



Lifelong
Learning
Programme



EUROPEAN STANDARDS EDUCATION BOOKLET FOR GAT CHILDREN

PROJECT GATE

“GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN TEACHER’S AND PARENT’S TRAINING”



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INTRODUCTION

The brochure was created as a common work by partners from Six European countries involved in the Leonardo da Vinci partnership project “Gifted and Talented Children Teacher´s and Parent´s Training – GATE”. The brochure provides a brief overview of the strategies and approaches used in the project partner countries in the field of education of gifted and talented children. The text concentrates on three crucial issues related to education of GAT children.

The first part of the text concentrates, in broad perspective, on the understanding of “talent and giftedness”, which influences the development of educational standards and attitudes and approaches towards the GAT students. The second part provides a brief insight into the system and standards from the field of education of GAT students in the countries (regions) involved in the project. The third part deals with the crucial elements in the process of education of GAT children – the identification of gifted and talented children. More than anything else, it is the way of identification of a GAT child that reflects the educational standards in the field of GAT children education in the countries involved in the project. The second and third parts include, apart of the general information on the situation of education of GAT children in the partner countries, a short *case study* complementation, which offers a more detailed insight into a specific sub area of GAT children’s education in selected partner countries.

The Project LEONARDO DA VINCI PARTNERSHIP GATE (Project number 2013-1-TR1-LEO04-47702) is, indeed, a **gate** provided to teachers, parents and all concerned actors in the educational community regarding the gifted and talented students, which special educational needs not always find an adequate answer and support.

Through common joint work and mutual learning mobilities, the involved partners from Spain, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Italy, Lithuania and United Kingdom have researched which are the existing educational resources on this topic, which ones are specifically addressed to vocational education training (VET) teachers and students and would offer a new educational tool to support them in their individual pathways to guarantee the “jump” between the VET and the labor market, implementing at the same time the support at home and within the surrounding educational community.



PART 1. EDUCATION AND GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN

Gifted education (also known as Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), Talented and Gifted (TAG), or G/T) is a broad term for special practices, procedures, and theories used in the education of children who have been identified as gifted or talented. There is no standard global definition of what a gifted student is.

Gifted and talented education dates back thousands of years. Plato (c. 427–c. 347 BCE) advocated providing specialized education for intellectually gifted young men and women. In China's Tang Dynasty (580-618 CE), child prodigies were summoned to the imperial court for specialized education. Throughout the Renaissance, those who exhibited creative talent in art, architecture, and literature were supported by both the government and private patronage.

Differences in intelligence have been known for recorded human history, disputed statement but the development of early intelligence tests by Alfred Binet led to the Stanford-Binet IQ test developed by Lewis Terman. Terman began long-term studies of gifted children with a view to checking if the popular view "early ripe, early rot" was true. The Terman Genetic Studies of Genius longitudinal study has been described by successor researchers who conducted the study after Terman's death and also by an independent researcher who had full access to the study files.

Modern studies by James and Kulik conclude that gifted students benefit least from working in a mixed-level class, and benefit most from learning with other similarly advanced students in accelerated or enriched classes.

In 2011, the National Association for Gifted Children (NACG) published in the United Kingdom a position paper that defined what a gifted student is. According to the position paper, the term "gifted," describes individuals who demonstrate outstanding aptitude or competence in one or more domains. An "aptitude" is there defined as an exceptional ability to learn or reason. "Competence" is defined as documented performance or achievement in the top 10 percent of the population.

Educational authorities differ on the definition of giftedness: even when using the same IQ test to define giftedness, they may disagree on what gifted means - one may take up the top 2 percent of the population, another might take up the top 5 percent of a population, which may be within a state, district, or school. Within a single school district, there can be substantial differences in the distribution of measured IQ. (The IQ for the top percentile at a high-performing school may be quite different from that at a lower performing school.).

