



NORTH-HUNGARY

CASE STUDY

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1. Introduction and context: what, where and why?

1.1. Understanding selected region/community/town/village: key characteristics

North-Hungary is the most underdeveloped region in Hungary and it is the 8th poorest region in the EU. According to Eurostat Miskolc, the capital of the region is the city most hit by poverty in the EU. “Before the end of the socialist system in 1989, Miskolc and some other industrial towns nearby could provide employment for most of the population in the region. Economical changes were not in favour of heavy industry workers or of unskilled labourers. Unemployment has grown and there are many families in the region the children of which grew up without ever having seen their parents go to work. Social structure has changed; the less mobile Roma population became the majority in many settlements and in parts of towns (Hunya-Szabó, 2016).

In the mid-2016, the average unemployment rate in Hungary was 5.1%, while the county of the region that is home to both schools discussed in this study, had an unemployment rate of 12.5%, and the rate is much higher amongst the unskilled. Only 15% of those who haven't finished the eight-year primary education were able to find work (KSH, 2016). The rate of early school leavers in Hungary is close to the 10%, target of the Education 2020 (10.3%), but it is the highest in the selected Northern region (18,4%).

One of the case study schools, Open Door is located in Diósgyőr, the poorest part of Miskolc, where the biggest iron factory, the iconic centre of the heavy industry used to be. The other school, Béla IV (referred as Hejőkeresztúr School), is situated in Hejőkeresztúr, 20 kilometres from Miskolc, serving three small villages, two of them are on the government list of the most disadvantaged Hungarian settlements (Hungarian Government, 2015).

1.2. Getting to know selected schools of the field study: a brief profile

Introduction to the Hungarian school system

Both selected schools provide primary education. In Hungary, in most cases, pupils start their primary education at the age of six or seven, after three years of compulsory pre-schooling provided by kindergartens, where kids can go between the age of three and six or seven, depending on their level of maturity.

Primary schools in most cases have eight grades, so pupils attend them from the age of six or seven to the age of fourteen or fifteen. We do not have a lower and upper secondary system, secondary schools generally serve the age group of 14-19.

There is a diagnostic testing process that first graders go through, but this not for all the pupils, teachers can decide who seems to have additional attention. About 30% of the first graders are involved yearly. There are central competence tests compulsory for all (Maths and Hungarian) at sixth, eighth and tenth grades, and there is a school leaving maturity exam at the end of grade 12.

For more than twenty years, the Hungarian education system has been in continuous reform with the financial aid of the European Funds. Between 2003 and 2015 the “Educational Integration Program”, a pedagogical framework for integration (known as IPR, short for the Hungarian name) was providing professional and financial support for kindergartens and schools with a high number of disadvantaged children. The aim of the program was to provide equal chances by competence-development activities during and after regular school time - involving partners from the community, like NGOs, local authorities, etc. The financial support was aimed at creating a more inclusive environment, and assets that contribute to the development of the target group. Between 2003 and 2007 an additional 50% normative (per capita) financial support was provided for schools based on the number of pupils transferred from segregated into integrated classes; from 2007 to 2015, funding was awarded through

an application system. The tender had the title “HEFOP 2.1.3”, short for “Human Resources Operative Program”.

Up to 2010, Hungarian educationists experienced **a very inspiring and vivid period**, suitable for educational innovation. About 25% of the schools took part in different projects aiming at the modernization of teaching and learning practices, a lot of them promoted equity and inclusion. The Hejőkeresztúr School and Open Door in Miskolc were both beneficiaries of different projects at the time. Thanks to the funding, they were able to find a way to create the physical and professional conditions necessary for the overall implementation and consolidation of their original, specific, “local” innovations.

Tenders for the schools echoed the central directions and methodological preferences of the educational government. Therefore, schools could be certain that if they design their project according to the tenders, they are going to comply central expectations. **The actual national core curriculum**, the calls and the two case study innovations were in favour of cooperative learning of all kinds. All tenders contained (mostly compulsory) CPD trainings; most of them provided mentoring and teaching / learning materials. **These were effective mostly in the phases of adaptation and trial, less effective in mainstreaming and embedding, but hardly at all in sustaining.** This is due to the fact that all tenders covered a 2-3 year period, too short for mainstreaming and sustaining any complex innovations. In 2010-11, policies became more prescriptive and centralized. Policies are still embedded in tenders, and project periods are still not long enough to stabilize innovations in the long run¹.

1.2.1. School 1: Open Door Primary School

Open Door has a Kindergarten (ages 3-6), a primary school (ages 6-14/16) a vocational secondary school (ages 14-17/18) and there is an independent music school operating in the same building (ages 6-16). The case study concentrates on the primary school, because it has an innovative tradition regarding teaching methods and knowledge dissemination within the staff and in wider circles. It is worth mentioning that the kindergarten works along the same principles.

The primary school has a history of 150 years. It was established for the iron workers’ children, at the very same time that the ironworks was set up. The beautiful brick building – originally serving as a boys’ school - is 115 years old. In 1949, the school, formerly managed under the authority of the factory, was taken over by the state. Between 2004 and 2011, it was a branch of a “mother” school and it became independent again in 2011, when the Open Door Baptist Congregation took over the provision of education. The nearby kindergarten was also embraced in 2012, and the vocational secondary school a year later.

There are eight grades in the primary school, which is most common in Hungary. The first graders are six or seven years old. The 28 teachers and a teacher assistant work with some 300 pupils. They could have four assistants but the positions are unoccupied since they cannot find suitable and available people for the positions.

The reputation of the school is very good among the parents and in the wider profession, but not in the city. They are a fully Roma school, other families than Roma do not want to send their children there. The teacher community of Miskolc “feel sorry for them” and also “look down upon them” because of the difficult school population, as the principal says. They work with universities, they take part in numerous innovative projects and research programmes – they are well-known for their innovative approaches.

¹ The present project that is aimed at mainstreaming the Hejőkeresztúr model is scheduled to run for five years.

Students' overall average performance in competence tests is not good. The principal says that "they are very proud of their achievements because of the added value they have. But the complex added value indicator of the competence tests are composed in a way that they do not take into consideration the deep poverty and social disadvantage that these pupils come from². There are diagnostic tests for first graders, however, they are not compulsory for all, therefore their results are not taken into account when gauging added value in tests later. The results of the diagnostic tests at first grade suggest that the majority of the pupils at Open Doors will not be able to acquire the necessary learning skills or to catch up regarding social skills and general behaviour. It is not rare that first graders do not say a word and are not able to participate in the simplest common tasks. "Starting from there, it is a big achievement that the pupils are all able to communicate and willing to participate in learning and social activities within a couple of weeks." The school climate is calm, loving and professional. "We do not have time for chatting around; almost all the communication among the staff is professional." – as teachers say. **Morning talking circles** are essential to create and maintain this climate and also to develop communication and social skills.³

The school is strongly devoted to the "Step by Step Program" (SbS⁴), which concentrates on early childhood education from kindergarten to grade 4, providing **playful education in child and family centred environments**. The uniqueness of the school does not lay only in the method, but the way they identify with it, also the way **the staff has developed into a knowledge sharing professional learning community, able to sustain the program and disseminate what they have learnt** over those many years. Open Door is the first of the three newly (re)established SbS methodology centres in the country. The staff generally has strong professional confidence and they, in tune with the partner universities, NGOs and researchers, consider themselves innovative. (See further details below.)

1.2.2. School 2: Béla IV Primary School

Béla IV Primary School in Hejőkeresztúr is a regional state school for three villages (Hejőkeresztúr, Hejőszalonta and Szakáld) with a total population of cca. 2300. Hejőkeresztúr, the education centre and the biggest of the three villages is situated 3 kms from Hejőszalonta and 7 on the same route from Szakáld. There is a school bus available. In the present academic year, 2015-16, there are 227 children and 21 teachers at the school, they have 2 educational assistants / special teachers. There are eight grades with a varied number of students from 18 to 29 per class, also a class of 13 mentally handicapped children who can't be taught in an integrated way. They also have a class in Szakáld, where 14 pupils of grades one to three are taught together in one group, locally.

