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A large, stylized number '6' is the central graphic element. It is composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in various shades of green. The top part of the '6' is a light green arc, the middle is a darker green curve, and the bottom is a large, light green circle with a dark green circular cutout in the center.

Gifted Education

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1 BACKGROUND – THE PRESENT STATUS ANALYSIS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN AND THE NATIONAL CONTEXTS

Awareness on the importance of education of gifted students¹ and the national interest, deriving from it are setting the main guidelines of education policies at defining giftedness within the educational context in various countries nowadays. The definition of the concept of giftedness by and large determines the methodology of identifying the gifted students and the strategy of school work with them. The concept of inclusion of the gifted, which was being developed parallel to the special needs education, is the prevalent orientation of contemporary school nowadays, providing for the respect of rights of the gifted students by adapting the education to meet their needs on one hand, and drawing attention to their acceptance of responsibility for own learning and knowledge, creating not only personal, but also wider social benefits,² on the other hand, as »... today's gifted students are tomorrow's social, intellectual, economic and cultural leaders and their development cannot be left to chance«.³

In contemporary international studies⁴ certain trends in the education of the talented population are revealed, that need to be taken into account at identifying the gifted students, at planning and implementing the individualized approach of teachers to them⁵. Further, those studies reflect very clear trends for defining giftedness, from stricter psychometric definitions, placing emphasis on the students' potential, measured solely by intellectual abilities tests, to the development paradigm, providing for the extended definition of giftedness within the socio-cultural context, which apart from students' intellectual abilities also takes into account their achievements, implying their work, diligence and knowledge as prerequisites for their successful performance, i.e. their realised potentials, as well as some other non-intellectual variables⁶. Following the Eurydice survey⁷ in the European countries there are from 3% to 10% of such students on average. The majority of the European countries, among others Austria, Belgium (the French speaking regions), the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, Spain, Wales and also Slovenia follow the above mentioned general trend of extending the definitions of giftedness; however, from the accessible sources it is to be inferred that also among these countries there is (still) much terminological and methodological non-uniformity present⁸.

In the context of the given discourse the finding of a decrease in the

number of countries which place the gifted students in the group of special needs students, based on the data comparison of international research from the years 2006 and 2009, is also interesting. From the document *Specific Educational Measures to Promote all Forms of Giftedness at School in Europe*⁹ it is evident that gifted students are placed in the group of special needs students in ten European countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Greece, Ireland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Scotland, Spain, Portugal), whereas from the survey *Gifted Students: A Survey of Educational Policy and Provision*¹⁰ it can be inferred that there are only five countries still following this pattern, among them apart from Slovenia also Estonia, France, Greece and partly Ireland, the legislation of which, however, neither provides for nor prescribes any provision for the gifted students. Although such differences are partly due to the non-uniform application of the »special needs« concept in individual countries, the prime reason for such treatment may be in perceiving the needs of the gifted students in the sense of their learning potential and overachievements, respectively, and in the common educational and social orientation towards inclusion, as opposed to other special needs students, suffering from deficits and learning disabilities, respectively. Consequently, the needs of the gifted students are gaining on importance or being taken into consideration in the legislation of many more countries (Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Scotland, Wales, Slovenia); a trend towards drawing up national strategies and educational policies for the work with gifted students, respectively, is further being noticed. In Scotland, for instance, gifted students are treated as students with additional support needs. Accordingly the national strategy »Scottish Support Network for Able Pupils«¹¹ was drawn up for work with them. A similar policy contributed to the creation of the following documents: »Meeting the Challenge – Quality Standards in Education for More Able and Talented Pupils«¹² in Wales, »Policy Letter for Stimulating Excellence in Elementary Education« in the Netherlands, »Exceptionally Able Students: Draft Guidelines for Students« in Ireland, whereas in Switzerland a special legislative act, adopted by consensus among cantons, provides for work with the gifted students¹³.

