qualification structure (Intermediate, First, Second, etc.)	Notes on programmes that span across ISCED levels or sub-categories	Descriptive name of the programme	Main diplomas, credentials or certifications	Typical starting ages	Theoretical length of the programme	Typical length of the programme	Cumulative years of education at the end of the programme	Minimum entrance requirement	Programme specifically designed for part-time attendance	Reported in the UOE	Enrolment 1996-97	Other relevant information
United Kingdom															
0					Nursery schools and classes		2-3	2	1-2						Non-compulsory, not specifically designed for part time attendance but 95% of pupils attend part time.
0					Playgroups and day nurseries		2-4	1-3	1-3				No		Non-compulsory, contains educational content (inspection system), data currently coming on stream.
0					Reception classes		4	1	1						Includes first year of primary in Northern Ireland.
1					Adult literacy and numeracy	Varies but often no certification on completion	16+	Varies	Varies	11+		Yes	No		
1					Primary school		5	6	6	6					
2C	V			2C, 3C, 5B	Employer supported off-the-job	Varies but often no certification on completion	16+	Varies	Varies	11+		Yes	No		
2C	V			2C, 3C	Employer supported on-the-job training	Varies but often no certification on completion	16+	Varies	Varies	11+		Yes	No		
2B	P				Skillstart (Scotland only)	National Certificate Skillstart 1 and 2	16+	1	1	11+					Designed as the basic point of re-entry to education for those with special needs or no qualifications.
2A	G				Secondary school (age <14)	-	11	3	3	9	1				
3C	P				GNVQ [GSVQ] Foundation Level	General National Vocational Qualification Foundation Level	14+	1	1	10+					



3C	G			GCSE courses/SCE standard grades	GCSE/ SCE standard	14	2	2	11	2A				
3C	P			SCOTVEC National Certificate Modules	SCOTVEC National Certificate Modules	14-17			11	2A				
3C	V			Work-based training for adults	Varies but often no certification on completion	18-63	Varies	Varies	11+		Yes	No		
3C	V			GNVQ [GSVQ] Intermediate Level	General National Vocational Qualification Intermediate Level	15+	1	1	11+	3C				
3C	V			Activities leading to NVQ Level 2 and equivalent	Various qualifications equivalent to National Vocational Qualification Level 2	16	Varies	Varies	11+	3C		-		
3C	V			Activities leading to NVQ Level 1 and equivalent	Various qualifications equivalent to National Vocational Qualification Level 1	16	Varies	Varies	11+			-		
3C	V			Traditional apprenticeships	Varies but often no certification on completion	16-18	0.5-4	0.5-4	12+	3C		No		
3C	V			Work-based training for young people (including national traineeships)	All participants must work towards a vocational qualification	16-17		2	13	3C		No		
3A	V			Activities leading to NVQ Level 3 and equivalent	Various qualifications equivalent to National Vocational Qualification Level 3	16+	Varies	Varies	11+	3C		No		
3A	G			SCE Higher Grade	GCE A/AS equivalence	16	1	1	12	3C				Mostly in school but some in FE.
3A	G			Scottish Certificate of Sixth Year Studies	Certificate of 6YS	17	1	1	13	3C				Taken in comb with A/AS or NVQ3.
3A	V			GNVQ [GSVQ] Advanced Level	General National Vocational Qualification Advanced Level	16+	2	2	13	3C				
3A	G			GCE Advanced Level	GCE A/AS	16	2	2	13	3C				
3A	V			Modern Apprenticeships (MAs)	All participants must work towards a vocational qualification – NVQ Level 3	16-19+	3-4	3-4	14	3C		No		Government supported training so must involve vocational qualification.
4A	G			HE Access Courses		18+			11+					
5B				Activities leading to NVQ Level 5 and equivalent	Various qualifications equivalent to National Vocational Qualification Level 5	21+	Varies	Varies	11+	5B		No		
5B				Activities leading to NVQ Level 4 and equivalent	Various qualifications equivalent to National Vocational Qualification Level 4	18+	Varies	Varies	11+	3A		No		
5B		Short		Higher National Certificate (HNC)	HNC	18+	1	1+	14	3A				
5B		Short		Higher National Diploma (HND)	HND	18+	2	2+	15	3A				
5B		Medium		Diploma in HE (including nurses training)	-	18+	2-3	2-3	15-16	3A				
5A		Medium	1st	Bachelor's degree, 2 years (accelerated)	Bachelor's degree (BA, BSc, etc.)	18	3	3	15	3A				
5A		Medium	1st	Bachelor's degree, 3 years	Bachelor's degree (BA, BSc, etc.)	18	3	3	16	3A				



5A	Medium	1st		Open University (Bachelor's degree)	Bachelor's degree (BSc, BA, etc.)	18+	3		16	3A	Yes			
5A	Medium	1st		Bachelor's degree, 4 years	Bachelor's degree (BA, BSc, BEd, Beng, etc.)	18	4	4	17	3A				
5A	Long	2nd		Master's degree (taught)	Master's degree (MSc, MA, MBA, etc.)	21	1	1	17	5A (1st, M)				
5A	Long	2nd		Professional post-graduate on-the-job training	Many professional qualifications in various fields (accountancy, law, audit, etc.) e.g. CIMA, Articles	21	1-3	1	17	5A (1st, M)	Yes	No		
5A	Long	2nd		Post-graduate diplomas and certificates	Post-graduate diplomas and certificates (post-graduate certificate of education, etc.)	21	1	1	17	5A (1st, M)				
5A	Long	1st		Bachelor's degree, 5+ years	Bachelor's degree (MB, BDS, BV, etc.)	18	5	5	18	3A				
5A	Long	2nd		Master's degree (by research)		21	1-2	1-2	17-18	5A (1st, M)				
6				Doctorate	Ph.D.	21	3	3	19	5A (1st, M)				



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