The school was built 50 years ago and up to 2012 it was maintained with the joint effort of the three villages. Due to the low budget of the respective municipalities, financing the school became less and less feasible, so the country-wide centralisation (taking over by the state) was accepted with relief both by the school and the local governments in 2012. (Hunya – Szabó, 2016).

The underprivileged are highly represented at the school, 73% of the pupils have disadvantaged social backgrounds, and over 50% are of Roma descent. The two overlap in most cases. The school's overall performance is outstanding compared to similar schools in the region. They are proud that all children can complete their primary education and they all go forward and attend – mostly vocational – secondary education, thanks to the complex methodology they have been using and developing for 15

² See also 2.1.5

³ See also 2.1.5

⁴ Short for „Lépésről lépésre”, the Hungarian name of the program.

years. They can sensitively react to the results of the competence tests, for example by introducing a locally developed reading program to improve literacy.

Their speciality is the academically widely acknowledged Complex Instruction Program (CIP), for which they have become well-known. The program is also of high estimate amongst primary school teachers and principals. The original and later localised program was developed by Stanford University (US), and introduced in Hungary through a teacher training program in 1990, as part of the educational and social reform that followed the democratic change of system in 1989.

The program provides equal chances for children from different social backgrounds by eliminating their “fixed” social status. The method ensures that the children have ever-changing roles and responsibilities in active learning, and it proves in practice that **“everybody is good at something”**. Just like SbS in the Open Door School, CIP is the approach that unifies the school community. **The staff – strongly led and inspired by the head mistress - has become a learning community, able to sustain and develop, also to disseminate and teach at other schools.** It is their merit that the CIP program is already part of the initial teacher training at some teaching centres, and is about to be rolled out as a state initiative for providing equity.

Their case is also a good example of personal professional development, as the head mistress – originally an engineer and PE teacher - gradually became a widely respected teacher (also a university lecturer) and acquired a higher doctorate.

2. Two perspectives on school innovation processes: what supports and what limits innovation?

2.1. School 1

2.1.1. Innovation in school 1: presenting practised innovative approaches

The Open Door school is strongly devoted to the Step by Step⁵ program (SbS⁶), which was the first and strongest innovative drive for change, giving the school a special character in the mid 90's. All later innovations either strengthened this first defining experience, or passed without leaving sustainable results.

The program was designed by the American Open Society Foundations in 1994 for Central and Eastern European countries that had changed their socio-political system by getting rid of the Soviet control in 1989. The programme is still in place in over 30 countries, not just in Europe, but also in Eurasia. In 2004, the Foundation established the International Step by Step Association, a network of NGOs and individuals working together to improve the lives of young children.

Since its establishment, ISSA has developed a number of pedagogical tools and guides designed for teachers and other early childhood stakeholders **emphasizing inclusion, diversity, and the values required in open, democratic societies.** Independent evaluations over the past 20 years have shown that Step by Step “has an impact on the development of children’s democratic behaviours, ideas, and values, and **provides greater help to children who enter early childhood services with less-developed academic skills.**” (ISSA homepage)

⁵ Hungarian homepage of the Program:

⁶ The Hungarian abbreviation by which the program is known in the country is LL (Lépésről lépésre, which means Step by step).

ISSA has defined seven focus areas for their publications: 1. Interactions 2. Family and Community 3. Inclusion, Diversity and Values of Democracy 4. Assessment and Planning 5. Teaching Strategies 6. Learning Environment 7. Professional Development.

The values⁷ they promote are

- The rights-based approach to education which emphasizes the responsibility of educators to implement more inclusive practices.
- The agency of the child and her/his involvement in his/her own development, with a strong emphasis on the promotion of children's autonomy, initiative, sense of individuality, and identity, while supporting and acknowledging the development of multiple identities.
- The young child as a citizen with a strong voice, rights, and responsibilities; and the role of the educator to support them to be responsible members of society, to develop a sense of empathy and concern for others, to develop an openness and respect for diversity, to acquire skills to form, express, and justify their opinions, to listen respectfully and be tolerant to the opinions of others, and to resolve conflict.
- The development of life-long learning competences, including interpersonal and civic competences, awareness about environmental issues and sustainable development, intercultural understanding, entrepreneurship, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. (ISSA, 2010).

In Hungary, the program was introduced to teachers via 120-hour continual professional development (CPD) courses in the 1990s. The NGO providing these trainings and scaffolding for the implementation and operation was Ec-pec Foundation initially (2001-2010), and later the Partners Hungary Foundation (2013-2016). The program was declining after the withdrawal of the first NGO, and it has been in the last three years that the "old SbS schools are getting back to life again" The foundation invited the SbS schools to a re-opening conference in 2013 and has been working to re-organize the SbS-schools network⁸. At Open Door, there was no decline, it is their own interest to keep to the method and its principles. "In segregation you must give more to compensate, you must create an environment rich in stimuli. This is a way of life; you cannot dismantle it into small parts." (Focus group)

Regarding the implementation and the in-school knowledge sharing practice, it is very important to note that in 2002, two teachers were trained to become international SbS trainers. Not only did they learn certain knowledge sharing methods but they also became fully devoted to working as a learning organization⁹. One of the two in-school teacher trainers said "I immediately felt that it was the program we needed for the children we were working with." They had been struggling, pupils were not motivated, their behaviour was strongly problematic and the parents were not partners. The program proved to be a practical remedy for their everyday problems.

2.1.2. Innovations in school 1: what were/are main enablers (supporting factors)?

The SbS innovation, designed for the education of 3-10 year-olds, was initiated by the Soros Open Society Foundation, which used to be very active in Hungary and in Eastern Europe during the democratic transformation of the former socialist countries. They provided professional and financial help and organisational frameworks for introducing and implementing the SbS program among other

⁷ Indicators of the values are also available in the publication.

⁸ See 2.1.4 for more details.

⁹ See 2.1.5 for more details.

educational initiatives aiming at democratic change. The state generally approved these initiatives, which made it much easier for the schools to join.

Financial support from the Open Society SbS program to Open Door – similarly to other SbS schools - provided for the following besides teacher trainings (exact years are unknown):

- classroom furnishing according to the needs of the SbS program, class library for parents and pupils, cultural and sports activities (400 000 Ft¹⁰);
- forest school for the socially disadvantaged SbS pupils and parents, project work (450 000 Ft);
- improvement of learning conditions, dissemination, teaching at other schools, wider internet access, books, toys (350 000 Ft);
- experience / buzz programs with pupils, parents and teachers (450 000 Ft)

A lot of schools were seeking for methods fit to deal with socially disadvantaged children, to promote equity and inclusion after the democratic change. The state also initiated programs for answering this need¹¹; a very busy and innovative period started in the mid-90s and was going on for about 15 years. Since joining the EU in 2004, European funds have been used for educational reforms and innovative initiatives. All funding for projects are selected based on tenders, so it is the decision of the schools and their providers if they apply or not. Open Door has been very active, and – amongst others - took part in the Integrated Pedagogical System projects, which were enabling and enriching factors to sustain their proven methods. In the framework of this project they could equip three more classrooms according to SbS needs, were able to finance workshops, trainings, to buy ICT tools and educational assets. This program also provided for dissemination, so the school – like many others – has gained significant experience in teaching other schools, “which is the most important result of the development projects in the last 20 years.” (HG, university researcher)

As it is detailed above, financial support from the Open Society Foundation was directed to the implementation, sustainance and dissemination of the SbS program. The state provided money partly to sustain and disseminate SbS, also to help the integrated education of socially disadvantaged pupils in the framework of a country-wide program (IPR)¹² that was very much in tune with the original efforts and mission of the Open Door.