The contemporary paradigm to educate the gifted, bringing forward the development and contextual conditionality of the realized giftedness¹⁴, also sets the criteria for the identification and the level of inclusion of gifted students. Norway and Sweden are exceptions to this rule, practicing »total« inclusion; in both countries neither a special definition of the gifted students nor a definite procedure for their identification is

provided at the elementary school level. Similarly, also Cyprus, Lithuania, Malta, Switzerland and Scotland do not apply a special identification procedure either, whereas according to the document *Gifted Students: A Survey of Educational Policy and Provision*¹⁵ in the majority of other European countries the procedure of identifying the gifted students is carried out using more sources and data types; among them diagnostic instruments prevail, more often in combination with other procedures, e.g. with the teachers' or the parents' opinions (Table 1a). Similar findings regarding the identification procedures of the gifted are also reported by Freeman et al. (2010); the authors establish the combination of various identification procedures in numerous countries of the world (more than half of them use six or more different procedures), of which the teacher evaluation is most commonly applied (80%), followed by school grades and knowledge tests (62%), the data provided by parents and the community (62%), intellectual abilities tests (54%), other tests (51%), assessments produced by the school psychologists (48%), students' class work (45%), and creativity tests (23%).

Inclusion is gaining presence in numerous countries¹⁶, more attention is being paid to the holistic personal development of the gifted student and not to the development of his abilities only, and to various groups of gifted students. Following the principle of inclusion in the majority of the European countries gifted students are mainly educated in mainstream elementary school sections, whereby various forms of differentiation are encouraged allowing for individuals' delving deeper into learning within the scope of curriculum, as well as enrichment programmes are introduced with a view to extend learning beyond its scope, to take into account individual differences, and not to foster elitism¹⁷. Partnership and democratic relationships among various partners in the education of the gifted¹⁸ are promoted, more specifically, in 23 European countries (Table 1b) the gifted students are included in mainstream elementary school sections, whereas in Denmark, in Germany, in Hungary, in the Netherlands and in Switzerland a »mixed« model (in between special and mainstream sections) is deployed; in the Czech Republic, in the Netherlands and in Switzerland special sections within mainstream elementary school are provided for gifted students; specific (state) schools for gifted students are established in Estonia, in Hungary and in Switzerland, whereas in Austria, in Denmark and in Estonia gifted students can also visit special (privately owned) institutions; in Hungary and in Lithuania the »mixed« model is deployed, in between special and mainstream schools, respectively¹⁹. The very same source²⁰ reveals that in the majority of the countries gifted students are provided with numerous elective special and/or

additional programmes within regular education to choose from; individualisation constitutes the basis for work with the gifted in 20 European countries, whereas acceleration – per subjects, per classes – is deployed in 19 European countries; additional (enrichment) programmes, counselling and various differentiation forms are as often provided for. Similar findings are reported also by Freeman et al. (2010), who, drawing on an international study, resume the trend towards inclusive education of the gifted students; in numerous countries of the world the gifted students are predominantly provided with the education within mainstream sections of elementary school and the most often used method of work is carrying out enrichment programmes and introducing various differentiation forms.

Following the data of the survey conducted by Eurydice²¹ European countries provide for different approaches to teacher education for work with gifted students; in appr. a half of the European countries the integrative approach (nurturing giftedness is integrated in various subjects) within undergraduate education is applied, similar to the Slovenian one²². In some countries, e.g. in Germany, in Slovakia and in Austria students can opt for a special subject dedicated to gifted students. In Slovenia, as well as elsewhere in Europe teacher education for work with gifted students is provided within the scope of in-service teacher training; in the majority of the European countries teachers can take part in numerous seminars, organized at the state level or offered by private institutions, with the exception of Malta, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Finland and Iceland, where teachers do not undergo any additional education to work with gifted students²³.

Table 1a: Individual European Countries Overview
(European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2009)

	1	2	3	4									5	6				
				4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9		6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	
Austria	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	
Belgium*	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-
Cyprus	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
The Czech Republic	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
Denmark	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
Estonia	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-
Finland	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-
France	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
Germany	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-
Greece	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-

Hungary	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+
Iceland	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-
Ireland (UK)	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-
Lithuania	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	-
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Netherlands	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
Norway	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
Portugal	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
Slovenia	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	-
Spain	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	-
Sweden	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Switzerland	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	-
Scotland (UK)	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
Wales (UK)	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-

* French speaking regions of the country;

+ = presence of the characteristic; - = absence of the characteristic;

÷ = the characteristic is partly present.

