Legal and Institutional Background of Talent Development Initiatives in Romania and Hungary

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Aspects of our analysis

Main characteristics of talent care systems (based on the results of an international study - USA, Austria, Finland, Israel, Great Britain, Germany, Spain, Singapore, Slovenia – stated by Gordon Győri and Nagy, 2011):

• setting plainly the basic targets in talent care
• highlighting the social profitability of talent care
• introducing systematic thinking
• highlighting the questions of equality and justice
Methods of our analysis

• Analyzing:
  – Educational Acts
  – Legal documents

• Considering:
  – Acts and documents ≠ talent care system
  – But they provide a particular insight into the talent care system
Hungary
Hungary

• The analyzed Act:
  – CCIV. Act of 2011 on National Higher Education
  – From the recent academic year (i.e. from September 1, 2012), the Act will be valid according to the changes modified by the CXXIII Act of 2012
Setting plainly the basic targets in talent care

• It determines the goals of HE in a less branching manner than the previous act, and sets the goals certainly as subordinate to the elevation of Hungary.

• The text of the Act, therefore, does not explicitly elaborate on the linking of comprehensive goals of HE and talent care either.
But it is not perfectly cleared: what is the concrete role of HE in this correlation

The Act orders “the principles of the talent care system of higher education institutions” to be under the regulation of executive decrees. Because of this, in the executive regulation, the concept of top-down control is merging with a down-top organizational system, by leaning on well-working and already existing elements, earlier system and programs.
Highlighting the social profitability of talent care

- In the preamble, it refers indirectly to the wish that “our children and grandchildren would elevate Hungary again with their talent, perseverance and spirit.”
- Thus, in the preamble, talent is in the service of national interest – as opposed to the former Act on HE which seemed to emphasize individual-based education, where the student (or more exactly, the “student of outstanding abilities”) as an individual, for talent care, was the focal point.
Introducing systematic thinking

• While talent care forms appeared earlier only on a list, separated from each other, from the next academic year they are presented as placed in a valid, legal text system:

• The Act treats science student circles, colleges for advanced studies and Roma colleges for advanced studies as part of the “talent care, remedial education and programs” operated by institutions of HE.
The comprehensive principles born on the level of executive decrees are supplemental, but are only able to create an appropriate framework for talent care in higher education if they:

– pay respect to the existing, well-working practices
– stimulate the spread of these practices where needs are still found
– and if they provide an ample financial background to support this.
Highlighting the questions of equality and justice

Earlier: To build upon existing performances, and student initiatives (they had to find the possibilities)

Now: To find talented (gifted) students

- Because of the new Act on HE orders tertiary-level institutions to find talents, an important step forward has been made to broaden the opportunities of students with social disadvantages.
In the earlier Act the only point where the compensation of disadvantages and talent care truly connected was a mentor program for socially disadvantaged students.

In the new Act text, we find the Roma colleges for advanced studies, as well, which are called to support those with disadvantages – indeed, only one special group of these.

(Here, we need to note that Roma colleges for advanced studies existed long before their appearance in the text of the Act)
• The “mentor program”, indeed, provides for but a small fragment of those concerned, and the Roma colleges for advanced studies only provide for a minute group.

• The talent care of students with disadvantages, however, can only be successful if the respect paid to them is not restricted to these two special institutional forms in the future.
Romania
• As for the legislative situation, what can be read out and interpreted from the legislative texts, is an interesting dualism.

• On one hand, the rather brief legislative text contains declarations of principles, but at the same time says little about the specific ways and forms of this support.

• The educational institutions of the country show very different qualities, so any specific requirements beyond the acceptance of the suggested principles and accomplishment of minimal quality related results would create significant tensions in the system.
• Many talent care programs are carried out in the frame of non academic circles, but are hosted by civic institutions, by cultural associations, students` associations, private enterprises, foundations.

• As for the specific textual parts of the legislative documents, there is mentioned, that the objective of the Romanian educational system is the transmission of such a system of values and structure of knowledge, which assures for its participants with proper civic values and information and makes them able to face the challenges of the labor-force market.
• The state, according to the legislative text offers regular scholarships, assures the possibility for the students to participate to various summer activities, and offers non specified incentives for the students who achieve outstanding scholar performances.

• The minister of education may publish possibilities to apply for foreign scholarships, the participation being accessible through nationwide competitions. In the same time, these can be applied for only by the students of state-run and accreditated institutions, so there is no chance to apply for those study at non accreditated universities, whose existence is based on a temporary permission.
• An important part of the legislative text is that it emphasizes the possibility for the students to create special clubs, colleges and professional institutions.

• We can affirm, that the legislative document on the principles` level supports and encourages objectives connected to nationwide talent care, but simultaneously these tasks are delegated into the operating area of the individual institutions, and also they are to make the decision, if they wish to set up such initiatives, and if yes, in which form.
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<td><strong>Hungary</strong></td>
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<td>Quite detailed and branching regulative system</td>
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<td>Talent care and its institutional system is a <strong>more</strong> organic and legitimate part of HE</td>
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<td>Talent care is realized as a separate and emphasized task of institutions</td>
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<td>Significant relationship between sociopolitical goals and talent care as a tool</td>
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