Professional help came first from universities in the form of CPD courses, then from the NGOs, providing professional materials and trainings. NGOs also created and facilitated the network of the SbS schools. The organisational framework is a very important factor in sustaining and disseminating or mainstreaming innovation. There needs to be a supporting organisation that builds and maintains the professional network and strengthens the identity of the members. (HG, university researcher)

The inner need of the institution was the strongest factor to incorporate, pilot and implement SbS philosophy and practice. Later, success urged the staff involved to disseminate. The school had three principals over the history of SbS. The present headmistress was chosen from the staff and was well-informed about the method and had quite some experience in the practice of it, just like her

¹⁰ Euro/Forint ratio in the period by and large was 1/250. It means that these amounts were not very big but regarding the poor schools and that they served for 1-3 classes they were very good.

¹¹ Most importantly the “IPR” (Integrated Pedagogical System) since 2003, to empower the socially disadvantaged children by educating them in an integrated and better equipped environment, with up-to-date methods.

¹² See the Intro part of 1.2 for more details.

predecessors. Therefore, the change of personnel has not caused any problems. “It is very important that the school head is fully devoted and supportive.” (Focus group)

It has been a motivating factor also that the school became widely known because of the method, an “example” school regarding successful innovation. They have established good connections with universities, researchers, they get a lot of visitors and their reputation has grown significantly in the professional circles. There have been conference talks, newspaper and educational journal articles about SbS and their way of applying the method. Receiving so much positive feedback made the staff proud, and strengthened the feeling that they is a successful professional community.

In the last three years when the Baptist Congregation has been the provider, there has been greater freedom than in state schools, but there is no extra financial support. (Principal)

2.1.3. Innovations in school 1: what were/are the main barriers encountered?

When talking about the obstacles, Open Door teachers agree that time is the biggest problem. The method itself needs a lot of planning and practical preparation, since lessons are completely game-based. They say that it was easier before the new educational law (2011), which heightened the number of compulsory teaching hours. (Focus group)

The law also prescribes more hours for learning, and it is very hard to include the morning talking circles into the time table, however, they are an integral part of the SbS methodology. These 30-40 minute sessions go according to a settled schedule but also serve for covering actual issues. The conversation gets the kids in a concentrated mindset, so that focusing on learning and on each other becomes possible. The pupils come from very different and in most cases very difficult social backgrounds, and need this transition period from hard life to learning and cooperating peacefully. (Head mistress)

Big class sizes are not in favour of any innovative methods, neither of SbS. The state covers the operational budget of the school based on the number of children, but providing meals for all is not included. The Baptist congregation is a small entity, and is not able to give extra money for operation¹³. The school provides food for all the kids, a lot of them do not eat anything else but the school food, and Monday breakfast disappears in no time. As the budget is so low, they had to merge two classes (grade two), where now there are 34 pupils. (Head mistress)

Money is not the main issue regarding assets, since “we learnt how to prepare what we need for teaching and learning, and the things we could buy earlier are durable, like the mobile furniture or the big building blocks.” The NGO can help with the finances needed for dissemination – by the end of this academic year. (Focus group)

It is clear that innovation requires time and that pupil-centred active and playful methods cannot function without devoting a lot of time for preparation from the teachers. Overloaded teachers can be powered by enthusiasm, but overworking leads to a burnout sooner or later. It is also obvious that the ideal class size is under 25 pupils.

The staff is in unity and shares a common professional view; rare newcomers can fit in seamlessly, since the methodology is not forced. Sharing is the basic characteristic of their community. There has been a threatening sign, a teacher has left recently because of the hard work and high number of classes. There has been no precedent to this¹⁴. The teaching workforce is getting scarce, especially in this region, so it is not easy to substitute those who leave.

¹³ They can get money from the Baptist Church for summer camps, project day etc.

¹⁴ For more details see also 2.1.6

2.1.4. Mainstreaming and transferring innovations in school 1

There were nine schools involved in the first support period of the Open Society Foundation, in which the SbS method was used more or less as an overall approach, a school credo in grades one to four. As for now, there are three active primary schools in the SbS network, which is maintained by the Partners Hungary Foundation, who received the necessary money from the Open Society for a three-year period, 2013-2016. PHF have been continuing the job done by their predecessor, they employed the former professional project manager for this period. Otherwise, SbS is not close to their professional profile and they have not put much effort into its resurrection. In 2013, the professional methodology centres were re-established in the three active schools, and cca 100 teachers got acquainted with the methodology over three years. Unfortunately, these were individual professionals, not whole staffs of schools. There was no follow up, the teachers' involvement, the effects of the CPD trainings are unknown. (Responsible expert, Partners Hungary Foundation). The three schools are very far from each other (Miskolc, Kiskőrös, Pécs), and due to money and time constraints, they do not indulge in vivid networking.

Over the 16 years, hundreds of schools got acquainted with the SbS methodology, but there is no data on how many of them were or is applying it and for how long. This is due to the irregular financial and professional support and the fact that education policy has changed a lot from being competence centred to content centred, from liking to neglecting the foundation behind.

Technical details, pure methods are easy to transfer, but beliefs, attitudes, the complex, holistic approach are not. That is why an organic, local innovation that comes from the inner needs is much more sustainable. **Regarding transfer, the successful cases are the ones where the needs are recognised and the staff is already aware that some kind of change must be done, and the innovation provides an answer to the challenges they are facing, and it also suits the level of their own professional stage of development.** (HG researcher, focus group, me)

2.1.5 Innovations in school 1: what were/are main achievements (effects)?

According to the focus group it is not easy to measure which changes are a result of the method. Social competences of the pupils are good indicators. School staff has been using the method for a very long period as an overall school approach, so they do not have the possibility to compare, no control group. Before the program, the students were very hard to teach, they were not motivated and there were a lot of behavioural problems, however, at that time the average social background was a bit better.

Now the **pupils** are cooperative and interested, they enjoy learning. The teachers consider it as the result of the enjoyable, playful learning they apply, also due to the open and sincere appreciation of all the efforts that pupils make. **Morning circles** are essential in maintaining the good learning environment. Every morning they sit in a circle on pillows in a corner, the teacher in an armchair. There is a set routine to follow: the name of the day, the date, the weather, actual topics, poems, etc. Each child learns to speak in a way that is to the point and gets the chance to express what they think and feel. It is also useful for airing the stress that they might have brought from home.

Nevertheless, Open Door is not happy with competence test results. They say that the family background index cannot show the dark situations which most of the pupils come from. Unemployed and undereducated parents, alcoholism, crime, deep poverty, aggression, lack of care, low ethical standards... and still, these children get used to the norms at school and are developing a lot. The staff is proud of this social, ethical and disciplinary development despite the fact that the test results are bad.

They are also proud of the growing level of **parental involvement**. The two project closing days attract more and more parents each year, because they want to see their own children be clever and nice, but not many of them have the patience yet to watch other kids and to follow the whole performance.

The biggest result however is the unity of the staff and the **professional learning organisation** they became. Over the years – due to the deep involvement of the leaders and the two very well trained trainers – they developed the culture of sharing and learning from each other. The Open Door teachers have been interested in each others' achievements, challenges and innovations from the beginning. The staff has developed the habit of having workshops where first whole classes, later one or two half-classes are show-cased and analysed. They developed a scheme for evaluating these lessons, always with helpful intentions. These demonstration classes have helped the staff to better integrate bigger or smaller elements of innovative projects they were taking part in. They became well-trained, self-confident professionals having a common vision and going in the same direction. These facts make the achievements sustainable.

Another achievement worth mentioning is that the staff have learnt how to teach teachers, also in other schools, which made them even more conscious about what, how and why they have been doing. Within the framework of this case study, the researcher visited a workshop that had been advertised in all nearby schools in the region. At the workshop, two classes were presented, and the nature and manner of the work with them was explained to participants. It was not possible in the last three years to organise longer trainings, anything other than afternoon workshops due to the lack of interest, even though trainings held earlier for entire school staffs were 30-60 hours long.