1 = special defintion of gifted students in school legislation;

2 = gifted students are placed in the special needs students group;

3 = the needs of the gifted students are highlighted in school legislation;

4 = special procedures of identification and giftedness assessment, respectively

- sources: 4.1 = teachers, 4.2 = parents, 4.3 = learner's achievements, 4.4 = intellectual abilities tests, 4.5 = interview with the learner, 4.6 = diagnostic assessment procedures, 4.7 = potential ability tests, 4.8 = ability tests, 4.9 = lerner's portfolio;

5 = special education of teachers for work with gifted students;

6 = advocates of the needs of the gifted students: 6.1 = parents, 6.2 = organizations for gifted students, 6.3 = teacher organizations, 6.4 = gifted students themselves;

Table 1b: Individual European Countries Overview
(European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2009)

	1						2					3					
	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6
Austria	+	-	-	-	+	-	E	E	E	E	E	+	+	+	+	+	+
Belgium*	+	-	-	-	-	-	E	nd.	nd.	nd.	E	+	+	+	+	-	+
Cyprus	+	-	-	-	-	-	nd.	nd.	nd.	E	E	+	-	+	+	+	+
The Czech Republic	+	-	+	-	-	-	E	E	-	E	E	+	+	+	+	+	+
Denmark	+	+	-	-	+	-	E	E	E	E	E	+	+	+	-	+	-
Estonia	+	-	-	+	+	-	E	E	O	E	E	+	+	+	+	+	+
Finland	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	E	+	+	+	+	+	-
France	+	-	-	-	-	-	E	E	E	E	E	+	+	+	+	+	+
Germany	+	+	-	-	-	-	E	E	E	E	O	+	+	+	+	+	+

Greece	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	O	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Hungary	+	+	-	+	-	+	E	E	E	E	E	+	-	+	+	+	-
Iceland	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	E	E	-	-	+	+	-	+	+
Ireland (UK)	+	-	-	-	-	-	E	-	-	E	-	+	+	+	+	+	+
Lithuania	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	E	E	+	+	+	+	-	-
Malta	+	-	-	-	-	-	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+
The Netherlands	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	E	E	-	E	+	+	-	+	+	+
Norway	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
Portugal	+	-	-	-	-	-	E	-	-	E	E	+	+	+	+	+	-
Slovenia	+	-	-	-	-	-	E	n.d.	n.d.	E	O	+	+	+	+	+	-
Spain	+	-	-	-	-	-	O	-	-	E	O	+	+	+	+	+	+
Sweden	-	-	-	-	-	-	n.d.	n.p.	n.p.	n.d.	n.d.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Switzerland	+	+	+	+	-	-	E	E	E	E	E	+	+	+	+	+	-
Scotland (UK)	+	-	-	-	-	-	E	n.d.	n.d.	E	E	+	+	-	-	-	+
Wales (UK)	+	-	-	-	-	-	O	-	-	E	E	+	+	+	-	+	+

* French speaking regions of the country;

+ = presence of the characteristic; - = absence of the characteristic; ÷ = characteristic is partly present.

E = elective, O = obligatory, - = not provided, n.d. = no data available.

