

# ENCOMPASS – the Hungarian Model for Scientific Educational Television Broadcasting

## INTRODUCTION

There is a growing shift towards employing an increasing number of entertainment elements in all areas of modern television broadcasting, including that of scientific educational broadcasting. Stations are forced to move in this direction as a result of the intense race for higher ratings – a race in which public stations are no exception. ENCOMPASS is an experiment in knowledge transmission that both in theory and in practice combines the tradition of Hungarian popular science programs, the experience of international science public relations and the use of the most up-to-date info-communications media.

## THE CHANGING STRUCTURE OF KNOWLEDGE

By the second half of the twentieth century, the structure of knowledge that we had considered Western science since Kepler, Galilei and Descartes, has changed in crucial aspects. The financial market and economy have gained decisive roles in defining science topics, financing research, and moreover, in setting meritocracy or reputational hierarchies. Such special issues as scientific assessment, availability to the public, and authorship are also affected by increasing medialization and copyright developments. The relative freedom of scientific and academic autonomies (academies, universities, research institutes) has been challenged by the political expansion of party-based democracies.

All of these are 'outside' forces tearing apart the classic framework of science. At the same time, however, some internal trends point in the very same direction: the quantity of information, the puzzling interwovenness of various fields of science, and the increasingly common detachment of technicized and instrumentalized science from the general ethos of societal-cultural responsibility. Under the effect of mass conference-tourism, which has grown into an independent business, the foray of scientific publications has been transformed. The new constraints and possibilities of publication make it impossible to keep references up-to-date in a traditional manner. The publicity of statements has been dramatically restricted by the term 'closed information networks' employed to publish research results as ordered by the government or by industry. At the same time, in the case of some large-scale development projects, rival companies create joint development platforms or networks, which seem to create a wide array of public access to science.

The new financiers and users of knowledge are responsive to practical skills. The national systems of knowledge organizations settled in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are now challenged by the post-modern idea of mobility, and the new demands for education. Education was once unquestionably linked to a certain period in a person's

life – to set places and assessment criteria – but now has broader perspectives in both place and time. This is why the first part of the well-known expression ‘lifelong learning’ really re-defines the word learning itself. Learning today is no longer a one-way process of rigid exams, based on a set of schoolbooks, where the whole process of learning is linked to established social roles.

The post-academic age – prominent sociologists of science coined this term to depict the disintegration of the academic-type science organizations and scientific research.

### **Broadening Cast**

New participants and new roles have appeared on the scene of the knowledge industry: professional science mediators and business partners now represent market demands for knowledge-intensive goods and social responsibility.

While in the model of the modern age the researcher, or creative scientist, was the absolute centre, since as early as the 1960s when the Big Sciences (physics and chemistry) emerged, the science manager, or the science (and university) organizer, has become an equally important participant. By the 1990s, representatives of a third function, the knowledge transmitters, became honored and institutionalized parties to all research activity. These new roles largely result from the spread of a monetary approach which made the spending of public and private funds liable to justification, and let the view of the audience play a crucial role in the allocation of funds. This is how the relationship between science, knowledge and society has become one of the key fields of science in the 21st century. This process has changed not only the forms of scientific activity, but the essence of research work as well, from scientific organizations to strategic plans of research institutes and to scientific speech, the public scientific vernacular.

### **Infotainment – a new concept for science popularisation**

In this context, TV producers/directors as well as expert consultants are ever doubtful as to what constitutes a ‘popular scientific educational’ programme. Is it sufficient to merely select the right topic, or is employing a recognised expert in the given field also required? The same tendency can be seen in these stations whereby any topic can be covered, such as plastic surgery or police investigations, as long as the form of presentation is suitable. Such programmes theoretically refer to the scientific foundations of the disciplines being presented, but in practice they capitalise on the looks of certain pop stars or the tabloid popularity of horrendous crimes.