2.1.6. Innovations in school 1: their sustainability

The threat to already proven sustainability is fluctuation. The teachers are much overloaded and work under very hard circumstances. Some teachers have already decided to transfer to another school, where teaching is less stressful and burdensome; where there are fewer children coming from aggravated social backgrounds and where the class sizes are a lot smaller. The staff has a strong community spirit, they stick together and strengthen and encourage each other, but this, by itself, is not enough to solve everything. (Head mistress, focus group)

As Open Door teachers cannot do else but teach the way they are used to teach, because it helps them and the pupils to succeed, to feel happy and contented. They cannot see why they would give up practising the SbS methodology. Although the method was planned for the age group 3-10, they also apply it in upper grades, but “with less rigidity”. For example, talking circles cannot be held every day, but two-three times a week and they must be shorter because of the time constraint caused by the fully packed curriculum. (Head mistress, focus group)

2.1.7. Innovations in school 1: monitoring, evaluation, learning loops and planning of innovative approaches

Open Door is not a school where research and teaching go hand in hand. There are no planning, monitoring or evaluation mechanisms. Even the workshops and in-school trainings are held in a random way, not systematically. They just feel that they have been going the right way, but do not have hard data, scientific proof that they have been successful. They cooperated with two universities on different projects, but none of them involved collecting data.

They follow the further studies of the pupils and experience that about 90% enrolls secondary education, but those who succeed at getting into schools that provide for matriculation are more likely to drop out. Most often, this is not due to their low achievement, but to the fact that these schools feature paying programmes and there are things that students are supposed to buy, but their families cannot afford to cover these expenses. At lower level vocational schools there are grants available. (Principal)

2.1.8. Stakeholders' engagement into innovations in school 1

As it has been detailed above, universities, NGOs, an international foundation and state tenders were all enablers of the SbS innovation. Students and parents have been involved in traditional ways, not as planners.

The school has been maintaining a very good partnership with the Teacher Training Centre of Miskolc University since the beginning of the 2000s (UJ, KJO, Miskolc University).

- The SbS program has been introduced to future teachers, who can choose to get their teaching practice at the Open Door School. Open Door has become a basis school for the compulsory practical training. Publications were born as a result of these experiences.
- There have been trainings for university teachers and teachers-to-be on the SbS methodology.
- University professors have given further methodology trainings to the school staff on demand. Therefore, this has been a mutual learning process.
- At different CPD teacher trainings the trainers of the school and the university teachers work in tandem.
- Within the framework of the university's Social Responsibility Program the future trainers often provide micro-group personal development lessons for the pupils in need.
- The Teacher Training Centre has hosted exhibitions of project works made by Open Door pupils; and TTC staff often visit the school to take part in programs there.

There are Pedagogical Centres in all regions, belonging to the Central Education Office, the state maintainer of primary and secondary non-vocational education. These centres replaced the former Pedagogical Institutions, which – among other duties, such as organising competitions - provided pedagogical, methodological help for schools in the region. These newly formed centres operate as offices, they organise the classification process of the teacher career program, and do not help the schools yet. Open Door is not a state school, they would not have benefited from the pedagogical help even if it existed, and the future Baptist Pedagogical Centre has not been established yet. This missing link might not challenge their pedagogical work, since they are rather the source of knowledge than a staff in need of help.

There should be three system levels involved when implementing, sustaining and mainstreaming innovation: the school that recognises the need for innovation and is willing to change, central support that makes the innovation possible (autonomy, freedom, time, money, appreciations), an intermediary organisation that helps the process professionally and builds some kind of network to enable knowledge sharing among schools and monitors and evaluates the process. (HR researcher, PG education providing centre director) In case of the Open Doors this mid-level organisation have been the Teacher Training Centre of Miskolc University and the two respecting NGOs.

2.2. School 2

2.2.1. Innovations in school 2: presenting practiced innovative approaches

The Hejőkeresztúr School is strongly devoted to the Complex Instruction Program (CIP¹⁵), which was the first and strongest innovative drive for change, giving the school a special character in the 2000s. All later innovations either strengthened this first defining experience, or passed without leaving sustainable results. CIP is based on the Complex Instruction¹⁶ (CI) programme of Stanford University

¹⁵ The Hungarian abbreviation by which the program is known in the country is KIP.

¹⁶

(USA), but it was implemented creatively and complemented with some other methods that also serve students' competence development such as the use of board games, pair-reading and fostering dialogue between generations. The combination of these methods has resulted in a unique educational programme in Hungary, which could be labelled as the 'Hejőkeresztúr Model' (Hunya – Szabó, 2016).

In 2000, the US Embassy organised a Complex Instruction (CI) CPD teacher training in the other end of the country. The newly appointed head mistress and 16 other Hejőkeresztúr teachers took part in this training. Their impression was that CI is the right way to motivate and help their growing number of pupils with underprivileged social backgrounds.

The program applies a complex, theoretically grounded methodology, as a result of twenty years of research in the USA and six in Hungary. The Hungarian version is a free variation of the original Stanford programme. This proved to be successful in socially heterogeneous contexts with students of various abilities in both countries (K. Nagy, 2015).

The main concern of the programme is how education can provide equity for the underprivileged, how to help them gain applicable knowledge in mixed ability communities. What can motivate pupils of different abilities to work together? The answer is a methodology that basically belongs to the cooperative learning approach, made widely known mostly by Spencer Kagan¹⁷; but which has its own principles. In the learning process, cognitive, moral and affective components of education are balanced, scientific-intellectual, social-civic and personality development angles are equally important, and these are realised by well-designed, varied and purposeful activities.

CIP is based on four principles:

- education involves a varied level of non-routine, open-end tasks that are able to mobilise pupils of different abilities and competences;
- responsibility is shared, which means that learners are responsible for their own personal work and the group is responsible for individual achievements;
- work is evaluated against set norms and roles;
- hierarchy within the group - the status of the pupils - is mobile, all abilities are explored and praised.

Norms and rules are displayed in all classrooms, and at each CIP lesson, there is one that the teacher scrutinises and informs the pupils about what is being observed. The complex application of norms and rules also enables the pupils to assess each others' behaviour. The norms and rules are the following:

- You have the right to ask for help from anyone in the group.
- It is your duty to help anyone who asks for it.
- Help others but do not do the work instead of them.
- Never leave your task unfinished.
- Tidy up after the completion of the job.
- Fulfil the role you were given in the group.

The teams consist of 4-5 pupils, who take on a different role each time. They stay together until they have tried all the roles, then different groups are formed. The roles may differ according to the number

¹⁷See Kagan's Cooperative Learning website at

of the students in a group, also because of the character of a given task. There is always an assistant teacher, a speaker, there can be a note-taker, a material manager, a time-keeper, someone who is responsible for good behaviour, etc. It is possible to have more roles in a lesson but no one can be left without personal responsibilities.

Rotating the roles helps the development of diverse competences and makes the status of a child unfixed within the group. They see each other in many roles and situations and they all take on those different roles, so they find out what they are good at. They learn how to lead, how to speak about the job done, how to work effectively. They also realise that everybody is good at something, nobody is good at everything and they together are better than anyone alone. This means that the status rank is not fixed, there are no children left behind (Hunya – Szabó, 2016).

2.2.2. Innovations in school 2: what were/are main enablers (supporting factors)?

After 1989, the social and economical change put Hejőkeresztúr - as it happened to many other schools of the region - in harder situation¹⁸. “We could not engage the children and could not develop the weaker pupils any more”. “After the **training in Pécs**, we tried the method and the pupils showed interest.” “We fell in love with the mentality that everybody is good at something.” The method is equally good for catching up and for talent development.” “It was the ambience that changed; we were laughing and enjoying ourselves.” “Success makes you devoted.”(Focus group)

The **training** was inspiring, but not detailed and practical enough to implement the methodology. That is why the head mistress was researching and experimenting with a local methodological pattern for three years in a single class before embedding CI in the daily routine of the school. She was gradually involving teachers who showed interest. Within these three years, the whole staff took part in in-house CIP trainings organised by the school head, and by now, almost all of them apply it regularly. The strong and direct involvement of the head teacher provided true **leadership** that is still there.

