

Hungary

Dobbantó (Springboard) project of FSZK (Public Foundation for the Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities)

The Dobbantó Programme started in 2008 with 15 participating schools, 5 from the capital city and 10 from other regions, across Hungary; it has an approach for students age 15 to 24 years old, with learning and behavioural difficulties, which have already dropped out of education and training or are about to leave the system and do not have any secondary or vocational qualification. The programme offers them an additional year of education to understand and overcome their earlier failures at school, in learning or in their personal lives, and to find the best way to move on.

Although the program is taught for a group of people no longer than 16 per school, with a not resemble image of traditional school environment, Dobbantó rooms are design for students to find themselves in a formal and informal learning opportunities; within the learning content the students have three options after finishing that year; return to formal education, enter adult training or take a job. There is regular ongoing feedback from the “partners”, people who works individually with the students as well as the parents’ motivation to encourage their children, which has been key on involvement and enthusiasm for the participants in the current schools.

Main Focus of Innovation: LEARNERS, TEACHERS, CONTENT, ORGANISATION, RESOURCES

Other keywords: blended/non-formal, equity, (alternative-philosophy)

General Information

Name of the ILE: Dobbantó (Springboard) project of FSZK (Public Foundation for the Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities), Hungary

Location/Address: Pap Károly u. 4-6. Budapest, 1139 Hungary (leading organisation of the project), 15 schools all over Hungary

Website: www.fszk.hu/dobbanto

ILE submitted by: FSZK

Rationale

Why do you suggest that it should be included in the project? How does it respond to 21st century learning challenges?

Low levels of education and early school leaving act as serious barriers to economic and social development around the world. The European Commission published an action plan to reduce early school leaving on 31 January 2011. The document takes as a starting point that “more than six million young people in the EU leave education and training with lower secondary level qualifications at best. They face severe difficulties in finding work, are more often unemployed and more often dependent on welfare benefits. Early school leaving hampers economic and social development and is a serious obstacle to the European Union's goal of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The Commission today approved an action plan that will help Member States to achieve the Europe 2020 headline target of reducing the EU average rate of early school leavers to under 10%, from the current level of 14.4%, by the end of the decade.” According to the action plan, the measures that can help to solve the problem of early school leaving fall into three categories: prevention, intervention and compensation. The recommendations of the Commission were adopted by the Education Ministers on 24 May 2011 in Brussels.

Early development measures are the most effective solutions for preventing early school leaving. This is also supported by international experiences. However, prevention is only possible in cases where the likelihood of school failure can be anticipated either well before or at the time of entry into school, e.g. for children who are first or second generation immigrants, come from different ethnic, low status cultural or unfavourable social backgrounds, or whose special educational needs are detected in time. In many cases, behavioural and learning difficulties arise later, in spite of the student's successful initial integration and good performance at school, and these problems may lead to frequent misconduct and underperformance and then to repeated absence, unacceptable academic results or even dropping out of education and training. Such failures rarely occur through the fault of the student. The root cause of the problem is often a change in the life of the family (divorce, death, new marriage, loss of work or work ability, etc.), the non-inclusive, hostile or humiliating attitude of certain teachers or the peer group, or the existence of unrecognised or unprofessionally addressed special educational needs. In such cases, *a range of intervention or compensation measures are needed to give a second chance to these students. The programme described below offers a good response in these situations.*

The legal basis of launching the *Dobbantó Programme* - and implementing it under the leadership of the Public Foundation for the Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities (FSZK) - was the 2007 amendment of the Public Education Act. The programme began in 2008 with 15 participating schools – 5 from the capital city and 10 from other regions – selected from applicants across Hungary. The participating vocational schools implement the *Dobbantó Programme* in one or more groups of 12 to 16 students who complete a “preparatory ninth year of education”. The students joining the *Dobbantó* groups

are 15-to-24-year-old young people who have already dropped out of education and training or are about to leave the system, and do not have any secondary or vocational qualification. The Programme offers them an additional year of education to understand and overcome their earlier failures at school, in learning or in their personal lives, and to find the best way to move on, i.e. to return to the school system or to enter vocational training or the world of work.

The Dobbantó Programme began in January 2008 and is due to end in November 2011. It has two main strands of activities:

- a) Developing teaching and learning materials for the additional year of education made possible by the law. The purpose of these materials is to support the development and reintegration of students based on their individual needs, in other words to create new, complex (innovative) learning environments that can help to change the views the participating students have about school as a result of their earlier school failures. These ILEs are different from the traditional learning environments in terms of
 - the physical learning environment;
 - the organisation of learning;
 - the learning content;
 - the instruction methods;
 - the pedagogical approach and practice (pedagogical paradigm).
- b) Providing training and support to the teachers working with the students and the heads of their schools. Here, the objective is to help the replacement of the so-called traditional focus on the teaching of subjects by approaches and practices that focus on the individual progress of students, and to enable teachers to securely navigate in the new complex learning environments that reflect the pedagogical paradigm of the Dobbantó Programme.

In the preparation phase, which lasted from January to October 2008, a team of invited experts developed the conceptual framework and outlined the content of the Programme according to the professional instructions of FSZK. Calls for applications were published to recruit professionals to support implementation (edu-coaches to work with the heads of the schools and mentors to support teachers and the implementation of the required changes at the schools), and the training of the successful applicants began. The participating schools were selected in an application procedure. The period between November 2008 and August 2009 focused on preparation, which involved the development of a modular curriculum, the provision of additional training and ongoing professional support to the professionals supporting implementation at the school level, the preparation of the participating schools, and the selection of independent external organisations for monitoring and evaluating the Programme.

The Dobbantó Programme was piloted in the 2009/2010 school year. At that time the teacher teams have completed part of the preparatory training and were ready to pilot the Programme – the modular curriculum and personalised development at individual pace – with the first Dobbantó groups in the newly created learning environments. Many teachers documented their experiences in this phase, and these experiences were used to revise the modules and the other resource materials. These revisions were also informed by the evidences from monitoring and evaluation. Naturally, throughout this period, the teachers and the heads of the schools could rely on ongoing professional support rooted in practice, which has not changed ever since. In the 2010/2011 school year, the participants could already build on the good practices derived from the pilot, the revised modules and resource materials, and on an accredited Dobbantó framework curriculum. As another new feature, a third independent organisation has been engaged to follow up the success of the students who completed the first school year of the Programme. As the data collected in the first school year suggest that the results of the Programme are good and may be

worth sharing, we are now presenting these results in various forums and looking for opportunities to develop Dobbantó into a programme that is suitable for wider dissemination and application.

Evidence

Is there any evidence or indications showing that this initiative achieves the outcomes that it is aiming at?

Learning Aims / Intended Learning Outcomes of the ILE

What are the core learning aims and which knowledge, skills or attitudes are to be acquired? (These may include outcomes related to learners' social, interpersonal, or meta-cognitive development)

Requirements in the Dobbantó Programme

In the Dobbantó Programme, teachers set specific requirements for each individual student as part of personalised pedagogical planning. Therefore, the requirements listed below do not apply to each and every student. The specific objectives to be achieved are embedded in individual development plans drafted after getting to know the students, considering their earlier achievements and identifying the possible areas of development.

The Dobbantó Programme defines the potential requirements to be applied in the development of students within a system of competences. The development work focuses on five main competency areas. The following section defines the related competences in more detail:

A) Communication competences

1. Communication as a form of social interaction

Students can recognise communication situations and intentions, and apply the related social principles effectively in everyday life.

2. Speaking and understanding, interpreting and creating oral texts

Students are aware of the basic features of verbal and non-verbal communication, can notice when there is a mismatch between the verbal and non-verbal messages being conveyed, and are able to resolve it in cooperation with the other party involved in the conversation, observing the socially accepted rules.

3. Reading, understanding written texts

Students can read and understand a range of written texts, summarise the main points briefly in their own words, and ask questions about the text.

4. Writing, creating written texts

Students can express their thoughts in writing in an appropriate and grammatically correct manner.

5. Visual communication and using images

Students can interpret well-known and socially accepted sign systems based on images; interpret figures, pictures and charts inserted in written texts, and add figures, pictures and charts to their own written works.

6. Communication through electronic media

Students can evaluate and interpret the information received through various electronic media, and use such information selectively, based on their own values. Students are able to initiate communication by using their available means, and strive to acquire basic user competences.

7. Communication through art

Students show openness toward music, visual arts and artistic performances, can interpret these for themselves, and use art as a means of self-expression according to their own interests and possibilities.

8. Evaluating communication

Students can understand and interpret the aims and intentions of their communication partners, argue for and against the topic of a debate, and use critical thinking in communication situations.

B) Learning competences

1. Image of self as a learner

Students view themselves as learners, and form a refined and positive image of themselves as learners, which then becomes an integral part of their self-evaluation and self-image.

2. Perception of learning

Students perceive learning as a lifelong process extending to all fields of life and offering opportunities for growth, in which the student - i.e. the learner – must play an active and constructive role.

3. Planning and organising the learning process

Students manage their own learning, view learning holistically, as a process, plan its stages and circumstances, and organise these in such ways that ensure effective and efficient learning.

4. Finding sources of learning

Students explore the sources that should or may be used for achieving their learning objectives, consciously select their sources of learning, and identify, analyse and evaluate the sources that may be relevant for them.

5. Processing sources of learning

Students interpret the sources selected in the learning process, and memorise and acquire them to the extent necessary, thus improving their skills and abilities and shaping their views.

6. Using sources of learning

Students test, apply and practice the acquired knowledge, the experiences gained in the learning process and the developed skills and abilities in accordance with their learning objectives, in the given learning situation and in other learning situations and everyday situations, and interpret the outcomes of learning based on their own views.

7. Understanding, applying and evaluating different learning methods

Students are familiar with and try out a range of learning methods, techniques and strategies, and consciously apply the effective ones in different learning situations.

8. Evaluating the learning process

Students continuously reflect on their own learning, evaluate their learning performance in a realistic and subtle way, and consider learning as an opportunity for growth and development.

C) Social competences and competences required for a healthy life

1. Cooperation

Students can ask for, provide and accept help and constructively participate in group activities by respecting the personality and opinions of others and observing the general rules that are widely accepted by society.

2. Social integration

Students take efforts to find and accept their place and role within the organisation and their social environment, effectively adapt to the changing circumstances of these, and strive to manage the conflicts that may arise in socially accepted ways.

3. Healthy life

Students can create and maintain the environmental conditions of a healthy life (order and hygiene) and develop proper daily routines, including regular exercise, and strive to develop healthy eating and effective stress management habits in their personal lives in order to protect their health.