The increasing use of the term ‘infotainment’, the combination of the words ‘information’ and ‘entertainment’, signals that purely scientific programmes, in their original sense, are losing ground all over the world. Globalisation, commercialisation, and reality shows have made educational broadcasting an endangered species. Scandinavian public stations are still holding up, but even the BBC has witnessed an apparent change, i.e. for the sake of presenting entertaining shows and the rhetorical efficiency of convincing the public, it has increasingly been hiding real scientific knowledge from its viewers. By employing lots of 3D graphics, dynamic sound effects, and even a new style of narrative that uses a form of heroic storytelling to present the procedures of a scientific research project, the programme creators enable viewers to ‘comprehend’ the subject

at hand easily, quickly, and without any particular intellectual effort. Viewers live through the experience as if it was a Hollywood production. As the attention and concentration level of the average TV viewer is lower and more diffused than that of a problem-solving researcher, for-profit broadcasting must fight to keep the viewer in front of the screen, and it consequently creates strict criteria in terms of duration, level of detail, cohesion, language, the illustrations and pictorial tools applied, etc. These clearly limit the possibilities for programme makers and define the character of a given programme. NOVA, the most prestigious American counterpart of the BBC, which also operates with the highest budget in its market segment, has ordered all its staff members to complete a course offered by a fashionable storytelling expert. In part due to the above factors, scientific and documentary films have consequently become confusingly similar.

This does not contradict the fact that there is huge competition in the international market of scientific documentaries and television programmes. Nowadays, it is quite rare for a television station to be able to finance a major documentary on its own. Instead, independent artists and experts are invited to submit their ideas and screenplays, and different television stations join their financial resources to back a production. Only one out of every 300 proposals submitted in Great Britain ends up being made into a film. The various programmes are measured against each other at international television forums called 'pitchings'.

'Infotainment', however, does not mean a lack of scholarship, or at least not necessarily. Ever since serious scholarship came into being, great scientists have emphasised making wider segments of society accept the significance of their knowledge. 'We need to simplify everything as much as possible, but no further' was Einstein's thesis; it could very well serve as the norm for all forms of good popularised science, since the actual entertainment task is to simplify complicated scientific problems and make them clear-cut and enjoyable so that the non-expert viewer can comprehend, or at least follow them without allowing any significant damage to the scientific truth. 'Hiding' scholarship is therefore not equivalent to giving in to pseudo-science or charlatanry, it is merely a question of methodology and of a style that finds a way to highlight a problem. This style is understandably quite different from that of the researcher's laboratory, employing suitable metaphors and spectacular examples instead of mathematic formulae which are impossible to follow. Increasing financial and intellectual capital are therefore being concentrated around professional television stations that make efforts to meet the challenges of 'infotainment'. It is worth noting that television is still a key medium (though not the only one) for this popular and entertaining way of sharing knowledge. Newspapers and publishers, content-rich websites, databases, information services, education programmes, international research projects, and individual communities of researchers support each major television station.

One good example is the National Geographic Channel. Older generations of Hungarians probably remember the elegant and slim yellow booklets illustrated with breathtaking photographs. Most of us don't realise that the brand itself is almost 120 years old. On January 13, 1888, a group of 33 American men including geographers, explorers, attorneys, meteorologists, cartographers, teachers, biologists, and engineers founded a society in Washington to facilitate the accumulation and publication of geographic knowledge. In time, the National Geographic Society became the most significant non-profit scientific and educational society in the world; it has sponsored over 7,000

scientific research projects and expeditions. Even now, some 200 exploration teams are at work at numerous locations to enrich humankind with the latest information on the anthropological, natural history-oriented, and archaeological findings of various regions of the Earth. Later generations identify NG as the television station with the yellow square logo. The television channel is also popular in Hungary, and it has dynamically increased its viewership, which now totals over 30 million in Europe and Africa. National Geographic Channels International, the American parent company, currently reaches 160 million households in 143 countries and in 25 languages. NGC Europe, the European division of NG, broadcasts in 17 languages in 34 different countries. In the United Kingdom and Ireland, where broadcasting began in 1997, an additional one million households were connected last year alone, and advertising proceeds have increased by one-third since 2001.