PART 2. STANDARDS AND APPROACHES TOWARDS EDUCATION OF GAT CHILDREN IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES

The following chapter offers a general description of the approaches and standards prevailing the field of GAT children education. The following contributions outline the situation in the field of GAT children education in Spain (Murcia), Italy, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom (England) and Bulgaria.

Bulgaria: TRAKIA UNIVERSITY STARA ZAGORA

The policy concerning the child in Bulgaria in the field of protection, education and development of the gifted children is realized on the basis of a number of legal documents such as The National Strategy for Children (2008-20018), adopted by the National Assembly. On the basis of these documents, and particularly in the light of the European Directive (the legislation), special provisions for gifted children have been adopted, formulating relevant concepts and policies in the educational system. A gifted child, according to the experts, is a child who, unlike the other children his or her age, demonstrates the ability to achieve higher results for a comparatively short time and succeeds in a wider range of educational activities or spheres. The basis of the gift is talent (a prerequisite for the development of relevant skills), which is defined both genetically and by the immediate environment of the children/students, by the intentional stimulation and social support from family and the educational environment. It is assumed that giftedness is a synthesis, a kind of high-quality combination of abilities (general or specific) - the quality of the person which provides excellence. Creativity is the highest form / an emanation of the development of the capabilities.

Czech Republic: EDUCENTRUM O.S.

In the Czech Republic, the work with GAT children is regulated by Decree No. 73_2005 Coll., the education of children, pupils and students with special educational needs and children, pupils and students who are exceptionally gifted.

In this decree there is stated that the identification of GAT children is made by school counselling service. If the student is detected as GAT, then the school director can offer an individual educational plan or place the student in a higher class. If the students are exceptionally gifted, the school director can create special classes where students of the same or different grades are educated in particular school subjects.

Italy: IC VR3 SAN BERNARDINO – BORGO – TRENTO

In Italy, there is a lack of projects aimed at young GAT students. The country doesn't present a National Project that can give a practical response to the needs of these learners. Nevertheless, the necessity to direct our attention towards these students is now been recognized. Following this new awareness, in recent years, few organizations, supported by public educational authorities, have developed specific projects in relation to this topic.

AISTAP, a private studio organized by a group of psychologists, is a good example of a well-known Italian organization devoted to work with GAT. Its aim is counseling for families with difficult children. This Institution organizes summer camps and, on request, provides counseling for teachers. It is only recognized as an Institution by our Ministry of Education but no more than that; no joint program or intervention protocols to share. It has no bearing in the public school system, not even as a consultant institution.

It is however necessary to point out that in Italy, skills such as art, music or abilities in the logical-mathematical area, can be developed right from a very young age such as the music skill, or from grade nine onwards, by choosing the appropriate school (Conservatory of Music, School of Art, the Scientific Secondary School). The most urgent problem that needs to be addressed area:

- *The early detection of particularly gifted children*
- *The need to foster a mental openness that allows to identify other types excellency.*

Lithuania: NATIONAL REGION'S DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science together with Kaunas University of technology in 2002 performed research and presented results in "Highly gifted children education situation analysis in Lithuania". The establishment of the support system for gifted children started in Lithuania in 2005.

The main important education documents during the last decade where reflects regulation on GAT are "Children and young people's education strategy" (2005), "Gifted children and youth programme" (2006), "Gifted and talented children education programme" (2009), "Law on Education" (2011), "Building of the Gifted and Talented children search, identification system and improvement availability of schools for these children 2014-2016 Action plan" (2014).

In 2008 Ministry of Education and Science together with Special Education and Psychology Centre presented methodical recommendations for teachers, education support professionals and parents "How to recognize a child's talents?"

Assessment of a child's school maturity for children, who developing faster than other children of a similar age, and they are able early starting to school, or preschool are performed by Pedagogical Psychological Services in Lithuania. Pedagogical Psychological Services network is working in all around Lithuania mostly in biggest cities and one their work field is to support children who are gifted (have high potential) and are able early starting to school or preschool, children with special needs, when IQ 130 or more, but learning achievements are low. Services are supported by state and local municipalities.