1 = inclusion of the gifted students in the education process: 1.1 = education in the mainstream elementary school sections, 1.2 = combined approach between special and mainstream sections, 1.3 = special units and sections within mainstream elementary school 1.4 = a special state school, 1.5 = a special private school (academy, institute), 1.6 = a combined approach between special and mainstream elementary school;

2 = education provision for gifted students: 2.1 = special programmes in mainstream sections; 2.2 = special programmes in special units/sections of the mainstream school, 2.3 = special programmes in special schools/academies, 2.4 = special after-school programmes (in the afternoons, on Saturdays, summer camps...), 2.5 = individualized teaching and learning in mainstream sections (e.g. individual programmes);

3 = curriculum adaptations within regular education: 3.1 = individualization, 3.2 = acceleration, 3.3 = enrichment study programmes, 3.4 = counselling, 3.5 = differentiation, 3.6 = ability grouping;

During the last ten years in Slovenia the problematics of detecting the gifted students and working with them has been more systematically approached on the legal basis than in the past²⁴, e.g. in elementary school the underlying document was Concept: Identification of and Work with Gifted Students in a nine-year Elementary School (1999)²⁵, whereas a similar concept has been developed at the secondary education level²⁶ in the last three years. Both documents provide for the identification of giftedness procedure and work with gifted students pursuant to the

Elementary School Act,²⁷ the Organization and Financing of Education Act,²⁸ the Gimnazija Schools Act²⁹ and the Vocational and Technical Education Act³⁰.

Table 2: Identification of and Work with Gifted Elementary School Pupils according to the *Concept: Identification of and Work with Gifted Students in a nine-year Elementary School (1999)*

Elementary school grade								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
MONITORING of students – characteristic traits, needs, interests – INDIVIDUALIZATION								
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOMINATION Criteria: school performance, outstanding achievements, competitions, hobbies, opinions delivered by the teacher or school counselling service 						
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOMINATION Criteria: teacher grading, ability tests, creativity tests • NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS 					
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMMES 					

Table 3: Identification of and Work with Gifted Secondary School Students according to the *Concept of Education of Gifted Secondary School Students (2007)*

Modes	Year			
	1	2	3	4
1. The learner has already been identified as gifted in elementary school and has submitted the identification certificate.	INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMMES			
2. Identification of the gifted students according to the Concept.	NOMINATION → IDENTIFICATION → NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS → INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMMES			
3. Identification on the basis of an outstanding achievement at the national or international level.	IDENTIFICATION → NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS → INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMMES			

Findings of the supporting analyses conducted by the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia in the period of introducing and implementing, respectively, the Concept in elementary school (2001/2002, 2004/2005, 2007/2008)³¹ showed³², that by developing and introducing the Concept in Slovenia a new era of approaching the gifted students in elementary school began: the gifted identification procedure was conceptually harmonized, work with the gifted students was included in the yearly work plan of elementary school, individual programmes for the identified gifted students are carried out, and there is legal provision for organization and funding the activities for gifted students. The concept was gradually being adopted in elementary school, simultaneously with the introduction of a nine-year elementary school (75% of elementary

schools started introducing the compulsory nine-year programme in 2003/2004). The majority of schools (26%) kept records of their third graders already in the school year 2005/2006, followed by the fourth graders after one year (13% of schools); most seventh graders were nominated in the school years 2003/2004 and 2004/2005 (20% and 22% of schools). The identification procedure was applied in timely sequence, in the majority of schools from 2004 onwards³³. According to the report delivered by the Primary and Secondary Education Expert Group thirteen gimnazija schools and nine secondary technical schools are participating in the project of introducing and monitoring the Concept at the secondary school level³⁴.

At this point it should be pointed out that in Slovenia the empirical data have not been collected yet, on the basis of which the context and dynamics of work with gifted students could be better understood and explained, so this remains one of the priority areas to deal with at the national level in the future. The objective of the supporting analyses undertaken by the National Institute of Education of the Republic of Slovenia was to monitor the introduction and implementation of the Concept in elementary school (its organizational level mainly), so the state of affairs in the education of the gifted elementary school students as per content and methodology, extending beyond this scope, is only partly reported on. The findings of the mentioned analyses and the practice taking into account the favourable impacts of implementing the Concept in the last ten years also reveal some technical and professional drawbacks at identification and work with gifted elementary school students, that will have to be done away with in the future; the suitability of assessment instruments for giftedness is of prime concern, especially the validity and objectivity of the teacher assessment scales (OLNAD07); further, the competence of teachers to assess giftedness is also questionable, individualized work with gifted students, and the lengthy and administratively demanding identification procedures at the expense of actual pedagogical work are to be paid attention to, as well³⁵. There is a high percentage of identified gifted students, which is most surprising; on average, 26 % of students are identified as gifted per generation³⁶, indicating the problem of developing and understanding the concept of giftedness, of realistic options and reasonableness of creation and implementation of such a large number of individualized programmes. The need for improving the teacher assessment scales (OLNAD07) and for raising the criteria for the definition and identification of the gifted students, respectively, has been recognized considering the mentioned current status.