The number of subscribers in the Czech Republic has multiplied by six since 2001. With its quality and entertaining documentaries, the station has established its position in the global market. Its success is based on the belief that good television programmes should quench viewers' thirst for knowledge. The channel provides financial assistance for the exploration, environmental protection, and educational projects of the National Geographic Society. The National Geographic Channel has launched a significant scientific educational project in Hungary. Its film database matches the needs of public education, and through its text-based information and test files related to the films and available on the Internet, the channel facilitates teachers' classroom work. NG's various national channels also sponsor a bi-annual international geographical youth competition (National Geographic World Championship), and participate in the preparation of local teams.

## **KNOWLEDGE INDUSTRY**

A decisive element in science today is the partnership of researchers and the economy. With near-immediate research and development orders, companies greatly influence the operation of scientific institutions by their organizational, leadership and communication cultures. By the second half of the past century, the operation of large companies became unimaginable without socially charitable undertakings such as science, education or support for the gifted. At the turn of the millennium, the change is even more significant: in the name of Corporate Social Responsibility, not only do companies employ various means of patronage, but they tend to use their resources as responsible participants of society. The European Union defined the programme of corporate social responsibility within the concept of 'good government' in 2001. Its elements, such as openness, participation, transparency, coherence and efficiency together facilitate sharing information, the involvement of experts and civilian society in decision-making, transparency of decision-making processes and an analysis of the expected effects. Today, companies not only plan charity events that look good in the marketing plan and form a better public image, but the social dimension becomes a part of the company strategy itself. Since economic competitiveness is largely defined by the element of knowledge, it is not an accident that charitable activities are mainly focused in the areas of science and education.

## ENCOMPASS – the initiative

The result of these processes is that new projects were launched in the field of the 'knowledge industry' rather than in the science or education of traditional economy. This term represents a particular branch of the economy; it is not a part of the system of education and research institutions controlled by the public sector, but is part of the open market, where the appearance of new players is a normal development. This is exactly what happened in the case of *Mindentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS*. With the help of info-communication, conscious media-usage, and with the co-ordination of corporate funding and the highest ranking scientific prestige, the Academy, Magyar Telekom and T-Online formed an alliance to become a new actor in the knowledge industry.

In Hungary, the technical and access aspects of information culture have been developing through debates and despite obstacles. The radical growth in telephone coverage and the spread of cellphones clearly show that the Hungarian telecommunications company had a realization: it can only calculate on a growing market if it systematically develops Hungarian information culture. Moreover, developments in the telecom industry worldwide show that the mono-cultural, speech-oriented form of telecommunications will be replaced by a set of complex services which will offer content, access, communication, data-transfer and multimedia combined. Such movements of the globalized information market have left their mark on the innovations of the multinational open share Matáv (now Magyar Telekom) group (owned by Deutsche Telekom): Axelero (now T-Online) the internet provider, and its content provider, [Origo], the largest Hungarian portal site, have been in operation for five years, and the educational division has offered the most up-to-date internet-based knowledge-transferring solutions. All these factors make it understandable that *Mindentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS* means a lot more to them than just a program to sponsor. It plays an integral part in the socio-economic positioning of the company group: a knowledge intensive service company taking part in a knowledge-centered program. The fact that the ENCOMPASS program itself has been realized by Matáv (now Magyar Telekom) employees, resulted in a dual interference. It is now proven possible to acquire the special requirements of the knowledge industry, which in turn has brought corporate management culture into a knowledge-transferring program.

And it was brought to the right place. In Hungary, some academic research institutions, and later the Hungarian Academy of Sciences itself, have engaged in the research of 'internet and knowledge organization'. Hungarian universities and businesses are not lagging behind in either the use of IT tools or their affinity towards information, although innovations in this field have not taken root, one exception being the PhD. course covering the theoretical questions of knowledge transfer, run by the Distance Learning Center at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics.