“There was **no teacher resistance**” – the principal recalls. “Introduction and adaptation went smoothly. Nobody was forced to take up the method, we were just sharing. The difference in atmosphere and motivation was obvious, so step by step, almost everybody got convinced and soon devoted. ... There were late adopters, 4-5 colleagues, and we still have two-three teachers who hardly use the methodology. But everybody must learn it via in-school trainings and workshops.” (Head mistress)

“The introduction and implementation was so slow and natural that nobody really noticed that something basic had been changing, definitely not the parents. At the beginning, in the piloting period, we did not even communicate what we were experimenting with.” (Head mistress)

It is not easy to define how much **financial support** the CIP project received by participating in different projects, financed by the European Funds, but the biggest sum was received in 2004. The school gained five million HUF in the framework of the IPR¹⁹ to carry on with CIP that had already been elaborated and piloted by that time.

It was also a strong **professional enabler** that in 2006, the school head finally met Rachel Lotan and Elizabeth Cohen, masters of the CI programme at Stanford, for what proved to be a very useful professional exchange. During the visit, it came to light that the principles were the same in Hejőkeresztúr, but their practical applications were different. Ms Lotan visited the Hejőkeresztúr School again in 2010 and gave her consent that the programme worked equally well in the way it has been

¹⁸See 1.1 for more details.

¹⁹See the Intro part of 1.2 for more details.

implemented in Hejőkeresztúr. The head mistress had the possibility to go to Stanford again and see some American CI schools in 2013.

2.2.3. Innovations in school 2: what were/are main barriers encountered?

The **physical environment** was not suitable for the new methodology, in the adaptation period there was a need for mobile furniture. All the desks were fixed and that was unsuitable for frequent group work. Maybe nowadays, school furniture is much more modern, this might be not a concern at most schools any more. (Focus group)

Lack of practical information and no professional help could be considered as barriers to smooth implementation, but in the case of Hejőkeresztúr, these circumstances proved to be fruitful. By trial and failure, the staff learned by themselves what worked and what didn't, and this was how they developed the **ownership** of the programme.

Since the methodology was adopted in a vivid period with frequent financial support, lack of money was not a real burden, but **time was**. CIP is a time consuming methodology. The teacher prepares all the activities and materials needed for them before class. "We are supposed to have 20% of the classes organised according to the method. We have more teaching hours nowadays than we used to, and there are other compulsory tasks that make us overloaded. Still, the number of CIP-classes is not decreasing, we have so many interested visitors that we must do more than expected by our own schedule." (Focus group)

2.2.4. Mainstreaming and transferring innovations in school 2

Several dissemination processes and ways of networked learning can be recognized within the expansion of CIP. National development programmes that focused on raising the attainment of disadvantaged children, had a strong network element. As a result, the school developed good professional connections with other schools. They have learnt the importance of **experiential learning** as a part of the continuous professional development (CPD) of teachers, and the **policy of open doors**²⁰ became part of their daily routine. Not only the head teacher, but the colleagues have been visiting each others' lessons regularly and they warmly welcome teachers or groups of teachers from other schools. As a result, some visiting schools started showing strong interest in applying the method.

The Hejőkeresztúr School has **an excellent CPD programme**. The first part of the programme is a 30 or 60 hour training – mostly for larger groups of a single school -, where teachers get familiar with the CIP methodology. The training material has been developed by the school head in cooperation with the Miskolc University and Eszterházy Károly Egyetem, Eger, where she has also been teaching CIP methodology for the future teachers. The CPD-programme enables the participants to apply the CIP methodology in heterogeneous student groups in order to help the talented, the underachieving talented and the children who are lagging behind equally; also to handle social status problems and to create a dynamic learning community where everybody is appreciated and all members improve. They have been shaping the CPD program according to the experience, and nowadays involve learners in the process which makes the training even more convincing and valid.

On the basis of this training, participants who have been convinced and motivated start applying the CIP in their daily routines. Mentoring is provided by CIP trainers for a whole academic year. Freshly trained teachers can decide when and with what topic they want to use the method. When a lesson plan is prepared, they discuss it with their mentors online in an interactive process.

²⁰ Meaning it word by word, not referring to the Open Door school.

Mentoring also means bilateral visits: new CIP teachers can go and see lessons at Hejőkeresztúr or other CIP schools, and the mentors go and observe lessons at the joining schools once a month. When the academic year is over, and the new school decides to apply the methodology, there is another four-year cycle during which help is provided by the trainers. It is a slow process, but changing the pedagogical culture takes time.

For the time being, members off staff of 57 schools have been trained, 26 have been using the method as it is used in Hejőkeresztúr, and all 57 are in the informal CIP network. These are mostly primary schools (grades 1-8), but there are 16 secondary schools that have joined. By now, there are trainers at other CIP schools as well, so Hejőkeresztúr is not solely responsible for the dissemination. In an academic year, the network is able to take up and train 20 new schools.

“There was a school which took part in our training, and decided to apply the methodology. Their lesson plans were perfect, still, the pupils were fooling around in class. This was because the teachers were not trustworthy, they had not identified themselves with the methodology, and they did not have the ownership of what they had been doing.” (Focus group)

“In another school, after introduction, they said that all was very nice, but they did not need the CIP methodology. Their pupils are well off, the only problem is that they are insufferable, horrid. They have not realised that this is why they would have needed the change, and that CIP could have made the children cooperative.” (Focus group)

The network has not been registered yet, but it has a webpage (²¹), and some common activities are organised each year (e.g. a board-game competition for the children and a professional conference for the teachers). Mentoring also means live connections.

The Hejőkeresztúr School wants to become an officially **registered CIP-centre**. There is already such a centre at Miskolc University, where the school head has been teaching the method to future teachers and at CPD courses.²²

In 2016, KIP network introduced their work at the Hungarian Science Academy.

As a result of network building and active participation in different national projects, the CIP programme has become well known. Because of their success with socially disadvantaged children, some key players in the government and in business sector have taken notice of the school and showed interest in disseminating the CIP methodology.

- The University of Technical Sciences, Budapest – which has a Centre for Educating Technical Teachers – has organised trainings for teachers in cooperation with the Hejőkeresztúr School.
- An EU founded project on maths and sciences (Geomatech, www.geomatech.hu) invited the school to take part in the modernization of teaching and learning these subjects. Experience based and playful online learning tasks have been developed since 2014, using the Geogebra software. An online task database has been created for all the 12 grades of public education.
- Vodafone Hungary Foundation has donated tablets to Each CIP school to promote successful learning.
- The head teacher is/was a part time lecturer at more universities (Miskolc University, ELTE University in Budapest, Eszterházy University in Eger). She uses the CIP-method at the initial

²¹ Limited content is also available in English:

²² From 2016 she teaches part time at another university, which is the consortium leader of the project aiming at rolling out the CIP.

phase of teacher education, her students meet this method in both practice and theory. As a part of their initial teacher education, the students can visit the Hejőkeresztúr School and this way they take part in experiential learning.

- A Regional Methodological Centre of the Hejőkeresztúr model was established at Miskolc University at the end of 2015, within the framework of the Social Renewal Operational Programme. The centre caters for those groups of teachers who work with multiple disadvantaged children and who are ready to use the CIP method. This Centre gives place to the trainings and further network building. (Hunya – Szabó, 2016; School head)

The CIP program is the basis of a massive school development program, called COALA²³ which aims at decreasing early school leaving by training the teachers of endangered schools.²⁴

2.2.5. Innovations in school 2: what were/are main achievements (effects)?

Due to this approach, each child of the Hejőkeresztúr primary school completes their primary education and is able to take part in secondary education (starting at grade 9 in Hungary). Almost 70% of the graduates go to a kind of secondary school that provides high-school graduation, the others enrol to lower level vocational education.

The school results in the national competence tests are at an average level, despite the fact that there is a very high rate of socio-economically disadvantaged children and children who have learning and behavioural difficulties. They achieve 15-20% higher scores than other schools of the same socio-cultural background. There is no aggressive behaviour, and nobody is absent without leave. The school climate is peaceful, there is no drop-out or failure, and nobody is expected to take the same grade twice as it was frequent before, as the school head recalls.