The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-III edition and Raven Colored Progressive Matrices are the first intelligence tests standardized in Lithuania. But these tests are unable to assess the powers of gifted children. Recently it is used Berlin intelligence structure test for children (BIS-HB) and Drawing creative thinking test (TCP-DP).

Mainly the first steps takes in the identification and helping of gifted children in Lithuania, at this moment the legal framework in Lithuania does not allow organizing appropriate assistance. Children join education system mainly from the kindergarten age (3-5 years), starting year 2016 according to the changes in the Law on Education it will be obligatory for children to go on pre-school education. Gifted and talented children identification during all education period in pre-primary, primary, basic, secondary education is mainly on teachers' and parents responsibility. Children and young people who join vocational education system usually starts it after the basic school at age 14-16 or later after the secondary school or gymnasium at age 18 and more. In this case in vocational education the main attention is to professional skills and students are skipped from more or less as gifted and talented identification system. Starting 2015 in vocational training strategies are already included main steps how vocational training institutions have to pay more attention to GAT.

Spain (Murcia): ASOCIATION INTERCULTURAL LA GALERIA

As result of the LDV GATE Project initial research, it was found by the Spanish partner the current Protocol for High Abilities Students in Murcia Region. This protocol is supported by the Murcia Regional Ministry of Education (www.carm.es), which created in 2011 a Specific Team for Talented and Gifted Students (EOEP Específico de Altas Capacidades).

This Specific Team is intended carrying out functions of guidance and expert advice to the rest of educational counselling, to the inspection of education and educational institutions that taught the teachings of the second cycle of pre - primary education (kindergarten), primary education and secondary education. The team has a centre of educational resources for this type of students in order to guide and facilitate specific materials to schools.

The Protocol for GATE Students, under the Murcia Regional Ministry of Education, is developed each academic year in priority schools, where detected and identified such students. Centres asked for this priority recognition and propose a teacher as coordinator for the centre project.

United Kingdom: REFLECTIVE LEARNING INTERNATIONAL

In England, schools are expected to identify 5-10% of students who are gifted and/or talented in relation to the rest of the students in that school. This is a pragmatic approach concerned with ensuring schools put in place some provision for their most gifted and talented learners. Usually the term gifted applies to traditional academic subjects, and talented is used in relation to high levels of attainment in the creative arts and sports.

Gifted and Talented' is the terminology adopted by the UK Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to describe a range of 5% to 10% of pupils in each school. These young people do not form an homogeneous group. They do not all exhibit the same behaviour or characteristics, but represent a wide range of individual differences. School definitions may therefore relate to pupils who show outstanding ability or achievement in either a limited or extensive range of areas.



Case study: Official documents related to GAT children list and the organizations working with GAT children in Bulgaria

In all of the partner countries involved in the GATE project, the area of GAT children education is a complex field influenced by a number of public attitudes, legal norms, state policies and institutions and individual active in the GAT children education.

What are the most important state policy documents that shape the protection, education and personal development of the gifted children in Bulgaria?

- The National Strategy for Children (2008-20018), adopted by the National Assembly
- The National Strategy is adopted according to Article 1, para. 3 of the Law on Child Protection
- National Programme for Child Protection, operationally developing the Strategy
- National Programme of the Measures for the Protection of gifted children in 2013
- Convention on the Rights of the Child of the United Nations – an important part of the Strategy is to encourage and support the development of gifted children
- Directive 1248 for the education of gifted children of the European Union, 1994

Which institutions work with gifted and talented children?

1) State schools.

- Pre-school education includes children between 3 to 6/7 years of age and is compulsory only for 6-year-old children. The 5-year-old children are about to be included in the near future.
- Secondary schools - these include: primary school level – grade 1 to grade 4, lower secondary level – grade 5 to grade 8 and high school level – grade 9 to 11th grade.
- Profiled schools:
 - Profiled schools with intensive foreign language teaching (language schools) – the entrance is after completing the seventh grade and a competition (from 8 to 12/13 grade);
 - Profiled schools - the entrance is after completing the 7th grade and a competition (with the study of science and / or maths, the humanities, sports schools, art schools, etc.) (8 to 12/13 class);
 - National secondary schools.

