

# **Professional Calling in Higher Education**

## **Challenges of Teacher Education in the Carpathian Basin**

Edited by Gabriella Pusztai and Tímea Ceglédi



© Veronika Bocsi, Tímea Ceglédi, Anita Csokai, Ágnes Réka Dusa, Ágnes Engler, Marzanna Farnicka, József Balázs Fejes, Hajnalka Fényes, Mihály Fónai, Dana Hanesová, Valéria Kelemen, Klára Kovács, Zsuzsanna Márkus, Pentti Moilanen, Laura Morvai, Gabriella Pusztai, Gabriella Mária Stark, Norbert Szűcs, Balázs Török, authors, 2015

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Reviewer: Zsuzsanna Veroszta

Translators: Mariann Lieli, Zsolt Hegyesi, Pál Lieli, Éva Valis and Nóra Barnucz

Proof reader: George Seel

### **Higher Education & Society 3.**

Published by  
**PARTIUM PRESS**  
**PERSONAL PROBLEMS SOLUTION**  
**ÚJ MANDÁTUM**

Publisher in charge: Zoltán Zakota & Borbála Németh  
Editor in chief: István Péter Németh  
Cover design and layout: Attila Duma  
Printed in: HTSART Printing House

ISBN 978-963-12-3401-5



TÁMOP-4.1.2.B.2-13/1-2013-0009

Enhancing the regional networks of professional services and research activities to support teacher development in the North-East region of Hungary

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## TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Pusztai, Gabriella & Ceglédi, Tímea

The teaching profession's loss of prestige over the past few decades has been the consequence of a number of simultaneous negative trends. Research on teacher education in Central and Eastern European countries suggests that it is worthwhile investigating the reason for a peculiar self-selection which causes high-status and well-performing students to opt for other professions at the career choice stage. Alongside the appeal of more favourable professional and financial career prospects, it can be clearly detected that teachers' professional self-image is worse than society's opinion of them (TALIS, 2013; Fónai et al., 2014; Fónai & Dusa, 2014; Fónai, 2014). The growing uncertainty of teachers' professional identity is a warning, and it is necessary to establish its causes in order to restore it. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe have obviously had to cope with the burden of the long-lasting effect of the ideological pressure on teachers since the middle of the last century as well as an education policy which aimed to treat the formerly stratified professional group uniformly as "teachers". The ideological struggle of the socialist era proved to be a further drawback, as it created an atmosphere full of suspicion between teachers and parents, and thus the most important partners in education were left without each other's support. Still, what has been the most difficult to recover from is the constant experience of distrust among teaching staff members, either because of ideological control or, after the political transition, as a result of an educational policy encouraging individualistic competition (Pusztai, 2011). At the same time, research has already proved that if teaching staff members form a professional community where there is trust, it has a beneficial effect on teaching and even on the performance of students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Bordás, 2014a; 2014b; 2015; Bacskai, 2013; 2015). Research on the teaching profession, apart from self-selection, has called attention to another widespread negative phenomenon: the abandonment of the teaching profession on a large scale which is significant even by international standards (TALIS, 2013; Varga, 2007; Kovács & Fekete, 2014; Sági & Ercsei, 2012; Nagy & Varga, 2006; Pusztai et al., 2015; Jancsák, 2012a; 2012b; Pusztai, 2012; Kovács, 2015a, 2015b). According to the latest findings, this is rooted in insufficient professional socialisation, especially during the years spent in teacher education (Jancsák, 2012a; 2012b; 2015; Pusztai, 2012; 2015). In our region as well, some freshly graduated teachers give up their teaching careers either right after graduation or a few years later. The loss is even more painful if they leave not only the profession, but also the region. Apart from the loss in human capital, it also means

that in certain regions educational institutions, including minority institutions where the language of instruction is not the official language of the state, are left without a fresh supply of teachers.

During our research we wanted to find out about the characteristics of the population of teacher education students in our region in 2015. Who are the students who make up the next generation of teachers, what backgrounds do they come from, what motivations do they have and how committed are they to the profession? And, above all, how is their professional identity shaped during the years of higher education? Our analyses always involved comparison, either to students preparing for other professions or to teacher education students from other regions of the Carpathian Basin. Our research has revealed that there are new phenomena to be identified in the professional socialisation process in higher education and to be reacted to with well-planned institutional policies so that higher education institutions can enter the field of action with sufficient power to shape identities.

Our present volume gives an account of our latest research, conducted among teacher education students in our region. The Teacher Education Students Survey in Central and Eastern Europe (TESSCEE) was carried out within the SZAKTÁRNET project (TÁMOP-4.1.2.B.2-13/1-2013-0009) coordinated by CHERD-Hungary (Centre for Higher Education Research and Development) at the University of Debrecen.

The field of our research was the catchment area of the University of Debrecen in and outside Hungary, since students shift from one institution to the other in the region as they move on to the next phase of their studies. The investigated area includes the Northern Great Plain region in Hungary, Partium, Central Transylvania and the Székely Area in Romania, Subcarpathia in Ukraine and Vojvodina in Serbia. Our research centre has been doing research in the area for over one and a half decades (Kozma, 2002; 2010; Pusztai, 2005; 2008a, 2008b; 2010; Juhász, 2006; 2010; 2014; Kozma & Ceglédi, 2010; Kozma & Pataki, 2011; Ceglédi et al., 2014; Pusztai & Engler, 2014a; 2014b; Pusztai & Kovács, 2015) (Figure 1). Our research has focused primarily on institutions of higher education where the language of instruction is Hungarian, but for comparison, we have extended our research to non-Hungarian teacher education institutions in Partium, Transylvania and Subcarpathia. Additionally, we also provide a short overview of teacher education in Slovakia, Finland and Poland through case studies.



Figure 1. The location of the higher education institutions of our study.



Edited by Zsuzsanna Márkus

The questionnaire survey was conducted in two phases, in the spring and autumn of 2014. During the first TESSCEE 2014 survey the participating institutions were the following: the University of Debrecen; Debrecen Reformed Theological University; the College of Nyíregyháza; Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences; the Off-site Faculty of Babeş-Bolyai University in Satu Mare (Szatmárnémeti); the Off-site Faculty of Babeş-Bolyai University in Odorheiu Secuies (Székelyudvarhely); Partium Christian University; the University of Oradea (Nagyvárad) and the Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute. The second TESSCEE survey in the autumn of 2014, apart from the institutions listed above, also involved the Mukachevo State University (Munkács), the Uzhhorod National University (Ungvár), Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania and the University of Novi Sad.

The population of the first TESSCEE survey in the spring of 2014 was first-year, full-time, state-funded or tuition-paying students from the above institutions. According to the data provided by the institutions, this numbered 979 students. We tried to cover the full population in our online survey. The number of questionnaires returned was 306 (139 from Hungary, 82 from Romania, 83 from Ukraine, and 2 questionnaires which did not contain the name of the institution). Thus the response rate was 31%, which can be regarded as exceptionally high, with the usual rate – in our experience and according to the literature – being about 10% in similar surveys. The response rate varied between different institutions: it was the highest at the University of Debrecen and the lowest at the Debrecen Reformed Theological University. As for institutions outside Hungary, the number of responses also varied. We received the highest number of responses from the Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute and the lowest from the Partium Christian University. We received an approximately equal number of completed questionnaires from Babeş-Bolyai University and its off-site faculties, the College of Nyíregyháza, and the University of Oradea.

The second TESSCEE survey was carried out in the autumn of 2014. We tried to contact the same first-year cohort we had worked with in the first phase, who were now second-year teacher education students. We also considered it important to compare students who had just entered higher education to those who were closer to graduation. Therefore the population consisted of full-time, state-funded or tuition-paying students from a year group that was close to the input (second-year students of bachelor and one-cycle programmes) and from one that was close to the output (first-year master students and fourth-year students of one-cycle programmes). The sampling frame was established on the basis of the data provided by the institutions. In the Hungarian institutions, the sample size was planned to be proportionate to the number of students at the given faculty and institution: 20% in the case of second-year bachelor and one-cycle programme students and 50% in the case of first-year master and second-year one-cycle programme students. We contacted the student groups when they were taking part in their university/college courses. The randomness of the sample was achieved by random selection from the lists of student groups provided by the institutions. During this phase of the survey, we contacted 635 teacher education students altogether (199 from Hungary, 170 from Romania, 201 from Ukraine, 63 from the only Serbian institution involved in the study, and 2 questionnaires which did not contain the name of the institution).

During the second phase, it was one of our priorities to compare teacher education students to students who were studying in other fields, so we created a combined database by merging our survey data with those of the IESA questionnaire survey (Institutional Effect on Students' Achievement in Higher Education), which was conducted simultaneously to ours and used the same sampling method. In this way, we had data on 1792 students at our disposal. Some of the authors used a version without the University of Novi Sad (Vojvodina in Serbia). They analysed the answers of 1729 respondents, 572 of whom were teacher education students.

Some faculties proved to be exceptionally cooperative and supplied us with very informative data. The response rate varied from institution to institution, but looking back at our student surveys over the past decades, we have observed that heads of institutions find such student surveys increasingly important and useful.

In both phases, the questionnaires were to be filled in online, but in the second phase respondents also had the chance to submit them on paper. Three languages, Hungarian, Romanian and Ukrainian could be used. The data received in different forms (online or paper) and different languages were first summarised in an integrated database in each phase of TESSCEE. Data procession was carried out with the help of EvaSys Survey Automation System. As we aspired to more than just a descriptive summary of the responses and wanted to find relationships between the variables, we made detailed analyses with SPSS, a software package used for statistical analysis.

Both phases of the survey were organised and conducted by the researchers of CHERD-Hungary and the staff of the partner institutions. Besides the commitment of the responding students and the lecturers and other staff of the partner institutions, the success of our project was due to the fact that wherever it was feasible, we tried to organise the completion of questionnaires at a particular time and place under the supervision of an interviewer or an assistant. Students could fill in the questionnaires online – in a suitable computer room – or on paper, anonymously, and on a voluntary basis.

Among the authors of the studies, one can find all institutional actors involved in the

region's teacher education. In this way the most topical issues of teacher education are discussed from multiple perspectives. This volume, with its focus on one central topic, is the joint product of PhD students who have recently graduated from teacher education, teachers who are practicing their profession in public education, actors who have played a role in establishing and operating teacher education in the region, and educators, sociologists, and researchers of higher education who have great sensitivity to the social problems of the region.

The studies deal with several issues of teacher education from the past through the present to the future, from students' previous school careers through the moment of entrance into teacher education to becoming a mature teacher, from preschool teacher education to subject teacher education, from macro-level to micro-level approaches, from general overviews to in-depth analyses of more specific problems, from qualitative approaches to quantitative analyses, and from leisure activities through educational values to social inequalities.

Alongside the diversity of their content, these studies have a common message: teacher education in the region exerts an influence on the future of society in the Carpathian Basin, since teachers can convey values such as responsibility for one's local and regional community.

*Summer 2015*

*The editors*

## REFORMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

### A PHENOMENON-BASED CURRICULUM FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Moilanen, Pentti

#### ABSTRACT

Phenomenon-based teacher education is a variant of research-oriented teacher education with an emphasis on complexity of the professional situation of teachers. The students are encouraged to investigate complex real-life educational phenomena through their own experiences and with the aid of theories and concepts of various sciences. The chapter presents the main reasons for adopting a phenomenon-based curriculum in teacher education at the University of Jyväskylä.

The curriculum was developed during two years of intensive collaboration. Several alternatives were presented during the process but a moderate model combining content-oriented and phenomenon-based curriculum was selected.

The chapter also gives two examples of the implementation of phenomenon-based learning. These examples show that phenomenon-based learning can be seen as a general pedagogical idea that can be implemented in many ways.

#### INTRODUCTION

The idea of research-based teacher education has become increasingly popular in recent years. The arguments for it vary. One of the main arguments is that teachers must be innovators and researchers in education because of the many demands confronting schools (Munthe & Rogne, 2015). In Finland, the wide autonomy of teachers has stressed the importance of research-based teacher education (Toom et al., 2010, p. 340; Westbury et al., 2005, p. 475). Local decision-making and school-based curriculum development have expanded teachers' roles in schools and transformed teachers' work, making it more demanding.

The goal of research-based teacher education is to educate inquiry-oriented teachers who have the capacity to use research-derived competencies in their teaching and decision-making. These teachers are reflective and question their ways of acting and thinking. They are able to conceptualise educational phenomena and to relate them to larger phenomena (Jyrhämä et al., 2008, p. 3; Toom et al., 2010, p. 339; Westbury et al., 2005, p. 477).

Research-based teacher education has various meanings (Toom et al., 2008, p. 2). Firstly, the development of teacher education is, and should be, guided by research. Secondly, the contents of teacher education programmes are based on the results of educational research. The third meaning is related to the aims of teacher education. Teacher education aims to educate inquiry-oriented future teachers. The focus of this chapter is this third meaning of research-based teacher education. I will demonstrate

some problems with the process and introduce a new model for teacher education that attempts to solve these problems.

## KEY DETERMINANTS IN FINNISH RESEARCH-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION

Finnish teacher education is a good and quite unique example of research-based teacher education (Toom et al., 2010, p. 333). Even primary-school teachers in Finland have master's degrees. Their major is education, the study programme of which is structured according to a systematic educational structure. Students take courses in psychology, sociology and philosophy of education, but the main perspective is didactical. Studies in education also include teaching practice, in which students are guided by university lecturers and schoolteachers. In addition to their major in primary teacher education, they study the elements and pedagogy of school subjects.

In Finland, teacher-education students are given opportunities to solve pedagogical problems through research-based argumentation (Toom et al., 2010, p. 333). In teaching practice, students must base their analysis of learning situations on scientific argumentation and use these theories to develop pedagogic solutions. Of course, students also receive support through traditions and the practical advice of their teachers. In any case, it is not enough to develop practical pedagogy; a teacher must also be able to give well-argued reasons for the educational actions he or she takes. The main idea of teacher education is to combine practical and theoretical studies in education.

Most teacher educators in Finland have doctoral degrees and are capable of basing their teaching on research findings and research-oriented thinking. This often leads to a critical stance towards established school pedagogy.

Students learn various research skills while writing their master's theses. In addition, they perform small-scale data collection and analysis in various courses, which helps them to learn how to conduct educational research.

A good theoretical model for Finnish teacher education is the integrative model of pedagogical knowledge, developed by Tynjälä (2014). According to this model, teacher knowledge is a combination of various modes of knowledge: conceptual theoretical knowledge, practical experiential knowledge, self-regulative knowledge and socio-cultural knowledge. Conceptual theoretical knowledge consists of educational theories and models. Practical experiential knowledge includes personal learning and teaching experiences and strategies. Self-regulative knowledge consists of metacognitive and reflective skills. Socio-cultural knowledge includes unwritten rules and practices, and cultural myths.

One of the basic questions of teacher education is how to support students in integrating these various modes of thinking (Tynjälä et al., 2014). The first method of integration is when theoretical knowledge is transformed into practical applications and students have to give theoretical reasons for the practical solutions adopted in teaching practice. Secondly, practical experiences are conceptualised and explicated with the help of theoretical concepts and models. This happens, for instance, through analysis of personal learning experiences with the help of learning theories. Self-regulative knowledge develops through reflection. For this reason, students must analyse the hidden presuppositions of their conceptions, usually with the help of various theories.

Problem-solving is important for the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge. It requires students to take an active stand towards knowledge and to try to integrate various conceptions, theories and practical solutions.

## HOW WELL DOES RESEARCH-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION WORK IN FINLAND?

Finnish primary teacher education students seem to value research-based teacher education (Byman et al., 2009, p. 90; Jyrhämä et al., 2008, p. 13), but they also have critical points of view. With a colleague, I have supervised students whose master's thesis topics were the evaluation of teacher education. The main point of view of these studies is that scientific thinking takes a long time to develop and that too great a number of separate topics in a teacher-education curriculum does not support the development of scientific thinking.

According to Hiltunen and Kunelius (2012, p. 2), primary teaching students' experiences help them learn to reflect, think critically and develop professionally. This is a very important result for research-oriented teacher education. On the other hand, students say that they have not learned enough to combine educational theory with the practice of teaching. Even if this result is not unique to Finnish teacher education, it is quite alarming. Students also say that they want more responsibility for their learning and opportunities to make choices. This experience is telling for the learning culture of teacher education.