D) Core employment competences and career building competences

1. Self-awareness and self-organisation

Students are able to identify their strengths, areas for development, fields of interest, preferences and sources of motivation; strive to gain experiences in as many field as possible, and develop an essentially positive self-image based on the feedback received from others.

2. Competences needed for adapting to change

Students can recognise the external and internal signs indicating the need for a change, flexibly define objectives based on these, prepare an action plan, and find the available sources of help to implement it.

3. Competences related to career development and lifelong learning

Students are aware of the expectations of employers, know how to align those expectations with their own needs, recognise and exploit the learning opportunities arising in their environment, and strive for continuous self-development, as demanded by the recognised changes in the labour market.

4. Job seeking, labour market and advocacy competences

Students are familiar with different job seeking techniques and apply them as required by the principles of supply and demand, including the adequate obtaining and handling of documents required for taking a job, and are able to advocate their interests as employees in accordance with the law.

E) Work competences

1. Basic health and safety competences

Students understand the importance of observing the fundamental rules of health and safety at work, and handle working instruments, products and the physical working environment in an environmentally conscious manner.

2. Job-specific communication, social and learning competences

Students can understand and follow instructions in the working process, listen to others, and use forms of communication that are appropriate to their roles; organise their work efficiently and carefully to produce quality, collaborate with others and take into account the views of others that may differ from those of their own; consider new situations arising in the course of the working activity as problems to be solved, and use the learned strategies effectively in solving them.

3. Job-specific competences

Students strive to continuously improve their job-specific competences within the job category chosen on the basis of the working opportunities offered by the school and their own interests.

Learners

Which group(s) of learners is it aiming at? Who is eligible to take part? How many learners are there? What are their ages?

As mentioned earlier, the target group is defined as 15-24-year old young people with learning and behavioural difficulties who have already dropped out of school or are on the verge of dropping out. On average 12 – but not more than 16 – such young people can join for one school year a Dobbantó class set up within a mainstream vocational school. After that year, the students have three options: return to formal education (remain at the same vocational school or choose another school to complete a vocational school programme or a general secondary school programme leading to a general certificate of secondary education), enter adult training, or take a job (and possibly continue their training while working).

Facilitators

Who are the teachers/facilitators? Who are the leaders? What are their professional backgrounds? What are their roles?

Teachers are key to the success of the Dobbantó Programme. The Programme builds upon teachers who can work in teams and use teamwork to make their work as a teacher more effective. Therefore, selecting the right teachers, training them and enabling their collaboration are highly important. The professionals of the various institutions participating in the Dobbantó Programme work in two closely cooperating teams (the teacher team and the competence development team).

a) Teacher team:

This team comprises the teachers who work with the students in the Dobbantó classes, i.e. teach them and have permanent and direct contact with them. Ideally, each Dobbantó class should have 3 to 5 permanent teachers, and team teaching should be used in 40% of the total time spent in the classroom. In general, three Dobbantó teachers – one specialised in arts, one in sciences, and one in VET – are responsible for developing competences and covering the modules in the Dobbantó class, and at least one Dobbantó teacher must have SEN expertise and experience.

b) Competence development team

The members of this team are involved in drafting individual development plans and providing support for the students. Indispensable members of this team are the student and his or her parents/relatives and teachers (class teacher/mentor, etc.), and it may also have such members as the school’s psychologist, the teacher responsible for child protection, a family counsellor, a special teacher, etc. This team has two types of members:

- permanent members: e.g. the school’s psychologist, the teacher responsible for child protection, special teacher, teacher, etc.
- temporary members: e.g. student, parents/relatives, family counsellor, etc.

As a key feature of the Dobbantó Programme, each participating student has a “partner”, i.e. an adult either in the teacher team, or in the competence development team, who has regular contact with the student and sits down with him or her at least once a week to reflect on progress, provide guidance, etc.

Organization of the ILE
How is learning organised? How do learners and facilitators interact? What kind of pedagogy do they follow? What curriculum is used?

A typical school year has 36 weeks. Of these, the first week is used for getting to know one another and for planning, and the last week is for reflection, feedback and looking ahead. This means that 34 weeks – approximately 1020 hours – are available for effective work, of which 60% should be spent on NCC related learning and 40% should be devoted to the development of competences required in the world of work – also taking into account the need for coordination. The schools are free to structure the school week in any way, but for practical reasons they are recommended to use 3 days for covering NCC modules in the classroom and 2 days for activities related to the world of work. Of these 2 days, the students should spend one day inside and one day outside the school focusing on core employment competences and career building competences or on career orientation.

- School days begin with orientation (20 to 40 minutes), i.e. preparing for learning and working together throughout the day, and discussing the tasks and the schedule of the day, and the individual needs and progress.
- Then a longer period (60 to 90 minutes) is spent on working on a selected module, using methods and arrangements adapted to the characteristics of the individual students and of the group.
- This is followed by a group activity whose purpose is firstly to let the students relax after the demanding “school type” learning activities and secondly to develop other types of competences (40 to 60 minutes of sports, dance, drama, photography, etc.);
- The day is closed by giving feedback at both individual and group level (20 to 40 minutes). This session can also be used for selecting works for and reflecting on the student portfolios.

4 days/ week (school days)	Activity	Organisation	Objectives
	Period 1: Opening session	Group activity.	Orientation. Planning.
	Periods 2 and 3: Working on the modules	Organisation of learning is adapted to the characteristics of the individual students and of the group.	Developing competences.

Period 4: Sports, relaxation, break	Group activity.	Developing communication and social competences.
Period 5: Working on the modules	Organisation of learning is adapted to the characteristics of the individual students and of the group.	Developing competences.
Period 6: Closing session	Individual and group level.	Teachers and students jointly reflect on the day and on the student portfolios.

The above schedule is used on all days of the week, except the day that the students spend outside the school in order to gain experience in the world of work. (While any day of the week may be used for this purpose, depending on the local conditions and the needs of the participating employers, it may be less productive to select the first or the last day of the week).

Most schools participating in the Programme are quite flexible as far as the school year is concerned. This means that students may also join the Programme after the beginning of the school year, provided that there is a vacancy in the group. If a new applicant is admitted in the spring and apparently needs more time for gaining personal strength, then he or she may remain in the Dobbantó class for the next school year. Likewise, if it turns out during the school year that a student could make more progress in another training programme, or needed less time for gaining personal strength, then he or she may leave the Programme before the end of the school year in order to join that other programme or to start working in a job, provided that he or she has ceased to be of compulsory school age.

Learning Context

In which context does learning take place? What does the physical learning environment look like? Are community resources used to facilitate learning and how?

The Dobbantó classes are heterogeneous in terms of the age, cultural and ethnic background and (special) educational needs of the students. The Dobbantó students constitute a separate, relatively segregated group within the mainstream schools participating in the Programme, but they participate in all school events. In the Dobbantó Programme, learning takes place in three locations: in the classroom, at the school and its facilities, and outside the school. The participating schools are required to organise visits to workplaces within the community, and the modules are also based on the observation of or even participation in real life situations. The budget of the Programme allows the schools to organise outings and visits to the theatre, cinema or museums for the students. The tea kitchen, where the students can have meals together or invite parents or other students from the school, the various games and the chat corner provide opportunities for students to practice everyday social interactions. Many schools have organised longer trips or camps where the students could spend several days together.

Facilities, Resources and Technologies

a) *The learning materials used in the Dobbantó Programme and the developed modules*

The learning materials developed for the Programme – at a high level of methodological detail – are organised into modules that are available in print and offer a wide choice to enable adaptation to the individual learning needs of the students. The modules of the altogether 5200-page material fall into three thematic categories: 1. subject modules (mathematics, science, communication and Hungarian language, foreign languages (English and German), social and contemporary studies) based on the National Core Curriculum (NCC); 2. modules for developing core employment competences; and 3. modules introducing students to the world of work and occupations from various job categories (of the 21 job categories defined for vocational training purposes, schools are required to offer six selected job categories based on the students' needs and the local conditions). For the teachers participating in the Programme, the printed

learning materials are also available on the Internet. In addition to using the readymade modules, teachers are encouraged to further improve the proposed learning materials by adapting and supplementing the modules based on the needs and interests of their students and by exploiting the local opportunities (the Programme can offer financial rewards for such efforts).

b) The physical learning environment

Since drop-outs tend to have a negative image of school, it is not enough to offer them learning situations that are different from what they are used to. The learning environment should also be innovative, pleasant and motivating. Therefore, it is essential for the Dobbantó classroom to be very different from traditional school settings.

Classroom arrangement and furniture:

- own classroom/room;
- mobile desks + tables;
- access to school library and, where possible, reference books, resource materials, toys and games and software supporting learning/development in the room;
- at least 3 computers and Internet access, printer and, where possible, copier in the room;
- audio-visual equipment (CD and DVD player, TV set, VCR, or projector, etc.), musical instruments;
- shelves and cabinets for storing CDs, DVDs, student portfolios, etc.;
- shelves and glass cabinets for displaying the students' works;
- chat (cosy) corner with carpets, cushions, bookshelves, beanbags, etc.;
- full-body mirror (showing the whole body);
- cork strips and noticeboard on the wall;
- toys, sports equipment;
- many plants and, where possible, an aquarium;
- tea kitchen (table, chairs, kitchen furniture and, where possible, a microwave oven or a cooker, etc.)

History of ILE

Who initiated it? For what reasons was it started and with what purpose? Have these changed since?

The Dobbantó Programme was initiated in response to the 2007 amendment of the Public Education Act, in particular Article 126. Pursuant to this Article, the authorities responsible for education at the county level are required to designate vocational schools to offer personalised development programmes for 15-24-year old students who have been so far unable to complete secondary school or obtain a vocational qualification due to learning and behavioural difficulties that are not of organic origin. These schools may organise small sized preparatory classes for such young people, i.e. offer an additional “ninth” year of schooling before entry into the mainstream vocational school programme. Considering that no ready-made programme was available to implement this statutory requirement, and that vocational school teachers are typically not prepared for using personalised development programmes adapted to the students' own pace of progress, the state secretariat responsible for education within the Ministry of National Resources (Ministry of Education in 2007) provided to FSZK, the successful applicant for undertaking the task, HUF 850 million from the central budget of improving vocational training and education (Training Component of the Labour Market Fund) in support of implementation. At the moment, there is a fully developed programme for the preparatory year, which can be effectively implemented based on the experiences of the 15 schools participating in the pilot. There is also a framework curriculum, which was accredited a year ago, and the accreditation of the training programme for the participating teachers is in progress. These two

are the necessary conditions of scaling up the Dobbantó Programme and of developing it from a pilot programme into an approach that is suitable for mainstream application In Hungary.