2) Private schools.

3) NGOs. Example: “A School for Talents” (acting):

4) Municipal and schools with public and private partnership, centers for extracurricular activities: Municipality activity Centers, Children’s Centers, and Astronomical Observatories.

To provide at least one example from many Bulgarian organizations devoted to work and support of, we may introduce the nongovernmental Eureka Foundation which helps talented and young people with implementation of projects in the fields of science, technology management (for more information, please see the website: http://www.evrika.org/?page_id=2&lang=en)

PART 3. IDENTIFYING GIFTED AND TALENTED (GAT) STUDENTS

Identification is a crucial element in the approach towards GAT students in the partner countries. The standards used in the process of identification of a GAT child reflect the understanding of “talent and giftedness” in the particular country or culture. How shall we then identify a “gift” or “talent” in a child?

In *Identifying Gifted Children: A Practical Guide*, Susan K. Johnsen (2004) explains that gifted children all exhibit the potential for high performance in the areas included in the United States federal definition of gifted and talented students:



The term 'gifted and talented' when used in respect to students, children, or youth means [those who show] evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities.

At EU level, The Centre for the Talented Youth of Ireland has run in Dublin City University since 1992. The School for Gifted Children in Bratislava (Slovakia) was established in 1998. It offers education known as APROGEN – Alternative Program for Gifted Education. In England, schools are expected to identify 5-10% of students who are gifted and/or talented in relation to the rest of the cohort in that school - an approach which is pragmatic (concerned with ensuring schools put in place some provision for their most able learners) rather than principles (in terms of how to best understand giftedness). The term gifted applies to traditional academic subjects, and talented is used in relation to high levels of attainment in the creative arts and sports.[26] The National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth ran from 2002 to 2007 at the University of Warwick. Warwick University decided not to reapply for the contract to run NAGTY in 2007, instead introducing its own programme, the International Gateway for Gifted Youth in 2008. In January 2010, the government announced that NAGTY was to be scrapped the following month.

However, despite the attention devoted the GAT children by both researchers and educators, there is no widely shared and accepted common definition of a GAT student - or a common procedure to identify them at EU level.

Case Studies in Recognition and Identification of GAT Children (Spain and Bulgaria)

The two following case studies provide a brief insight into the situation of identification of GAT children in Spain and Bulgaria. The first text, concentrated predominantly on the activities organized for GAT children and their teachers and parents by the Specific Team for Talented and Gifted Students (EOEP) under the regional Protocol for GAT education of Murcia.

Identification of GAT children in Spain (Murcia)

The process of identification of GAT students in Spain is determined by educational protocols designed at regional level. In Murcia, under the Murcia Regional Ministry of Education,

The early detection or primary identification of the GAT students is done by teachers at classroom, which inform the Direction Board of the educational centre and this one contact with the Specific Team.

The Specific Team develops several interviews: with the teachers, with the parents, with the students. If there is a positive detection, some tests (with parent's permission) are done with the student to define if he/she is gifted, talented or multi – talented.

EOEP activities for GAT students

- **The Training Courses for Teachers** in priority schools (primary and secondary) are developed at the beginning of the academic year (October – November) by the EOEP to school direction board and teachers directly responsible for the Protocol for GATE Students.
- **The extra – curricula workshops** are complementary to the formal training activities, carried out outside school hours that provide enriched learning opportunities (promotion of research and discovery, creativity, social skills, teamwork...) to students of high abilities, using multiple and varied methodological alternatives according to the interests and needs of these students.
- **The follow – up meetings** between the EOEP and the teachers during the academic year, periodically established according the number of GATE students in each centre.
- **Information activities and open days** for teachers and parents are annually organized by the EOEP together with the Murcia Regional Ministry of Education.
- Some **Parent’s Associations** organize within their Parent’s School specific courses, seminars or activities related to this topic.