2 PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Solutions for the identification and work with gifted students in elementary and secondary schools are based on the realised marked impacts of introducing and implementing the Concept: Identification and Work with Gifted Students in a nine-year Elementary School, on experience in the education of the gifted students in lower music school and in the gimnazija sports and arts sections, and on good practices of various European countries, as already mentioned in the introduction to the text. In order to apply the mentioned solutions optimally, some legislative and systemic changes need to be introduced, that are presented as supportive solutions in the text.

The Basic Objective of Identification of and Work with Gifted Students

The basic objective of identification of and work with gifted children in elementary and secondary school is provision of the education process to meet the needs of the gifted students and to nurture their overall personal development, with a view to contribute to the development and realization of their potentials as much as possible. Giftedness is encouraged and promoted in the areas linked to the education development of elementary and secondary school students, as well as within the context of partnerships with other educational institutions, provided they cater for fostering the potentials of the gifted students.

Definition – Who are Gifted Students

Gifted students perform far above average and fall within the top 10% of the population. Their outstanding levels of aptitude are assessed by their intellectual abilities, creativity, school performance (in languages, mathematics, humanities, science subjects, technical subjects), artistic achievements (music, art, performing arts, literature), and sports achievements.

Gifted students should be treated as an independent group of students, exhibiting exceptional potentials regarding their learning outcomes, accounting for individual adaptations within primary and secondary education. Thus, it is sensible to exclude the gifted students from the present definition of the special needs students³⁷, as, contrary to other groups of students, these students do not experience learning deficits or disabilities, the only exception being gifted students with special needs, e.g. gifted students with specific learning disabilities, behaviour problems, chronic diseases, or other. Gifted students need adaptations of different kinds than other groups of special needs students, so they should be devoted enough time and attention within the scope of school work, the task which is

very difficult or almost impossible for teachers to complete, because their work is based upon the present definition of the special needs students.

Identification of Giftedness in Elementary and Secondary School

Identification of giftedness in primary pupils from the fourth grade onwards is carried out systematically, following a three-levelled model to detect gifted students³⁸, i.e. (1) nomination, (2) identification, and (3) interview with parents. In secondary school the identification procedure is carried out in the same way if the student was not already identified as gifted in primary school. Consequently, the secondary school student submits the appropriate certificate of his identified giftedness.

Identification of giftedness is a flexible procedure in terms of processing (monitoring students) and is conducted on the basis of various sources and types of data: ability tests, assessment scales for teachers and/or expert grades, and outstanding achievements of students.

At identifying the gifted students special attention should be paid to students from different cultural and/or lingual background, to students of socially deprived families and to special needs students, because giftedness in these categories of students often remains unrealized or hidden, which makes it difficult to recognize.

Educational Provision to Meet the Needs of the Gifted Students

Provision for the gifted students is brought about in a flexible manner – they take into account the identified traits and area/s of giftedness, respectively, in an individual learner, and are carried out in accordance with the principles and objectives of educational practice in mainstream elementary and secondary schools. There are two kinds of provision, with regard to the organization and to contents; they are planned and documented in an individual teaching curriculum for each identified gifted student.

The goal of organizational adaptations is to modify school obligations for reasons of the potential absence of the gifted student from regularly scheduled classes, due to his extracurricular activities in connection with his giftedness, e.g. absence due to trainings, workouts, competitions or obligations in other educational institutions, in so far as these provide for better working conditions for the gifted learner than the home school and the realm of the normal curriculum of school education at individual school subjects.