Even if research-based teacher education works well in theory, it does not always work so well in practice. In the department of education at the University of Jyväskylä, learning and teaching experiences have inspired students and teachers to develop a more effective form of research-based teacher education. Phenomenon-based education offered one possibility and a new teacher-education curriculum was developed over two years of intensive collaborative work.

There are many new models for research-based higher education, the most popular of which is problem-based education. This has been used, for instance, in medical education, and there are also some cases of it in teacher education (Blackbourn et al., 2011; Choi & Yang, 2011; Edwards & Hammer, 2006; Kwan, 2008).

The aims of problem-based teacher education are, of course, the same as the aims of research-based teacher education in general. Blackbourn et al. (2011, p. 141) states that problem-based teacher education aims to produce teacher candidates who are capable of addressing the complex learning needs of diverse students. This presupposes the development of critical and creative thinking in pre-service teachers.

The basic idea of problem-based education is that students have to apply collaboration, critical and problem-solving skills, and content knowledge to real-world problems and issues (Blackbourn et al., 2011, p. 141; Kwan, 2008, p. 324). Students typically work in small tutorial groups and the problems that they work with are selected by their educators (McLinden, 2010, p. 31). The problems are selected to produce the predetermined instructional objectives and conceptual and theoretical understanding (Blackbourn et al., 2011, p. 147).

The first task of the tutorial group is to discuss the presented problem and produce

tentative explanations for the phenomenon. After that, they must identify areas in which they lack knowledge, study various learning materials to find better explanations, and find practical solutions to the problem (Barrows, 1996).

Another variant of research-based higher education is phenomenon-based education. It has been used, for instance, in agro-ecology education (see Østergaard et al., 2010). There are some similarities in problem-based and phenomenon-based higher education but the main difference to my mind is that problem-based education is more structured than phenomenon-based education.

## THE BASIC IDEAS OF A PHENOMENON-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

A phenomenon is something that is experienced, or something that shows itself in human experiences. Lived experience precedes our conceptual understanding, and our relationship to phenomena is experiential rather than intellectual (Østergaard et al., 2010, p. 28).

The main idea of phenomenon-based teacher education is that students study educational phenomena in real-life contexts through their own experiences and with the aid of the theories and concepts of various sciences. Students learn to analyse ill-structured phenomena and to develop action plans for handling them.

Education is full of phenomena that are difficult to understand because they are, by nature, quite complicated. Students often wish to have simple guidelines for their actions in teaching or teaching practice, based on the illusion that classroom reality is of itself, simple. The wish to be able to control all of the events in a classroom is quite understandable from the viewpoint of the students, and losing control is a frightening possibility.

A more sustainable alternative is to learn to understand the classroom realities. This understanding often presupposes personal involvement in these realities. The aim of phenomenon-based learning is to understand the complex classroom realities that teachers encounter in their profession (see Østergaard et al., 2010, p. 27). Teachers and teacher-education students in schools must act in ways that promote student wellbeing. School realities also include ethical and philosophical questions.

In teacher education, students should learn to analyse complicated practical phenomena from various points of view. They should use theories from various sciences (psychology, sociology, philosophy, didactics, etc.) in this analysis, which will show that phenomena may be conceptualised from many points of view and interpreted in many ways. Therefore, students should learn to negotiate about different interpretations and to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of those interpretations.

Students should also learn to make plans and decisions and to carry them out. Teaching is, after all, a very practical activity and students have to learn quite practical ways of interaction. One cannot presume that analysis of classroom phenomena is all a student needs to learn to be a skilful teacher, but it is a good cornerstone for this. Students must also learn to evaluate the outcomes of their actions and the validity of the interpretations behind them.

Our main thesis concerning the phenomenon-based curriculum is that a deep study of a few educational phenomena produces a broad understanding of education. Therefore,

the curriculum does not have to contain all of the important theories or topics. This idea conflicts with a content-oriented view of learning, according to which the teacher-education curriculum should include all of the topics that are relevant for teaching professions. This view easily leads to a curriculum that is crowded with various topics, and students face the challenge of building a coherent understanding from all of the various, and sometimes conflicting, contents.

Because of the complicated nature of the phenomena under study, a collaborative method of learning is mandatory in phenomenon-based learning. A student group has more capacity than a single student, something which is necessary for analysing phenomena from various points of view, and collaboration is needed to achieve a holistic view.

### FIRST STEPS TOWARDS A PHENOMENON-BASED CURRICULUM

An analysis of the teacher-education curriculum of our department shows that we have struggled in making a compromise between a phenomenon-based and content-based curriculum, but we have taken some steps from content-based towards phenomenon-based.

We have given our students a lot of freedom to choose which phenomena to study, but at the same time, we have tried to ensure that they study a wide range of phenomena. Therefore, we have defined five phenomena areas that students must study. These areas also give a structure for the teacher-education curriculum. They are: 1) interaction and collaboration, 2) learning and guidance, 3) education, society and change, 4) knowing and expertise and 5) scientific thinking and knowledge. In teacher education, the fourth area corresponds to teaching practice and the fifth refers to qualitative and quantitative research methods, including bachelor's and master's theses (Teacher Education Curriculum, 2014).

In the curriculum-construction process, we offered another alternative, in which teaching practice and research methods were included in the first three phenomena. According to this alternative structure, there were only three phenomena areas and the study of these areas would have included, along with theoretical studies, large-scale research on certain phenomena. In addition, teaching practice would have been structured according to these phenomena areas.

The idea of phenomenon-based learning takes many shapes in the curriculum of teacher education. This shows that phenomenon-based learning can be seen as a general pedagogical idea that can be implemented in many ways. I will give two examples of the implementation of phenomenon-based learning in the curriculum.

Studies in education begin with a short introduction to educational sciences. The traditional method is to present the students with the main areas of educational sciences and a short history of educational thinking. In a phenomenon-based alternative, students are presented with an obscure phenomenon in pedagogical thinking and an opportunity to investigate it. We sought phenomena that could show the complicated nature of the relationship between educational theories and practice. There were several possibilities, among which the discussion on inclusive teaching seemed to be promising. Inclusive teaching is a pedagogical idea that receives a lot of support, but is also the object of suspicion, especially from teachers. We thought that these conflicting attitudes towards



inclusive teaching could be a phenomenon through which students could familiarise themselves with the nature of educational thinking.

The idea was that students should study their own experiences related to inclusive education, and read both scientific and lay arguments for and against it. Through this material, they could investigate the relationship between educational theory and practice. In small groups, the students shared their experiences of how different learners were treated during their own schooling, and they attended lectures on the sociological, psychological and philosophical dimensions of treating student diversity in education. The students also read some articles pro and contra inclusive education.

Based on all of this data, the students analysed how everyday thinking and scientific thinking relate to each other in the case of inclusive teaching. We hoped that the students would notice the complicated nature of this relationship.

Another example of a larger study unit shows how to include research and student choice in the learning process. In a phenomenon area (such as education, society and change) students are presented with introductory lectures and reading to orientate them to the phenomenon area. Students should also have practical experiences in this area, and will share them. If experiences are shared, students will be given opportunities to have more of them.

After this orientation, students and educators negotiate a large phenomenon to be studied. In this case, it might be democracy in education, teacher autonomy and collaboration, or something else. After the selection of the large phenomenon, student groups choose their research area within the larger one. This phase also includes negotiation between student groups so that all of the research areas build a meaningful totality, and the groups investigate the phenomenon from various theoretical points of view.

The next phase is research done by the student groups under the guidance of educators. The research results will be published in a convenient format and shared in a seminar. The purpose of the seminar is to build an integrated understanding of the phenomenon studied.

This last example shows that students need a lot of time for the study of one phenomenon. Therefore, the curriculum should not contain a huge amount of separate study units. It is better to study only a few phenomena at once, but study them deeply.

## CONCLUSION

We have had experiences with a phenomenon-based curriculum for one year. We have gathered various kinds of data during this year, but a deeper analysis is forthcoming. Because of my active role in the curriculum process, my experiences may be biased. In discussions with my colleagues, I have got the impression that students are quite interested and question-oriented in their studies. On the other hand, some students felt that the possibility to choose the study topics was stressful. For them, the previous method, which involved fewer choices, was easier.

For me, the more student-oriented curriculum has been a challenge because the students' interests are quite varied. My expertise is now more challenged than it used to be. On the other hand, it is easier to admit to myself that I need support from my colleagues.

The two-year process of being in charge of curriculum construction with colleagues

has taught me the power of collegiality. I can recall moments during which personal despair vanished thanks to the brilliant ideas of my colleagues. Our policy of spending two years on curriculum construction seems to have been a good choice. The process was slow but it gave us the opportunity to discuss in dozens of meetings what phenomenon-based learning will mean for us and how we can use it to meet our ideals for teacher education.

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## WHAT SHOULD TE STUDENTS KNOW ABOUT THE REALITY OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION?

Hanesová, Dana

DATA ABOUT COMPARATIVE RESEARCH ON TEACHERS IN THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN REGION

### ABSTRACT

The overall aim of teacher education (TE) programmes is to prepare TE students for their future careers. This study, supported by the European Social Fund project Mobility - Enhancing Research, Science and Education at the Matej Bel University (ITMS: 26110230082), was written to help to raise the quality of TE preparation of future teachers for the real contexts in which they will work and to build their professional self-awareness and self-value as teachers. The author presents results of an international comparative research project on the teaching profession which she participated in. It focused on the theoretical knowledge and standard competencies of the teaching profession and their application in real school practice. The purpose was to identify the everyday professional activities that the teaching profession consists of and to point to the distinguished professional competences of teachers. The researchers made an effort to examine them under “the microscope”, via profессиographic research methods, covering not only what the teachers were actually doing in their classrooms and schools during their working days, but also all the activities connected with their profession performed in their off-school hours and weekends.

### INTRODUCTION

The aim of teacher education (TE) programmes is to prepare future students for their future profession. Analogous to other professions, the best way to do this is to have a clear idea of the prerequisites of the teaching profession – what kind of competences and activities are crucial for high quality performance in this profession. This seems logical, but is it really happening? Where do the standards of the teaching profession come from? Are they prescribed for the profession by top-down legislation or do they reflect the real needs of communities, schools, parents, and above all, students? What do future TE students know about their profession; what kinds of skills do they expect to be in demand once they enter teaching? How precisely do they predict the demands of their future career? Are they prepared to handle the everyday reality of teaching practice?

Of course the first information they get about the profession is from the apprenticeship of the observations they make during their own schooling years. They can also observe the social status of teachers in their surrounding community. During their TE studies they get a chance to “touch” the silhouettes of the profile of an ideal teacher, especially from the perspective of the standards of competencies that should lead to good results with their students. Their pre-service field experiences and their state exams are designed to test to what extent their TE studies have managed to reach this aim. But it is only after starting to

work in the profession that the real life of a teacher starts. What will it reveal? Preparing and implementing curriculum and lesson plans, daily classroom management, solving emerging or longstanding problems, being able to face many complex relationships - all of them demand many professional competences of teachers. Are teachers, as well as teacher trainers themselves, able to identify them, to be aware they are executing them, to reflect on their own performance of them, to structure them and rank them according to their actual importance? Are they aware where their own 'professionalism' lies? And if yes, can they share this bottom-up awareness of how they engage in the profession with future teachers? Can TE students thereby acquire the appropriate set of competences and teaching skills? Is their image of the profession realistic? Or is the reality different, frustrating teachers and leading to burn-out or pushing them to leave the profession? And if this is so, should we not investigate the educational reality first, then identify the standards of the teaching profession and subsequently apply them in teacher preparation?

These and other similar questions have been challenging teacher trainers at Faculties of Teacher Education for years. However, only some of them have led to thorough scientific investigations with the purpose of opening doors into the real world of the teaching profession and of producing precise and valid data describing that world. Especially significant have been international comparative research studies of this issue. The aim of this study is to review some recent research in order to facilitate the creation of a realistic perception of the teaching profession by TE students.

## PROFESSIOGRAPHY OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

One study, called "The Profession of Preprimary Teacher and Primary Teacher within a Dynamic Concept", which succeeded in uncovering important data on the teaching profession was carried out by three Central European Faculties of Teacher Education in the years 2008 – 2010, with the support of the Slovak Research and Development Agency (APVV-0026-07). Why has this study been so important?

Perhaps as a remnant of the previous historical period, in many post-communist countries there has been a tradition of taking a normative approach to what teaching performance should look like. Besides facing the constantly added pressures of national laws, the Teaching Faculties have also been challenged by international educational policy demands (Lisbon Strategy, Bologna Declaration, etc.) specifying the capabilities, competences, qualities and skills expected of teachers. In Slovakia, the compulsory transition of teaching education from a non-structured to a structured model with two degrees (B.A and M.A) according to the Bologna Declaration represented a negative move against the process of the progressively developing model of teacher education (Kosová & Tomengová, 2015, p. 40). Sadly enough, these documents were often prepared by staff "sitting around the green table" without continuous interaction with people who actually understand school practice. This top-down approach has been especially reflected in state legislation regarding how teachers should implement educational reforms in their teaching (Kosová & Porubský, 2011, pp. 17–27).

On the other hand, for many years something has been missing – thorough scientific research into the reality of the professional profession (Kasáčová, 2010, pp. 5-15). Although there has been extensive research aimed at various aspects of teacher education, only a few

studies have investigated individual activities that constitute the performance of teachers in a detailed, subtle way. The biggest gap in serious research has probably been in the area of the pre-primary and primary teaching profession.

This deficit in our knowledge of the reality of teachers' professional performance in an exact, scientific sense was underlined in several studies by B. Kasáčová, a Slovak pedeutological expert (by pedeutology we mean the science dealing with teachers/studying the teaching profession). According to Kasáčová's analysis (2009, pp. 20-38), the image of the teaching profession had been for a long time based mainly on 'intuition', and not on scientific research. This was especially true in the case of the pre-primary and primary teaching profession. Under Kasáčová's leadership, a team of researchers from the Slovak, Czech and Polish Faculties of Education (the Faculty of Education at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, the Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology at the University Kazimierza Wielkiego in Bydgoszcz, Poland and the Faculty of Pedagogy at the University of Ostrava in Ostrava, the Czech Republic) decided to carry out thorough research, called "The Profession of Preprimary teacher and Primary Teacher within a Dynamic Concept", into these professions and to create a teacher's profiogram – a real picture describing the whole scope of daily, weekly and yearly professional activities of teachers in the context of their regular biodromal rhythm. The plan was to confront the discrepancies between pedeutological theory and the required competences of teachers as defined in the Competence Profile of the Pedagogical Employee with their everyday practice, including the sphere of organization of the daily activities of teacher's work (Kasáčová et al., 2006). These could have been both directly and indirectly linked to the process of education, especially the pedagogical thinking of teachers, pedagogical communication, pedagogical capabilities and competences of teachers and specific real professional activities. The team decided to apply a profiography method to do so. By profiography we mean a job-analysis or work description which can also be used as a research method dealing with the systematic acquisition, description, analysis and evaluation of professional activities in the context of the personality and professional assumptions for performing one's profession (Kasáčová & Tabačáková, 2011, pp. 68-81). Profiography started to be used more widely in various professions in the 90-s but pre-primary teachers lacked it completely and primary teachers were involved only marginally.

The Competence Profile of the Pedagogical Employee formulated by a team of educational experts in Slovakia in 2006 consisted of three categories of teachers' key competences (Kasáčová et al., 2006):

- a) competences needed for communication with pupils:
  - to identify the individual characteristics of the pupils: to get to know the pupil via an educational diagnosis and to be able to deal with the individual specifics of the pupil;
  - to identify the psychological and social factors of the pupil's learning (teaching style);
  - to identify the socio-cultural context of the pupil;
- b) competences connected with the educational process:
  - to mediate the educational content (to be familiar with the content of the school subject; to be able to plan and design instruction, to set appropriate aims and objectives, to do an analysis of the state curriculum, to choose and implement an appropriate methodology, to assess and evaluate the educational process);
  - to create conditions for learning and education (positive climate, materials and technological background);

- to facilitate the personal development of pupils (to be able to influence it, to develop pupils' social skills and attitudes, to prevent and remedy socio-pathological phenomena and behavioural disorders;

c) competence of teacher's self-development:

- to have the ability to initiate and direct their professional growth and self-development (self-diagnosis, self-reflection);

- to identify oneself with one's professional role and with the school.

## DATA

The research sample of pre-primary (kindergarten) teachers consisted of 641 teachers – 43.53% from Slovakia, 33.39% from the Czech Republic and 25.4% from Poland (Kasáčová, 2011, pp. 137-154). The sample of primary teachers consisted of 437 teachers – 51.25% from Slovakia, 23.34% from the Czech Republic and 25.4% from Poland. For the purposes of the research, these teachers recorded 4670 working days and 1572 weekend days in total.

The purpose of the research was to identify the specific professional activities of pre-primary and primary teachers, to reveal their structure and the time ratio between them. Thus the main methods of profессиography used in this research were questionnaires, observation, interviews and, especially, recording sheets (Babiaková, 2012, pp. 222-242). During three different seasons (spring – autumn – winter), and always for a two week period, the teachers were asked to monitor all their own professional activities minutely (starting with from 7:00 – 16:00 on a working day, but also after 16:00 and during weekends) and enter them into the following profессиographic record (Appendix 1) (Kasáčová, 2011, pp. 83-99).

## RESULTS

After the pre-research stage, the researchers succeeded in preparing a profile structure of the professional activities of teachers at both pre-primary (ISCED 0) and primary (ISCED 1) levels. The piloting in-service teachers identified almost 30 activities that determine their profession (Appendix 2 and 3).

The main emphasis of the research was on finding out the real workload of teachers as well as the (time) structure of activities performed by teachers during their working days and weekends.

### PRE-PRIMARY TEACHERS

The research showed that the highest number of hours per week (Monday – Sunday) spent in professional activities by pre-primary teachers was 58.3 hours in the Czech Republic (due to “school in nature” – 1-2 weeks spent with children in out-of-school activities in the countryside – as partially indicated by Burkovičová et al., 2011, p. 241), 42.20 hours in Slovakia and 37.97 hours in Poland (Babiaková et al., 2011, p. 132).

As the final comparative study shows, some differences in the duration of the respective professional activities recorded by the research participants are reflected in the specifics of the countries. Czech pre-primary teachers – probands in the research sample – spent more time on a) planning educational activities; b) setting the educational environment and organizing the educational activities; c) motivating students; d) solving conflicts and tensions during the educational process, etc. The activity on which the Czech and Slovak teachers spent most time was teaching itself, as well as managing educational activities inside the kindergarten. Polish pre-primary teachers' main activity was preparing and creating teaching aids. Slovak teachers invested quite a lot of their working time in participation in various committees and school bodies as well as organizing and managing school clubs according to the interests of children/requirements of parents.

Another difference among the countries was the season in which the workload of the teachers was most intensive (depending on the various activities that the teachers were involved in). In Slovakia the most intensive season for pre-primary teachers was in the spring; in the Czech Republic - in the autumn. Polish teachers did not record differences in seasons.

The research revealed some interesting data, not only about the regular activities, but also the irregular activities of pre-primary teachers. The Slovak teachers mentioned the following:

- Administrative work (inventory of furniture);
- Activities connected with various festivals (Teachers' Day, Mother's Day, Children's Day);
- Decorating the school or classrooms after renovations/painting the walls;
- Buying new teaching materials;
- Buying toys, rewards for children;
- Visiting various cultural events or organizations;
- Organizing performances for various community groups;
- "School in nature" week/weeks;
- Skiing or swimming training;
- School projects;
- Writing school curriculum;
- Class trips;
- Discussions with policemen, firemen, and other professions;
- Taking photos of the whole class;
- Activities preparing pre-schoolers for their school attendance.

#### PRIMARY TEACHERS

The average amount of time spent on performance by primary teachers in the research sample during working hours, but also after 4 p. m. and during the weekend, was 39.62 hours in Poland, 43.07 hours in Slovakia and 46.56 hours in the Czech Republic (Babiaková, 2012, p. 232).

It is useful to compare these data with older research studies. According to a study in 2000 (Blížkovský et al., 2000, p. 251) which investigated the workload of teachers in the same three countries (Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic), the average workload of all investigated teachers (levels ISCED 1, ISCED 2 and ISCED 3) was 41.8 hours in

Slovakia, 42.51 hours in the Czech Republic and 40.4 hours in Poland. That means that during one decade the workload in two countries might have increased (by 1.59 hours in Slovakia and by 4.23 in the Czech Republic).

Hanesová (2009, p. 162; 2011, pp. 155–168) – one of the members of the APVV research team – compared the results with other available data from previous research on teachers' activities in other countries. Some examples are presented in the following table. Although there is no space here to describe those studies, it is necessary to say that they usually counted hours spent in teaching, lesson preparation, testing and assessing, producing teaching aids, administrative activities, contacts with teachers/students/colleagues and the community, other activities (supervision of students after lessons), self-study, etc. Of course, this always depends on the methodology used, and most of the research studies reported in the table did not use the same criteria. We present this table only for orientation. The table also includes the results from our most recent research.

*Table 1: Work load of teachers.*

<b>Country/year</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Hong Kong 2006	63.5
Great Britain 2006	50.1
Canada 2004	53.3
Tasmania 2004	48.7
New Zealand 1995	47.35
Australia 2005	47.1
Czech Republic 2010	46.56
Austria 2000	43.44
Slovakia 2010	43
Poland 2010	39.62
Older: Switzerland 1999	38.25

Source: Hanesová (2009, p. 162)

In all three countries primary teachers spent the greatest amount of time planning lessons and teaching: 24.3 hours in Slovakia, 27 hours in the Czech Republic and 25 hours in Poland, including managing activities and coordinating students' work. The second most time-demanding category of activities included activities aimed at activating and motivating students (Burkovičová et al., 2011, pp. 255-256). This fact reflects the rising trend of students' passivity and is a challenge for current teachers.

The average time spent by primary teachers in activities directly connected with teaching and preparation for teaching found in the research is documented in Table No. 2.



*Table 2: Time spent in teaching/lesson preparation (in minutes).*

<b>Activities of primary teachers directly connected with teaching and lesson preparation during the working week</b>	<b>Slovakia</b> (minutes)	<b>Czech Republic</b> (minutes)	<b>Poland</b> (minutes)
Projecting and planning the lessons	176	<b>223</b>	132
Checking the preparation of students for the lessons	93	99	61
Activating students, motivating activities	131	130	<b>182</b>
Explaining new subject matter	<b>145</b>	129	134
Management and coordination of the learning activities of students	316	363	365
Testing of learning results	124	131	77
Assessment – in direct contact with pupils	99	105	70
Preparation/teaching individual plans for students with special educational needs	82	64	<b>171</b>
Recognizing and solving behavioural situations	80	68	69
Marking and grading students' assignments	111	<b>161</b>	110
Creating teaching aids	100	145	131
Together	1 457	1 618	1502

Source: Babiaková (2012, p. 236)

The seasonal differences between the workload of primary teachers in various seasons were minimal. Slovak and Czech primary teachers showed the highest level of professional performance in the spring. Polish teachers showed the most balanced workload over the year, although the most active season for them was the winter (Filipiak et al., 2011, pp. 285–314). The research confirmed that there were differences in the level of work load on different days of the week, Friday being the least loaded day. In the case of Slovak teachers, a statistically significant difference was found between the work performance on Wednesday and Friday (Babiaková et al., 2011, p. 145). The school timetables tend to plan fewer lessons on Friday, reflecting the potential tiredness of the students after spending the whole week at school.

The research also showed that primary teachers still often use traditional explanatory methods of teaching – verbal instructions, thus keeping a certain imbalance between over-active teachers and less active students. Learner-centred education has not yet become a reality in primary schools. Czech teachers spent more time preparing lessons and teaching materials than Slovak teachers. As a result of school reforms in Poland, teachers use a lot of pre-prepared worksheets and workbooks; this may be one reason why they spent less time planning and preparing the lesson and teaching aids. Polish teachers spent more time preparing individual plans for students with special educational needs than the other two categories of teachers. Solving problems related to bad behaviour took the least amount of time.

Differences among the three countries were also found in the connection between the time spent in professional activities and the length of teaching experience of primary teachers. In the Czech sample, the busiest teachers, spending most time in their profession during the week, were teachers with 20-30 years' teaching experience, whereas in Poland the inexperienced, and in Slovakia the most experienced, group of teachers reported the highest work load.

Activities in the last two categories of primary teachers' performance were similar to those mentioned in the case of pre-primary teachers. Teachers spent 6.7% of their average week in activities belonging to category E. A lot of time had to be devoted to standard activities, such as administrative work, writing students' reports, or rewriting curricula. More time investment was also needed in over-standard professional activities, e.g. preparing students for various olympiads and other competitions, recycling, meetings with the community and also after-school tutoring (assistance to students working on assignments). Also, the range of teachers' other-than-teaching roles and the range of membership of various committees and boards was wider than in the case of pre-primary teachers (e.g. the role of career consultant for 14-15 year olds). Of course, primary teachers had to perform several 'non-professional' activities that were often time-consuming, perceived either as useful (recycling, buying new teaching aids, preparing costumes for students' performance), or often as a burden (cleaning the desks, fundraising, checking students' hair because of lice, copying materials).

Comparing the data from profессиography with questionnaires, it warrants saying that the teachers' questionnaires showed more hours spent in the profession than the actual records kept by individual teachers (Babiaková, 2012, p. 226). This might have been caused by the fact that when teachers have to perform their teaching and observe it at the same time, the data might have been modified to some extent. Similarly Swiss researcher Landert in his profессиographic research (2006) found out that there was only a 20% match between what the teachers wrote in their records and reality: 37% of teachers recorded a higher workload and 43% recorded a lower number than the reality (Landert, 2006). The researchers, aware of this risk of using profессиograms, prepared a precise triangulated system of methods. They paid attention to piloting stages of all of them and to editing all instructions for teachers in the research sample.

## SUMMARY

To sum up the results of the research described above it is important to say that statistically there were no cardinaly significant differences between the three countries investigated. But, of course, there were differences between the structure of the professional activities of pre-primary and primary teachers, as well as in the time spent carrying them out.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to help open a door into the space where the answer to our key question "What should TE students know about the reality of the teaching profession?" might be found. We focused on describing just one aspect of the answer – on the scope of

teachers' daily professional activities and time spent performing them, and on their overall work load (For the purpose of this study we dealt only with pre-primary and primary school teachers). We have used this approach because we believe that teacher trainers and their TE students should become familiar with data from this kind of research. It reflects as truly as possible the real picture of the teaching profession and hopefully can enable TE students to be better prepared for teaching – at least mentally. At the same time, it reveals the professional character of teaching and, I suggest, may lead some to view teaching as an aspirational profession, in the same way that people view such popular professions as medicine, law (e.g. according to Fónai, 2014), veterinary medicine, and firefighting.

Of course the actual reading of 'some' professiographic records of teachers might not have the power to raise the motivation level of TE students to enter or stay in the teaching career. We believe that one of the most influential phenomena that should be very closely interconnected with this picture of teachers' work load is the social status of teachers. In effectively functioning educational systems – such as Finland – the high demand for professionalism in the teaching profession goes hand in hand with high social status.

The social status of teachers seen from the point of view of financial reward in Slovakia in the last few decades has been much lower than in case of the other professions mentioned above. Maybe this was one of the reasons why there has been a long ongoing discussion among educational experts regarding the necessity of precisely and explicitly formulating the professional competences and professional standards of the teaching profession. In 2007, the Slovak government approved "The Proposal of Professional Standards" as a starting document for the "Act on Pedagogical Employees" (Kasáčová et al., 2006). On the other hand, Finland does not have any precisely formulated professional standards for the teaching profession. In spite of this, not only is the Finnish educational system one of the world's leaders in the academic performance of its students (e.g. in PISA tests), but teaching is Finland's 'most respected' profession; primary school teaching is even the most sought-after career. Teachers – including those teaching at primary level – are given the same status as doctors and lawyers. Primary school teaching is one of the most popular professions among Finnish young people, "attracting the top quartile of high school graduates into highly selective university-based teacher training programmes" (OECD report on Finland, 2013).

There is yet another perspective from which to consider the social status of the teaching profession – and TE students should be prompted to consider it. It is the social status seen from the perspective of the demands made on this profession. According to recent international comparative research by Poliaková (2014, pp. 139-141), the profession of a primary school teacher is considered as one of the most demanding professions (usually coming straight after a doctor and before a lawyer). In this context (not paying attention to attractiveness and financial rewards as signs of social status), Poliaková's research confirmed previous research results showing that the idea of a lowered social status for the teaching profession had been a myth (Havlík & Kořa, 2007). Teachers themselves consider their profession as demanding, and thus they themselves do not view it as of low social importance; rather, they view it as having quite a high level of social importance.

With these facts in mind, we can move forward to showing the real value of professionalism in the teaching profession in its daily performance. We suggest that discussions like this might be extremely useful in TE, helping students to be better prepared to handle the everyday reality of the teaching practice – knowing the demands and the pitfalls, as well as the joys, of a well-performed profession.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study was supported by the project Mobility - Enhancing Research, Science and Education at the Matej Bel University – Activity 1.3 - ITMS code: 26110230082, under the Operational Program Education co-financed by the European Social Fund.

## APPENDICES

*Appendix 1. Daily professiographic record of a teacher.*

Categories of activities	Time intervals									
	7,00-8,00	8,00-9,00	9,00-10,00	10,00-11,00	11,00-12,00	12,00-13,00	13,00-14,00	14,00-15,00	15,00-16,00	16,00 and later
<b>A. Activities directly connected with teaching, lesson preparation</b>										
designing and planning of lessons										
checking up pupils' preparedness for lessons										
motivating, activating students										
explaining new subject matter										
...										
<b>B. Other activities connected with education</b>	7,00-8,00	8,00-9,00	9,00-10,0	10,00-11,00	11,00-12,00	12,00-13,00	13,00-14,00	14,00-15,00	15,00-16,00	16-
meetings with parents										
doing paper work										
staff meetings										
break supervision										
...										
<b>C. Activities connected with other roles of T</b>	7,00-8,00	8,00-9,00	9,00-10,0	10,00-11,00	11,00-12,00	12,00-13,00	13,00-14,00	14,00-15,00	15,00-16,00	16-
membership of committees										
school librarian										
organizing school club										
...										
<b>D. Education and self-education</b>	7,00-8,00	8,00-9,00	9,00-10,0	10,00-11,00	11,00-12,00	12,00-13,00	13,00-14,00	14,00-15,00	15,00-16,00	16-
taking part in education										
self-study										
<b>E. Extracurricular and public activities of T</b>										
<b>F. Others: .....</b>	7,00-8,00	8,00-9,00	9,00-10,0	10,00-11,00	11,00-12,00	12,00-13,00	13,00-14,00	14,00-15,00	15,00-16,00	16-

Source: Kasáčová (2011)

*Appendix 2. Pre-primary school teachers identified 27 detailed activities, later divided into A – F categories.*

**A. Activities directly connected with teaching, lesson preparation**

- a1 – projecting and planning the educational activities
- a2 – preparation and organizing the learning environment
- a3 – activities evoking activation, motivation
- a4 – performing teaching, management of educational activities inside the school
- a5 – setting up and solving various educational situations/conflicts etc.
- a6 – performing and managing educational activities outside the school
- a7 – performing and managing educational activities on the school playgrounds
- a8 – assessment of the results of learning
- a9 – individual care for children with special educational needs
- a10 – creating teaching aids

**B. Other activities connected with educational processes**

- a11 – diagnosing the children
- a12 – meetings and cooperation with parents
- a13 – doing paperwork
- a14 – consultations with other teachers, school psychologists etc. about individual students
- a15 – staff meetings
- a16 – assisting children with activities connected with self-service and keeping daily regime
- a17 – supervision during children's autonomous activities, games and resting time

**C. Activities connected with other functions/roles of the teacher**

- a18 – service on various committees (methodological, advisory, etc.)
- a19 – school librarian/library management
- a20 – leading a club for children
- a21 – keeping school records, chronicles, archives etc.
- a22 – keeping a school cabinet, taking care of a classroom premises

**D. Education and self-education**

- a23 – participant in a course/further education
- a24 – self-study
- a25 – teaching other colleagues

**E. Off-school, public/community activities connected with the teaching profession: a)**

with children: organizing performance of children - organizing Children's Day, Mother's Day, teachers' choir, etc.; b) without children: attending community meetings/conferences, fundraising, school projects, preparing new school curriculum, administrative activities, or planting trees.

F. *Other activities*: a) without children: organizing exhibitions of children's art work, decorating the rooms, buying rewards for children, web-site management, preparing video/photo presentation of the school, fundraising, management of various events – swimming training course, preparation of parental ball, masquerade, writing school newspaper, etc.; b) with children: preparing various performances - trips, preparing children for competitions, visiting public library, etc.

Source: (Babiaková & Cabanová, 2011, p. 13)

*Appendix 3. Primary school teachers identified 27 detailed profile activities, forming categories A – F.*

**A. Activities directly connected with teaching, lesson preparation**

- a1 – projecting and planning of the lesson
- a2 – checking up pupils' preparedness for lessons
- a3 – activities evoking activation, motivation
- a4 – explaining new subject matter
- a5 – managing and coordination of students' learning activities
- a6 – testing of learning results
- a7 – assessment – in direct contact with pupils
- a8 – preparation/teaching individual plans for students with special educational needs
- a9 – recognizing and solving behavioural situations
- a10 – marking and grading students' assignments
- a11 – creating teaching aids

**B. Other activities connected with education process**

- a12 – diagnosing students
- a13 – meetings and cooperation with parents
- a14 – doing paperwork
- a15 – consultations with other teachers, school psychologists etc. about individual students
- a16 – staff meetings
- a17 – supervision of students (in classrooms, school halls and other premises, canteen)

**C. Activities connected with other functions/roles of the teacher**

- a18 – member of various committees (methodological, advisory, etc.)
- a19 – school librarian
- a20 – leading a club for students
- a21 – keeping school chronicles, archives etc.
- a22 – keeping a school cabinet

**D. Education and self-education**

- a23 – participant of a course/further education
- a24 – self-study
- a25 – teaching other colleagues

E. *Off-school, public/community activities connected with the teaching profession* (similar sorts of activities as at ISCED 0)

F. *Other activities* (decorating school, collecting money or teaching aids, fundraising, restructuring school curricula, etc.)

Source: Babiaková, 2012, pp. 230-231



## TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE POLISH EDUCATION SYSTEM AND PATHS OF TEACHER PROFESSIONALIZATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE 1999 REFORM

Farnicka, Marzanna

### ABSTRACT

In this article the Polish experience of educational reform is presented. The change in the education system in Poland was introduced by the Act of 25 July 1998, effective as of 1 September 1999. The criticism of the abolished political system (i.e. the communist system) also involved a critical approach to the assumptions and philosophy of its education system. The reform marked the onset of new thinking about being and becoming a teacher as a lifelong process and, instead of leaving it to teachers' own choice, created and forced on them a development path referred to as professional advancement. After reform, problems were encountered in areas where the changes were the most pronounced. The first problem was connected with the organization of school work and developmental and educational processes in newly established schools. The second problem area was teachers and their career path. Not only did the educational reform introduce changes in school life for students, but it also affected teachers. Different career paths, called stages of professional advancement, were introduced. This article focuses on specific contexts and trade-offs and tries to answer questions such as: 1) What type of education system has been implemented in Poland since 1999? 2) What are its assumptions? 3) What are the steps involved in teacher professionalization? 4) What are the specific features of the Polish education system and what potential threats lie ahead?

### INTRODUCTION

In contemporary times, education creators are faced with new challenges. At the onset of the third millennium education is treated not only as a set of processes serving to increase competences, but also as an indicator of a country's development level and an element of the economy. This latter point may be illustrated by the well-known phenomenon of selling whole education systems by various countries, such as Finland, or selling licenses for teaching according to certain methods, at which Americans excel. Thus, education creators not only design education systems, study the management of learning processes or evaluate these processes, but also try to establish an adequate paradigm to capture how a person functions in a learning situation in the lifelong perspective. In this context, all the participants/subjects of educational activities are taken into account, i.e. students, teachers and those who support the education process.

The efficiency of a given education system is measured by various indicators, such as general education level (i.e. the number of persons with higher education in a given society), unemployment level, or a more detailed PISA system evaluating the

competencies of children and teenagers in reading, reasoning and the so-called sciences<sup>1</sup>. At present the European leader is Finland, and worldwide – China, Singapore and South Korea. Comparing the changes that have taken place in that ranking since 2000 one can notice a giant leap forward in Polish students' performance. Poland first took part in the PISA study in 2000 and ranked below the average of OECD countries. In 2003 the range between the best and the worst pupils decreased, which was due to improvement among the students with the poorest results but also among the best ones. Poland joined the group of countries with scores approaching the OECD average.<sup>2</sup> In the 2006 ranking Polish 15-year-olds scored above the OECD average in reading with understanding, and interpretation, coming 9<sup>th</sup> among their peers from all around the world. In 2012 Polish teenagers maintained that result and also achieved similar results in science. As for mathematics, Polish students occupied the 13<sup>th</sup> position (OECD, 2012). Such a quick progress of Polish results in the PISA ranking makes one wonder just how that scientific and educational “miracle” happened. This is attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What type of education system has been implemented in Poland since 1999?
2. What are its assumptions?
3. What are the stages of teacher professionalization?
4. What are the specific features of the Polish education system and what potential threats lie ahead?

#### WHAT TYPE OF EDUCATION SYSTEM HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED IN POLAND SINCE 1999?

Initiation – this phase is connected with the rationale of the project, the idea behind its origination, which stems from identified needs.

The change in the education system in Poland was introduced by the Act dated 25 July 1998, effective as of 1 September 1999. In Poland there is a joke that goes: “One can venture to say that in Poland the main need for change resulted from the desire to change...” as the Polish system of education and teacher training operating until 1998 was evaluated as good and sufficient. It provided general knowledge and was a system developed and operating in the socialist states of Central and Eastern Europe. Authors of Scandinavian education systems admit that they drew inspiration and assumptions from the socialist education systems, including the Polish one in the 1980s.

The philosophy of change. The criticism of the abolished political system also involved a critical approach to the assumptions and philosophy of its education system. In 1995,

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<sup>1</sup> PISA (acronym for Programme for International Student Assessment) is an international study co-ordinated by the OECD. Its aim is to collect comparable data about the achievements of 15-year-old students in order to improve education quality and the organization of education systems. The PISA programme originated in 1997. PISA checks knowledge and skills that are vital from the perspective of challenges to be faced in adult life. The point of departure is the concept of literacy, understood as the “ability to use knowledge and skills for analysis, argumentation and effective communication in the process of posing, solving and interpreting problems in various situations” (OECD, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international economic organization of 34 developed democratic countries. It was established by the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development signed by 20 countries on 14 December 1960. The aim of the OECD is to support its member states in achieving the highest possible level of economic growth and the living standards of its citizens.

Maria Straś-Romanowska (1997) characterized three cultural tendencies manifesting themselves in the thinking about man, about human development and relations to the self, which translate into objectives to be pursued by education systems. The first perspective may be called a collectivist one. From this perspective individuals are treated as members of a given society and the issues posed relate to the adaptation of an individual to changing cultural conditions, his/her social identity and the sense of psychological safety. The second tendency visible in the approach to man, human education and development is the individualistic perspective. The focus here is on an individual, his or her freedom, dignity, expression, realization of dreams and individual development. The questions posed relate to pragmatism, but also to consciousness, choices, and experience. The answers formulated utilize concept categories such as: self-knowledge, self-assessment, identity, placement of control, orientations, expression, personal attributions or self-fulfilment. The last perspective is the community-oriented one, based on a neoconservative and axiological approach. The self-world relation is treated symmetrically and perceived as a whole, governed by the principle of unity. The emphasis is put on sense, dignity and universal values and transcending the limitations of an individual rooted in a specific culture (Farnicka, 2011). Values emphasized are responsibility for one's own life, for other people or for the fate of the world. The summary of differences of the presented approaches and their implications for education are presented in the Table below.

*Table 1. Education models in various types of cultural settings.*

<b>Criteria/type of culture</b>	<b>Collectivist</b>	<b>Individualistic</b>	<b>Community-oriented</b>
Self-world relation	Focus on the world	Focus on self	Symmetrical relation
Category in which development is perceived	Adaptation	Self-realization	Self-transcendence
Issues addressed	Adaptation and safety	Problem of "self" and individual freedom	Search for meaning, dignity
Aims of upbringing /Educational goals/	Learning, acquiring social behaviour and social roles, group identity, functioning in a group	Consciousness, self-consciousness, self-knowledge, self-evaluation, self-identity, empowerment and control; freedom, individual development potential, individual experience, creativity and its expression, happiness	Source of human morality, conditions for the origination of ethical norms and respect for them; evaluation of deeds, dignity, readiness to sacrifice oneself for others
Consequences for education	Concentration around requirements and expectations of mentors [those having authority]; external evaluations	Search for changeability, novelty, relativisation, freedom	Respecting differences, viewing one's behaviour in the context of absolute values, such as goodness, love, responsibility

Source: Own compilation based on M. Farnicka (2011)

Prior to the reform, the Polish system of education was recognized as a collectivist one with a certain tolerance for outstanding "geniuses", who were offered a different path of development in specialist (master) schools. The changes in the system and its assumptions

were supposed to move towards individualistic and community-oriented values. That direction was to help people cope with changes and release independent and critical thinking (Farnicka & Liberska, 2014a).

## ASSUMPTIONS

### ASSUMPTIONS OF THE NEW SYSTEM – IN SEARCH OF PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS – PLANNING

The comparative analysis of education systems functioning in the contemporary world shows that different aspects of student development have been emphasized and different points of reference adopted for the evaluation of the effects of education and teachers' work. Some systems pay attention to the question of pupils' submissiveness toward the teacher (East-Asian), others attach great importance to pupils' active involvement and individual development and promote external evaluation of learning results to which they fit pupils' work done at school and evaluation of the "quality" of teachers (Anglo-Saxon) (see: Farnicka, 2014). The list of characteristic traits of particular types can be found in *Table 2*.

One can identify three main configurations of school education systems: East-Asian, Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon (in Russian language studies, also the German-Russian system is added, characteristic of the former USSR and socialist bloc countries) (Abramowa et al., 2015). In each of those configurations one can notice characteristic patterns of behaviour and influences, which differ in the way they exercise control over the teaching process, the way it is situated in the social structure and environment and the methods used to check the quality of the school's work (Nowosad, 2011). The wish to depart from the configuration referred to here as German-Russian prompted our reformers to consider three other points of reference: East-Asian, Scandinavian, and Anglo-Saxon. In the East-Asian configuration the organization of the teaching process is focused on strict regulation of many issues, beginning from the general systemic regulations up to instructions for conducting lessons and development of a strictly regulated examination system. It is worth mentioning that this configuration emphasizes the value of education through pressure on achievement exerted on students, parents and teachers. And although education is of mass reach and conducted collectively, the emphasis is put on individual achievement.

In the second of the configurations, the Scandinavian model, the leitmotif is cooperation and care to create the optimum conditions for individual development, despite the fact that the educational process takes place in the peer group. This means that for many years students acquire basic and higher-level competencies working in a group, without any pressure on individual achievement. Schools enjoy wide autonomy. In this type of pedagogical culture the ethos of the teacher is high. In the Anglo-Saxon approach, tests and educational procedures are the instruments ensuring a high quality of education. Schools work on the basis of good educational facilities and extended, school-specific curricula (Farnicka, 2010).

The assumptions made for the purpose of changing the education system in Poland were connected with the wish to embrace the Anglo-Saxon model, in which a high quality of education would be ensured by tests and educational procedures. Schools were supposed

to work on the basis of good learning facilities and extended, custom-designed curricula. The involvement of teachers and students was intended to activate the system and adjust the knowledge transmitted to the needs of the changing culture and cultural environment. Besides this, the education system success indicators were divided into: knowledge, skills and behaviours. The Journal of Laws No. 14 of 15 February 1999, item 129, points out that the objective behind the general education curriculum for 6-year [primary] schools and lower secondary schools [gymnasia] is the comprehensive development of pupils. Education consists in harmonious realization by teachers of tasks in the field of teaching, shaping skills and educating.

*Table 2. Education systems based on cultural configurations.*

Type of configuration	East-Asian	Anglo-Saxon	Scandinavian
Objective	individual educational success	individual educational success	individual's developmental and intellectual functions
Form of system organization	authoritarian	mixed – external monitoring of activities	autonomous
Organization of the teaching process	directive, specified by external requirements	specified by external requirements	individualized, suited to the child's needs
Forms of work	collective	individualized	group and individual work

Source: Own compilation based on M. Farnicka (2010)

At the level of reform implementation certain problems appeared of an organizational nature as well as those related to the school management processes. The system change was made by the Journal of Laws No. 117 of 25 July 1998. The major change concerned the organization of the education system, i.e. a switch was made from the old structure, i.e. grade 0 [reception class] + 8 years of primary school + 4 years of general secondary school or 5 years of technical secondary school or vocational secondary school, ending with the matriculation examination (“matura”), or 3 years of basic vocational school which could be optionally followed by a three-year supplementary technical secondary school to a new structure:

grade 0 [reception class] + 6 years of primary school + 3 years of lower secondary school [gymnasium] + 3 years of upper secondary general school or 4 years of technical secondary school or 3 years of vocational school.

Below you can find a graphic representation of the changes in the school system organization and pupils' educational path (Table 3). In reality, the length of the education process has not changed, only its organization.

Table 3. Changes in the organization of the education system.

	Before the reform	Now	Remarks
Primary school	8 years (8 grades)	6 years (6 grades)	100% of pupils aged 7 and up (since 2015 – 6 and up)
Lower secondary school		3	100% of students aged up to 18
Upper secondary school	4 – 5 years	3 – 4 years	Graduates finish compulsory education at the age of 18-19 (18-20 in the previous system)

Source: Own compilation based on the Journal of Laws No. 117 of 25 July 1998

Table 4. Current educational path of a student.

<b>4 years</b>	Doctoral studies			University/ other higher education institution	
<b>3 or 3+2 years</b>	University/other higher education institution			3 years technical upper secondary school [technikum]	
<b>3 – 4 years</b>	Upper secondary general school [liceum ogólnokształcące] 3 years	Technical upper secondary school [technikum] 4 years	Vocational secondary school [liceum zawodowe] 4 years	Basic vocational school 3 years	Vocational and general special needs education
<b>3 years</b>	Lower secondary school [gimnazjum]				Special needs education
<b>6 years</b>	Primary school (since 6 - 7 years of age)				Special needs education

Source: Own compilation based on the Journal of Laws No. 117 of 25 July 1998

#### CHANGES IN PROCESSES AND INITIAL PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH IMPLEMENTATION.

Problems were encountered in areas where the changes were the most pronounced. The first problem was connected with the organization of school work and developmental and educational processes in newly established schools. The second problem area was teachers and their career path.

In September 1999, the number of schools and school principals practically doubled, as the first assumption of the reform was the separation of primary and lower secondary schools (these were to be separate schools, the possibility of creating “school complexes” was ruled out). This separation gave rise to many doubts and controversies. Shortening developmental perspectives and lack of learning continuity were pointed out as disadvantages. On the other hand, the opportunity to change the developmental environment and introduce new forms of work in the lower secondary school were underlined as merits (Farnicka & Kowalski, 2012).

Educational process and teachers. Before the reform, teachers used to have two career paths, i.e. they could choose integrated elementary education or specialised education. The latter, consisting of teaching specialized subjects, used to begin in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school and continued until the very end of school education. In order to qualify as a teacher, one had to be a graduate of a five-year Master's program either in early school education or in a given discipline (e.g. history or physics) with the pedagogical specialization.

The new reality brought new teaching paths, and teachers already active in their profession had to either re-qualify to teach certain subjects or discontinue teaching them in primary schools. This was because fully specialized teaching divided into particular subjects was abandoned in primary schools and instead certain "education streams" were created, including humanities, mathematics, science, and arts, plus such subjects as PE, a foreign language and religious instruction (voluntarily chosen by parents). A teacher hitherto teaching biology, geography, physics or chemistry in the old system was faced with the choice of either teaching his or her subject in a lower secondary school (gymnasium) or obtaining qualifications to teach science in primary school (combining elements of biology, physics, chemistry and geography).

#### THE SYSTEM OF TEACHER TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Not only did the educational reform introduce changes in school life for students, it also affected teachers. Different career paths, called the stages of professional advancement, were introduced. The changes concerning teachers' careers were accompanied by the introduction of the Bologna system in tertiary education in Poland (1999) (Kula et al., 2006), which took its final shape in 2006 through the introduction of terminology and the actual division of the studies into three stages: Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral studies (Journal of Laws, 2006). The Bachelor's degree qualifies teachers to teach in primary and lower secondary schools, while the Master's degree qualifies them to teach in upper secondary schools.

As of the date of the official introduction of the reform, those with teaching qualifications acquired during regular or postgraduate studies may enter the professional development path from trainee (junior) teacher through contract teacher, appointed teacher to chartered (diploma) teacher. Achieving subsequent steps on this career path requires completion of certain probation periods (internships) as specified in the Act, with a positive evaluation of the candidate's professional achievements and the approval of the relevant authority on the basis of an examination, interview, or analysis of professional performance (art. 9b clause 1 of the Teacher's Charter). For each internship a co-ordinator is appointed, whose task is to offer assistance to the teacher on the internship, particularly with the preparation and implementation of the professional development plan and with the performance evaluation proposal to be prepared for the internship period. This proposal is submitted by the co-ordinator to the school principal.

Teacher promotion to a higher rank is granted by an administrative decision (art. 9b clause 4 of the Teacher's Charter). Qualification and examination committees participate in the process, but they serve advisory functions and are not allowed to make administrative

decisions in the scope of professional promotion. A trainee teacher is promoted to the rank of contract teacher by the school principal. A contract teacher is promoted to the rank of appointed teacher by the school governing authority (municipality, city). Appointed teachers are promoted to the rank of chartered teachers by the authorities exercising pedagogical supervision over schools (the regional Education Superintendent authority [Kuratorium] or Marshal). Appointed and chartered teachers employed in positions requiring special pedagogical qualifications (e.g. Youth Fostering Centres) are promoted by the competent minister (Pyter & Balicki, 2014, p. 24-36). The system of professional advancement in the form described is still in force, with changes introduced on 26 March 2013 lengthening the internship periods. The reform forced teachers to shape their professional career path according to the milestones described. In the initial period of the reform operation (until 2013) it was possible to shorten internship periods and accelerate the advancement path. The level of contract teacher was assumed as a starting level for teachers already employed at schools.

Below follows a description of the requirements that need to be fulfilled by teachers to qualify for particular levels of their teaching career. The first stage is a trainee teacher. Within 20 days of starting work, a trainee teacher presents his or her professional development plan to the school principal. The principal appoints an internship co-ordinator, who must hold the title of either appointed or chartered teacher. The internship lasts 9 months (Journal of Laws, 2013). Once that period is over, the following steps must be taken in order for the trainee teacher to achieve the status of contract teacher:

- the principal evaluates the trainee teacher; if the evaluation result is negative, the trainee teacher is entitled to appeal to the school governing body or apply for an additional 9-month internship;

- having been positively evaluated by the school principal, the trainee teacher files an application for the initiation of qualification proceedings leading towards obtaining the rank of contract teacher;

- the qualification committee holds an interview with the trainee teacher; once the trainee teacher is accepted by the committee, the principal awards the title of contract teacher; if acceptance is denied, the trainee teacher may apply for another nine-month probation period.

A contract teacher may begin his/her 9-month internship in order to be promoted to the rank of appointed teacher after at least two years of work at a school, and an appointed teacher may start his/her internship in the qualification process for obtaining chartered teacher status having worked at school at least one year from the previous advancement.

Internship periods for the rank of appointed teacher and chartered teacher last 2 years and nine months each.

An appointed teacher wishing to qualify for the rank of chartered teacher undergoes a probation lasting 2 years and 9 months.

Thus, the requirements to be completed in order to achieve the status of a chartered teacher, which may be regarded as the final stage of the official professional development, take almost 10 years of work (cf. Tables 4 and 5). A candidate for the chartered teacher position must have satisfied the principal and the qualification committee. After this he/she is treated as a full teacher. At this level a teacher is completely independent and can prepare his/her own methods or programs.



A chartered teacher with a teaching career of at least 20 years, of which 10 years has



been as a chartered teacher, and who has notable and recognized professional achievements may be appointed honorary School Education Professor by the minister for teaching and education matters. The appointment takes place upon the recommendation of the Jury for School Education Professors [Kapituła do Spraw Profesorów Oświaty].

The degree of professional advancement determines the pay and employment status. Currently it is the degree of appointed teacher that gives its holder full entitlements resulting from the Teacher's Charter (i.e. the Act defining teachers' rights and obligations, which has precedence over the Labour Code in matters of rights and duties stemming from the employment relation of persons who are covered by its scope, i.e. teachers) (cf. *Table 5 and 6*).

*Table 5. Time needed to qualify for particular teacher titles.*

Trainee teacher	Contract teacher	Appointed teacher	Chartered teacher	Professor of Education
				
9 months to a year	Minimum a year of work	Internship 2 years and 9 months	A year of work	2 years and 9 months
				min. 10 years as Chartered teacher

Source: Own compilation based on the Regulation by the Minister of National Education, dated 1.03.2013 on acquiring degrees of professional advancement by teachers. 26 March 2013, item 393

*Table 6. Requirements for teachers*

<b>Trainee Teacher</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- observes classes conducted by his/her internship co-ordinator or other teachers (at least two classes per month) and discusses the observed lessons with the teacher who conducted them;</li> <li>- learns how to keep obligatory school documentation;</li> <li>- knows the regulations concerning safe and hygienic conditions for education and work;</li> <li>- conducts classes with students, in the presence of the internship co-ordinator or school principal, at least one such class per month, and discusses them with the person who supervised them;</li> <li>- participates in forms of professional improvement available in his/her school.</li> </ul>
<b>Contract Teacher</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develops the ability to use information and communication technology in his/her work;</li> <li>- has the ability to take into consideration the developmental needs of his or her students, the issues specific for their local environment;</li> <li>- acquires the ability to organize and improve his/her teaching skills and tools, evaluate his/her own actions and assess their efficiency;</li> <li>- develops the ability to apply knowledge from the field of psychology, pedagogy and didactics and general information from the area of education.</li> </ul>
<b>Appointed Teacher</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- undertakes activities aimed at perfecting his/her professional skills and methods of work, including IT and communication technology skills;</li> <li>- is able to carry out tasks to improve the quality of work in his/her school;</li> <li>- expands knowledge and develops skills serving his/her own development and improving the quality of the school's work, on his/her own or through participation in various forms of continuing education.</li> </ul>

### Chartered (Full) Teacher

- achieves positive results in his/her teaching, educational and care-providing work as a result of implementing activities aimed at perfecting his/her own work and improving work quality;
  - makes use of information and communication technology in his/her work;
  - develops the ability to share his/her knowledge with other teachers, e.g. by conducting open classes, particularly for trainee and contract teachers, as part of intraschool teachers' advanced training or through other forms of activity;
  - has completed at least three of the following tasks:
    - a) development and implementation of a programme of teaching, educational or care-related activities or other activities connected with the place of work,
    - b) performance of functions in educational bodies outside his/her school,
    - c) widening the scope of operation of the school, particularly related to its teaching, educational or care-providing tasks,
    - d) learning a foreign language at an advanced level,
    - e) performing tasks in co-operation with other institutions,
- f) has other considerable achievements in professional work and has the ability to identify and solve problems.

Source: Own compilation based on Regulation by the Minister of National Education dated 1.03.2013 on acquiring degrees of professional advancement by teachers. 26 March 2013, item 393

Why teachers are forced to develop? One reason is related to the rights and ethos of work, and the second is the system of payment. Average pay is one of the elements motivating teachers to undertake professional advancement. Therefore, the quickest pace of advancement was noted right after the introduction of teacher career paths when teachers were able to achieve the highest pay level fairly quickly. Currently, as the advancement extends over time, one can observe slight differences in the pay offered to trainee and contract teachers and the greatest difference is between the ranks of appointed teacher and chartered teacher. These differences result from the rise in minimum pay and therefore pay rises over the last 5 years have been the most beneficial for trainee teachers (Official Salaries of Teachers in Poland, 2014).

*Table 7. Levels of average pay for teachers with various degrees of professional advancement.*

Degree of professional advancement	Amount of remuneration (as % of the basic amount*)
Trainee teacher	100
Contract teacher	111
Appointed teacher	144
Chartered teacher	184

\* MA title with pedagogical preparation, 40 working hours [per week], 18-hour teaching load  
Source: Official Salaries of Teachers in Poland, 2014

## AFTER THE REFORMS

### WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF THE POLISH EDUCATION SYSTEM AFTER REFORMS?

The specific nature of the Polish education system may be observed in the example of the methods connected with the monitoring, evaluation and control of tasks. Monitoring and control are the tasks present at all the remaining stages of the process. Their function is to check whether everything is progressing according to the adopted plan. This enables reaction to a given situation and the introduction of possible corrections. In principle, evaluation of the implementation of the education system is the task of the Supreme Chamber of Control (NIK) as the highest authority; supervision is also exercised by the Minister of Education through School Superintendents and local authorities. The changes introduced and their consequences upturned the existing status quo and all those involved in the education process had to activate remedial strategies that enabled them to creatively adapt to the new reality.

The outcomes of new educational system will be presented from two perspectives: the atmosphere surrounding education and tools for the measurement of outcomes.

Along with the introduction of the education reform, a process of diagnosing and criticizing the condition of Polish schools was initiated. Over this period, the education level of Poles grew noticeably.<sup>3</sup> Due to the hopes awakened and the rapidly introduced changes, both school staff and those benefiting from its services (pupils and parents) have started to display a tendency to formulate harsher opinions about the way in which schools function and show less satisfaction with them (Farnicka & Liberska, 2014b). A specific “spiral of discontent” has developed which involves both adults working in the school system and politicians. Subsequent governments have introduced corrections to the reform which change very little in the reform concept itself but make certain recommendations more specific. Currently we are witnessing a lowering of the obligatory age threshold for starting school from 7 to 6 years of age and a regulation concerning free Internet textbook in the first and second grades of primary schools, as well as many author programs. Managing and supervising schools (and also their funding) is increasingly the responsibility of local authorities. It could be said that school principals complain about the demanding attitudes of parents and deficiencies in the system. Teachers concentrate on protecting their rights and independence and express how tired they are of adapting to constant changes and increasing bureaucracy.

There is a lack of synergy which manifests itself in a lack of co-operation between participants in the education system and a bad atmosphere surrounding education. Differences in terms of the operationalized and expected effects of the learning process between particular groups (teachers, parents, students) may result in a failure to utilize their potential. This “throwing away of pearls” may be perceived as a factor hindering the effectiveness of educational activities and lowering the quality of the learning and teaching process. Instead of co-operating, those engaged in educational situations may assume a number of attitudes caused by disturbances in interpersonal communication or an inadequate recognition of the actual problem. Parents, especially well-educated ones,

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<sup>3</sup> I am referring to the rise in the percentage of adults with higher education qualifications, specifically a pedagogical degree, from 5% to 30%.

form a natural pool of resources and social potential for the school and its staff. Instead, a myth of a demanding, dissatisfied parent, an incompetent teacher and an omnipotent but somehow trapped principal have appeared and prevails. Thus, the social capital in the form of parents' education and consciousness which could translate into support for their child's development and for the school becomes an obstacle. The question of both the opportunities and problems related to the utilization of the potential resulting from the increase in the education level of the society was discussed by Mirosława Nyczaj-Drąg (2011). The author pointed to the end result, i.e. the inability of the system to make use of the economic, material and educational capital of parents – the segregation of schools, classes, and areas into “better” and “worse”, high individualization depending on the family's financial status, as well as the privatization of the education process. Against this background, the widely discussed problem of a loss of social capital appears, but also of the tangible process of losing “pearls”, i.e. people with outstanding talents who statistically are present in the system, but who do not appear in expected numbers (this relates to both students and teachers). The entire situation leads to a perception of the Polish school in crisis, which threatens the well-being of parents, children and teachers (Farnicka & Kowalski, 2012).

In such circumstances, increasing importance is attached to the results of external tests as tangible indicators of educational success. Such tests are held three times during the course of obligatory education: in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school and at the end of the third (final) year of the lower secondary school (gymnasium). The test concluding the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade covers the material from the integrated teaching of humanities and mathematics. Sixth-graders take their test divided into a humanities part, a maths and a science part and (since 2014) a foreign language part. Tests at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> class of gymnasium education check knowledge in the field of humanities, civic education, mathematics and science, as well as the chosen foreign language at the basic or extended level. According to the assumptions of the 1998 reform, external tests were supposed to evaluate the development of students and their competencies in order to help them choose their further education path. Comparing results was intended to reveal areas of special talent, as well as indicate those areas that required more work, while the increase in competencies was intended to reveal the quality of work in a given school.

Currently these external tests also serve another purpose, i.e. they are used to evaluate schools. This evaluation, however, fails to depict the increases in students' knowledge and competences; instead, it checks the average result obtained by pupils from a given birth year, which is used for comparisons. The District Examination Board publishes average results for the entire country, particular provinces and cities. The local press prepares rankings of local schools. Thus, a quick index measuring the work of particular schools and their teachers is obtained. As the school districts (school zoning) principle does not operate, parents choose good or better schools, making the differences between particular schools in a given region even more pronounced. No matter how we view external testing in the context of its educational value, it is certainly a good mechanism for achieving good results by undertaking additional work to attain a concrete goal chosen by the school, the teachers, sometimes parents and, lastly, students.

## THREATS THAT LIE AHEAD

As the aims of contemporary education consist of shaping and developing student empowerment and encouraging conduct reflecting values such as (1) civic co-operation, (2) productive independence, (3) critical thinking and (4) a wide repertoire of behaviour (cf. Brzezińska, 2005), the teaching process must be, as a matter of principle, based on students' and teachers' own activity, take place in the right period and proper conditions and shape those skills that are considered important. In such an approach, in the entire education system it is the teacher that appears to be responsible for ensuring that suitable elements are present in the learning environment which would stimulate the functions listed above.

In the current education system teachers are confronted with an ideal of an active, creative and involved teacher whose competencies widen and deepen (Wilkomirska, 2005). At the same time, teachers are expected to ensure pupils' good results in external tests. Often the two aims are contradictory, causing conflict not only between the teacher and the pupil (and his/her parents) but within the teacher's role (pupil's subjectivity-objectivity and teacher's subjectivity-objectivity).

Returning to the critical analysis of the 1999 reform, which was a systemic solution, one should note its advantages, including the initiation of the cycle of change and setting in motion the mechanisms of the activation of (mainly) teachers. The reform marked the onset of new thinking about being and becoming a teacher as a lifelong process and, instead of leaving it to teachers' own choice, created and forced on them a development path called professional advancement (Dobrołowicz & Karwowski, 2002). Furthermore, the reform changed the approach to teaching teenagers and opportunities to lead different types of school (Figiel, 2001). The assumptions behind the establishment of lower secondary schools were that such schools (gymnasias) were to offer teenagers a place to pursue their interests and passions and support them in development. Different methods of teaching were to be introduced. The separation of that stage of education from primary school through the sixth-graders' test makes young people enter the new educational environment with high hopes of a fresh start. Despite the controversies still present concerning such a model of functioning for gymnasiums (mostly among psychologists), the structure itself is not perceived as a threat to achieving success (Farnicka & Liberska, 2014b). The problem is too much focus on the results of external tests and presenting those results as averages, at the expense of work on personal contact, or on the analysis of contents or materials in a given subject.

The influence of a wide socio-cultural context for the process of the organization of education is undisputable. Changes taking place in the contemporary world require individuals to be fully mature and have the ability to achieve life-long learning. In a dynamically changing world it would be quite difficult to arrive at a single, most efficient solution which could be universally applied. This is the price we are paying for diversity and changeability. Instead, we will face a mosaic-like multitude of parallel solutions. We need, and we have, many different forms of education. Apart from the mosaic quality, other threats described by Zygmunt Bauman (2011) will also appear, such as a dichotomization of societies and the lack of an equal start or access to cultural and scientific assets. These are the dangers that European countries are currently striving to counteract. Polish reforms show that it is possible to achieve this with success. Their experiences could be

transferred to other countries, taking into consideration all the limitations of this method. These solutions should be taken with care since they are influenced by countries' specific contexts and trade-offs, because we know that in education there is often no simple most- or least-efficient model.

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## KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS AND PARENTS – SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE KINDERGARTEN SYSTEM IN HUNGARY

Török, Balázs

### ABSTRACT

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) has become an important field of educational development policy. Hungary is no exception, so under the guidance of the Oktatókutató és Fejlesztő Intézet [Hungarian Institute for Education Research and Development] a nationwide, representative poll was carried out in 2014. The poll was extended to the entire operation and changes in the kindergarten system. In our study we intend to present various interesting and characteristic findings from the survey. The findings are related to the training activities of kindergarten teachers and the connections between parents and kindergartens. As an introduction, we discuss the expansion of early childhood education as one of the most characteristic transnational processes in the field.

### THE EXPANSION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

An additional phenomenon of globalization is that transnational recommendations related to educational policy are receiving increasing attention in Hungary, too. This is particularly true of the period following Hungary's accession to the European Union (2004). Let us first take a brief look at the ECEC objectives and the politics of the Union and the OECD.

In the past few decades, ECEC available to all has become a priority among the objectives of supranational organizations (Vandenbroeck et al., 2010). The background to the changes is the economic doctrine that ECEC is regarded as an investment in human resources with a high return. The experts attached to supranational organizations rely primarily on the results of research projects in Anglo-Saxon countries (OECD, 2010), that calculate a rate of return between 17:1 and 70:1 for early childhood education and care systems, depending on the various return calculation models used (Bertram & Pascal, 2002; Pascal et al., 2013). The expansion of the ECEC system is, in accordance with these concepts, not a mere charity objective for its own sake, but is strongly connected to economic development and labour force replacement goals. This is exemplified by the policy of the European Union, one of the top priorities of which is increasing the employment rate of those between 20 and 64 years of age to 75% by 2020. The average base figure is 68.4% (2013). To that end, the road leads primarily through an increase in the female workforce: in 2014, 63.5% of women worked in the territory of the EU, as opposed to 75% of men. In some of the member states, this is an especially important objective, for instance in Italy, where the proportion of female employees is no higher than 50%.

The objectives of supranational organizations thus make the expansion of ECEC a



general trend. The “Barcelona Objectives,” formulated by the Council of Europe in 2002, set the increase in female employment as a priority. Similarly, the Barcelona Objectives intend to increase the number of those working in child care. In accordance with the Objectives, a minimum of 90% of children between three years and school age were supposed to be involved in the system in 2010 (European Commission, 2013). The target figure was further increased in the “Education and Training 2020” programme of the Union, expecting 95% of the children between four years of age and school age to receive ECEC. The monitoring of 2014 revealed that the respective indicator was an average of 93.9% in the member states of the Union (European Commission, 2014).

In connection with international trends it is to be noted that in some member states the cultural heritage of traditional home education impedes the expansion of ECEC. That is the situation with Finland, so successful in the PISA tests. In Finland the figures are below the Union average: only 62.6% of 5 year old children went to kindergarten in 2009 (Taguma et al., 2012). The case of the Czech Republic is similar; contrary to the EU2020 objectives, the number of children involved in ECEC has been in continual decline since 2004 (2004: 96.9%; 2012: 86.1%).<sup>1</sup>

The changes taking place in Hungary at present are in accordance with the international tendencies of ECEC; that is, more and more children enter the system at an earlier and earlier age. On 1st September 2015, the compulsory preparatory year before school was replaced by compulsory kindergarten from the age of three.<sup>2</sup> With this measure, Hungary is probably exceeding the requirements set up in EU2020 plans (95%), since even before the change, 94.5% of Hungarian children attended a kindergarten.<sup>3</sup> After the change of the political system in Hungary, the political forces dominant in educational policy making placed great emphasis on compensational goals, so the need to compensate social disadvantages among children is still an important reason for introducing and expanding the compulsory kindergarten system. This is slightly different from the usual arguments heard in the EU, where the starting point for the changes is improving the chance that women will enter the labour market on an equal basis. Whatever the reasons for the changes, our research findings suggest that there is massive support for the idea of compulsory kindergarten education: 81% of the kindergarten head teachers, 76% of the teachers, and 75% of the parents of small children were in favour of the decision.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

As an introduction to our research, we organized focused group interviews with kindergarten heads at five settlements. In addition to this, we had individual interviews with 17 kindergarten heads. We carried out a structured interview with the representatives of 8 municipalities that support and run kindergartens.

For the inventory, sampling took place in 50 pre-selected school districts in November and December 2014. The basic sample represents the entire Hungarian kindergarten system, so it is possible to claim that the sample is representative at a national level.

1 Source: Eurostat (chart code: tps00179) (European Commission, 2014)

2 Hungarian Parliament, Act 2011:8.§(1) 2013/CCIII., modified by Point (4) of § 24. (1 September 2015.)

3 Source: Eurostat (chart code: tps00179)

The research took place on a random sample, and the analytical unit is the kindergarten (whether it is an independent institution, a part of another institution or functions in any other organizational form). A special questionnaire was developed for the computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI) to be carried out in the kindergartens with the heads and, wherever possible, at least four kindergarten teachers. In addition, ten parents, whose children attended the kindergarten concerned, were requested to complete paper-based, self-administered questionnaires. As a consequence of the different sizes of the kindergartens concerned, the different numbers of staff in them, and the varied willingness of the parents to respond, the average number of kindergarten teachers per kindergarten arranged into the sample was 3.35, and the respective number of parents was 8.56. The data base thus created contained the data of 432 kindergarten head teachers, 1,451 teachers and 3,668 parents. In accordance with the research concept prepared in the Education Research and Development Institution, the data gathering through the inventory and the processing of the data has been carried out by TÁRKI Társadalomkutató Intézet Zrt. [Social Research Institute Inc.].

### THE TRAINING ACTIVITY OF KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Continual education development raises demands on kindergarten teachers to maintain and improve their professional competences. One of the most common methods of professional progress for a teacher is doing the specialized exam. Two fifths of the kindergarten teachers in the sample had a specialized exam, and one sixth of them planned to take it, or had already participated in a preparatory course. One third of them did not have any ambition regarding the specialized exam.

*Table 1. Do you have a specialized exam? (% of all respondents, row percentage).*

		Yes	No, but underway	No, but planning	No, and not planning to	Not responding, irrelevant
Total		40	3	15	33	9
	Budapest	73	0	10	14	3
Type of settlement	City	42	3	15	31	9
	Town	35	2	16	35	12
	Village	32	6	15	38	9
	18-35 years of age	33	7	35	12	13
Age	36-45	45	4	20	21	10
	46-55	40	3	7	43	8
	Over 55	31	0	3	60	6

Source: Kindergarten teachers data basis (2014, N=1451)

The proportion of teachers with a specialized exam is outstanding in the capital city, almost three quarters, and it diminishes gradually down to the smaller settlements. The specialized exam is not very popular among kindergarten teachers over 45 years of age;

the proportion of those who plan to do it is below 10%, as opposed to 35% of younger teachers.

The objectives connected to the further training programmes organized for teachers give us an insight into the intentions and motivations of kindergarten teachers. From their answers it is clear that the primary goal of their participation in professional further training programmes is increasing their efficiency; 93% of respondents mentioned this. Other professional goals, for instance promotion in their jobs, are preceded by personal motives for a number of kindergarten teachers. 53% of respondents mentioned improving their general education, and 36% mentioned personal satisfaction as the results they expect(ed) from the further training courses. The two other professional reasons that were priorities for head teachers appeared no higher than the middle of the list of the motivations of kindergarten teachers: promotion at work was only important for one quarter of them, and the acquisition of a new diploma or qualification was only important for one sixth. The motivation factor deemed one of the least important, i.e. spending their free time in a useful way, was only chosen by 8% of teachers and 6% of head teachers. Similarly to head teachers, teachers rarely undertake further training to change jobs: the proportion of those who look for a different job within the public education system is negligible, and the number who seek an entirely different occupation outside the system, or want to launch a business venture of their own is even lower. Some other objective was only mentioned by one twentieth of respondents.

*Table 2. What were your objectives in attending the further training course?  
(% of those who attended a course in the past 3 years).*

	Occurrence (%)
To be more efficient in my work	93
To improve my general education	53
To improve my personal satisfaction	36
To achieve promotion in my job	26
To obtain a new certificate or qualification	18
To spend my free time in a more useful way	8
To find a job more suitable for me within the educational system	3
To change jobs	1
To start a business enterprise of my own	1
I had some other reason to attend the course	5

Source: ECEC Hungary 2014, Kindergarten teachers data basis (N=1046)

Promotion in the job or the acquisition of a new qualification are not very important for older kindergarten teachers. With the increase in age, personal satisfaction came to the fore: older and more experienced teachers undertook a course for their own personal pleasure, to improve their own personality.

Further training and professional activity are important means of preventing burnout. We therefore examined the professional risk experienced by kindergarten

teachers: the phenomenon of burnout. According to the results of the self-administered questionnaire, three quarters of kindergarten teachers do not see any danger of burnout at present, 14% of them sense some signs, but no direct danger yet, whereas almost 10% have already experienced symptoms of professional fatigue and exhaustion. Burnout is most characteristic of kindergarten teachers working in kindergartens run by various associations, in institutions integrated with some other organization, and in small branch kindergartens.

*Table 3. A danger in the teaching profession is burnout. Which category applies to you at present? (% of all respondents, row percentage).<sup>4</sup>*

		I do not find professional burnout a danger	I sense the danger, but the problem is not imminent	I experience some of the symptoms of professional burnout
<b>Total</b>		76	14	10
<b>Type of supporting authority</b>	District of the capital city, city	72	19	8
	Town	80	11	9
	Association	73	12	12
	Village	77	15	6
	Other	77	10	10
<b>Type of institution</b>	Central	83	11	6
	Independent	78	14	6
	Associated, or branch	71	15	12
<b>Age</b>	18-35 years	92	5	2
	36-45	80	15	5
	46-55	70	17	12
	Over 55	61	18	19
	Max. 5 years	92	6	3
<b>Professional experience</b>	6-15 years	87	10	3
	16-30 years	72	18	9
	Over 30 years	66	16	14

Source: ECEC Hungary 2014, Kindergarten teachers data basis (N=1430)

We found that the occurrence of professional exhaustion and burnout increased in parallel with the age of those concerned, and also with the amount of time they have spent in their job.

Stress may contribute to the emergence of burnout. Kindergarten teachers who have more than the average number of problems and conflicts with parents in different issues appear to experience the symptoms of burnout in higher numbers than the average, too.

<sup>4</sup> Two answer options (“I experience some of the symptoms of professional burnout, but I find them a manageable problem” and “I experience some of the symptoms of professional burnout, and I find them a problem difficult to overcome”) were combined into one, for easier analysis of the data, and the “No answer” and “I do not know” options were dismissed.

Work in a kindergarten is probably more difficult in underprivileged, poor areas. Kindergarten teachers threatened by burnout often work with children who do not receive the most elementary care at home: lack of adequate clothing, hygiene problems, signs of emotional neglect, and an environment adversely affecting their mental development all feature among the problems experienced. It is possible that when all these disadvantages are combined, they reach a critical mass that puts the professional commitment of a kindergarten teacher under severe test.

On the other hand, our data do not appear to reveal any connection between burnout and the number of children in a kindergarten. Similarly, not even the extent to which a kindergarten is crowded shows any direct connection with teacher burnout. On the contrary: the groups taught by teachers affected by burnout are apparently somewhat smaller than those of their colleagues.<sup>5</sup>

We need to take into account the consequences, and not only the reasons, for professional burnout. Fatigue and a sense of impotence are two of the observable consequences. Fewer of the teachers affected by these symptoms tend to agree with the statement that kindergarten teachers should be more active and play a more intensive role in the public representation of the rights of children.

The lack of ambition is also observable. Half of the teachers affected do not have a special exam and they do not plan to take it (in the total sample the respective proportion is only 33%). Among those who attended some further training course, the lowest number of teachers who justified participation by reference to their professional progress were those who struggled with the symptoms of burnout.

Kindergarten teachers affected by burnout are also threatened by pessimism and scepticism. They are pessimistic about almost every aspect of a teaching career (professional prestige, appreciation of outstanding teaching work, activity in their own further training, personal development and professional self-esteem). Those who experience the symptoms of burnout are more critical than the average as regards the situation of the kindergarten within the entire educational system. Those who compiled their portfolio, which is required for a teaching career, were usually very critical of the circumstances and conditions related to the creation of the portfolio.

All this suggests that burnout is an exceptionally important problem in the whole context of developing the kindergarten teaching profession. Teachers affected by burnout are in a difficult situation, and they are in need of help.

## CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARENTS AND KINDERGARTENS

95% of parents believe that the role of the kindergarten is important and, within that, two fifths believe that the role of the kindergarten is decisive in terms of the children's future school career. In our research we examined the factors that parents find important in connection with the kindergarten. The opinion of the parents has an important role in the popularity of a kindergarten; we therefore included this factor in our observations.

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<sup>5</sup> At the same time, those experiencing burnout find smaller groups more manageable.

*Table 4. How important are the following aspects for you? (% of all respondents, row percentage).*

	Very important	Somewhat important	Unimportant	does not know/no answer
Personality of the kindergarten teacher	89	6	1	3
The usability of the playground/garden of kg.	75	20	1	5
Individual treatment of your child	74	17	3	6
The personality of the childcare assistant	71	21	3	5
Programmes offered to the children	69	25	1	5
Environment, neighbourhood of the kg.	66	28	2	4
Connections with parents, families	65	27	3	6
State of repair of the kg. building	56	37	3	4
Size of kg. (number of children)	50	39	5	6
Fee charged	29	38	22	11
Programmes organized for parents	21	45	24	9
Age of the kindergarten teachers	12	30	50	7
Other	2	2	2	94

Source: ECEC Hungary 2014, Parents data basis (N=3668)

The results suggest that parents attribute great significance to the human qualities and professional skills of the kindergarten staff. 90% of parents find the personality of the teacher outstandingly important, and 70% of them have the same opinion in relation to childcare assistant. The age of the kindergarten teachers is, on the other hand, an utterly unimportant factor.

As far as the infrastructural circumstances of a kindergarten are concerned, the most important appears to be the size and usability of the playground (75%), while 56% of respondents ascribe great significance to the general state of repair of the kindergarten. Similarly important is the neighbourhood and environment of the kindergarten, as indicated by 66% of parents.

Beyond the personal services offered by the kindergarten and the professional image of the institution, the individual treatment the children receive there is the third most important aspect. Approximately 66% of parents consider it very important that there is a wide range of children's programmes available. They also believe that good connections between the kindergarten and parents are indispensable. 25% of parents, however, believe that programmes organized for parents are not really necessary.

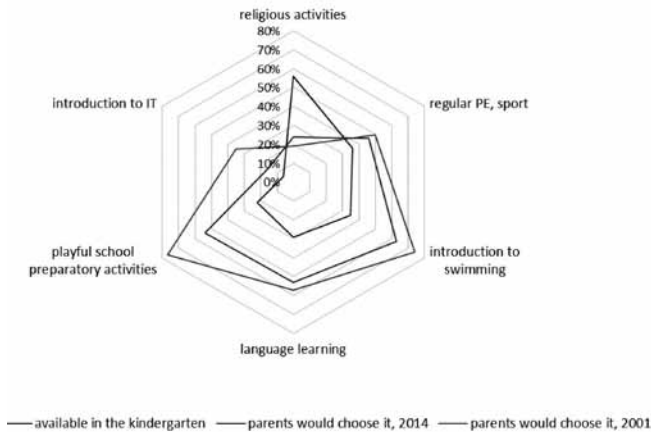
When we inquired about other objective aspects, the capacity of the kindergarten, i.e. the number of children in it, is an important feature in the opinion of half of the respondents, but a mere 30% attributed much significance to the fee the kindergarten charges.

The results are very similar to the findings of the research conducted in 2001: even if the order of some of the elements are not entirely synchronous between the two surveys, the main points are basically the same. Then four main points were then, just as now, the personality of the kindergarten teachers and childcare assistants, the kindergarten

playground, and the individual care the children receive. Openness to parents and programmes offered by the kindergarten are in the middle range of importance. The last two elements, the neighbourhood and environment of the kindergarten, and especially the state of repair of the building, are now a lot more important than these factors were thirteen years ago (Török, 2004, pp. 27–28).

The demand on the part of parents for the special activities and programmes organized for children in the kindergarten largely outstrips what is available. The difference was particularly significant in 2001, but even in our research of 2014 there was a gap between the expectations regarding special programmes and the kindergartens' ability to satisfy them. One of the reasons for the moderate response of kindergartens to the demand from parents is the commitment of these institutions to providing equal access to everyone. A wider range of special activities and programmes would affect equal access and opportunities to all.

*Diagram 1. Special activities organized for children in kindergartens. Responses from kindergarten teachers: available in the kindergarten. Responses from parents: we would like it, 2014 data, and we would like it, 2001 data.*



Source: ECEC Hungary 2011 and 2014, Parents data basis ( $N_{2011}=4138$ ;  $N_{2014}=3668$ )

With respect to the connections between parents and the kindergarten, we examined the time children spend in the institution. One third of the children spend a maximum of 7 hours a day in the kindergarten; a cumulative 50% spend 7 and a half hours there, and a total of four fifths stay there for 8 hours or less a day.

*Table 5. Time spent by children in kindergarten a day (responses from parents, column percentage).*

<b>Max. 6 hours</b>	12.8
<b>6-8 hours</b>	41.9
<b>8 hours</b>	18.8
<b>Above 8 hours</b>	17.8
<b>No answers</b>	8.6
<b>Total (N=)</b>	3668

Source: ECEC Hungary 2014, Parents data basis (N=3668)

The average child spends seven and a quarter hours in the kindergarten. The average time children spend there gradually drops from Budapest (8 hours) to the small villages (7 hours and 6 minutes). There is also a tendency as regards parents' qualifications; children of parents with 8-grade elementary education spend 7 hours in the kindergarten, whereas children of parents with a college or university degree tend to spend 7 and a half hours there. Children of working parents and older parents spend an even longer time in the kindergarten. 89% of respondents were satisfied with the time their children spend under the care of the kindergarten, 3% would like to increase it, and 8% to decrease it. Compared to parents in the country, parents in Budapest were more likely to want to reduce the time their children spent in kindergarten. Many parents with low qualifications would lengthen their children's kindergarten day. A categorization of parents in terms of the time their children spend in the kindergarten will show that the majority of parents are by and large satisfied with the amount of time their children spend there.

We examined the connection between parents and institutions through, among other factors, parents' opportunities to visit the kindergarten during the day. The attitude of parents to their visit to the kindergarten, and their children's activity room has undergone a considerable change over the past decade. A definite separation of the roles is now more important for parents than it was in 2001. 38% of respondents disapprove of parents visiting their children in the kindergarten now, whereas 13 years earlier this proportion was only 23%. 51% of parents find it acceptable to visit their children occasionally, as opposed to 59% in 2001. Only one parent out of twenty approves of being able to be together with their children in the kindergarten at any time (5%; earlier it was more than double this, at 11%); 6% of respondents did not provide an assessable answer.

The possibilities offered by kindergartens in this respect exceed parents' demands: three kindergartens out of ten welcome parents without any preliminary appointment. Half of the institutions offer the same opportunity on their "open days". Parents reported to the researchers that 10% of kindergartens do not invite parents to visit their children.



*Table 6. What is the practice in your kindergarten? Is it possible to visit your children in the kindergarten during the daytime? Do you approve of visiting children? (% of all respondents, row percentage).*

		Yes, any time by appointment	Yes, on the open days	It is not possible to visit the children during daytime	Does not know/no answer
<b>Total</b>		28	49	10	13
<b>Attitude to parental visits</b>	Approving visits any time	58	30	6	6
	Approving occasional visits	27	57	7	9
	Disapproving	26	43	16	14

Source: ECEC Hungary 2014, Parents data basis (N=3668)

Small kindergartens are the most flexible, and those in the capital city are the most rigid in this respect. As shown in the chart above, the expectations of parents and what the kindergartens offer largely coincide. The modal values in the columns meet in the main diagonal, i.e. at the point where the matching categories meet.

The connections between parents and kindergarten teachers are very close; they often inform each other about important issues concerning the children. 37% of parents discuss questions related to the upbringing of their children with their kindergarten teachers on a daily basis, and another 33% on a weekly basis. It is only one sixth of the parents who talk to the kindergarten teachers once a month, and a mere 10% of them have consultations at even longer intervals.

*Table 7. Do you find it necessary to talk to the kindergarten teachers more frequently than indicated? (% of all respondents, row percentage).*

		Yes, I would like more frequent discussions	No, this is satisfactory	I do not need such discussions at all	Does not know/no answer
<b>Total</b>		10	87	2	1
<b>Frequency of discussions</b>	Daily	6	91	1	1
	Weekly	9	90	1	0
	Monthly	14	84	1	1
	Rarer	22	74	3	1

Source: ECEC Hungary 2014, Parents data basis (N=3668)

The overwhelming majority of parents are satisfied with the present situation, only 10% of them would like to have more frequent discussions, and the number of those who do not need a meeting with the kindergarten teachers at all is negligible. Those who only have an opportunity for a discussion with kindergarten teachers to talk about issues related to their children only once a month would, obviously, like to make these meetings

more frequent. Kindergartens usually have no objection to this at all; even parents who come to meet kindergarten staff at longer intervals than once a month, find the occasions satisfactory, so it is more than likely that parents themselves have shaped the system in this way.

84% of parents are satisfied with their consultations with kindergarten teachers, 10% of them receive less information than they expect, and only 5% of them complain about being given too much information.

More than two thirds of parents believe that kindergarten teachers share their educational principles, one quarter of them believe that the educational principles of kindergarten teachers are close to their own, and the proportion of those who have principles entirely different from those of kindergarten teachers is negligible. It seems that the educational principles of parents and teachers have converged considerably since the survey of 2001 was conducted. In 2001, more than half of the respondents shared the same educational principles as kindergarten teachers, and one third of them saw major differences between their own principles and those of teachers, at least on certain issues (Török, 2004, p. 20). We may therefore conclude that kindergartens shape their educational practice in close cooperation with parents, and as a result, there are no serious tensions between the expectations of parents and the possibilities provided by the institutional system.

Various programmes and events organized by the kindergarten are important occasions for maintaining connections with parents. The most important of such events are fund raising activities. According to data supplied by head teachers, 45% of kindergartens organize charity events; 18% of them more than once a year, and 27% have one such occasion annually. The highest number of charity events are organized by institutions supported by churches and associations. There appears to be a need or demand for fund raising activities in one quarter of those kindergartens where no such events take place at present. Only one quarter of all the kindergartens in our survey do not report such a need. Fund raising activities and other charity events are, naturally, more common in areas where parents and families are not very wealthy. The proportion of kindergartens where parents do not find it necessary to organize fund raising actions is almost twice as high in the capital city as in the provinces.

## SUMMARY

The economic development efforts of supranational organizations (EU, OECD) are now felt in the field of education, too. The expansion of early childhood education and care through the kindergarten system, aimed at assisting women in the labour market, and at supporting underprivileged communities, has been accomplished in Hungary. Kindergarten attendance from the age of three was made compulsory on the 1st of September 2015. The measure met with the general approval of both parents and kindergarten teachers, so Hungary is certainly able to meet the requirements of early childhood education and care laid down in EU2020.

An examination of the learning activities of kindergarten teachers indicates that the specialized exam remains an important element of the career path even after the introduction of the central career model. 15% of all respondents plan to obtain the exam,

and among younger teachers the figures reaches 35%. The further training ambitions of kindergarten teachers are fuelled primarily by their desire to improve their efficiency at work (93%), their general education (53%) and their personal satisfaction (36%). The importance of further training programmes is underscored by the fact that these courses may prevent teacher burnout. In our data, the proportion of those affected by burnout is 10%, with a further 14% threatened by the phenomenon. It is noteworthy that the majority of kindergarten teachers threatened by burnout work with children who often lack the most elementary care at home, and whose parents are not, or hardly, cooperating. The work of a kindergarten teacher is apparently more difficult and professionally riskier in the poorer areas of the country.

We examined several dimensions of the connections between parents and kindergartens. It was soon found that parents gave a priority to the personality of kindergarten teachers and childcare assistants, when they formulated their opinion of kindergarten care. Infrastructural conditions were much less important for them, although it had certainly become more significant since the 2001 survey.

The demands and expectations of parents in relation to special activities organized by the kindergarten for children are higher than what the institutions are able to offer. In the background is certainly a conscious endeavour on the part of kindergartens, also supported by educational policy makers, to provide equal chances and equal access for all children.

The close relationships between parents and the institutions, characteristic of Anglo-Saxon countries, influences the quality development concepts of ECEC, so the “commitment of parents and communities” now receives considerable emphasis (OECD, 2012). In Hungary, the connections between parents and kindergartens are definitely harmonious; 37% of parents discuss issues related to their children with kindergarten teachers on a daily basis. It is also noticeable that both parties find a clear separation of roles an advantage: 40% of parents disapprove of the possibility of parents visiting their children at the kindergarten any time. That restriction was supported by parents in a higher proportion in 2014 than was the case in 2001. It is apparent that in Hungary parents’ commitment to kindergartens may be increased in different ways from the methods used in the Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition. The development of ECEC may, in many respects, demand different solutions.

Charity events and fund raising campaigns have become a major instrument in reinforcing the connections between parents and institutions. Recognizing the need among parents and children living in deprived circumstances, 45% of kindergartens organize such events, especially those supported by churches and associations.

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## BACKGROUND OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

### RESILIENT TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS. SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Ceglédi, Tímea

#### ABSTRACT

Our analysis attempts to find out what habitual traces of social determination are present in today's higher education in Eastern Hungary (Szívós, 2009; Bourdieu, 2003a; 2003b). Which elements of family heritage disappear for the years of higher education in the student population which has been selected at their previous stages of education and at admission into higher education? How does the upward movement of the impact of social background manifest itself (Boudon, 1981; Róbert, 2000; 2003; Mare & Chang, 2003; Pusztai, 2011; Csata, 2006)? A comparison between students who perform well in spite of their disadvantaged background (the resilient group), those who perform at a similarly good level but have a more advantaged background (the beneficiaries), those who have a similarly disadvantaged background and perform badly (the drifters) and those who perform badly in spite of their favourable background (the indifferent prodigals) can help answer the question of where, if at all, the core of factors determining one's existence as a student, rooted in one's social identity, appears (Ceglédi, 2012; 2014). In this paper, the comparison is based on the habitual components of academic work and cultural consumption. Teacher education students from the region deserve special attention because they traditionally show the traits characteristic of well-performing student groups from rather disadvantaged backgrounds (i.e. the resilient group).

The source of the data for our research was a survey carried out in the autumn of 2014 in the Partium higher education region on the borders of Ukraine, Romania, Hungary and Serbia. Our questionnaire was completed by 1792 full-time students including 635 teacher education students. Our present analysis is based on the subsample of Hungary (N=1223). Resilient students and their control groups were selected on the basis of their disadvantaged background and excellent academic performance.

Our results imply that while resilient students consciously distance themselves from their own earlier habitus, they consciously adapt those elements of their family habitus that can be utilised in their institutional integration. Besides, the extent and patterns of distancing oneself and of adaptation are indicative of social determination. Resilient students are characterised by the unconditional acceptance of institutional obligations and academic involvement to such an extent that they even surpass the beneficiaries; yet, at the same time, they remain behind in terms of making the most of their university years as would-be intellectuals. Resilient students are overrepresented, whereas indifferent prodigals are underrepresented in teacher education. The analysis of the differences between the resilient and the other three groups of teacher education students has led to the conclusion that social inequalities take different forms in teacher education and in other fields.

## INTRODUCTION

The starting point of our research is the identification of those higher education students in Eastern Hungary who perform well in spite of their socio-economic disadvantages. The term used to describe them is resilient, which refers to the fact that they succeed in the face of difficulties (Waxman et al., 2003; Sugland et al., 1993; Sameroff, 2005; Ceglédi, 2012). We compare them to those who have a more advantaged family background and perform similarly well (the beneficiaries), to those who have a similarly disadvantaged background and perform badly (the drifters) and to those who perform badly in spite of their favourable background (the indifferent prodigals). By comparing the traits of the groups constructed on the basis of academic achievement and social background we can examine social inequalities. We intend to map students' habitus and find the borderline at which social background still has an influence and beyond which one's origin does not matter. We attempt to explore the deepest roots of social inequalities, which can be detected even in those students who have not taken the usual path at the selective junctions of education and achieve well, even in higher education. We pay special attention to teacher education, where we expect special patterns of social determination.

### A GENERAL PICTURE OF THE INEQUALITIES EXISTING IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN HUNGARY AND THE REGION STUDIED

In Hungary the expansion of higher education began with considerable delay. It was only after the political transition of 1989-90 that the same structural expansion and growth in the number of students began that had taken place in Western Europe in the 1960s and 70s (Kozma, 2004; 2006; Hrubos, 2014). The expansion had a double effect on social inequalities. On the one hand, a growing number of young people whose parents had no university degrees began to drift into higher education, whereby structural mobility increased. On the other hand, most of them applied for admission to, and were accepted by, low-prestige institutions and majors, and thus they received degrees that did not have great value on the labour market. Consequently, social inequalities appeared in, or "crept" into, higher education, as well ("upward creeping inequalities").

Firstly, the influence of one's background partly manifests itself in whether one enters higher education or is left out, which is the result of the selective nature of the lower stages of education, self-exclusion and the strongly background-dependent admission system. Secondly, along with the expansion, the social divisions that served and still serve to privilege highly qualified parents' children have also deepened and spread within higher education. The introduction of the Bologna system has led to further divisions in the inner stratification of higher education (Róbert, 2000; Gázsó & Laki, 1999; Andor & Liskó, 1999; Neuwirth & Szemerszki, 2009; Ceglédi, 2011; 2014; Nyüsti, 2012a; 2012b; Gáti, 2010). There are, however, certain factors that operate against inequality, such as the opportunity to enter higher education after secondary technical school, the relatively high number and proportion of state funded student places in higher education, the system of equity-based additional admission points, as well as grants awarded for high achievement and/or disadvantages of background, talent development programmes and other forms of support.

Inequalities also have a territorial aspect rooted in the strong regional segmentation of Hungarian higher education. Our study focuses on institutions from Eastern Hungary (University of Debrecen, College of Nyíregyháza, Debrecen Reformed Theological University), where students have a less favourable socio-economic background than in the more central regions of the country. This is partly due to the fact that the population in the catchment area of the higher education institutions of the border region have a more disadvantaged social background (higher unemployment rate, lower level of education) than the national average. The student composition of the region's universities and colleges is also shaped by selective migration. This phenomenon, on the one hand, causes a loss to the region as some of the high-status population moves to central Hungary for education. On the other hand, being a popular destination for Hungarians from outside Hungary, the region also benefits from selective migration (Teperics & Dorogi, 2014; Ceglédi & Nyüsti, 2011; Nyüsti & Ceglédi, 2013; Polónyi, 2012; Teperics, 2005; 2006; Fónai et al., 2011; Pusztai, 2010).