Early recognition of gifted and talented children in art in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, the problem of the early recognition of gifted children in art isn’t much discussed, because of the opinion that the manifestation of this talent usually shows up a little bit later. There are a number of indicators, however, by which we can recognize gifted and talented children in art in the early stage of their development. These indicators are characteristic of the child’s drawing and are always present in their pictures. They are connected with shape and details in images, with reflection of space in drawing, with composition decisions. But gifted and talented children in art usually use these characteristics of the drawing at an earlier stage of their development. The manifestation of these characteristics connected with the talent of children in art, in this research are grouped as it follows:

- Earlier proceeding of drawing stages.
- ✓ Early manifestation of development of images (This can correspond with the Draw-a-Man Test of Florence Goodenough).
- ✓ Early reflection of space in drawings.
 - Early reflection of 2 dimension of space in drawing.
 - Early reflection of mixing two or more points of view.
 - Early reflection of 3 dimensions of space in drawing.
- Original and unusual compositional decisions.
- Choice of unusual point of view.
- Interesting and unusual choice of themes and plots.
- Ability to use colours. (Children should be able to mix colours and shade them properly.)
- Using of different techniques and experimenting with materials in children’s drawings.
- Creativity in all art activities: images, space, composition, plot, choice of technique and materials.

In this research are regarded drawings of children from the earliest shows of their art activities, until their teenage years, when the manifestations of talent can be considered as categorical. During the research children's drawings are collected and analysed. There are two, three or more of the indicated signs, in them. It's interesting also to mark that the early interest to a certain object or indication of the image, is conserved for a long time, and often remains unchanged for years.

The adequate pedagogical interference is an obligatory for helping the child to develop its abilities. Their development, though, is possible only when they are determined and diagnosed by a well-trained specialist. Often, preschool and primary school teachers, tend to overlook the art training, because they are not able to recognize these signs in the children's drawings.

The early diagnostic of a talent in art would be useful for parents, teachers and children and for their future development and realization in this area. Manifestation of this talent can be also connected with giftedness and talent in other areas. Creating a system with criteria for diagnostic of this talent can be useful and helpful for preschool, primary school teachers and parents.



CONCLUSION

The brochure presents only a brief and partial insight into a very complex and challenging problematic. Its main purpose is to raise awareness of the diversity of the field of GAT children education in the partner countries. In every country involved in the project, the situation is very specific and different to the other countries. However, we identified and examined a number of ways and approaches to the education of GAT children that may be valuable and beneficial when shared and discussed.

The general point that all the examined countries share is the understanding of “talent and giftedness” in terms of artistic competences or exceptional cognitive abilities or intelligence. The notions of gift and talent are rarely used and discussed in the field of vocational education. Viable and meaningful transferability and use of the GAT concepts, educational approaches methods into the field of vocational education was identified as a crucial challenge to be addresses both in general and within the framework of the LDV Project GATE.

PROJECT PARTNERS

ASOCIACION INTERCULTURAL LA GALERIA (ES)

- Address: Calle Cuartel 1, Bajo. 30151 Santo Angel, Murcia, Spain
- Website: www.galeriaintercultural.org
- Contact person: Andrés Abad (eu.intergaleria@gmail.com)
- About the organization: A.I. LA GALERIA is a regional NGO based in Murcia Region. It works in this region since 1994, date of foundation, initially as Regional School for Leisure and Outdoor Time Activities, recognized by the Murcia Regional Government, accreditation and qualifying Outdoor and Time Activities Camp Directors and Trainers. During last years, A.I. LA GALERIA has developed a career in the fields of culture, education, employment, gender and non-formal learning training activities.
- Partner support organisations: IES ALQUIBLA, Murcia - Spain (Secondary School), CEIP REINO DE MURCIA, Murcia - Spain (Primary School) and Pedagogical Cabinet GATEA, Murcia - Spain



EDUcentrum o. s. (CZ)