The goal of provision as regards content is to modify the teaching contents and methods to the development of thinking, learning strategies, knowledge and interests of the gifted students and to encourage their motivation to learn, either in form of internal, flexible or partially external differentiation, or in form of modified individual and group activities within the extended school programme (additional lessons, preparations for competitions, research camps, personal development programmes, excursions, projects, art colonies ...). Other kinds of provision can also be brought about if they are reasonable for an individual gifted student, for instance subject or class acceleration.

At planning and utilizing provision special attention should be paid to the gifted students from different cultural and/or lingual environments, to students of socially deprived families and to the special needs students, (to the so called double special students), for who the provision should primarily derive from their identified giftedness, if possible, because in case of difficulties of such students their giftedness plays an important role of prevention and compensation in their personal development (self-concept enhancement, learning facilitation, interests, goals ...).

Provision with regard to contents is regularly utilized during regularly scheduled classes as a rule and do not significantly deviate from them if there are no well-grounded substantiated reasons for this (e.g. camps, competitions, excursions).

Coordination of Work with Gifted Students in School

Every school has a coordinator for work with the gifted students, who organizes and harmonizes various procedures and activities pertaining to the education of the gifted: teacher education and training at school premises, raising awareness of parents and wider community about problems of giftedness, recognizing the gifted students, planning and monitoring the implementation of individualized programmes, evaluation of work with the gifted students, collaboration with other school coordinators (e.g. with the ones in charge of cultural, artistic and sports activities) and harmonization at the school, local and national level.

Teacher Competence

Inclusive approach to education of the gifted students requires the highest possible level of professional competence in identifying the gifted students and working with them. Teachers can acquire additional competences in various programmes of in-service teacher training in order to deepen their knowledge of work with the gifted students; such

competences may also be gained at different levels of university study.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Impacts of the Work with the Gifted Students

Quality education of the gifted students requires monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of the methodology of the identification and work with the gifted students, providing for the basis to plan the necessary improvements and/or changes. The internal evaluation is performed by school and is included in its annual action plan, whereas external evaluation is conducted periodically at the national level.

Personal Data Protection

Documentation on nominated and identified students is managed and kept by the school counselling service.

2a Proposals for Support Solutions

- The national strategy for work educating the gifted students should be drawn up, highlighting the key guidelines and principles of the inclusive approach to teaching the gifted students across the educational vertical.
- Rules on the identification and work with gifted students should be created, providing for the »legitimacy« of conceptual and professional foundations.
- At the state level an expert body should be established in order to coordinate and foster the implementation of the national strategy for the identification and work with gifted students and to provide for inter-ministerial coordination, as well (schooling, science, culture, work, economy ...) ³⁹.
- Research into education of the gifted students should be facilitated, especially at the national, but also at the international level, with a view to better understand the gifted students and work with them in the given socio-cultural context, and to additionally foster giftedness in students.
- Education of teachers and coordinators for identification and work with the gifted students at school should be fostered and supported; apart from single subjects pertaining to education at all three cycles of university pedagogical study programmes various kinds of in-service teacher training and exchange should be encouraged, as well.
- Awareness of a wider and narrower social environment on the

importance of respecting human rights and the principles of democracy, autonomy and equal opportunities, and above all, the right to education of the gifted students regardless of the level of education should be raised; priority is given to the appropriate recognition of unusual characteristic traits in students (versus neglect, avoidance or underestimating them) as well as to resuming pedagogical work with them (in the sense of individualisation and not stigmatisation or elitisation) – vision is the development of the system of values of »a culture of fostering potentials«, encouraging optimal education development of various students and perceiving giftedness at different public levels as the prime motive for social advancement.