Funding of the ILE

How is it funded?

The Government provided HUF 850 million in support of the Programme for the period from December 2007 to November 2011. This amount is distributed among the main activities as follows:

Programme management	7.4%
Programme development and development of learning (resource) materials	30.7%
Rollout in schools (supporting schools, professionals assisting school improvement)	49.7%
Monitoring and evaluation	5.6%
Communication and dissemination	6.6%

The continuation of the Programme would require future funding for maintaining programme management and for running it at the schools. The other activities only have “maintenance” costs. While the ministries sharing the responsibility for the prevention of early school leaving recognise and highly appreciate the results of the Dobbantó Programme, and even include it in their development plans, it is not clear how its continuation in the next school year or its rollout in further schools will be funded.

Learning Outcomes

What are the learning outcomes achieved by the ILE, including academic, social, interpersonal and meta-cognitive outcomes? How is learning assessed?

Initially, the Dobbantó team defined student retention and the students’ successful exit from the Programme as the most important indicators of success. The tables below show the results achieved in the completed 2009/10 school year and the first semester of the 2010/11 school year:

Student fluctuation during the school year

15 June 2010		Number and fluctuation of Dobbantó students during the school year	1 March 2011	
174	100%		Number of students in September	187
47	27%	Joined during the school year	30	16%
191	110%	Completed the Dobbantó year (remained in the class in the 2010/11-school year)	201	107%
30	17%	Total of those who left Dobbantó during the school year	16	9%
of which:				
11	6%	Moved to another training programme during the school year	9	5%
9	5%	Started work during the school year	1	1%
5	3%	Left Dobbantó during the school year for other objective reasons	4	2%
5	3%	Dropped out during the school year	2	1%

Paths taken by students completing the first school year of the Programme

Paths taken by the Dobbantó students who completed the 2009/10 school year (Data of 15 September 2010)		Number of students	As a percentage of those who completed the Programme	
<i>Total</i>		<i>191</i>	<i>100</i>	
Continued education and training after completing the Dobbantó class	full time programme within the school system	9th year class of vocational school	60	31.41
		10th year class of vocational school	19	9.95
		ten-month training for closing gaps	10	5.24
		twenty-month training for closing gaps	2	1.05
		repeated Dobbantó year	8	4.19
		“fast track” VET	29	15.18
		VET following 8th year of education	21	10.99
	9th year class of a secondary school programme leading to general certificate of secondary education	15	7.85	
	adult training	training for a vocational qualification listed in the National Register of Qualifications	5	2.62
		9th year class of a secondary school programme leading to general certificate of secondary education	1	0.52
<i>Total number of those continuing education and training</i>		<i>170</i>	<i>89.01</i>	
Did not continue education and training	found employment	13	6.81	
	unemployed	8	4.19	

The success of the Programme is measured by three organisations from three different perspectives. The outcomes of the Dobbantó Programme are evaluated by an external evaluator, the improvement processes of the Programme are monitored by another organisation, and the future success of students who completed a Dobbantó year are also followed up as of the 2010/11 school year.

a) Evaluation of outcomes

The Programme is evaluated by Qualitas T&G Tanácsadó és Szolgáltató Kft. (www.qualitas.hu). This organisation has been engaged to prepare biannual reports in order to:

- ensure accountability for the use of public funds;
- ensure professional accountability;
- provide data and information for ongoing reflection;
- provide information to the Programme Manager, the Professional Advisory Board and the Programme Office on the operation of the Programme; enable the presentation of the achieved results and changes; and provide input for the corrections to be made to the process of development.

b) Monitoring the Programme as an improvement process

The Programme is monitored by Tárki-Tudok Tudásmenedzsment és Oktatókutató Központ Zrt. (www.tarki-tudok.hu). This organisation provides regular feedback and monitors the following:

- Do the teachers participating in the Programme receive adequate support to be able to assist effectively the progress of Dobbantó students?
- Do the heads participating in the Programme receive adequate support to be able to use the Dobbantó improvement plan within the school improvement process?
- Do the mentors and edu-coaches participating in the Programme receive adequate support (enough or adequate training) to be able to perform their duties?
- Do the teams of professionals involved in the Programme development work (Working Groups) receive adequate support from the Programme Management?
- Does the adopted improvement model works well?

c) *Following up the success of former Dobbantó students*

Gallup Hungary, the organisation engaged to perform this task, will deliver its report by 31 August 2011. The section below shows some of the findings disclosed in their first partial report based on interviews made with students who continued their education and training in the formal school system:

	Yes	No
When I think about last year, I am happy that I was a Dobbantó student.	97.6%	2.4%
I know what I need to change to improve.	89.0%	11.0%
I am aware of my strengths, and I know what I am good at.	90.6%	9.4%
I definitely do not want to drop out of school.	90.6%	9.4%
The Dobbantó gave me a lot of knowledge an practical skills that I find very useful in my life.	87.4%	12.6%

Former students found the following five practical outcomes to be most useful (quoted in order of frequency of mention):

1. Learning how to write a CV
2. Information on employers, visiting workplaces, gaining work experience
3. Job selection criteria
4. Self-awareness (increased self-confidence, better understanding of who I am and what I can do)
5. Personal development, improved manual skills
 - Learning to learn (learning has become easier, acquired a different learning method)
 - Cooperation (helping others, working together with peers, listening to others)

Documentation describing or evaluating the ILE

Is there documentation on this learning environment? Is there a website? Films? Research reports or evaluations? Other forms of documentation? (please supply references or links)

a) *The Dobbantó Programme has extensive documentation. The following are available on the Internet:*

Website: www.fszk.hu/dobbanto; student recruiting pages (made available to the schools by the Dobbantó Programme): www.dobbantok.hu; blog of the camp organised for the students of the 15 participating schools in June 2011: <http://dobbantotabor.blogspot.com>

b) *Printed documents and resource materials developed for the Programme in addition to the modules:*

- The pedagogical model of the Dobbantó Programme
- Recommendations for implementing inclusive education – resource material for inclusive teachers
- Bridge to the world of work – resource material
- Methodological manual – for organising and implementing job-shadowing activities in the Dobbantó Programme
- “Student Support Booklets” series (Booklets 1 to 4)
- Personalised development – but how?
- Formative and supportive assessment – but how?
- Networking – but how?
- Learning to learn – but how?
- Beyond the classroom – but how?
- Cards for starting conversations with students in order to identify their existing competences
- What can the Dobbantó do? – a collection of good practices submitted by teachers
- Work Book – a pocket book for students about work and employment.

Since its beginning, the Programme has published six newsletters and a student newsletter with articles written by students, all of which can be downloaded from the Dobbantó website. Before the end of the Programme, two more newsletters and one student newsletter are due to be published.

c) *Films*

The final cut version (cca. 70 minutes) of the documentary on the Dobbantó Programme will be available by mid-October 2011 (with English subtitles). The film will be first shown to the public on the Programme Closing Event on 26 October 2011.

Several other shorter films on the Programme, and cca. 15-minute documentaries on each school are also available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUgSrerMMU4> and – with English subtitles – at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x46uJPR2Ag8&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL.

The media coverage of the Dobbantó Programme (professional journals, radio, TV) is also available on the website under “Media Coverage” at:

http://www.fszk.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=316:sajtohirek&catid=68:programok&Itemid=117

Other information you consider to be relevant to describe the ILE

A more complex description – within the Dobbantó conceptual framework – of the two essential components of the Programme mentioned in Point 1, i.e. changing the learning environment in its complexity and providing support for teachers and school leaders to securely navigate in the ILE, is considered necessary.

a) *Complex changes in the learning environment*

The Programme is based on changing in a complex and fundamental way the broadly understood learning environment, including

- the physical learning environment,
- the organisation of learning,
- the learning content,
- the instruction methods, and

- the pedagogical approach and practice (pedagogical paradigm),

which played a role in the earlier school failures of the students and shaped their views of school, learning and themselves.

The physical learning environment does not resemble anything that might be associated with the image of a traditional school. The Dobbantó students find themselves in a truly pleasant, aesthetic and motivating setting where every condition is given for relaxation, leisure activities, socialising and more importantly for different ways of acquiring new information and exploiting formal and informal learning opportunities. A typical Dobbantó classroom has an adjacent tea kitchen, an inviting relaxation corner for having a chat with others, a range of sports equipment and educational toys and games, at least three computers with Internet access, learning software, and a resource library.

Small groups are a key feature of the *organisation of learning*. A Dobbantó group may not have more than 16 members, who work with 4 or 5 Dobbantó teachers. As learning is not organised around subjects, teachers may spend more time with the students over a week, which allows them to really get to know the students and also helps the evolution of trust and bonds between the teachers and the students. Wherever possible, two teachers work simultaneously with the class in 40% of the total teaching time. In the schools, the teacher team is assisted by other professionals, such as a school psychologist, a SEN teacher, a special teacher, teaching assistants, the school's teacher responsible for child protection, a teacher specialised in social pedagogy, school-based social workers, etc., depending on the local conditions. Where necessary, these partners also include youth workers. A growing number of employers play an increasingly important role in helping to introduce students to the various job categories. The structure of a school day is also different from the usual: each day begins with a period of whole class orientation, which is followed by longer periods of learning and a so-called "free period", which can be used for relaxation, sports, socialising, eating together, etc. Weeks are also organised in an innovative way, because students spend one day of each week outside the school. This day is typically used for workplace visits, but there are also many outdoor programmes and learning opportunities.

Essentially, the *learning content* focuses on three main areas: 1. developing communication, social and learning competences needed for continuing formal learning or entering vocational education and training; 2. developing core employment competences and career building competences needed for managing future life; and 3. supporting the personal development and growth of each individual student in order to improve the students' self-image, self-awareness and self-confidence, which is the most important area. 5200 pages of learning materials have been developed to support instruction in a more conventional meaning. Owing to their modular structure, these materials offer a rich resource for teachers to adapt instruction to the students' individual needs. While helping to meet the requirements of the National Core Curriculum, the content of the modules developed for learning communication, social and contemporary studies, English and German as a foreign language, mathematics and science is practical in nature and relates to real-life situations. The "Bridge to the world of work" curriculum, which has been developed for the development of core employment competences and career building competences, is unique in Hungary. Its eight modules building upon one another intend to direct students toward more realistic career choices by helping them to learn directly and indirectly about the various job categories.

