

# Talent pool

**It is vital that Europe introduces an initiative to identify and develop talent as it would hugely benefit our society, writes Kinga Gál**

In times of crises, when economic resources are constrained, other resources should be utilised more effectively to address the problems and challenges that societies are faced with. That resource is talent – a natural resource that can be found in any state. Therefore, finding gifted people and developing their talents is in the interest of any state and of Europe as a whole. Talent support does not mean elitism or elite support, but the possibility to discover talented people in all segments of society, regardless of age or background.

This was the reason I started an initiative related to talent support in the European parliament. On 23 January 2013, together with my colleague Mojca Kleva, we hosted a high-level conference on talent support. Representatives of the European commission, the presidency of the European council for high ability (Echa), academics, experts and representatives of NGOs participated in the event and were addressed by Anneli Pauli, the commission's deputy director general of DG research and innovation. Pauli said that talent support is a key measure for the sustainability of high level research and

innovation in the EU and argued that there is a definite need to improve competitiveness in Europe using talents, as they are the EU's future research area.

President of Echa and founder of the network of 'talent points' in Hungary and in neighbouring countries Péter Csermely said, "Support of European talent and creativity is not a luxury, but our life insurance." These 'talent points' serve the locals and are open for all just as a community house or sports club. Parents and teachers can receive guidance on how to discover and treat talented children and young people. Furthermore, it is a space where the children themselves can meet each other and develop their skills through means of formal and non-formal education. Csermely outlined the efforts of European governments and NGOs to develop a European talent support network. He claimed that "on one hand the talented people need the support of the society, but on the other hand the society needs the support of its talents as well".

The outcome of the conference proved that the role of talent support is underestimated both in member states and at EU-level, and there is an urgent need to develop a long-term European roadmap in this regard. Stakeholders at all levels should be involved in spreading the good practices and building partnerships and collaboration Europe-wide. Otherwise, China and the US will progress much faster by developing acts and action plans in the field.

In conclusion, I can only highlight the importance of cooperation at national and international level in the field of talent support. Each European citizen may hide a form of talent, therefore any initiative helping professionals to discover and develop talents should be supported. ★

***"Finding gifted people and developing their talents is in the interest of any state and Europe as a whole"***

The Budapest declaration on talent support states that "Everyone may be able - in something. A talented person is somebody, who has an excellent gift combined with extraordinary general skills, a high level of special skills, creativity and devotion to a certain field. Talented people are able to perform at a high level in any walk of life regardless of age."

This cornerstone document was endorsed on 8 April 2011 by representatives of 24 European countries during the Hungarian EU presidential conference on talent support.

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