- Partnership among various institutions – schools, families, local community and/or other organisations and institutions, respectively (sporting, cultural, technical ...) and higher education institutions should be popularised at formulating and carrying out individualized programmes for gifted students, thus relieving teachers and gifted students of the burden of time-consuming and of over comprehensive content; further, the adaptation programmes should also be more sensible and vital (e.g. project tenders).
- In the Elementary School Act, the Gimnazija Schools Act (1996, Article 42) and in the Vocational Education and Training Act (1996, Article 79) documentation on the identified gifted students should be included in the data collection management.
- Schools should be provided with additional funds and other ways of support for work with gifted students, in order to be able to pursue adapted individual and group activities, and also for employing additional personnel for coordination. Various institutions, in which the gifted students can appropriately be additionally educated and/or trained, should also receive the financial support.

3 CONCEPT CREATION

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Translated by Aleksandra Hribar Košir.

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- 2 Meeting the challenge: Quality Standards in Education for More Able and Talented Pupils (2008). Pridobljeno 7. 1. 2011, na strani: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/pubs/circulars/2008/meetingthechallenge/meetingthechallengee.pdf;jsessionid=B9TZJ4vMnmsdinWwlvzdhvQ5h hFN3zQttQQpGdKvsbk7qYy9mLb!2101391267?lang=en>.
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- 4 Nadarjeni – koncept in operacionalizacija koncepta, ocenjevalna lestvica, INDEF. Zavod RS za šolstvo. Pridobljeno 7. 1. 2011, na strani: <http://www.zrss.si/default.asp?link=predmet&tip=7&pID=37&rID=1412>.

Notes

- 1 The term »learner« stands both for primary and secondary school students.
- 2 Armstrong et al. 2010; Smith 2006.
- 3 Campbell et al. 2004, cit. in Robinson and Campbell 2010, p. 8.
- 4 Eurydice 2006; European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009; Freeman et al. 2010; Monks and Pfluger 2005.
- 5 Robinson and Campbell 2010.
- 6 Kaufman and Sternberg 2008.
- 7 Eurydice 2006.
- 8 Eurydice 2006; European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009.
- 9 Eurydice 2006.
- 10 European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009.
- 11 Web source 1.
- 12 Web source 2.
- 13 Web source 3.
- 14 Feldhusen 1998; Feldman 2000; Gagne 2005; Monks 1992; Tannebaum 1986; everything according to Kaufman in Sternberg 2008.
- 15 European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009.
- 16 Freeman et al. 2010.
- 17 Hymer and Michael 2002.
- 18 Montgomery 2006.
- 19 European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009.
- 20 Table 1b.

- 21 Eurydice 2006; also in European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009.
- 22 Razdevšek Pučko and Jurišević 2007.
- 23 Eurydice 2006.
- 24 Elementary School Act 1980; The White Paper 1995.
- 25 The Concept was confirmed at the 25th meeting of the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education (1999).
- 26 The concept of Secondary gifted education practice 2007. The concept was confirmed at the 10th meeting of the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education (2007).
- 27 The Elementary School Act 1996, Articles 2, 11, 12, 40 and 79.
- 28 The Organisation and Financing of Education Act 1996, Articles 2, 11, 61 and 81.
- 29 The Gimnazija Schools Act 1996, Articles 2, 10 and 24.
- 30 The Vocational and Technical Education Act 1996, Article 3.
- 31 According to Jurišević 2009.
- 32 The introduction and implementation of the Concept in secondary education has not undergone the support analysis yet.
- 33 Cf. Bezić and Deutsch 2008.
- 34 Web source 4.
- 35 Jurišević 2009, 2010.
- 36 Bezić 2009.
- 37 The Elementary School Act 1996, Article 11; The Gimnazija Schools Act 1996, Article 10, The Vocational and Technical Education Act 1996, Article 10.
- 38 The procedure for the identification of the gifted students was adopted in 1999 by the Work group for creating the concept for work with the gifted students, chaired by Dr. Drago Žagar (Žagar 2006).
- 39 The gap in the area of work with the gifted at the national level in Slovenia emerged also in international cooperation; thus, from the data of all four international surveys, mentioned in the text, (Eurydice 2006; European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009; Freeman et al. 2010; Monks and Pfluger 2005) it is obvious that the data for Slovenia had been submitted from various and not always reliable sources; in some places significant deviation from the existing state of affairs can be noticed.