As regards *instruction methods*, the Programme gives preference to the approaches of the so-called alternative pedagogies, i.e. it encourages the application of the appropriate variations of cooperative learning and project-based learning, as well as the various forms of individual learning. Formative assessment plays a key role in the Dobbantó, as it strengthens reflective attitudes and practices among students and teachers alike.

The Dobbantó teachers must follow a student-centred *pedagogical approach*. In other words, teachers focus on the individual students and on individual progress. To this end, personal development plans are made with the involvement of students and, where possible, the parents. The PDPs lay down the personal objectives, define the actions to be taken to achieve those objectives, and provide a basis for reflecting on

and assessing the achievements at three-month intervals. As it is considered important to help students learn how to take responsibility for their actions (and progress), contracts and agreements may be made for shorter periods, as necessary. Each student has a so-called partner among the teachers, who sits down with the student to talk every week. These conversations are often more informal than formal. The teachers work in a team, help one another, and discuss problems at their weekly team meetings. This makes their work significantly easier, because they are not left alone in managing the problems of their students, which are often difficult to handle and solve.

b) Professional support to changing/improving schools

Pedagogies ensuring attention and personalised care to each individual student are increasingly proposed as a solution for reducing early school leaving. (The so-called Bridge Programme included in the draft Public Education Bill also intends to build on a wide range of modern pedagogical methods, in particular individual and personalised development programmes, a lot of group work, and communication and lifestyle exercises.) On the other hand, it is hardly mentioned that teachers may find it very difficult to meet this demand without help. This is because introducing personalised approaches to schools would require teachers to abandon deeply established routines, which is a task that typically takes a very long time and necessitates professional intervention.

Since the age of 6 (i.e. the time of entry into school or the very start of preparing for the teaching profession), most teachers and school leaders have had most experience with frontal teaching. Their own primary and secondary school teachers must have treated all students more or less the same and not let their authority in the classroom questioned. Such personal experiences – gained in 11,000 or more lessons – inevitably lead to the development of a *deeply rooted mental model*, which is only strengthened by a higher education system that tends to treat students uniformly and measures performance by testing. This means that personal experiences accumulated, reinforced and internalised over 16 or 17 years need to be deleted and overwritten for a teacher to be able to securely navigate in the complex learning environment demanded by the Dobbantó paradigm, or to use any other approach that focuses on supporting the progress of individual students instead of covering the material scheduled for the day.

Changing such deeply embedded views and practices is a long interactive process. In constructivist terms, it requires a *conceptual change*. Becoming an informed and experienced user of a student-centred approach takes more than merely switching to new teaching materials and learning content, or extending the teaching repertoire. This explains why curriculum reforms and new learning resources introduced in isolation and initial or in-service teacher training programmes disconnected from everyday classroom experiences have never been able to deliver the expected results. *Only gradual steps and reflective pedagogical thinking and practice, based on constantly looking ahead and back at the same time, can lead to the evolution of a firmly based practice of consciously selecting the content, tools and methods that are appropriate to a particular individual or situation.* The Dobbantó Programme has embarked on a journey of this latter type. After two and a half years of continuous interaction with the participating teachers and school leaders, half or perhaps two-thirds of the journey has been completed. At the current stage, where the participants already know where they need to improve, the following solutions are applied:

- Every teacher team receives support from a so-called *mentor*, who receive training and supervision under the Programme to be able to help implementing changes at the school. The mentor visits the school every month to facilitate reflective thinking and change processes, which include offering possible solutions to the team, should it get stuck. Through his or her presence and activities, the mentor is to provide a role model of student-centred and supportive teacher behaviour. One of the mentor's important tasks is to help the participating teachers become a team.
- As an important means of promoting and improving reflective thinking in teachers (and school leaders), the Programme offers financial rewards to the participants who submit observations and comments on their *own practice and experiences*. Such products can relate to any teaching activity

and have already been written about work in the classroom, the experiences with the modules, the work done with the students (case studies), the results of professional development, training or experimenting with certain methods, and the school leaders' experiences. The formative assessment of teacher performance is the responsibility of the heads of the schools, but the Programme Management provided them with formative assessment models in the first two semesters. (Teachers' products can be uploaded continuously to <http://www.fszk.hu/moodle/>. Access is free to all after registration.)

- School leaders are supported in improving their leadership practice through reflection by so-called *educoaches*, i.e. professionals who have been trained to adapt their wide experience in business coaching to the special conditions of the education sector.
- *School leaders* can also benefit from two-day training sessions organised annually on any topic that may be considered useful in the light of the progress of the Programme, and participate in meetings to discuss operative issues 2 or 3 times a year, or as needed.
- The Programme maintains good relationships with the *local authorities* of the schools, provides them regular information on the results of the participating schools, and organises meetings for school leaders and administrators to discuss achievements and the opportunities for exploiting or taking forward those achievements within the community.
- “*Regional*” exchanges are organised twice a year, in three locations each time. These meetings are not attended by all school teams and leaders (but every team can participate in one meeting at least in each semester). Each regional meeting is hosted by a different school. The objective is to provide opportunities for a direct exchange of experiences and for learning from one other (teachers like these events so much that many of them applied for and participated in all the three regional exchanges organised last year).
- When the Programme began, 8 key aspects of development (buoys) were defined for the participating schools / Dobbantó teams to help them moving toward student-centred practices that can be used effectively to prevent early school leaving. This was considered necessary, because the fifteen schools that had joined the Programme represented different stages of development and different levels of quality in terms of applying personalised teaching and learning and the willingness/capacity to change. As the buoys were seen as a useful aid to understand the essence of Dobbantó, the schools were asked to diagnose their current situation and set objectives in these eight key areas. On the basis of these, each school/team prepared an improvement plan and an action plan for a semester, whose implementation was evaluated at the end of the semester, and a new action plan was adopted (with the necessary amendments) for the next semester. The formative assessment of these reports and action plans was carried out by the Programme Management.
- The Programme Management monitors all processes and acts or intervenes, as appropriate, upon detecting good practices or issues in the following:
 - memos written by mentors and educoaches about their visits to schools;
 - records of case discussions by mentors or educoaches;
 - reports made by the schools;
 - regional meetings;
 - training sessions organised for school leaders;

- meetings organised for school leaders;
- documents written by the teachers;
- feedback received from the monitor or external evaluator of the Programme.

In conclusion, our (evidence based) experiences suggest that at least 3 years – more realistically 5 years – are needed to achieve an authentic and fundamental change in deeply embedded pedagogical views. From the perspective of cooperation with students, the objective is to develop student-centred, personalised approaches and practices. In the case of teachers/school leaders, this is to be achieved by applying constructivist tools and methods.

Dobbantó Buoy

Buoys	Description	Support provided by the Dobbantó Programme
Individual learning path	<p>The school should provide a real opportunity for adaptation to individual development needs by ensuring personalised development paths. Personalisation may be extended to objectives, the competences to be developed, the learning content, the depth and width of learning, the ways of organising teaching and learning, the learning time, the methods of assessment, and the learning environment as a whole.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual development plan • learning contract • learning materials • resource materials: <i>Student Support Booklet 2</i> <i>Modules</i> <i>Competence cards</i> <i>“But How?” series</i>
Teamwork	<p>Teamwork is an essential feature of the Programme. The objective is to achieve broad based cooperation with the involvement of as many people as possible, regular consultations, and concerted work by the team members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentoring • professional background • resource material: <i>Student Support Booklet 1</i>
Career building	<p>The Bridge component is meant to help transition from school to the world of work. It offers a diverse range of activities for developing and reinforcing a positive self-image in students by building upon their individual strengths. It focuses on the development of competences for employability, improving self-awareness, and introducing jobs and occupations. Another important feature is that the students are provided with regular opportunities (on a weekly basis) for visiting workplaces / gaining work experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentoring • building connections to the world of work • resource materials: <i>Job shadowing</i> <i>Networking – But How?</i> <i>Modules</i>
Student support	<p>Complex – psychological, social, learning – support for students, involving efforts to understand the students’ personal life situations and ideas about the future, and the provision of professional and special assistance for changing these, as appropriate. Student support means personalised development and services that are adapted to the students’ individual abilities and needs, and contribute to reducing or removing the obstacles to achieving their objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentor • building connections to the local support system • training sessions of regional meetings • resource materials: <i>Student Support Booklets 1 to 4</i> <i>Newsletters</i> <i>Teachers’ works</i>
Cooperation between schools and coaches and mentors	<p>Every school works with a coach, who supports the head, and a mentor, who supports the teachers on an ongoing basis. The schools are required to develop arrangements that will ensure successful collaboration with these external participants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentoring for teachers • coaching for school leaders • support for mentors • support for coaches

Whole school involvement	The isolation of the Dobbantó class and the teachers working with the Dobbantó students is not desirable. Consequently, the schools are required to work out the ways of spreading the new mindset and methods among the whole teaching staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work of Dobbantó team • coaching • resource materials: <i>Case studies by school leaders</i> <i>Exchanges for school leaders and regional meetings</i>
Finding and retaining earlier drop-outs	Schools are required to develop procedures for finding, attracting and retaining earlier drop-outs living in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development vision • teachers (mentoring) • school leaders (coaching) • resource material: • <i>Recruiting students</i>
School improvement programme	Each school is required to draft a school improvement plan whose implementation is considered feasible within the period of the Programme in the light of the diagnosis of its current situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defined sets of criteria • resource materials: <i>Model improvement plans</i>

The schools participating in the Dobbantó Programme:

- Addetur Foundation’s General and Vocational Secondary School, *Budapest*
- Budai-Városkapu Nursery School, Primary School, Vocational School, Special Vocational School and Elementary Art School, *Pécs*
- Éltes Mátyás Primary School, Special Vocational School, Children’s Home, Dormitory and Educational Support Service, *Nyírbátor*
- “Esély Education Centre” Primary School, Special Vocational School, Integrated Educational Support Service, Educational Consultant, and Learning Ability Assessment and Rehabilitation Board, *Békéscsaba*
- Esély Kövessi Erzsébet Vocational and General Secondary School, *Budapest*
- Göllesz Viktor Primary School, Special Vocational School and Dormitory, *Iregszemcse*
- Harruckern János Public Education Institution, Gyula, *Szabadkígyós* Member Institution
- Kecskemét Technical Vocational School, Special Vocational School and Dormitory, *Kecskemét*
- Kiskunfélegyháza Secondary School, Vocational School, Special Vocational School And Dormitory, Kossuth Lajos Member Institution, *Kiskunfélegyháza*
- Martin János Vocational Training School, *Miskolc*
- Öveges József Teacher Training Secondary School and Vocational School, *Budapest*
- Szász Márton Primary School, Vocational School, Special Vocational School and Integrated Special Education Institution, *Tapolca-Diszel*
- Szolnoki Service Sector Vocational Secondary School and Vocational School, *Szolnok*
- Than Károly General and Vocational Secondary School and Vocational School, *Budapest*
- Bercsényi Miklós Food Industry Vocational Training Centre, Dormitory and Teacher Training School of the Central Hungary Agricultural Vocational Training Centre of the Ministry of Rural Development, *Budapest*



1) How are the work placements organised?

