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'If you miss it you miss out'- Springboard (Dobbantó Programme), one possible way of social and educational integration for the vocational school students at the risk of drop-out

Dobbantó

The Springboard (Dobbantó) Programme is a national programme that was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Culture and is supported by the National Fund for Vocational Education for the years 2008-2011, is co-ordinated by FSZK (The Public Foundation for Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities-Fogyatékos Személyek Esélyegyenlőségéért Közalapítvány – FSZK). The Dobbantó Programme is aimed at helping participating schools to develop complex and personalised systems of services based on individual development plans for students with special educational needs (SEN) and/or early school leavers.

Edu-coaches and mentors provide teachers with training on new innovative methods and educational principles. Furthermore they also hold trainings providing continuous on-the-job support for teachers and leaders of vocational schools. Schools receive a grant to implement the objectives of the project.

As a result, teachers can lead/facilitate differentiated activities adapted to student needs and offer career guidance based on personalised career plans made in cooperation with the students. Professionals also help young people who have a series of failures behind them (early school leavers) finish their studies and acquire competencies required on the labour market.

The Dobbantó Programme is aimed at helping 15 participating schools all over Hungary to develop complex and personalised systems of services based on individual development plans for students with special educational needs (SEN).

The development work includes the following:

- ❖ psycho-social support and improving mental health
- ❖ improving learning
- ❖ career guidance
- ❖ functioning network with local social, family and youth support organisations and employers

This way the participating schools can design the operation of the preparatory 9th year of education in view of the conditions of long term sustainability and to meet their related responsibilities (obligations) at a high professional standard even after the end of this programme.

The success of the Dobbantó programme in numbers

The first Dobbantó schoolyear (2009/2010) ended in June 2010 showing surprisingly good results as regards both completion and continuation of studies. A total of 191 students arrived in the 15 schools where the programme is operating. Nearly 90% continued studies in one form of education or another. The most important result is that through individual development, more than 65% of students were able to start studies in some form of vocational school. Considering the nature of the target group, the rate of students getting into secondary school providing graduation is significant (nearly 8%). Meanwhile, persons dropped out of the programme for any reason does not reach 10%, only 2.6% of this can be considered as classic drop out.

So the Dobbantó programme really does prove that young people who have drifted to the edge can be effectively led back to the school system with the right pedagogical system.

Rate of completing Dobbantó programme is high

Statistical results about the effectiveness of the first schoolyear of Dobbantó programme shows that compared to the starting number of 174 individuals of the beginning of September 2009, this number increased to 191. (The number decreased by 30 students during the year and increased by 47 with new entries). Of the 30 students that left the programme, 9 of them started work during the schoolyear, 11 continued their education in a different school and five of them terminated their studies in Dobbantó due to some acceptable reason (change in family circumstances, moving).

Only the leaving of 5 students can be considered as a classic drop out. This is only 2.6% of the starting number.

The rate of students continuing studies after completion of Dobbantó is high

Nearly 90% of those who completed the Dobbantó programme continued studies in September 2010. The majority (31.4%) of those who finished got to the 9th grade of technical schools, a further 10% to 10th grade. The number of students who got into pre-time vocational training (over 15%) and vocational training based on the 8th grade is also significant (11%). This data indicates that the Dobbantó programme is able to develop and guide a significant percentage of students, who would otherwise drift to the edge, to get into some type of vocational training after a Dobbantó year. Nearly 8% of the finishers had the opportunity to get into the 9th grade of a secondary school that provides graduation. This confirms the hypothesis that with intensive individual development, a significant rate of students with good qualities are able to get into education which provides complete secondary qualifications. (Or to get back to it despite failures suffered.) It is also not to be overlooked that more than 6% are able to improve their poor school knowledge in 10 and 20-month trainings and the few students training for a vocation in adult education can be considered a success from a labour market point of view. Some begin their studies in secondary schools that provide graduation.

Relatively few enter a job immediately

21 students of the 191 who completed the first year of the Dobbantó school are not continuing their studies. 13 of these started work until the beginning of September and only 4.2% (8 ex-students) became unemployed.

What have we learnt from E2C?

FSZK- Dobbantó programme joined the E2C in April of 2008, which gave us the opportunity to have a deeper insight into the international good practices by visiting some schools in Denmark and Germany. There was another possibility in Budapest, where E2C teachers from many countries (e.g. Poland, Spain, Germany, Denmark, Sweden) shared some good ideas on how to reduce the drop-out rate in second chance schools. As a host organization we were more than grateful to have an important discussion with our guests on how teachers can be effective in second chance schools.

We also participated in 2 Youth Summits (regular teachers' and students' meeting). The first one was in AE2O (Second Chance School) of Matosinhos in August of 2009, where Anónio Luis Mesquita Da Silva and his team organized a wonderful and exciting week with lots of meaningful conversations on second chance issues and a big fiesta at the end ☺.

The second one was in Kolmarden organized by the second chance schools of Linköping and Norrköping in April of 2010, where three Dobbantó schools (they joined the E2C in 2009)

were present. Everyone enjoyed the challenges of wildlife and the close touch of the Swedish flora and fauna. All of the workshops gave the opportunity to get some good idea on how to make the life of second chance schools more colourful. The farewell party was delightful, where every participant dressed smart and Hungary gladly took it upon itself to organize the next Youth Summit.

Get the party started in Budapest in 2011 ☺ ☺ ☺

We are more than delighted to host the next Youth Summit on 22-26.June 2011 in Budapest. Our motto is 'The future in your hands'.

What we offer is a colourful programme for students, teachers and decision makers in an inspiring environment called Budapest. We are planning to show you our capital from different perspectives such as Budapest the centre of cultural life or the centre of unexpected events, and furthermore nature's untarnished beauty.

We hope to see all of you next summer.

You will be informed about the details very soon.

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