The higher education and science policy reforms of the 1990s, however, inspired researchers and research institutes of the Academy to face the information challenge and to engage in its creative interpretation. Where scientific research is the main business of the institution, changes in everyday research management and theoretical reflections go hand in hand. An all-inclusive and open perspective is a product of the multidisciplinary character of the Academy, as well as being representative of the whole of Hungarian science. Initiatives stem from the empirical research covering the relationship of the

internet and scientific activity, the Academic-Philosophical Open University of the Philosophical Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences that originated in the research of Kristóf Nyíri, or the concept of the Virtual Research Institute, which focuses on genomics. This is how the Academy has been able to provide well-founded answers to the theoretical and sociological questions hidden behind the organizational and media challenges of *Mindentudás Egyeteme*/ENCOMPASS.

### **The invested expertise**

Under the aegis of public and private partnership with the academic supervision of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, ENCOMPASS is able to employ the prestige and network of connections of the Academy and engage in a venture with an unprecedented outcome. The three aims laid out by the founders were to make the position of science competitive in the media world, popularise Hungarian scientists and enrich Hungarian language culture. As a first step towards participation in a greater Europe, *Mindentudás Egyeteme* has found a new name for the promotion of its programmes abroad: ENCOMPASS (ENCyclopaedic knOwledge Made a Popular ASSet) and has launched its new, foreign language website. The name 'ENCOMPASS' truly describes the content-creation process at *Mindentudás Egyeteme*, whereby ideas and subjects of potential interest are taken from the lofty world of science and shared with the general public with the help of modern multimedia, in a manner that should prove as engaging as it is informative.

Péter György, aesthete and media consultant to former Matáv (now Magyar Telekom), played a paramount role in the establishment of *Mindentudás Egyeteme*. The idea originates from him, and the program first came into being after he fought his way through and urged the company to make all the necessary corporate decisions. Matáv's (now Magyar Telekom) financial generosity must be stressed, with the commitment of Matáv leaders Elek Straub, Chief Executive Officer, and Tamás Pásztor, Chief Human Resources and Legal Officer, as well as György Simó, Chief Executive Officer of Axeleró Internet (now T-Online) who had a very positive, inspiring impact on the project. After the launch of the program they continuously treated it as both a private and company interest, often taking operative roles in *Mindentudás Egyeteme*.

The same attention and contribution is characteristic of the Academy leaders. By giving the very first lectures they took upon themselves professional risk, and as the program progressed they have become the most effective communicators within *Mindentudás Egyeteme* – giving us all a new lesson in the modernization of science management. Leaders of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Szilveszter Vizi E., President, and Norbert Kroó, Secretary-General at that time, supported the concept of *Mindentudás Egyeteme* within both professional and science policy avenues. Later, through a process of consultations, they helped enhance the quality of professional content and engage a wider scope of lecturers.

Kristóf Nyíri's scientifically grounded and practically effective initiative helped to define new ways of depicting knowledge as a whole. His joint efforts with Dénes Dudits and Károly Szegő in developing the content of the program formed a starting point. This historical recount of ENCOMPASS illustrates that the program is an intersection of

scientific academic content and up-to-date info-communication and media channels, through corporate management culture. The French program, *L'Université de tous les savoirs* was an inspiration for Mentitudás Egyeteme, but was redesigned to meet Hungarian standards (while the Hungarian name saved its French generosity and universal impetus). In the end, a different program was created with its own logic, message, fundamental concepts and organization. Foreign examples and Hungarian forerunners served only as starting points, but not as patterns to be followed.

With László Sallai, Director, Training of Matáv (now Magyar Telekom), György Fábri's greatest task was to reach a common aim of the two different institutions. Within a framework of effective project management, and by enforcing the considerations of the Academy, they were to create lectures that mediate values to the audience and are acceptable to the media. Through many pitfalls, experiments and negotiations, the initiative has reached the point where ENCOMPASS lectures held in the modern auditorium offered by the Budapest University of Technology and Economics are produced by professional staff, and operate a full production chain up to the final touches in the media.

