

Stimulating talent development in European higher education

Report MeTalent YouTalent Event, Munster (Germany), 21-22 November 2019

'I learned much more about honors programs and talent fostering methods; and I met interesting people, encouraging and motivating me a lot.' That was the main take home-message of one of the participants in the MeTalent YouTalent Event in Munster (Germany) in November 2019. Around 60 teachers, students, researchers, program managers and others interested in talent development in higher education from throughout Europe joined this event. Instruments created in the EU-funded project CoTalent were presented, used and discussed with participants.

The two-day event was meant to spread results from the project Working in Europe to Connect Talent Development in Higher Education (CoTalent). In this project, nine organisations strongly committed to talent development in higher education have joined forces to provide teachers with tools to stimulate their talented students. Baseline of the project is: Europe simply cannot afford to lose talent.



Me and You

The event focused on two instruments for teachers developed in the CoTalent project:

1. The MeTalent Mirror; an instrument for teachers to self-evaluate views towards talent development. This instrument consists of an introduction and three different tools;
2. The YouTalent Spotter; an instrument for teachers to spot talented students. This instrument consists of four different tools.

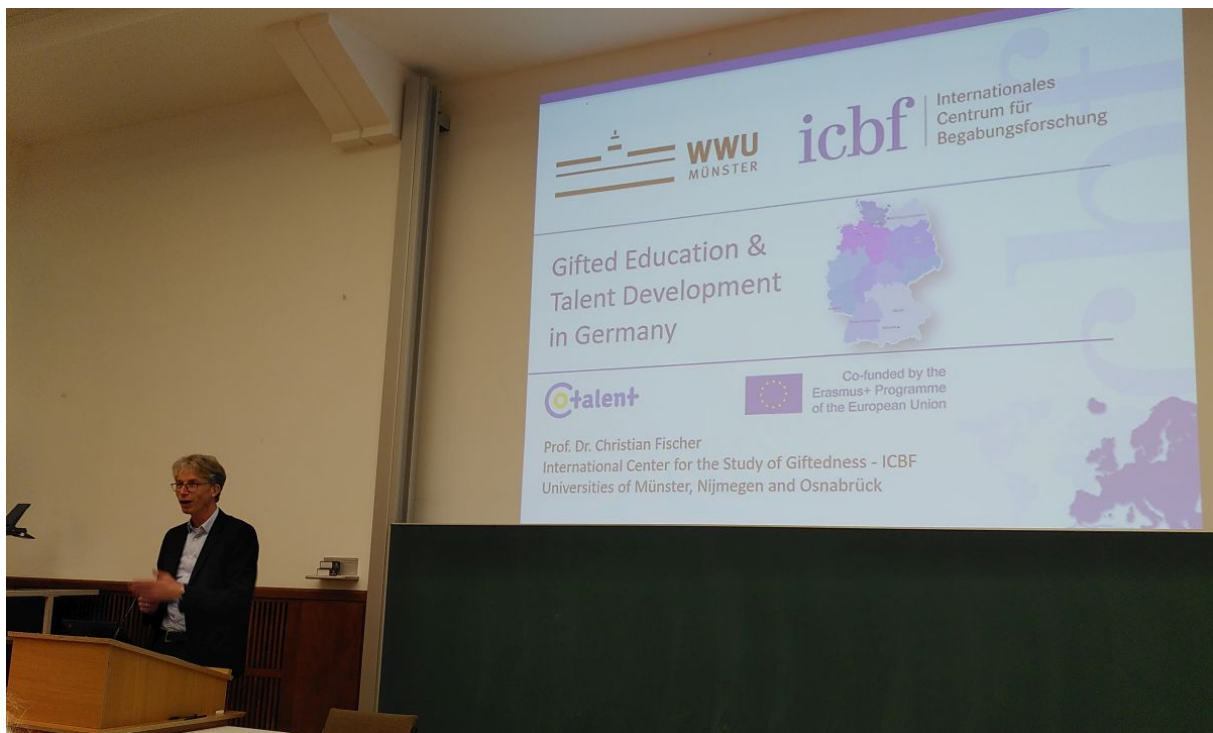
The variety of tools ensures that there are options available to suit different situations and personal tastes. Participants used the tools in workshop sessions and provided feedback to

the CoTalent team, focusing on the presentation and user experience of the tools. The final versions of the tools will be published on the project website, free to use for everyone. In addition, the first content of the CoTalent e-library was shared with the participants. This includes a number of inspirational and instructive videos which help teachers build a research-based talent development program in higher education.

Three keynotes

In addition to this all, three keynote speakers provided participants with food for thought and discussion.

Professor *Marca Wolfensberger*, who leads the Research Centre for Talent Development in Higher Education and Society at Hanze University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands joined forces with *Yvonne Pannekoek*, Honors Director at the Medical School Amsterdam UMC, also in the Netherlands. Using the honors program in Amsterdam as an example, they spoke on honors didactics, admission procedures, involvement of students, personal leadership and more. Professor *Christian Fischer*, Head of the International Centre for the Study of Giftedness (ICBF) in Munster, discussed gifted education and talent development in Germany.



Participants

The ICBF at the University of Munster (Germany) hosted the event. Participants joined from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Poland, the Netherlands and Romania. In the evaluation, comments from participants included:

-‘I came to the mini-Conference because I worried that we are losing a lot of talent in regular classes, but found no-one to engage with. Now I am more confident that there is indeed a problem, and know that I can lean on a new network for support.

-‘I met interesting people, encouraging and motivating me a lot.’

-‘The project is about finding ways to better spot and develop talented students in the universities, by educating the teachers to this task. But really I think a lot of the ideas would

do good for so-called normal students as well. So perhaps the project is also about better teaching so that more people get to discover that learning can be a joy if you get to do it in a nice way.'

-'Great energy and motivation to introduce Honors Programs at my university'

More evaluation results are shown in the appendix.

Final event and more information

The next and final event in the CoTalent project will be the International Conference on Talent Development and Honors Education 2020 featuring CoTalent, held in Groningen (Netherlands) on 10-12 June 2020. Registration for this conference is now open and proposals can be sent in until January 15 on www.honorsconference2020.org.

A discount to join this conference is offered to members of the European Honors Council (EHC), associate partner of CoTalent. Free EHC membership includes a bi-monthly newsletter with regular updates about CoTalent. Info can be found at www.honorscouncil.eu.

The CoTalent project is supported by a grant from the EU, in the Strategic Partnerships program within Erasmus+ Key Action 2¹ and runs from 2017 to 2020. More information about the project can be found at www.cotalentwizard.eu

Appendix. Table 1: Evaluation scores on the main questions. (N= 23 out of 65)

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The accommodations were good	47.83%	43.48%	8.70%			
The topics of the keynotes matched well with the goals of the Conference	26.09%	34.78%	34.78%		4.35%	
The program of the Conference was varied	30.43%	43.48%	26.09%			
There was always someone to help with questions	82.61%	8.70%	8.70%			
The Conference was very well organized	65.22%	34.78%				
The concept of the Mirror group and what they want to achieve, was clear	47.83%	30.43%	13.04%	8.70%		
The concept of the Spotter group and what they want to achieve, was clear	26.09%	43.48%	26.09%	4.35%		
The concept of the E-library group and what they want to achieve, was clear	17.39%	34.78%	30.43%	8.70%	4.35%	4.35%

¹ This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein