

A bespoke, award-winning education opportunity

Taking a look at one of Helen Doron English's many exemplary master franchisees

There are countless success stories throughout the Helen Doron English franchise network, of parents and educators that decided to take their career into their own hands and become a franchisee or even master franchisee for a particular region.

One such individual is Szilvia Meszaros, the national franchise representative in Hungary for Helen Doron English. Szilvia began her career as an English and Maths teacher and computer programmer, and was well on her way to completing a law degree. Upon the birth of her daughter, however, Szilvia made the decision to purchase her first Helen Doron Learning Center – and she hasn't looked back since.

"I heard about Helen Doron English from my best friend 14 years ago who was the mother of a baby, and she really loved going to these English courses," explains Szilvia. "I already admired it by the way she talked about it. I always felt that this is something I would like to do, so when my baby daughter was born, I took her to our first Helen Doron Baby's Best Start English lesson and fell in love with it. Since then, my friend also became a learning center franchisee because she also fell in love with the methodology."

Szilvia's daughter, Villó, also opened her eyes to the benefits of customized learning from an early age. "I live with my 12-year-old daughter, Villó. She was born in 2009 and has multiple learning disabilities, limited hearing and



AT A GLANCE HELEN DORON ENGLISH

Established:
1985

Number of franchised outlets: Over 1,100

Location of units: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mexico, Montenegro, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine

Investment range: €150,000 - €250,000

Minimum required capital: €200,000

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visual impairment. She also has ADHD. But I am very proud of her because she could be integrated into the national school system despite all these difficulties. She is a very bright, lively and happy girl, and I have learned so much from her in the last 12 years that I am very grateful for," says Szilvia. "It's very interesting that she was diagnosed with severe hypotonia just when I did my Helen Doron Teacher Training. The Helen Doron English methodology that I was just getting to know as a teacher from the teacher training, and the concept of positive reinforcement and all the ideas that Helen so wonderfully put together, really did help me get through the difficulties connected with my daughter."

EDUCATION EXPANSION

Since opening her initial Learning Center, Szilvia now runs three locations herself alongside seven expert teachers. She teaches

Szilvia with Helen Doron and Villó



Szilvia with all her franchisees



“I feel very lucky that I can work closely with Helen Doron herself and meet other master franchisees all around the world”

children who were just babies when they started on their Helen Doron Educational Group journey, and she's now preparing them for Cambridge Exams. “Seeing the children grow up in front of us and develop into amazing and talented teenagers who easily pass the Cambridge First Certificate Assessment at the age of 14 is wonderful.”

Szilvia reflects on how she quickly got involved: “I was a parent taking her baby to an English course for only a few weeks because I immediately signed up for a teacher training course. I started teaching in Szeged, but after a couple of months, I felt that I would love to do more,” says Szilvia.

“I decided to purchase a learning center 250km from my home city, so I literally left everything behind to start my own business. In just one year, I became a mother, a Helen Doron teacher and a Learning Center franchisee. After only two years, I was chosen to represent the national franchise for Hungary, together with my business partner, Gergely Frenkel.”

Szilvia's national franchise area presently includes 64 learning centers throughout Hungary, run by 55 individual franchisees and more than 250 teachers. Approximately 7,000 students benefit from expertly crafted English courses all across Hungary.

“I try to travel to as many venues as possible during a school year to give support and help them in their businesses, and we have excellent relationships,” says Szilvia.

“We encourage everyone who has a family to prioritize in a way that the well-being of the working mothers and all women should be the most important aspect”

BUILDING THE PERFECT TEAM

Following Szilvia's initial launch, the next step was to create a perfect franchising team that would be able to realize the ambitious growth plans that she had for the future of her Helen Doron network.

This involved recruiting only the best franchisees in Hungary, and 60 per cent of Szilvia's network are also shareholders in the master franchising company. It's a truly bespoke model that benefits all involved, and is testament to the flexibility that Helen Doron English offers its international partners.

“With full support from head office which encourages flexibility and not a ‘one-size fits all’ business model, we built a personalized plan which is specific to the needs of Hungary and works beautifully for us,” says Szilvia.

As with the rest of the global network, the majority of Szilvia's Hungarian franchisees are women, and she believes that the Helen Doron franchise model specifically empowers women to pursue their dream careers.

“We encourage everyone who has a family to prioritize in a way that the well-being of the working mothers and all women should be the most important aspect. We also have meetings and workshops to help them. It is exciting to see that they can fulfil their career expectations while finding self-fulfilment.”

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

Despite Szilvia's impressive growth as national franchise



representative for Helen Doron English in Hungary, she's far from finished. The pandemic taught her many valuable lessons about developing the business, and she's now ready to put these into practice and continue expanding with the right kind of partners.

“We still have a few more cities where we don't have learning centers and are planning new business concepts to further support new franchisees. Also, we like the non-stop new programs that Helen introduces to us every year. I believe in stabilizing first and expanding afterwards, so we will do everything according to how it benefits everyone already in the network.”

“I believe that the main goal should be having business people around us who are satisfied with their businesses and offer good quality services. They should be as involved as possible so that we can all get the most out of our businesses. Therefore, growing the number of learning centers should be done thoroughly and carefully, according to a rigorous plan.”

If the unparalleled flexibility of the Helen Doron English model isn't enough, nor the customized development plans that account for specific regional requirements and nuances, then perhaps Szilvia's enthusiasm for the community feel of the entire operation will showcase just how special an opportunity this truly is.

“I feel very lucky that I can work closely with Helen Doron herself and meet other master franchisees all around the world. It is a great community. We always share our ideas and especially during such a hard time like this pandemic. I should say that feeling safe among these people and knowing that I am not alone in a situation like this makes this system absolutely awesome.”