The schools participating in the Programme are expected to involve as many employers as possible in job shadowing and in the activities aimed at gaining work experience. The objective is to introduce students to six or more jointly selected job categories so that they can get an impression of a wide range of working environments. To this end, the schools can build upon their existing relationships with businesses, but they are also expected to enlarge their networks to ensure that they can offer opportunities for gaining work experience in any selected job category. Under the Programme, a resource book called *Networking – But How?* has been published to support these activities. Naturally, the available opportunities are greatly influenced by the schools' local conditions. This means that schools located in different parts of the country are able to maintain relationships with different numbers of businesses, but each school ensures that their students can visit several workplaces during the school year and tries to invite local entrepreneurs into the classroom.

2) How are the portfolios used and what forms of formative assessment are applied?

The Programme was launched with a clear determination to apply non-traditional forms of assessment in the preparatory ninth year of education (the Dobbantó class), i.e. to avoid marking student performance. Already in the preparation phase, the practical implementation of this principle highlighted a number of issues, including legal ones (e.g. How to close the school year? What should the certificate contain? etc.). Teachers were also better used to applying forms of summative assessment. The first school year of the Programme made it clear that teachers struggled with the use of assessment supporting progress at individual pace, whose main objective is to help individual improvement, and not to measure the achievement of external standards or requirements. The Dobbantó Programme applies a system of formative assessment which consists of the following closely interrelated components:

- *Personal development plans* (PDP) used for the three-monthly assessment and analysis of progress made by each individual student in a limited number of key fields of competence. A PDP helps to reconsider learning outcomes and learning plans on a regular basis, and therefore it is an important means of student reflection – and learning self-reflection – instead of being merely a document that records achievements and the objectives for development to be achieved in the next phase.
- *Evaluation sheets* helping students to summarise their thoughts about what has been learned upon closing a unit of the curriculum to be covered.
- *Portfolios*, which are developmental portfolios and used as a source of formative assessment for students. Portfolios are used to record the development objectives defined by the students, a contract in some cases, the student's PDP, and the student's works and reflections made in the course of working with the modules. Working with their portfolios requires students to actively document their own learning processes, evaluate their own and their peers' products based on a given set of criteria, and define their own objectives in consideration of their reflections with the teacher. In other words, the focus is on the process, and not on the outcomes.
- *Opening and closing discussions*. Each day begins and ends with a whole group discussion, which provides an opportunity for jointly planning a day or a longer period, identifying individual tasks, and summarising and evaluating the results or experiences of a given day/period.
- *Face-to-face talks*. Students have weekly talks with the teachers who provide them individual support. These are good opportunities for giving individual feedback, exploring personal problems in more depth, or making so-called contracts for a specific issue or evaluating the performance of such contracts (which may also be done during the closing discussions).

Figure 1: The system of assessment applied in the Dobbantó Programme



Encouraging and helping student self-assessment play a key role, as it is essential for students to understand where they started from, how they can improve, which direction they should take, and what they could achieve. This kind of assessment can help students to become aware of the reasons of their failures and successes and to learn how to set objectives for themselves. The programme intends to support the institutionalisation of formative assessment, as an approach, by firstly giving a written – formative type – feedback to all school reports and teacher products, and secondly by including this topic into the training agenda of the school leaders. Where school leaders use a formative approach to assess the teachers’ work, formative assessment can sooner become part of classroom practice.

3) What is the relation between the Dobbantó students and the mainstream students?

Dobbantó students attend a preparatory zero year of secondary school (or a ninth year of education). From the outset, this has been considered to be a potential danger of segregation, especially because many members of the target group experienced exclusion earlier, and that experience may have also contributed to their dropping out of school. The Programme attempts to mitigate this real risk by making both school leaders and teachers aware of this problem, encouraging them to separate the Dobbantó students from the mainstream students as little as possible. In many schools, the Dobbantó students join school events and are accepted as full members of the school community. In other schools, however, the Dobbantó classroom is physically separated from the rest of the school, and the Dobbantó students are not welcome to participate in school events. While some resistance on the part of non-Dobbantó teachers and certain school heads was anticipated, it has turned out to be stronger than expected. Apparently, placing disadvantaged students with a track record of difficulties into a better than usual classroom environment may cause envy in some teachers, which may lead to a negative attitude toward the participating students and colleagues. By now, it has become clear that the Programme is accepted and supported stronger by the staff of those schools whose leaders promote it and facilitate the sharing of the Dobbantó approach and pedagogical toolkit (e.g. teamwork, modules, formative assessment) with the non-Dobbantó teachers. Segregation has been a real issue, but more at the level of teachers than that of students.

4) Evaluation outcomes

a) EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME RESULTS

Executive summary of the evaluation of Semester 4 made by Qualitas T&G on 28 February 2011

Objective of evaluation

The main objectives of the evaluation of the Dobbantó Programme is summarised as follows:

- ensuring accountability for the use of public funds;
- ensuring professional accountability;
- providing data and information for ongoing reflection;
- informing the Programme Manager, the Professional Advisory Board and the Programme Office on the operation of the Programme; enabling the presentation of the achieved results and changes; and providing input for the corrections to be made to the process of development.

1) External evaluation can ensure accountability for the use of public funds essentially by providing information on whether or not the programme follows the initially defined direction and works toward the achievement of the objectives identified in the project plan. ***In the light of the objectives, the Programme seems to be operating as planned, and the feedback given by those performing the activities confirms the coherence between the plans and the operations. The Programme has been integrated in the operation of nearly all of the participating schools.***

2) Professional accountability – the organisation of work during the programme, the perceived impact and outcomes of the work done so far – can be analysed on the basis of the detailed feedback given by the stakeholders. In this field again, the received feedback provides clear confirmation that the ***Dobbantó has led to highly perceptible, significant changes and improvements in the examined target group. Naturally, each school has a different attitude to change and has reached a different level of improvement. Some local authorities refer to the professional work done in the Dobbantó school as a model to be followed by the other schools administered by them.***

3) Providing data and information for ongoing reflection – the data and information collected in the course of the external evaluation of the Programme enable the participants to have a realistic picture of all levels of operation, from the individual experiences of the teachers of a given school to the common organisational features of the schools involved in the Programme. ***The skills and capacity of self-reflection show great variation at both the individual and the organisational level. External evaluation is like action research in the sense that it aims at contributing to the improvement of the process, and its outcomes should help the implementation of the Dobbantó objectives or the corrections required to the achievement thereof. According to the outcomes of the evaluation, no significant change can be seen in some fields, such as the division of work, where the detected issues have not been resolved. However, there are many good examples of an optimum level of openness leading to such changes in a given organisational unit that have proved to be conducive to the operation of the Programme. Such changes include the reorganisation or renewal of teams in some schools by admitting new members who are even more committed and open to the Dobbantó approach.***

4) Informing the Programme Manager, the Professional Advisory Board and the Programme Office on the operation of the Programme; enabling the presentation of the achieved results and changes; and providing input for the corrections to be made to the process of development – ***building upon the examined data, our report demonstrates that the Dobbantó Programme continued to operate effectively in the first half of the second school year.***

Evaluation methods

The methods and techniques applied for the evaluation were the following:

Applied method	Target group, organisation
Questionnaire (to be completed online)	Heads, team leaders, teachers, mentors and educoaches
Interviews	Programme Manager

The applied questionnaires contained the same sections as the ones used for the second measurement, as well as a number of new ones. In addition to the traditional method (based on questions) an image-based test was also used in the attitude test (SST), and our examination was also extended – following the buoys – to some of the changes and achievements, as well as the efforts taken to those ends. These gave us a complex but at the same time clear view of the outcomes and effects of the Dobbantó Programme.

The analysis places emphasis on the organisational features of the schools participating in the Programme (trust, relationships, commitment, climate, attitude to change). Similarly, emphasis is placed on the attitude of the teachers implementing the Programme to the process, the motivations behind their participation and the methods applied by them. Finally, the report analysis the impacts and outcomes perceived by the participants and implementers, as well as their use in the Programme.

Characteristics of the participating schools

The schools participating in the Dobbantó Programme show overall improvement compared to the previous measurements. The results suggest that the Programme is working successfully. The team members are highly committed to the Programme, they have developed a sense of ownership about the personalised pedagogical approach of the Programme and work accordingly.

The team members are of the opinion that their schools have become better functioning organisations, but the overall results remain behind those of the first measurement. According to our results, none of the schools had any organisational deficiencies which may have jeopardised the operation of the Programme. The new ways of operation have been integrated into the organisation of the schools, and the operation of the schools is well-balanced, although it could be further improved by achieving a better division of work. In the course of the Programme, the uneven division of work has proved to be a problem that the schools are unable to handle successfully at the local level. Considering that the division of work is a constant problem in nearly all of the schools, it is deemed to be worth reconsideration at the level of programme management, as the adequate solution is likely to be intervention at the level of strategic planning.

The schools follow highly varied improvement paths, because they are very different from one another. The gradually improving results of organisational evaluations suggest that, as the Programme progresses, the schools will slowly reach the optimum where the new ways of working are integrated into their operation. There are and will be schools that can cope increasingly better after overcoming the initial difficulties, while others will not perform that well.

Our study of the organisational climate focused on the existence of an “open school” approach. To this end, we looked at two factors: unity and team spirit. The Dobbantó Programme heavily relies on cooperation among the members of the system, and the team members must collaborate closely in their everyday work, for example in team teaching, where such collaboration is essential and indispensable.

The responses of the teacher teams imply a strong team spirit and a partnership based on accepting and respecting others, which acts as a source of energy in daily practice. The leaders are attentive to the team members, and they are proud of the achievements of their colleagues.