## **ENCOMPASS and society: From enlightenment to participation**

The scientific-political basis of the relationship between science and society dates back to the PUS (Public Understanding of Science) movement launched by the Royal Society in 1985 and its later versions. The ENCOMPASS programme is the Hungarian manifestation of the PUS movement. Corporate social responsibility as part of the business philosophy of Magyar Telekom and T-Online, as well as the scientific responsibility of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, have together provided for the implementation of the PUS programme in Hungary. The project aims at raising public awareness and facilitating dialogue between science and society. In its new form PUS is approaching the discussion model of democracy under the new name PEST (Public Engagement with Science and Technology). ENCOMPASS strives not only to win and maintain public awareness for science and technology but also to involve the population in the programme: as a member of the interested and informed audience, a user of the internet portal or a viewer/listener of various media, they become the main character of the programme and show proof of the high level of social perception of science in Hungary. The lecture series given on a weekly basis has entered its seventh semester. As of now, a nine-week pre-lecture 'production process' has been developed. The satellite programmes build on the lectures. A permanent team of 10 and an outside partnership network of 70 individuals operate the programme.

## **Scientific marketing**

ENCOMPASS incorporates a live lecture, television programme, radio broadcast, newspaper, book and a website with interactive elements stimulating participation. On the social level, therefore, this is the first communication 'mix' where the various communication channels are deliberately combined. The media presence of the

programme is excellent by today's standards due to its visibility on three TV stations five times a week. The three public networks air each lecture a total of five times, one of which is aimed specifically at overseas viewers of Duna TV. The lectures are regularly shown on local television stations as well. The Hungarian public radio network and one of the commercial radio stations also broadcast the programme. Readers of all national newspapers and two-thirds of the regional papers can familiarise themselves with the text version of the lectures and the biographies of the lecturers. Through the newspapers and weeklies this scientific information reaches one and a half million individuals every week. Educational television programmes and discussions address the topics by referencing the lectures and even presenting excerpts of the individual sessions.

### **Facts about ENCOMPASS: Awards, statistics, accomplishments**

Having become a unique brand, the programme has achieved unprecedented success due to the organic mix of its value-based scientific approach, professional media presence, and marketing. As a sign of its media success, Hungarian PR agencies, i.e. the real professionals, recognized ENCOMPASS with the Süveg Award in 2004. As evidence of its social recognition, the programme received the Prima Primissima Award of 2004 in the category of teaching and public education. The general meeting of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has awarded three top managers of Matáv Hungarian Telecommunications Ltd. (now Magyar Telekom), one of the founders of ENCOMPASS, with the Wahrmann Mór Medal in recognition of their work for the spread of scientific awareness in society and in the development of a knowledge-based society. In memory of the 100th lecture of ENCOMPASS, the management of Hungarian Radio P.L.C. issued the first commemorative on 4 May 2005. Ever since the programme was launched, listeners have been able to follow the lecture every week. The award is on par with the Nívó Prize regularly awarded by Hungarian Radio P.L.C.

One of last year's market research projects also indicated the growing need to deliver science content in an entertaining manner. According to the representative sample, close to one-third of the adult population has heard of *Mindentudás Egyeteme* (ENCOMPASS), two-fifths have seen at least one of the lectures on television, and over 80 percent attribute great importance to dialogue between researchers and those interested in sciences.

The accomplishments of ENCOMPASS expressed in numbers are as follows:

- Six semesters with weekly lectures
- 5 lectures outside Budapest, 2 in neighbouring countries
- 50 club discussions
- over 110 sheets of lecture material
- approx. 3,500 animations and illustrations
- close to 140 hours of television recording
- 4 published volumes
- some 200 regular attendants and an audience of 380–500 at each lecture (a total of approx. 28,000 people)
- 200–250,000 television viewers per week on average



- 40,000 radio listeners
- 1 million newspaper readers
- 5 million internet page impressions

## **Products and activities aiming at a dialogue with consumers**

Four volumes have been published, which – in addition to the high number of copies sold and the professional recognition received – proves that together with Kossuth Publishing, ENCOMPASS has achieved a true publication feat: they have preserved the multimedia character of the lectures using their rich and high-quality illustrative material. Thanks to its notes, references and terminology, the publication may be used as a textbook, and is suitable reading material for laymen and professionals alike.