Data is available for the last 10 years, when the programme has been in full operation. (Hunya – Szabó, 2016) There is no recent data on raising the level of achievement, since it is a program that has been running for more than 15 years, and in the recent years they have “just” been sustaining the results that had been achieved.

The school has become a learning community over the years, and they also learnt how to teach other teachers, how to disseminate their philosophy and methodology. They created two kinds of professional networks:

- one for making their dissemination process more effective (partnerships with universities, teaching the method in initial trainings, having common CPD trainings with university teachers);
- one for the 57 schools which they have already trained and who started working according to the methodology.

The biggest achievement is that the children are “teachable” and cooperative. (Focus group) It is also worth mentioning that there is a young teacher in the staff who had been taught the program by the school headmistress at the university, spent her compulsory field practice at the school and now is doing her PhD studies on CIP.

The CIP story is also a career story, the principal started as an average PE and engineer teacher, and over the years, she has become a teacher researcher, has done her PhD and secondary doctorate, has written books on the methodology and has become one of the most well-known and highly appreciated teachers in the country.

²³ The tender is EFOP-3.1.2-16

²⁴ For more information see 3.1.

2.2.6. Innovations in school 2: their sustainability

The treat to the already proven sustainability in the Hejőkeresztúr School is tiredness and burn out, due to the work overload already described in case study one. “When we introduce the method to other schools, they often say that they are not willing to put as much effort into changing the whole way of teaching, and they say that it is so much time that they cannot devote to preparation.” But those schools where they give CIP a try, usually keep to it.²⁵ (Focus group)

2.2.7. Innovations in school 2: monitoring, evaluation, learning loops and planning of innovative approaches

The school head and the staff are very professional and knowledgeable. The head teacher’s doctoral studies gave new fuel to CIP, the application and monitoring have become even more conscious. They have several close monitoring methods to follow each individual student to see how the absence and failure rates are changing, who goes to what kind of secondary education etc. Their in-school monitoring process also focuses on different aspects of the CIP lessons, compared to the traditional ones, such as:

- teacher and student activities and the way they influence one another;
- speech and activity frequency of children with low and high social statuses;
- the effect of the social status on pupil performance;
- dissolving original social status/rising the status within the group by ever-changing CIP roles in group activities;
- sociometry to see the change of central and marginal indicators, etc.

When they encounter a new phenomenon, they try and find some solution. This was the case with the low level of achievement on reading tests. The school head suggested introducing a kind of reading program for the elementary grades (one – four). It means that the pupils regularly read aloud to each other in pairs, first changing after each sentence, later after each paragraph, and in the end they tell each other what they have read.

They were also discontented with the low parental engagement and introduced the “Learning between generations” program. Children draw their family trees and label each member with a special skill they have. They, as a class choose five family members, and invite them for a learning occasion. There are five groups and an adult speaks about the skill they have to each group. The kids pre-prepare questions to ask in order to have a more vivid conversation. They tell the other groups what they have learnt from the guest, then go on the internet to find some presents for the adults, which can be a trick or a recipe in connection with the skill they have spoken about.

There has been a state initiative to introduce playful learning in which school staffs could learn how board games can raise motivation, help the talented, as well as to develop logic and social competences. Hejőkeresztúr School found that it suited their philosophy, and have been using board games during classes and as extracurricular activities for years. This proved to be an additional opportunity to make more pupils succeed.

A teacher trainee from Miskolc University carried out a research on the effects of CIP on other lessons²⁶, and came to the expectable result that other lessons are also mostly cooperative and several elements of the CIP-methodology appear in non-CIP lessons unintentionally. (Focus group)

²⁵ See also 2.2.4 for the roll out.

²⁶ CIP is supposed to be used in 20% of all classes in each subject.

2.2.8. Stakeholders' engagement into innovations in school 2

Pupils are not part of planning the innovation, they are the immediate, direct indicators of success. The school climate is like a thermometer and shows if something is right.

The most important mid-level partners are the universities (teacher training centres within them) – mainly the Miskolc University in the past, now Eszterházy University in Eger. There is mutual learning. Both partners teach and learn in each other's institutes, they also teach the methodology together to schools interested. This contributes to professionalism and mutually strengthens their professional profiles.

Vodafone is the private partner devoted to the program. Vodafone decided to promote and support CIP activities and networking. All CIP schools were given tablets in 2015 -16 (1.300 altogether), and they cover the costs of wifi connection, also the upcoming CPD trainings.

The private club of Dénes Gábor Award Holders decided to help the dissemination of the Hejőkeresztúr model financially, first in Hungary and since 2013, in the neighbouring countries, also.

In schools where CIP is used consequently, new trainers have been trained, so it is not only the Hejőkeresztúr School that introduces the methodology to new schools.²⁷

²⁷ See also 2.2.4 and 2.2.7.

3. Innovative practices in schools 1 and 2: lessons learned and policy pointers

3.1. Understanding the barriers and enablers: what influences the school innovation process²⁸?

There was been a middle phase between the development/local implementation and the mainstreaming process in both cases. Both schools have been disseminating their innovations via workshops, conferences, by accepting visitors and by providing trainings for individual teachers and groups of teachers from different schools and for whole school staffs. However, only the “Hejőkorszúr model” (CIP) is going to be mainstreamed, which in this context means central roll-out in the framework of a country-wide state project, financed by EU Structural Funds.

School situation and policy environment regarding experimentation / innovation

Both innovations were initiated in the 1990s, from outside, after the change of system in Hungary. This was a period when some regions, the North-East part of the country especially, became the losers of the change, when unemployment and poverty started rising, the composition of the population changed, in many places the Roma became the majority. Both schools experienced that the pupils were less and less motivated and a parents were less and less able or willing to help their children. The old methods of teaching started failing fast, so they were open to the initiations that several organisations were offering with state consent to democratise and modernise education.

The American Embassy and especially the Soros Foundation (US) were very active, providing a large variety of teacher training opportunities, some combined at some point with further help from appointed Hungarian organisations, mostly NGOs, as it happened in the case of Open Doors with the SbS methodology. In both cases, the schools had a large number of people trained, and both found the methodology a helpful remedy for their existing problems, so there was no resistance, only enthusiasm.

Embedding, tailoring and sustaining

In both cases, there were periods when no outside help was provided for embedding, tailoring and maintaining the innovation, but the inner need they recognised and the motivation from the CPD training that introduced these innovations (SbS in case one and CIP in case two) were enough to slowly embed the methodology. The recognised need and the success experienced from the start were the strongest drives to keep going in these phases.

For the SbS innovation, continuous help was provided from the responsible NGO in two cycles: 2003-2010 and 2013-2016, with nothing in-between. During the three years with no funding, the formerly established network fell apart completely and it was not possible to re-establish it in the second cycle. The second NGO was not as devoted as the previous one. This was bad for the SbS programme in many other schools, but the Open Door developed a kind of in-school training system, also a close partnership with Miskolc University, and these factors made it possible to further tailor and sustain the programme. In the case of CIP, there was an experimentation period to work out practical details, so the implementation process was even longer, six years altogether, during which they did not receive any professional help from outside, only reinforcement in the form of state programmes, especially the

²⁸ The narrative does not handle the barriers and enablers separately because they are interdependent. For more structured description see the tables after the narrative.

IPR²⁹ project, that emphasized that deprived pupils need extra attention and different methods. There were CIP-independent CPD programs that were sources of ideas for working out the exact methodology of CIP.

In general, “there have been plenty of promising and well-received innovations in Hungary in the last 25 years, and almost all of them started declining after a while, mainly because there was no organisational or financial help after the introductory period, which usually lasted for two or three, maximum five years.” (Clerk from the Ministry of Human Resources)

“There have been several initiatives that were intended for rolling out but the participating schools have not identified themselves with the aims of the project. They applied for the tender because they needed the money or the assets that were included in the project package.” (Clerk from the Ministry of Human Resources)

Monitoring and evaluation

Both schools have developed into professional learning communities by monitoring, evaluating, and shaping their own practice, by visiting each others’ classes (showcases and simple everyday lessons), and having workshops about their experiences, within and outside their respective institutions.