Our studies have shown that the heads of the schools perceive the least absence of unity, whereas team spirit is seen to be the strongest by the mentors. These results are considered to be of key importance, as

the mentors could gain a lot of insight while working with the teams over the last one and a half years. They are those participants who should support the individual development of the teachers by giving them personal attention and advice. As working groups, the teams are supposed to provide the students with a model in more than one way. Firstly, the students see them as groups of 5 to 9 people each of whom has different personalities and specific roles in the work done jointly. Secondly, team teaching is done in pairs in the classroom, where the members act in many respects differently from those of a larger group.

It should be noted that the respondents believe that the schools have ethos. Teachers have an exceptionally positive attitude to teaching and they show the type of commitment which is necessary for the differentiated and personalised treatment of the young people defined as the Programme's target group. Regarding the attitude to special educational needs, the teachers and the team leaders share the opinion that a lot can be learned from working with special needs students and that teaching methods should be adjusted to the special needs of such students. They find it important to talk to the students' parents as often as possible, and believe that the responsibility for recognising the existence of special educational needs lies with the teachers.

The Dobbantó Programme provides schools with opportunities for improvement in multiple levels and fields, i.e. in a very complex manner. We assessed the schools' ability to exploit these opportunities by looking at, for example, their attitude to change in specific areas of operation, including self-evaluation, planning, inclusion, improvement, coordination and organisation of work, and leadership.

The overall results of the fourth measurement show a tendency of either stagnation or slight improvement. This is because at the end of the first semester of the second school year there are still a few schools that have not been able to fully overcome the difficulties arising from the rolling out and running of the Programme.

The fourth measurement has further confirmed the outcome that the schools endeavour to manage changes at the highest level possible, and the opinion about these changes has also improved. As regards satisfaction with the various areas, the opinions within the schools show more differences due to the different experiences, tasks and responsibilities of the respondents, arising from the fact that teachers and heads have insight into different areas of operation.

As the heads of the schools tend to have an unambiguously positive view of all areas, their average opinion tends to be much better than that of the two other groups (teachers and team leaders). It is considered worth analysing the factors and personal experiences behind this phenomenon.

The importance of self-reflection by schools needs to be re-emphasised, as it is a key to their becoming capable of improvement and of addressing in a different and more effective way the problems arising inevitably in the course of operation.

The heads' leadership competences improved a lot in the pilot year, according to the assessment given by the edu-coaches, which was better in respect of all competences – except three (decision-making, focus on results, motivation) – than the assessment the heads gave to themselves. The preceding evaluation period showed an opposite pattern.

What makes it especially important is that the heads also reported much improvement in leadership theory, although they have not mastered these competences at such level which would allow them to apply these competences automatically in their daily work. In particular, the heads of large integrated schools have so many management tasks that they find it difficult to also function as educational leaders, which latter they deem necessary.

Normally, such a complete change of mindset would take a longer time. Unfortunately, the school leaders only had three coaching sessions to support their improvement this year, which was apparently not enough for all of them to improve their practical leadership skills. It should also be noted that there are some schools where the edu-coach has been unable to build with the head the relationship required for a coaching process over the last semester. On the other hand, there is a school where the old head has been replaced, and the new head expressly asked for this kind of leadership support, which has of course been ensured by the Programme Office.

As regards the improvement of the teaching staff, the teaching practice relies on projects and cooperative methods in supporting the learning process. Consequently, the participants of the Programme believe that the teacher's role is mainly to provide sources of learning. The school based assessments of students have

shown in two fields that the project method can bring more favourable results than the traditional teaching methods.

The view of teachers reflects the Dobbantó approach and objectives, because all three groups believe that teachers should evaluate the improvement of skills and the process of learning. Considering the success of the Programme, this is a key result, because the direction and the depth of the change of mindset in teachers are indicative of the depth of transformation and learning generated by the Programme.

The curriculum development work did not stop last year. Based on the feedback, the modules have been further improved and made easier to be covered and learned by the students in this school year. The student-centred approach and the focus on the students' individual learning processes have not lost any intensity since the launch of the Programme, which shows that the objectives set under the Dobbantó Programme have gained ownership at all levels.

The study of the teachers' attitude to Dobbantó has proved that the participants have an unambiguously positive view of the Programme and the related key factors. On the other hand, it should be noted that their view of the Programme as a whole and their own performance in it has shifted to a somewhat negative direction. The most important change is a growing fear associated to certain components of the Programme. It is deemed important to emphasise that none of the study findings indicate a strong fear. Consequently, the teachers' work is not impeded by a strong fear triggered by new tasks or challenges in any field. This is supported by the finding that the highest level of satisfaction comes from the teachers' self-assessment, and the satisfaction in teaching has also improved compared to the previous measurement. The analysis of the impact of the Dobbantó Programme – based on the teachers' responses – clearly confirms the effectiveness of our originally conceived development / instruction model based on an in-depth knowledge of the students.

The Dobbantó Programme makes perceptible impact on the school as a whole: in other words, its impact has not been limited to the participants of the Programme, and it has also been spreading among those teachers of the schools who are not teaching the Dobbantó classes. The answers suggest that the Programme has also extended beyond its original framework, as the teachers have begun to apply the acquired Dobbantó skills in other aspects of their work at the school, and the acquired Dobbantó skills have motivated teachers to learn and use additional skills.

The professional commitment and improvement of the schools are also demonstrated by the initiative of one of the Dobbantó schools, i.e. the organisation of an Arts and Science Conference for Dobbantó Students, which was attended by the students of eight Dobbantó schools.

The participants of the Programme use new methods and activities in their work, and make an influence on the work of other teachers through internal communication. Also, the impact on the organisation as a whole is already identifiable in some cases, which proves that the expectations from the Programme have been met, as far as the sustainability of operation is considered. The impact of the Programme was highly visible at the regional meeting of Dobbantó schools held in Miskolc, whose agenda included the interaction between the Dobbantó Programme and the other programmes run by the schools, including inter-programme learning.

The synthesis of the analyses shows that a dominant majority is clearly satisfied with the outcomes. The schools and the Dobbantó Programme have mutually impacted on each other and both have undergone considerable improvements. The width and depth of organisational learning differs from school to school, but the Programme Management may foster the learning process on an individual basis, adjusted specifically to the possibilities and needs of the schools in the last semester of the Programme. Since each school shows an individual pattern of improvement, it is considered worth collecting and analysing the good practices and solutions developed by the schools with a view to providing a kind of synthesis of the outcomes of the process. These two tasks would be particularly useful in the semester ahead, and this report supports the implementation thereof.

b) MONITORING THE PROGRAMME AS AN IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

*Executive summary of the **final** monitoring report
made by Tárki-Tudok Tudásmenedzsment és Oktatáskutató Központ Zrt.
on 1 September 2011*

Methods

In the monitoring process, equal emphasis is given to quantitative (questionnaire based) and qualitative methods. This is necessary partly because the latter can provide more flexibility, enable the exploration of unexpected phenomena, and may be modified in the field, and partly because in action research (like in any innovative programme), the volatility of the subject of monitoring makes it impossible to gain adequate information from a limited number of arbitrary measurements.

The professional monitoring of the Dobbantó Programme is based on a joint and complementary application of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Activities

Monitoring activities follow the approved Monitoring Plan, with the head of the monitoring research being responsible for implementation. The Head of Research is required to submit to the Project Manager three reports summarising the monitoring results related to each phase of the Programme. In addition, the Head of Research must immediately notify the Programme Manager upon considering that intervention into the Programme may be necessary on the basis of the monitoring data or any other sources.

While the *monitoring reports are not public documents*, the Programme Manager may, at her own discretion, disclose them to those professionals who may find the information therein relevant to their work.

At the beginning of each of the three monitoring phases, the Head of Research and the Programme Manager discuss previous experiences, including the outcomes of the external evaluation. As far as possible, the concrete plan for the next phase, including the finalisation of the specific instruments and techniques to be applied, must be agreed on by taking into account the opinions and information needs of the Programme participants.

OVERVIEW

The following section provides an overview of the effectiveness criteria of the Programme. Some of the criteria are specifically related to the previous phases of the Programme. In these cases, the data under Point I come from Phase One, and the data under Point II come from Phase Two.¹ All other data were collected in Monitoring Phase Three.

Monitoring is expected to answer the following questions:

1. Do the teachers participating in the Programme receive adequate support to be able to assist effectively the progress of Dobbantó students?

<p>Did the participating teachers receive adequate training on theory to prepare for the Programme?</p>	<p>On the occasion of our last visit, each school reported that their teachers had learned a lot in this Programme and emphasised the role of the regional meetings. II. No teacher complained that the resource materials and the training opportunities had been inadequate. I. Two thirds of the teachers considered the preparatory training completely satisfactory. One third of them replied that some of their questions remained unanswered.</p>
<p>Did they have access to good practices?</p>	<p>The regional meetings provide opportunities for exchanging experiences with other schools. The teachers find that these are the most useful parts of the regional meetings. I. All of the teachers had access to good practices which they intend to apply.</p>
<p>Do they find the resource materials satisfactory?</p>	<p>In Monitoring Phase One, all teachers were either partly or fully satisfied; none of them reported to be unsatisfied with the resource materials received in that phase. In Phase Two, half of the schools had problems with the modules. In Phase Three, only technical issues arose, and hardly any substantial problems were reported.</p>
<p>Can they apply the proposed solutions and teaching methods in practice?</p>	<p>All teachers tested at least one teaching method successfully. 75% of the teachers mentioned teamwork, 50% mentioned teaching in pairs. In the previous Monitoring Phase, the teachers' products contributed to the improvement of reflective skills.</p>

¹ The first monitoring report was made upon the closing of the preparation phase, on 15 October 2009, and the second was submitted after the end of the first school year, in October 2010.