Loosely related to the lectures, the ENCOMPASS club was founded in 2004, with the involvement of scholars. An interactive and less formal discussion with the experts, the club primarily focuses on the deepening understanding of ENCOMPASS among intellectuals. A Lecturers' Club created in 2004 aims at involving lecturers in brand building.

In 2005, with the sponsorship of the Ministry of Education, ENCOMPASS launched a new contest series for secondary school students to strengthen the link between students and science. The 'Ki miben tudós' series is built on the continuously expanding information included in the lectures of ENCOMPASS covering all disciplines and available in written and video formats at the web site. The contest starts with web-based qualifying 'trials' over the Internet. The teams getting into the national semi-finals participate in a training camp, and finalists have to solve various exciting tasks such as fast-paced quizzes, scientific problems and exercises requiring creativity and presentation challenges, in order to prove that they are worthy of the title 'mindentudós' (omniscient). The semi-finals and the final are broadcast on the Hungarian Television.

Supporting the idea of life-long learning, as a new development among the available system tools, an e-learning curriculum will be published on the ENCOMPASS website, built on the topics of over 100 lectures presented so far in the programme.

By introducing a student card system in 2005, ENCOMPASS wishes to reward the loyal followers of the programme from the local or Internet audience who regularly complete the ENCOMPASS tests. The ENCOMPASS student card system comprises two levels. From 7 March 2005 anyone can electronically apply for the basic student card, which is primarily equipped with a 'point collecting' feature. Those collecting 100 points will receive the ENCOMPASS premium student card providing major savings for its owner. Points may be collected in several ways, such as attendance at lectures or club discussions, completing the test available on the website, or acquiring the e-learning curriculum. At the same time, the services and discounts available for cardholders are expected to continuously expand. This form of learning is different from traditional education methods in that it is not completed in the form of an accredited training programme granting a degree, but is instead based on personal interests and commitment. The new curriculum is different from the increasing number of voluntary knowledge groups found on the Internet in that it is built around an institutional programme characterised by planning and systematisation, and the students who sign up receive help from tutors. The

first three topics to be developed into e-learning modules cover astronomy, genomics and the world of nations. Later on, full access to the e-learning curricula is going to be one of the benefits of the ENCOMPASS premium student card. In addition, the e-learning curriculum of ENCOMPASS is going to become part of the traditional university programme, and will be made available for university students.

### **Development of the scientific and artistic learning of underprivileged groups**

ENCOMPASS is involving the disabled, Romany youth and large families in its continuously expanding programmes. Romany students from the schools of Budapest, as well as physically disabled children from the Pető Institute have participated at club discussions and museum visits held in the Hungarian Natural History Museum. Sponsored by Family Aid Centres, underprivileged families regularly visit the museum club events. ENCOMPASS covers the travel expenses of disabled groups and groups travelling from outside of Budapest to its events. The audio versions of the lectures are provided to the library of the National Association for the Hungarian Blind and Partially Sighted in each semester. Secondary students with hearing disabilities regularly visit the lectures, where sign language interpreters provide assistance for them.

### **Community feedback: the Internet forum**

The nature of the Hungarian-language content available on the Internet is of decisive importance from the perspective of the present and future of Hungarian culture and the national identity of Hungarian youth in the information age. The ENCOMPASS website is accessible from the Origo portal, the most frequently visited Hungarian language website. It offers encyclopaedic content with quality technological implementation within the framework of the Origo Internet portal. It is safe to say that [www.mindentudas.hu](http://www.mindentudas.hu) is the most popular science portal in the Hungarian language, with thousands of pages downloaded every day.