Despite the conscious application and dissemination of their methods, data is scarce, especially in the case of Open Door. The responsible NGOs do not have any other data but the number of trained teachers/schools, and the school itself does not consider the central competence tests able to show the added value of their work. The Hejőkeresztúr School can provide richer data, especially since 2006, from which year there have been several kinds of continuous in-school measurements. They also evaluate the state competence tests responsively. The school head’s doctoral studies on the methodology made the monitoring process even more conscious.

In general, in Hungary monitoring and evaluation are missing elements of innovative projects. In most cases, a final evaluation is made based solely on the numbers of participants, trainings, amount of money spent etc., but effectiveness or the sustainability of the project are not involved in these reports. (Clerk from the Ministry and UJ, KI, Miskolc University)

Disseminating and peer learning

Both schools have learnt how to disseminate their innovative methodologies, and this is the “secondary innovation” they have. They started disseminating mostly by themselves, using their growing fame and respect, later with the help of NGOs, Miskolc University and PPPs. They have become effective trainers of other schools and created professional networks.

Open Door is less successful in this process, which is due to several characteristics: the innovation was ready-made, they did not take part in its design, and the network they are participating in was not initiated by them, they are just members and they were more dependent on the NGOs providing help. Both institutions have been able to maintain the method in the school and give regular workshops to other teachers and schools, but Open Door is not able to organise full trainings or to operate the network, neither feel really responsible for the latter. The fact that Open Door took part in a CIP training and joined the network shows how open they are. The CIP methodology can be integrated into SbS, and maybe vice versa.

Online networking does not exist in either case; however the CIP network has a homepage. The SbS homepage died with the diminishing participation of the NGOs.

²⁹ For more information see page 4.

Mainstreaming innovation in school education

Case two, CIP methodology is about to be rolled out within the framework of a 5-year, EU-funded project, named **COALA**³⁰ which aims at decreasing early school leaving by training the teachers of endangered schools. All teacher training centres (universities and colleges), the central Education Office and the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development participate. The program is planned to run for five years from 2015, on a budget of 9,86 billion HUF, more than 30 million Euros. In five years` time,³¹ 1500 primary schools are expected to join the program, mostly ones where underprivileged pupils are over-represented and the school's academic achievement is below the expected level. At the moment, universities are planning the exact content and process.

Hopes are high concerning this project, and so is scepticism. Positive thinkers say that this initiative could be the thing that activates underachieving schools to change their outdated and failing methodology. The sceptical say that

- project-mechanisms in general are not suitable for sustainable development, mostly because the preparation period always needs more time than planned, real activities in the field are always late and there is too little time until the end of the project to achieve real results;
- real school improvement projects, innovation processes need at least eight years;
- 1500 schools cannot get close attention which proved to be an absolutely necessary element for success;
- when the project ends and subsidies cease to come in, schools will find themselves without help and resources; consequently most of them will lose their motivation. (Varied resources)

It is relatively easy to learn the methods, but the vision, beliefs, pedagogical concepts are hard to change. Even if they change, they change very slowly and can do so only with continuous reinforcement. The focus group of teachers say that according to their dissemination experience, the very first step is the hardest: to recognise the need and the possibility to change and to take up the burden of learning and working even much more than usual, being already overloaded. They say that success is the most potent motivator, which comes right from the beginning.

“When there is governmental force, organisational frameworks and there are financial resources, good practices are much more likely to spread and take root, but the project closure is always a serious threat. Participants tend to give up making efforts when financial and professional help ceases. It is changing the mindset that can sustain new methods, but this is the hardest to achieve.” (Clerk at the Ministry Of Human Resources) “The ultimate criterion of success is the recognised local need.” (JU, IK, Miskolc University)

“Planning resources for the time after the project is always missing at all levels. As for the CIP methodology, there is a strong governmental intention behind mainstreaming it in a complemented and modified way. COALA also includes the Whole Day School concept elaborated earlier, and it is connected to the School Centres project as well, which is aiming at centralising small rural schools where available teachers are scarce. A long follow-up phase is included, but the mentoring process is very costly.” (Clerk at the Ministry of Human Resources)

The CIP methodology is supposed to take root during the initial teacher training, that is why the tender was composed in a way that teacher training institutes of all universities participate. At the moment, not all centres are convinced that this is the one and only methodology worth promoting. (Varied

³⁰ The tender is EFOP-3.1.2-16

³¹ There has already been delay, the tender for schools should have been out in February.

resources) “The country-wide roll-out is confined to the methodology, however the heart of innovation should be changing the culture of pedagogy. The project mechanisms are not in favour of creating sustainable change. The University believes in micro networks.” (JU, Miskolc University)

CIP was chosen to be mainstreamed because it is cheaper and there are more experts than in other programs possibly capable of providing CPD trainings and mentoring. The CIP methodology gave the basis for this new COALA project, but it is not named explicitly in the call for proposals. The Ministry of Human Resources took part in defining the goals and the expectations of this project, and a government decree decided on the chosen model.

A pilot project was run last school year in a smaller area with eight schools. Planning the exact realisation and a larger pilot with 100 schools takes two years. (IG, Ministry clerk)

	Case study school 1: Open Door	Case study school 2: Hejőkeresztúr School
The in-school situation limiting experimentation / innovation	There were no negative factors in the experimentation/implementation period. Sustaining is more difficult, see below.	
Policy environment limiting experimentation / innovation	Since 2011 the education system is more centralised and prescriptive, the content more detailed and the number of teaching/learning hours increased. From the same year on the newly introduced teacher career program means extra burden on teachers who complain about being overloaded and close to burnout. Policy is not stable; we are in a continuous reform which has had more directions and preferences.	
	The state judgement of Soros Foundation is not as welcome as it used to be.	
Embedding, tailoring and sustaining - limitations	Continuous help from the responsible NGO in two cycles: 2003-2010; 2013-2016; nothing in-between, the used-to-exist network fell apart and was not possible to re-establish in the second cycle. The second NGO was not as devoted as the previous.	In-school initiative after a 30-hour training, no mid-level professional help, mentoring or monitoring. They did not have a detailed “manual” on the methodology.
Monitoring and evaluation - limitations	Non-systematic, even the NGOs did not have other data but the number of trained teachers/schools.	Up to 2006 not systematic.
Disseminating and peer learning - limitations	With the help of the NGOs and the Miskolc University. They became trainers of other schools, but with little effect, the network is failing. Networking schools are far from each other, online networking does not exist.	None

Table 1: Development of innovations **in and by** the case study schools - **barriers**

	Case study school 1: Open Door	Case study school 2: Hejőkeresztúr School
The in-school situation promoting experimentation / innovation	Growing number of socially underprivileged pupils with unemployed parents, increasing poverty, highly overrepresented Roma population. Growing number of children with low motivation, learning disabilities and behavioural disorders. Declining school – family cooperation. Teachers feeling more and more helpless, open to find new ways. School heads deeply involved.	
Policy environment promoting experimentation / innovation	1989-2010: Vivid educational environment, growing freedom and autonomy; central support for cooperative, student centred, competence based education. All non-state initiatives are also welcome. 2004 – European funds are used for modernising education and to support inclusion and equity. 2010 - Centralised education system, content is more prescribed; competences are not as much in focus. 2015 – Trying to learn from and build on earlier successful initiatives and good practices.	
	The Soros Foundation US promotes the development and dissemination of SbS methodology through NGOs: trainings and mentoring.	The US Embassy promotes the dissemination of CIP methodology of Stanford University through trainings.
Embedding, tailoring and sustaining	Continuous help from the responsible NGO in two cycles: 2003-2010; 2013-2016; network building. In-school training system developed. Partnership with the Miskolc University.	16 teachers + the principal trained. In-school initiatives, no mid-level professional help, mentoring or monitoring. In-school training system developed, the school head took the lead. 2006 - 2010: Reinforcement from Stanford University. Partnership with the Miskolc University.
Monitoring and evaluation	In forms of workshops and visits to each others' classes (showcases and simple everyday lessons).	Continuous in-school measurements from 2006; several kinds. Responsive evaluation of country-tests. School head's doctoral studies on the methodology make the process even more conscious.
Disseminating and peer learning	With the help of the NGOs and the Miskolc University. They became trainers of other schools, but with little effect, the network is failing.	Mostly by themselves, using their growing fame and respect, later with the help of the Miskolc University and a PPP they became effective trainers of other schools and created a professional network.