- Address: **K Lomu 1056, 252 29 Dobřichovice, Czech Republic**
- Website: www.educentrum-os.cz
- Contact person: Zdenka Havrlikova (info@educentrum-os.cz)
- About the organization: EDUcentrum is a non-profit organization, whose aim is to support unconventional and innovative forms of education, foster motivation for lifelong learning, increase adaptability and promote active attitude towards further education across various age, social and professional target groups. Hence the main activities comprise implementation of innovative methodologies, use of ICT in education, creation of tools for distance and blended learning, creation of materials for trainers and learners, creation of didactic tools to facilitate application of new methodologies or creation of testing and comparative tools for progress evaluation.
- **Partner support organisations:** Vzdělávací centrum Turnov, o.p.s.



IC VR3 San Bernardino – Borgo Trento – VERONA (IT)

- Address: Via G. Camozzini, 5 – 37126 Verona, Italy
- Website: www.comprendivo03vr.gov.it
- Contact person: Anna Berti (vric89200e@istruzione.it)
- About the organization: The ISTITUTO COMPRENSIVO STATALE 3 “SAN BERNARDINO – BORGO TRENTO” is a state educational institution, composed of a kindergarten school, three primary schools, a middle school and a permanent territorial center for adult education. It is a place of training and education by means of study, acquisition of knowledge and the development of critical consciousness. The school is a community based on dialogue, research and social experiences, guided by democratic values and aimed at the development of the person in all its dimensions.



Reflective Learning – International (UK)

- Address: Overton Business Centre, Maisemore, Gloucestershire, GL2 8HR, England
- Website: www.rl-international.com
- Contact person: Professor (dr) Tony Ghaye (tony.ghaye@btinternet.com)
- About the organization: REFLECTIVE LEARNING-INTERNATIONAL (RL-INT) is a social enterprise and currently a global leader in building positivity and utilizing strengths that lead to high performance and positive social impact. Its work is collaborative, interventionist and appreciative. RL-INT is a multi- Disciplinary group of highly qualified researchers and work-based practitioners who draw on the disciplines of positive, cognitive and organisational psychology, health, international development, child protection and human rights. It runs practical workshops and seminars for professional practitioners, organises international conferences, participates in funded EU projects and runs the prestigious international peer reviewed journal called, ‘Reflective Practice’.
- **Partner support organisations:** Hartpury College, Sweet Dreams, University of Gloucestershire



Trakia University – Stara Zagora (BG)

- Address: Student Campus, Stara Zagora 6000, Bulgaria
- Website: www.uni-sz.bg
- Contact person: Elena Lavrentsova (elenavit@abv.bg)
- About the organization: Trakia University – Stara Zagora, Bulgaria is an autonomous state institution. It was founded in 1995. The structure of the university includes 6 faculties - Faculty of Agriculture; Faculty of Veterinary Medicine; Faculty of Medicine; Faculty of Education, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Technics and Technologies, Medical College and Department for Information and In-Service Teacher Training (DITT). The University performs education along programmes with four educational and qualification degrees – professional bachelor, bachelor, master and PhD, as well as programmes for qualification and post-graduation specialization in the system of lifelong education.



Public institution National Region's Development Agency (LT)

- Address: Vilniaus str. 88, Siauliai, 76285, Lithuania
- Website: www.nrda.lt
- Contact person: Mrs. Beatričė Poškuvienė (nrda@nrda.lt)
- About the organisation: National Regions Development Agency, operating since 1999, has extensive experience in formulating regional development policies, through various interventions. The Agency gives priority to regional development, strategic management and promotion of small and medium-sized Lithuanian business sustainable development problem region development problem and employment. Since 2001 agency has been successfully carrying out its activities and has implemented and participated in about 50 national and international projects in various areas: social, educational, business development, etc.



**Public Institution
National Region's Development Agency**

Partner support organisations: Public institution KURŠĖNAI POLYTECHNICS SCHOOL (vocational training school), ŠIAULIAI VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SCHOOL