### **ENCOMPASS' first steps in the European programs**

The EU kicked off its continent-wide campaign called Researchers in Europe 2005 on 8 June 2005. The goal of the project is to establish more direct ties between scientists and the general public through street events, theatre performances, and exhibitions meant to popularize scientific research to make it a more attractive career option for young people with fresh college degrees in their pockets. The central event of the series between June and November 2005 was the European Researchers' Night: programs that popularize scientific research ran simultaneously in twenty-five European countries. ENCOMPASS has joined forces with the Tivadar Puskás Technical College for Telecommunications and the Physics Department of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics to organise the domestic programs of the Researchers' Night on 23 September in the

auditorium of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics. The goal of this event was to let very young researchers meet more senior generations of lecturers and researchers and to allow them to appear together in the framework of a pan-European program. In line with the Year of Physics, the majority of topics covered were linked with physics. A range of lectures targeted different age groups. Apart from entertaining classes, researchers presented their own fields in the spirit of the interdisciplinary approach. The discussion forum at the end of the evening covered the distinctions between science and pseudo-science. It started off from the fact that pseudo-science is not bothered at all if it is not considered real science; on the other hand, as several scientists have described, the first moment of scientific discovery is not always rational – it is usually rationalized later on. Moreover, total cognition is not necessarily rational, either. Where do the roads of science and intuition cross, where are they linked, and how are they separated from inner magic that energizes the soul? On the Researchers' Night, participants worked to find the answers together, with the active involvement of the audience.

*'2010: A European Information Society for growth and Employment: Perspectives for Central and South-East Europe' conference*

In line with the main thrusts of the new Information Society strategy of the EU Commission, ENCOMPASS – together with The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, T-Com and the Ministry of Informatics and Communications – organised a conference focusing on the dimensions of innovation and investment policy, inclusion policy and, specifically, on broadband promises and perspectives. The conference aimed to reach out to the expert community, and in particular to researchers from Central and South-East Europe working in the field of ICT, telecommunications regulation and economics, and to provide a platform for an exchange on the latest trends, insights, challenges and opportunities, and for networking. Furthermore, the conference integrated the interrelations among technological, legal, competitive, organizational, socio-economic and ethical dimensions of the issues addressed. The conference results have been published in a dedicated publication series.

## CONCLUSION

The most important innovation of the Hungarian Mentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS is that its foundation is the development of an Internet knowledge-base. Next to this, its appearance on television serves as the most effective way of reaching our audience. While retaining the original intent to democratize knowledge, Mentudás Egyeteme has taken on a new mission amid the valueless and amoral messages of current Hungarian media: Mentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS aims to rebuild the social status of knowledge, and to establish the scientist as a public figure in his or her own right. This is why the program is closely linked with organized science, and stands up for the traditional values of scientific knowledge.

What Mentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS has proven is that the traditional values of scientific knowledge have remained valid for the audience of today's media market. Because of this, the adjective 'academic' is rehabilitated. The knowledge base, which Mentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS transmits by national scientists, is of an

international standard, genuine, and enjoyable. Mindentudás Egyeteme's web site has created a well-defined place, an accessible virtual campus. Naturally, there are similar programs that offer approaches different from the traditionally scientific ones, and there is ample opportunity to come across one of these on the Internet as well as in the mass media. Mindentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS wants to clearly indicate where it stands in the broad spectrum of mass media: Mindentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS only offers material that can be articulated within acceptable scientific paradigms. Just as brick-and-mortar universities have rules in place to define who may lecture on what topic, and all debates and expressions of opinion should stem from a theoretical framework, the virtual medium of Mindentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS is a community where all those gathering can trust to find a maintained framework of scientific discourse.

The standard of quality of the program and its values are guaranteed by creative scientists. There is no managing technique or medial innovation that could reach fruition at Mindentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS without their contribution, their knowledge, and their personality. The Mindentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS program proves the validity of scientific knowledge; a series of established scientific representatives have proven to be so-called media stars in a presentational culture, based on their lecturing qualities. Mindentudás Egyeteme/ENCOMPASS offers to the public the colorful spectrum of academic science in turn-of-the-millennium Hungary.