<p>Do the tools used to diagnose students upon entry meet the schools' requirements? Can they use these tools for individual development? Do they find these tools helpful?</p>	<p>In the second year, everybody could use a very simplified version of the PDP. II. There were only three schools among the 15 participants that did not use any form of measurement at the beginning of the school year. Most teachers found some form of testing subject knowledge, literacy or numeracy skills necessary and used them in September.</p>
<p>Are the teachers able to develop approaches which can actively contribute to the prevention of early school leaving?</p>	<p>The teachers are right in thinking that their personality and relationship with the students may be an important factor of preventing dropping out. This is also shown by their concerns about the following year, in which the young people will have to cope without the support of their "partner" in the teacher team. II. The teachers are of the opinion that patience is needed in the first place. In this respect, they can learn from one another, and therefore they find working in a team very useful.</p>
<p>Is their professional confidence growing? Are they capable of conscious prevention?</p>	<p>Professional confidence is best increased by positive feedback received from external sources (teachers of other schools, mentor) or by seeing that others also face the same problems.</p>
<p>Are the teachers able to use the Dobbantó Programme Package for Competence Development (hereafter: "DPCD")? What is their opinion about the DPCD? What are the results of using it?</p>	<p>II. 85% of the schools are able to use the modules as intended. The remaining 15% use them as a kind of curriculum to be covered on a compulsory basis, and therefore have problems with the modules. In the second school year, all schools reported to be able to select the right modules confidently or to replace them by their own teaching materials, where appropriate.</p>
<p>Are the teachers prepared for using the programme packages? Have they received the necessary tools, and can they use them?</p>	<p>II. While not all the modules were available at the time of beginning the school year, the schools had received all resource materials needed to start work on September 1. The schools did not receive the revised modules on schedule, and even more complaints were caused by not receiving the accompanying CD-ROMs. None of the schools received the competence cards, although they did not complain about it, which was probably because they did not know what the competence cards should be used for. We are not aware of any lasting problems relating to the use of any of the tools received.</p>
<p>Are the teachers able to organise learning in a differentiated manner in the classroom? Can they use adaptive techniques? To what extent can they master or implement these? How do the students react to adaptive instruction?</p>	<p>Every school mentioned that the Dobbantó class was so heterogeneous that it made frontal teaching impossible. Consequently, they apply differentiation or, as they called it, "face-to-face" instruction.</p>
	<p>There are no objective data available on the</p>

<p>Is the relationship between students and teachers cooperative and supportive?</p>	<p>quality of the student-teacher relationship, but our personal impressions were good. In one of the groups, the students claimed that getting to know their class teacher had been the best thing about the year. Teachers feel truly responsible for the future life of their students.</p> <p>II. Upon being asked about their own experience of success in the Dobbantó, all teachers tended to talk about the post-Dobbantó successes of their students, which can be considered indirect evidence of the quality of their relationship with the students.</p>
<p>Are the teachers able to implement team teaching?</p>	<p>Based on our personal impressions, team teaching was practiced very well in 6 schools, well in 7 schools, and poorly in one school. (In one of the schools, implementation could not be evaluated, because the team had ceased to exist by the end of the year.)</p>
<p>Can the teachers draft personal development plans in cooperation with the students?</p>	<p>The students were involved in the drafting of the PDPs in every school. With the exception of two schools, the parents were also often involved. On the other hand, it should be noted that none of the schools used the original PDP template in the second year.</p>
<p>Are the teachers really able to adjust the programme to individual learning needs by using the DPCD in a flexible manner?</p>	<p>They claim to be able to do so, and they increasingly supplement the programme by their own materials (and they are proud to show examples).</p>
<p>How do the teachers use the components of the DPCD in their daily practice?</p>	<p>II. They recall that they have been using the DPCD in all areas since the very beginning of the school year, i.e. they did not switch to using it gradually.</p> <p>No regress was observed in the second school year.</p>

2. Do the mentors provide adequate support to the teachers for implementing changes?

<p>Do the mentors receive adequate support to be able to perform their duties? Are they prepared for their task properly?</p>	<p>I. All mentors participating in the focus group interview were fully satisfied with their preparation and perceived the support provided for their work adequate, with no gaps.</p> <p>II. The mentors consider the support provided for their work under the Programme very good.</p>
<p>Do the mentors receive all the information and support needed for the performance of their work?</p>	<p>I. The general answer is yes, but there were two issues: like others, the mentors were informed of the delay in the Programme late, and many schools received that information from other sources and sometimes in contradiction to the official position of the Programme which was represented by the mentors.</p> <p>II. No such complaints were raised.</p>

<p>Do the mentors understand what their tasks and roles are?</p>	<p>II. Yes. They all claimed to be responsible for supporting the overall process in the schools and particularly for ensuring that the Dobbantó teachers are prepared for everything and anything as much as possible. Interestingly, many of them considered the retention of students as an indicator of their effectiveness.</p>
<p>Have the mentors built an adequate, supportive relationship with the teacher teams of the schools? Do the mentors provide a model of the role which the teachers are expected to play in their cooperation with the students?</p>	<p>Upon asked about the support received for the implementation of the Programme, most schools (10 out of 15) highlighted the role of the mentor. In all cases, the explanation was that the external view and outstanding professional expertise of a mentor could be a great help. II. The teachers described the relationship between the teacher team and the mentor very positively, ranging from fair through friendly and open to cooperative. This means that cooperation was virtually unanimously considered to be good in Monitoring Phase One. In Phase Two, while no open criticism was voiced, some of the responses were rather trite. Apparently, team leaders receive most of the support, and they are very grateful in all of the schools.</p>
<p>Is there adequate professional cooperation between the mentor and the educoach working with the same school?</p>	<p>II. Only one school reported a conflict between the mentor and the educoach, which was caused by the confusion about their roles (who should be responsible for what).</p>

3. Is the improvement plan prepared by the schools for the Dobbantó Programme being implemented?

<p>Do the school leaders ensure the physical conditions needed for the implementation of the Programme?</p>	<p>The majority of the schools did not complain about the physical conditions, which most teachers were typically satisfied with. On the other hand, teachers in Békéscsaba had to fight with their school leaders on the occasion of every single procurement in the second year.</p>
<p>Do the school leaders understand the Dobbantó concept? Are their diagnoses of the current situation and their improvement plans realistic?</p>	<p>I. Half of the heads reported that their school had not had any problems with embracing the Dobbantó Programme and its improvement model. II. The schools should be divided in two groups. In large educational institutions, specific professional issues do not fall within the head's sphere of responsibility. Where the project leader is granted sufficient powers, professional</p>

	<p>leadership is not a problem. However, where it is not so, problems may arise (Öveges).</p> <p>By Phase Three, the head of one school had become openly hostile to Dobbantó, as a result of considering the Programme to be a threat to the school itself.</p>
How much support do school leaders provide to teachers for the application of new educational content and methods?	<p>II. All of the respondent heads appreciated the work done by the teachers, whose workload has apparently increased as a result of joining the Dobbantó Programme. Teachers did not complain either, but their responses were less elevated, and most of them only expressed their awareness of the fact that their leaders ensure the necessary conditions and encouragement.</p>
How can the schools cooperate with local partners?	<p>Nearly all schools mentioned that personal contacts were needed to find job shadowing locations. The schools only reported to have lost locations that had gone bankrupt, and new contacts could also be made in the second year.</p>
Is there any evidence of developing micro-regional cooperation among schools in order to retain students at risk of dropping out of the school system? Do the schools enter into cooperation agreements? In what fields and how do they cooperate with other schools?	<p>There is no such evidence. On the other hand, many schools are involved in partnerships forged earlier, which continue to function without any cooperation agreement.</p>
Are the schools (school leaders and teachers) aware that they represent the last stage where something can be done against early school leaving?	<p>Yes, they are, and many schools include it in their mission statements.</p> <p>“We are able to retain students who would drop out of other schools.”</p>
Is the reduction of the drop-out rate considered to be an evidence of professional success? Do the pedagogical programmes of the schools include any activities aimed at the prevention and reduction of early school leaving?	<p>It is considered to be an evidence of professional success. The schools believe that the strongest evidence of success is when a student’s life becomes better. Teachers are most proud of such achievements.</p> <p>(No data are available on the pedagogical programmes.)</p>

4. Do the school leaders receive adequate support to be able to treat the Dobbantó improvement plan as part of their school’s improvement efforts?²

<p>Do the educoaches receive adequate support for the performance of their duties? Have they received sufficient, adequate training for the task?</p>	<p>I. According to the educoaches, the received training provided them with the necessary foundations, and they could approach the target group in an appropriate manner. II. The educoaches value and find necessary the regular monthly meetings (although one of them believes that it would be enough to organise such meetings less frequently).</p>
<p>Do the educoaches receive all the information and support needed for the performance of their work?</p>	<p>II. Yes, they do – and all respondents valued the support received from the Programme Office.</p>
<p>Do the educoaches understand what their tasks and roles are?</p>	<p>II. The educoaches claim to understand what their tasks and roles are, although one of them mentioned that it would be useful to better clarify and separate the roles of the various providers of support.</p>
<p>Do the school leaders understand the essence of educoaching and see the opportunities provided by it? Can they exploit those opportunities? Is there a proper relationship between the heads and the educoaches of the schools?</p>	<p>II. One school reported a problem, which was essentially personal in nature. The head did not find the support provided by the educoach assigned to the school appropriate, but the role of coaching remained unquestioned even in this case. II. There is an ambiguity: while all heads value the educoaches positively, 4 educoaches do not think that the heads they work with accept their personality and/or advice. II. The educoaches’ opinion has not changed since the previous period, i.e. they still think that making a difference (both in concrete terms and in the way of thinking) takes much more time and effort in the world of school than that of business. They did not experience any change in the heads’ attitude.</p>
<p>Is there adequate professional cooperation between the educoach and the mentor working with the same school?</p>	<p>II. Only one school reported a conflict between the mentor and the educoach, which was caused by the confusion about their roles (who should be responsible for what).</p>

² As the role played by the educoaches was most important in the earlier period of the Programme, the data for the indicators also come from that period. It should be noted that only 6 of the 11 educoaches answered our questions, so our findings had to be based on their observations.

c) FOLLOWING UP THE SUCCESS OF FORMER DOBBANTÓ STUDENTS

*The conclusions of the final study report made by Gallup Hungary on 1 September 2011.
Research methodology and tools*

The students' track record underlines the importance of personalised development. Any follow-up of their success after the Dobbantó Programme should also be built on a personalised approach. In this case, the size of the studied sample also made it necessary to apply personalised tools which can take into account the specific features of the age group and have a motivating effect. As a result of this approach, 87% of the young people involved in the study completed the 8-month follow-up period.

ESM (Experience Sampling Method) is a method applied in social and psychological studies. It focuses on current experiences and activities, and the cognitive and emotional reactions thereto, instead of recording final opinions or observing the subjects' reactions in non-realistic life situations. The essence of the applied method was that within the study period (from February 2011 to 10 June 2011), the persons participating in the study received signals through an electronic device (in this case a mobile phone) at random times based on a given algorithm to spend no more than two minutes on completing a questionnaire. Upon receiving the ESM signal, the students had to answer specific questions about their thoughts, feelings and activities at that moment. An ESM study is a bridge between an accurate survey and an environmental study. The ESM was used to study the career of former Dobbantó students entering a training programme and the factors influencing their quality of life in comparison to their peers, used as a control group. This was supplemented by the interpretation of the responses in the context of the three major fields of study.