Table 2: Development of innovations **in and by** the case study schools - enablers

	Case study school 1: Open Door	Case study school 2: Hejőkeresztúr School
Identifying and selecting good practice	SbS has not been selected for further dissemination, partly and possibly for political reasons.	The “Hejőkeresztúr Model” became really well-known; CIP has not competed with other models. It was chosen for its widely communicated success, trainer force and relatively low cost.
Disseminating and peer learning		The rolling out or mainstreaming of the model is under planning. Esterházy University is appointed to lead the consortium which is constructed from all university teacher training centres and a research institute. There were several pilots with 10-15 schools last academic year, but at that time the concept was <u>wage yet</u> .
Embedding and mainstreaming into policy		Mainstreaming was initiated by the government, and is being financed by EU funds.
Scaling up and sustaining		There is an intention to sustain the method in the schools that can <u>freely join the program</u> , but the way is not clear yet.
Monitoring and evaluating		Under planning.

Table 3: Mainstreaming innovation in school education (not by enablers and barriers but expectations)

3.3. Reflecting on transferability of school innovations into the local contexts

Both cases are capable of being transferred to any primary school context where the socially disadvantaged pupil population is high. The SbS methodology is suitable for children between 3-10, and some elements can be kept up to 11-14, as the practice has proved. The CIP methodology is best used in the age group of 6-14, but there are good examples even in secondary schools which in Hungary are for 14-18-year students.

The most important element of the successful transfer is that the whole teacher staff sees and accepts the need for change; and school culture promotes sharing and cooperation.

There must be a kind of demonstration (personal or video), so that they can see how the methodology works and what effects it has in real contexts. Personal and whole school commitment to work out a local framework for introducing the methodology is also a strong enabler of adaptation.

Experimenting with and implementing either of the two methodology needs extensive professional mentoring. Mentors should be teachers who have been practising the methodology successfully and are trained to teach and mentor their peers in other contexts.

There should be an organisation that promotes dissemination, transfer and networking. This body needs financial means, also professional staff for helping the transfer, implementation and sustainment of the methodology. Networking is a key element that can take over the role of mentoring after a while. Online networking can help the far-away organisations to keep contact, share and learn. Online networking does not occur it also needs to be promoted and facilitated.

The schools must have relative freedom for choosing their teaching/learning methods, but neither methodology requires extra organisational measures, both can fit in regular teaching days and timetables. Highly packed curricula are not in favour of the methodologies.

Time is a key element in applying any of the two methodologies. In the first year when preparation takes much more time than later, and trainings, workshops, lesson-observations, all kinds of professional

discussions are necessary frequently. Both methodologies are much more likely to be well-implemented and sustained if extra time is allocated for professional learning in the first year.

Both methodologies are based on cooperative learning, and for that there are some physical and infrastructural needs.

- The classrooms must be furnished with mobile furniture (SbS, CIP).
- All usual assets there are used for group and project work are continuously needed, like stationary; possibility to make paper copies, etc. (SbS, CIP).
- ICT tools, especially tablets and interactive white boards can add to the methodologies in case the teachers are trained. These tools are able to reduce inequity (SbS, CIP).
- The classroom should be arranged according to a certain pattern for different activities (SBS).
- A set of board games are required (CIP).

3.4. Policy pointers

- Policy pointer 1: School innovation is a complex, dynamic process; central interventions should be made very carefully. Compulsory elements hinder the success; organic development should be motivated by incentives. Basic involvement mechanism should be volunteering. (GH, university researcher)
- Policy pointer 2: There are hardly any innovations that are able to succeed if the school head is not devoted and supportive. They must be enabled to understand the aims and the steps forward the goal, their own role in the process; also to motivate the staff. Leadership for change is necessary. (CIDREE Worksop, Edinburgh, 2016)
- Policy pointer 3: Innovation potential is stronger in the business and the NGO sectors, this drive should be used even in strongly centralised education systems, like Hungary. (GH, university researcher)
- Policy pointer 4: However the Hungarian innovation projects are well documented (GH, university researcher); follow up data on sustainability and effectiveness is scarce. The after project period lacks attention and support, and this way is subject to expiration. (Various resources)
- Policy pointer 5: Vivid professional networks can be the carriers of innovative forces, but they need an organisational frame, actor(s) that facilitate the knowledge sharing and networked learning processes on the long run, not limited to the project period. (GH, university researcher)
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4. Annexes

Annex I: Wrapping-up matrix with closed-ended questions

Do you agree with the statements:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
There are insufficient financial resources invested in the development and implementation of innovative pedagogies and organisational practices in schools in this region			x			
The financial resources are distributed poorly inside schools in order to develop and implement the innovative pedagogies and organisational practices in this region			x			
Schools lack autonomy to make decisions regarding innovative approaches to pedagogies in this region			x			
Teacher education does not promote the development of capacities necessary for innovation in this region			x			
Institutional culture in the schools in this region is not tolerant to mistakes		x				
Working conditions in schools (in terms of available time, administrative support, etc.) are poorly adjusted to development of innovations in this region	x					
Education systems orientation towards standardised testing is an obstacle to innovation in this region			x			

Please add all your comments below if you feel that some answers should be explained in more details.

- 1) In the last 15-20 years European funds were the financial bases for developing and innovating education. The funds have been distributed via tenders aiming at helping underdeveloped regions, like North-Hungary. A lot of money has been invested but the results are not as good and wide as they should and could have been. There were tenders where the schools could get some money – sometimes for (mostly digital) tools or CPD trainings, but time was always short to achieve the expected results, and the projects not often answered the specific needs of the individual organisations.
- 2) “Inside” schools there are no resources or they cannot have control over them. At the moment schools do not have budgets, it is their governing organisation, the “Learning District” or “Educational District” who has the control of all expenditures.
- 3) In 2012 firm centralisation took place in education. With very few exceptions primary schools were taken over by the state from local governments, municipalities, and the number of church school has also been growing for years. The centralisation manifested in a much more prescriptive national curriculum, state school books, in introducing school inspection and a teacher career program, longer hours for both teachers and pupils. Methods are not

“centralised”, they remained free of choice, but the time pressure does not allow for time consuming innovative practices. In most schools they say that they do not have time for “playing around” but must keep to the speed expected, otherwise they cannot teach and learn all the content that they have to.

- 4) Teacher education has been quite traditional but there has a noticeable change been going on. There are state initiated, EU-funded big projects for teacher training centres to include innovative methods, like CIP.
- 5) Most schools/teachers do not tolerate mistakes and do not avow that mistakes are good because we learn from them. The freshly implemented inspection and teacher career program do not encourage experimentation either. Not as if it was stated in any documents but the feeling of being under control makes the teachers keep to the well established tradition. Both case study schools are exceptions, they do not mind mistakes either in teaching or learning.
- 6) As the number of working and learning hours has risen, also the curricula are full of content, even the innovative teachers have difficulties to find the way. All interviewed teachers reported that they were overloaded and tired, and were not able to find out new things and prepare for playful activities when having 23-26 lessons per week and heavy administrative duties, also other tasks that a teacher assistant could also do.
- 7) Standardised testing is good and bad at the same time. Open Door Head mistress says that she does not really care for the results, since the tests do not measure the real added value and the real development they experience at school. Four-hour tests with longish texts are not for those who have reading, concentration and behaviour problems. The Hejőkeresztúr School has a little better-prepared children population. The staff follows and analyses the test results with close attention and finds ways to make corrections in the teaching-learning programme to have better results.

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