The students participating in the Dobbantó Programme in the school year of 2009/2010 (except 6 young people in employment) were asked to take part in *personal interviews*. Likewise, the teachers who were responsible for child protection in the schools were contacted in person. The young people involved into the control group completed the questionnaires with the help of the data collectors implementing the survey.

The class teachers were *interviewed by phone*. The same method was used to interview those young people who took up a job after completing the Dobbantó class and therefore could not participate in face-to-face meetings.

The leaders of the schools participating actively in the Dobbantó Programme were asked to take part in *focused interviews*. The aim of these interviews was to interpret the processes identified by an analysis of school documents and to explore the adequacy (coherence) of daily practice.

The control group, whose members were the students' current classmates, participated in a *group interview*.

The understanding and earlier measurements of the Programme and the existence of school processes impacting on Dobbantó students were examined *by analysing documents*. The questions used in the interviews with the school leaders and the questionnaires completed by the teachers who were responsible for child protection in the schools were based on the analysis of the schools' pedagogical programmes.

The students involved in the study

The first meetings with the students took place between 15 December 2010 and 15 January 2011. Following these initial talks, 126 students agreed in writing to participate in the study (including 114 participating in public education, 5 employed, and 7 who were neither working, nor participating in education or training). Final rejection was received in 4 cases. Another 15 students could be involved later, after contacting them by phone. Therefore, the final sample included 141 young people who completed the Dobbantó Programme in the school year of 2009/2010 (127 participating in public education, 6 employed, and 8 who were neither working, nor participating in education or training). The study lasted 8 months, and 87% of the young people completed it.

The current situation of former Dobbantó students can be described, among others, by what they do and how their days are spent. The table below shows these for the 191 students who completed the Dobbantó year:

Participating in public education ³	127	66.5%
Employed	6	3.2%
Neither working, nor participating in education or training	8	4.2%
Refused to respond / were not available	50	26.1%
Total	191	100%

For the young people involved in the study (based on their declarations to participate):

Participating in public education	127	90.1%
Employed	6	4.2%
Neither working, nor participating in education or training	8	5.7%
Total	141	100%

The academic success of the target group was measured in comparison with a *control group* of classmates representing an additional view of school processes. The number of classmates involved in the focus group interview depended on the individual results of the questionnaires. The size of the target group made it possible to use the ESM with the same number of students in those classes where the number of former Dobbantó students was the highest. This also gave an insight into the given peer group's vision of the future and subjective quality of life.

The members of the control group were selected randomly from the classes included in the sample (where the number of former Dobbantó students was 2 or more). Of the 64 young people in the control group completing the questionnaires, 34 claimed to have or have had problems at school. The survey made at the time of closing the Programme (by interviewing 54 students in person) contained the same questions as those included in the questionnaire completed by the Dobbantó students.

Conclusions and reflections

According to our research findings, the one-year development work done in the **Dobbantó classes played a decisive role in the life of the young people** participating in the Programme. **98%** of the study participants **are happy to have been Dobbantó students**. **89%** of them claim to have acquired a lot of useful knowledge and **practical skills in the Dobbantó Programme** which they can use in life.

³ This category includes two students participating in adult training in the same school where they completed the Dobbantó class.

CATEGORIES OF PRACTICAL SKILLS	Frequency of mention
Writing a CV	36
Information on employers, visiting workplaces, gaining work experience	25
Job selection criteria	17
Self-awareness (increased self-confidence, better understanding of who I am and what I can do, easier navigation in life, career building)	17
Personal development as a learner, improved manual skills	14
Learning to learn (learning has become easier, acquired a different learning method)	14
Cooperation (helping others, working together with peers, listening to others)	14
Importance of school and learning (helped reintegration, raised interest in new things, showed opportunities for further training)	13
Preparation for admission interviews	12
Increased subject knowledge (Hungarian, math, science, logical skills)	10
Better understanding job advertisements	8
Communication (expressing feelings better, better communication with other people)	8
Tolerance (increased tolerance, easier to accept others)	8
Improved computer and Internet skills	5
Acquisition of completely new skills (sewing, typing, graphics skills)	5
Claimed to have learned new things but could not identify them	4
Sport	2
“I have learned the importance of being punctual” (behavioural norms)	2

While most young people mentioned practical skills, some of them also made reference to moral values (cooperation, forms of behaviour, tolerance).

The students participating in public education were also asked about their emotional motivations (“Describe what made you like a lesson last week”). Compared to the control group consisting of their classmates, **former Dobbantó students seem to place emphasis on different values**. While those who did not experience the Dobbantó values were mainly “happy about” getting good marks, **former Dobbantó students valued interaction** (see the methodology adapted to the students’ individual needs), which was followed by two methodologically similar classroom techniques that can play a key role in motivating young people (subject related games, positive classroom management and hands-on activities).

Describe what made you like a lesson last week	Frequency of mention %	
	Former Dobbantó students (n=75)	Control group (n=37)
Interaction	20	8.5
Group work	6.9	0
Hands-on activities (creativity, crafts, gardening)	18.9	22
Good atmosphere	12	13.9
Good marks	4	24.7
Positive classroom management, learning material, subject related games	21.8	16.6
Success	6.9	8.5
Neutral responses (we could do what we liked, solving puzzles, roller race in the classroom)	9.5	5.8

More than half of the students participating in public education (57.41%) confirmed the above opinion when they were asked about the methods, tools or pedagogical approaches which they would introduce in their current schools.

Recalling your Dobbantó year, is there anything that you would introduce in your current school? (n=62)	%
Teachers' attitude, informal conversations, face-to-face mentoring	24.19
Outings	14.52
Extracurricular activities, table soccer, ping pong	12.90
Learning: more variety	11.29
Computer use	9.68
Less learning, less hours	8.06
Workplace visits	8.06
Group work	4.84
Having meals together in the morning	3.23
Do not know	1.61
Did not respond	1.61

Summary of research findings

The labour market and career study of young people (with special educational needs) supported in the school year of 2009/2010 under the Dobbantó vocational school programme followed up the young people's success at school, at work and in everyday life. Various methods were used to get a picture of their integration in the school or the workplace, their effectiveness in learning or working, and the support received from their environment. The study also aimed at enabling the schools to better follow up and support the career and opportunities of their present and future Dobbantó students in education or in the labour market by fine-tuning the Programme and adapting its tools to their local conditions.

The study also provided an opportunity to collect data on the students' subjective quality of life and vision of the future.

The findings of the eight-month follow-up period confirm that the Dobbantó Programme has met its objectives.

The main focus of our study was to find out if the students who participated in the Dobbantó Programme in the school year of 2009/2010 have managed to successfully integrate into the mainstream classes of public education institutions or the workplace environments or communities where they are continuing their career. Can they succeed at learning or working? Can the school or the workplace provide them with effective environmental and organisational support? Has the Dobbantó Programme helped them to successfully manage their own life?

Exploring the young people's subjective quality of life and vision of future had special emphasis in the study, because we are convinced that hope, well-being and a positive vision of the future are inevitable for success in everyday life.

The students entertain an unambiguously positive opinion about the Dobbantó Programme and consider the Dobbantó year to have been a good experience. In particular, they highlighted personal attention, support and the feeling of security, and described their relationship with their peers and teachers as important and supportive. They claim to have learned things which are useful for choosing and planning a career and finding a job.

Following the one-year Dobbantó Programme, the students' integration into the new environment seem to be successful. They have become full members of their new classes, and their social relations are good at both the class and the school levels. Their answers confirm that most of them intend to complete the programme of the school they are currently attending.

The students' academic success has been fuelled by what they learned and experienced during the Dobbantó Programme. Thanks to the continuous reflection on progress and the supportive environment they have learned to understand and evaluate themselves better. The outcomes suggest that the students' success at school also motivated their parents to act as the teachers' partners in supporting the development of their children. Upon seeing academic success, the parents began to support and encourage their children. The students are aware of their personal strengths, and they endeavour to plan and exploit learning opportunities outside the classroom.

The most critical factors included the academic environment and organisational culture of the schools and the impact of these on the former Dobbantó students. As regards differentiation in the classroom, adaptation to individual differences and cooperative learning in small groups, the schools receiving the former Dobbantó students scored much worse than in any other field covered by the questions.

According to the consolidated Engagement Index, nearly half of the former Dobbantó students show involvement in and enthusiasm for their current schools.

Considering the school environment, it seems that the Dobbantó Programme has so far been unable to make the desired level of impact on the organisational and pedagogical culture of the schools joining the Programme, although school based professional development opportunities - for other teachers to learn the Dobbantó methods - were often emphasised in the interviews with the heads. It is assumed that the effectiveness of such school based professional development or in-service training opportunities is often reduced by the size of the school (the total number of students is between 2000 and 3000 in some schools), the teachers' high workload, the isolation of the Dobbantó class, or the physical distance between the member schools of the same educational institution. Apparently, the integration of the new practice and pedagogical culture – which proved to be successful in the Dobbantó Programme – would need conscious leadership support, more time and a more organised approach to school based professional development in the schools joining the Programme. This is an important issue, considering that the schools' child protection officers, heads and teachers all stressed that the majority of students could benefit from a programme like Dobbantó.

According to our findings, the results of the former Dobbantó students and those of the control group do not show significant differences. Similarly, the breakdown by age group and residence has only revealed a few minor gaps. It should be noted, however, that the results of the 19 to 25 year old students differ from the mainstream at several points, but these discrepancies are assumed to be attributable to differences in age and life experience. There are sharper differences between the results of mainstream schools and the results of schools specialised in catering for special educational needs, which can be explained by the fact that the teachers of the latter are already familiar with approaches and methodologies that are similar to those of the Dobbantó.

The consolidated ESM indices suggest that the students have confidence in the future (Hope Index), as they have a positive view of both their present life and their anticipated life situation five years from now. The Well-Being Index shows that half of the participants are happy and doing well in their everyday life and at school.

Hopefully, our results will help to further improve the Dobbantó Programme and make it easier for the schools to integrate the components of the Programme into their daily practice and pedagogical culture. We hope that the methodological guide can help to increase the effectiveness of following up the success of former Dobbantó students in the future.

Last but not least

The state secretariat responsible for education within the Ministry of National Resources has promising aspirations which make us trust that a successful project like this will have a place within the regulatory framework of public education and may be continued at a larger scale after November 2011.