There has been much professional debate on the input selection of teacher education in Hungary (TALIS, 2013). Most researchers have reported on counter-selection, especially in the case of college programmes providing training for lower levels of education (Varga, 2007; Kovács & Fekete, 2014; Sági & Ercsei, 2012; Nagy & Varga, 2006; Fónai, 2012). However, some studies of teacher education students conducted nationally, and especially in the region of our research, have pointed out that during the years of higher education, teacher education students – who generally have a more disadvantaged background – sometimes produce better learning outcomes than other students. That is to say, teacher education in the region of our research displays resilient traits: students come from a disadvantaged social background but perform well in certain respects (Pusztai, 2012; Pusztai et al., 2015; Kovács & Fekete, 2014; Dusa & Kovács, 2013; Ceglédi, 2012). The crucial question is whether these students will carry their deficiencies in cultural capital to the other end of the classroom and perpetuate the vicious circle of inequalities as teachers or will be able to pass on to their students their own experiences and ways of compensating for their disadvantages, and thereby diminish social inequalities.

#### ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT OR MAKING THE MOST OF THE UNIVERSITY YEARS INTELLECTUALLY?

One of our earlier qualitative interview research studies (Ceglédi, 2012) was targeted at disadvantaged students who performed well in higher education (mainly students from rural environments with parents who had a low level of education). We found that their academic involvement – meaning the psychological and physical time and energy they invested in academic work – was so intense that it was almost beyond their capacity (cited by Koltói, 2014). Their attitude can be interpreted as identification with the manifest goals of higher education, which – as the interviews suggested – was the family heritage of the majority of disadvantaged students who were admitted into higher education. Value studies have revealed that the values generally accepted by most low-status students are discipline, good conduct, thrift, politeness or a high sense of responsibility (Bocsi et al., 2015). Our interview research confirmed that these values were held by the majority of well-performing disadvantaged students' families and they looked upon them as being

useful in education. Higher education seems to appreciate this high level of academic involvement, for example by giving good marks (Ceglédi, 2012). A quantitative study conducted in the region came to a similar conclusion, namely that trust in the academic world, a knowledge-oriented attitude and taking higher education seriously are more typical of students coming from families which are not very highly qualified (Pusztai, 2011). Sometimes there is even a mystical touch added to the institution: one of the respondents drew a parallel between the University of Debrecen and Hogwarts from the novel *Harry Potter* (Ceglédi, 2012).

The obvious conclusion at this point could be that sufficient hard work can help overcome social disadvantages. However, this phenomenon is seen in a different light if we consider the course of action that children of highly qualified parents take at the same time. It has been observed that students who have highly qualified parents tend to show traits of scepticism and disappointment with academic ideals (Pusztai, 2011). In addition, Veroszta (2010) has discovered in higher education the presence of a utilitarian “system-elitist” group primarily made up of high-status students, whose value preferences are determined by the hierarchical perspective of the outside world with a special focus on the labour market. Therefore they participate in higher education only because it is inevitable. The so called “performance-elitist” students, also from the elite, who nevertheless hold more traditional academic values, are usually concentrated in those isolated faculties – principally art and economics – the entrance to which is almost impossible for low-status students.

Considering all this, one might ask whether it is not the reproduction of inequalities that is triggered by the blind acceptance of the authority and manifest goals of higher education (Bourdieu, 2003a; 2003b). Is the prize (good marks) given by higher education to resilient students in return for their acceptance of the values that legitimise it merely illusory and fragmentary, serving only the survival of the institution? Although a positive attitude to work and education is usually an important predictor of student success (Bocsi, 2015), inequalities may come to the surface again at later stages of one’s career, even in the case of disadvantaged students who meet academic requirements in a satisfactory way (Blaskó, 2008; Nyüsti, 2013).

As was revealed by one of our quantitative studies of resilient students, the phenomenon may be partly due to the fact that a positive attitude to work tends to diverge from making the most of the university years intellectually. Deficiencies in the latter appear in resilient students’ contacting faculty less frequently, their less intense involvement in extracurricular activities and in the building or maintaining of cultural capital (e.g. going to the theatre) (Ceglédi, 2012; 2014).

For the purposes of our present analysis we have selected two possible variables which show traces of being socially determined, namely academic involvement and cultural consumption, to be compared within a particular circle of students divided into groups formed at the intersection of social background and academic achievement. As regards social inequalities, we attempt to seek the roots of resilient students’ active academic involvement and their disposition towards academic investment, their special characteristics which become apparent when they are compared, for example, to well-performing students from advantaged backgrounds. We would also like to know how much social disadvantage can be compensated for by their extra investments. In our view, teacher education is an area of higher education where academic involvement



and cultural consumption play an outstanding role, partly because being a teacher is one of the most obvious intellectual roles, which entails a high sense of responsibility for one's studies and an overestimation of the importance of culture. Future teachers will have to motivate their students to academic involvement and convey cultural values as part of their job. Therefore we presume that the efforts made by teacher education programmes and the students themselves will help students from disadvantaged backgrounds compensate for their disadvantages. Our question is whether social divides, thanks to the above, are less marked within teacher education than outside of it in the light of the examined variables of inequality.

## HYPOTHESES

1. Resilient students are able to catch up with beneficiaries regarding academic involvement variables.
2. Resilient students are behind beneficiaries regarding variables of cultural consumption, which is essential to making the most of the university years intellectually.
3. Resilient students are overrepresented in teacher education.
4. Social divides are less marked within teacher education than outside of it.

## DATA

The source of the data for our analysis was the IESA-TESSCE II. 2014 survey carried out in the autumn of 2014 in the Partium higher education region on the borders of Ukraine, Romania, Hungary and Serbia. Our questionnaire was completed by 1792 full-time students, including 635 teacher education students. Our present paper treats the subsample of Hungary (N=1223). To identify resilient students, we grounded our analysis in two major dimensions: social background and academic achievement. We considered it important to use the most fundamental data: the most determining coarse variables for social background and variables that are the closest to the manifest academic goals. A great deal of research has proved that the two variables are in definite correlation.<sup>1</sup> When identifying disadvantaged students, we utilised the opportunity provided by index formation, namely that disadvantages can appear in any combination. In this way, we attempted to create indices that best adjusted to the diversity of non-traditional groups in higher education (Pusztai, 2011).

Our analysis focuses on where, along the coarsest intersections of social determinisms, those groups that either fit into or stand out from usual tendencies can be found, and what background factors help cross the more or less rigid barriers of the social status quo (see Ceglédi, 2012). We can discern four groups in the intersections of social background and achievement, shown in Table 1. The two groups that “obey” what they are socially determined for are the beneficiaries and drifters. The former group includes those who benefit from their advantaged social background. Drifters are those who are unable to cope

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<sup>1</sup> Since in indices of social background and academic achievement the accumulated amount of missing data would have been impossible to handle, we used a reduced database that had undergone logical imputation (for details see Ceglédi, 2015a).

with their disadvantages. The two groups that do not fit into the expected background – achievement correlation are the indifferent prodigals and the resilient group. Indifferent prodigals do not perform well in spite of their favourable background. In contrast, resilient students do so in spite of their disadvantages.

*Table 1. Groups in the intersections of social background and academic achievement (%).<sup>2</sup>*

	<b>Has two or more achievements</b>	<b>Has no or one achievement</b>
Has two or more disadvantages of background	resilient group (11.9%)	drifters (31.5%)
Has no or one disadvantage of background	beneficiaries (14.3%)	indifferent prodigals (42.4%)

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (subsample of Hungary) (N=1223)

## RESULTS

### DIVIDING LINES

It is generally true that resilient students outdo drifters and indifferent prodigals in almost every variable of academic involvement (Table 2). It is to be noted that there is an immense divide between resilient students and drifters. This confirms the necessity of a separate study of the resilient group. The best way to detect social dividing lines is to compare the two well-performing groups (resilient students and beneficiaries), as their differences reveal what impacts of family background emerge when the level of achievement is the same. Relying on the literature referred to above we presumed that resilient students blindly accept academic rules and they are very much inclined to make academic investments. These assumptions were confirmed by our findings; moreover, we also learnt that class attendance, submitting assignments in time, achieving good marks and reading recommended literature were considered more important by resilient students than beneficiaries. They were also more intent on finishing their studies and showed more academic discipline. They were able to catch up with, although not outdo, the beneficiaries in the amount of time spent preparing for class, the number of successful exams, the evaluation of their own abilities to pass exams and belief in the usefulness of their studies. They only seemed to be behind beneficiaries in reading assigned literature and evaluating their abilities to pay attention in class, but they were still better than the two badly performing groups.

Previous research has already shown that disadvantaged students, including the resilient group, are hard-working, hold studying in high esteem and accept manifest

<sup>2</sup> Variables of achievement: participation in professional events (conference talks or posters at OTDK, the national student research competition, or other conferences), membership of or grant received from the Higher Education Talent Development Programme, has received any kind of merit-based student grant, research team membership, publications, teaches private students, year group or major representative, creative work (computer program, invention, application, work of art). Background variables: inactive or missing father, inactive or missing mother, father without secondary education, mother without secondary education, lived in a rural environment at the age of 14, scored subjective financial situation 4 or less on a 9-point scale (for details see Ceglédi, 2015a).

academic goals (Bocsi, 2015; Ceglédi, 2012; 2014). Still, when looking at the findings a second time, one should consider several further issues. Is it true, given the extra efforts resilient students usually make, that they have to perform better for the same outcome? Moreover, their social advancement depends even more on institutionalised cultural capital, i.e. their university degree (Bourdieu, 2003a). They have a reason to regard it as the key to their social success. As resilient students lack any birth privileges, their degrees function as genuine certification documents on the labour market. For them, educational institutions serve as the only available channels of mobility (Bocsi et al., 2015; Baker & Brown, 2008). Resilient students' high aspirations, which even go beyond beneficiaries', may be related to the size of the social gap they must bridge (Csata, 2006). They have more at stake during their studies, as their preceding school careers demanded a greater "investment" from their families, given the limited amount of resources at their families' disposal. The same is supposed to apply to their own previous academic investment, since children from not very highly qualified and/or rural families do not typically take private lessons in order to pave their way to higher education (Ceglédi & Szabó, 2014).

From another perspective, it is beneficiaries' falling behind resilient students that needs to be explained. There is a view that this is rooted in the fact that higher education is losing ground as a means of reproduction, and students have a lesser sense of dependence on higher education. Simultaneously, beneficiaries, possessing a certain makeup of capital, shift to more profitable capital types from the point of view of reproduction (Bourdieu, 2003b). Our findings are in line with some other research that has demonstrated that high-status students' degree of trust in the academic world is rather low; they are turning away from academic values and show little willingness to make extra investment in a not very well-educated environment (Pusztai, 2011; Veroszta, 2009; 2010).

When comparing drifters and indifferent prodigals, we also come to the conclusion that students from a more favourable background are more disillusioned with academic ideals: it is indifferent prodigals who make the least effort to achieve good marks, have the lowest class attendance rate, are unwilling to devote energy to anything more than reading assigned literature and are the least intent on finishing their studies. At the same time, drifters, who come from a more disadvantaged background, work slightly harder to meet manifest academic expectations but they underestimate their own investment, and since they receive only discouraging feedback on how justified their participation in higher education is (e.g. through unsuccessful exams), they do not feel at home in the world of higher education (Ceglédi, 2012; Reay et al., 2009; Baker & Brown, 2008).

Table 2. Academic involvement of the four groups (column percentage).

	Indifferent prodigals	Beneficiaries	Drifters	Resilient students	Pearson Chi-Square
Makes every effort to be able to participate in courses (fully agrees)	32.3	40.5	32.3	43.8	0.03
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	-1.5	1.6	-1.2	2.3	
Submits assignments in time (to a great extent, to a very great extent)	70.9	65.8	67.3	83.8	0.005
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	0.1	-1.4	-1.6	3.5	
Wants to achieve the best possible academic results (fully agrees)	51.7	59.1	51.6	65.9	0.014
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	-1.6	1.3	-1.3	2.8	
Very intent on finishing studies (fully agrees)	52.9	62.9	55.9	67.2	0.013
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	-2.3	1.6	-0.5	2.5	
Read at least five items of recommended reading	18.4	30.2	18.5	32.8	0.000
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	-2.4	2.7	-1.8	3.2	
Able to spend time studying instead of doing more interesting things (to a great extent, to a very great extent)	48.6	51.9	41.8	57.3	0.049
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	0.3	1	-2.7	2.2	
Attends 80-100% of classes <sup>3</sup>	55.2	56	62	66.2	0.063
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i> <sup>4</sup>	-2	-.8	1.5	1.8	
Passed all exams	45.2	60.6	42.2	59.7	0.000
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	-1.8	3.3	-2.6	2.6	
Prepares for courses more than 3 hours a day	28	27.5	28.6	25.2	0.918
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	0.2	-0.1	0.4	-0.7	
Feels studies useful (yes/fully)	84.5	83.2	82.2	87.7	0.543
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	0.4	-0.3	-1	1.2	
Able to prepare for exams (to a great extent, to a very great extent)	64.7	71.9	61.1	71.3	0.023
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	-0.4	1.8	-2	1.5	
Read at least five items of required reading	46.3	57.1	44.5	52.7	0.033
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	-1	2.5	-1.6	1.1	
Able to pay attention in class (to a great extent, to a very great extent)	54	70.5	52.8	66.7	0.000
<i>Adj. Stan. Res.</i>	-2	3.5	-2.1	2.2	

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (subsample of Hungary) (N=1223)

<sup>3</sup> In tables 1 and 2, when reducing response options related to a given activity or statement, we ran cross tabulations with several types of categorisation in order to find the dividing lines along the most realistic frequencies. We present the findings in which the dividing lines were the most clearly seen.

<sup>4</sup> Adjusted Standardized Residual. Compared to random distribution, a cell is underrepresented if its value is below -1.96 and overrepresented if it is above 1.96) (Agresti, 2002).

Despite their high academic involvement, resilient students are not in the lead positions regarding investments made in order to permanently maintain their cultural capital or compensate for its deficiencies. The data in Table 3 lead to the conclusion that although resilient students try to catch up with beneficiaries in such traditional aspects of cultural capital as going to the theatre, classical concerts and museums/exhibitions, it is only reading in which they approach them, perhaps because reading is the most cost-effective of the listed activities.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, they have a remarkable lead in the above aspects over drifters and even over indifferent prodigals, except for theatre attendance.

It also strikes one that resilient students have very little free time. They go to cinemas and parties, watch films, go shopping or hang around in shopping centres and even meet friends less frequently than beneficiaries do, and less than the other groups. Their disadvantage was the smallest in social and sport games, and the only thing they stood out in was creative artistic activity, in which they even outperformed the beneficiaries. A resilient student's entire life as a student is centred around studying, which even suppresses free-time activities.

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<sup>5</sup> The participating institutions are all located in county seats, where there is access to theatres, cinemas, concerts and exhibitions. The only exception is an off-site faculty in a small town (Hajdúböszörmény) near a county seat.

*Table 3. The four groups' leisure activity habits.*

	<b>Indifferent prodigals</b>	<b>Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Drifters</b>	<b>Resilient students</b>	<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>
Reads daily	33	49.1	39.8	48.5	0.001
Adj. Stan. Res.	-3.7	2.7	0.2	2.3	
Goes to a classical concert at least once a month	28.4	40.4	26.9	33.6	0.012
Adj. Stan. Res.	-1.2	3	-1.6	0.8	
Goes to the theatre at least once a month	34.4	44.4	32.1	32.1	0.047
Adj. Stan. Res.	-0.3	2.7	-1.3	-0.7	
Goes to museums or exhibitions at least once a month	28.2	42.8	21.6	31.8	0.000
Adj. Stan. Res.	-0.4	4.2	-3.4	0.8	
Creative artistic activity every day	9.4	13	7.1	16.9	0.000
Adj. Stan. Res.	-0.7	1.3	-2.2	2.7	
Watches films every day	54.1	45	55.6	37.3	0.003
Adj. Stan. Res.	1.7	-1.7	1.9	-3.4	
Plays sport every day	13	16.3	8.3	8.5	0.016
Adj. Stan. Res.	1.3	2	-2.2	-1.2	
Goes to the cinema at least once a month	68.8	61.8	65.3	49.2	0.001
Adj. Stan. Res.	2.6	-0.7	0.5	-3.8	
Plays cards or games at least once a month	41.6	37.6	32.7	31.1	0.034
Adj. Stan. Res.	2.7	0.2	-1.9	-1.5	
Goes to a party at least once a month	60.5	58.8	54.5	45.8	0.019
Adj. Stan. Res.	2.2	0.6	-0.9	-2.7	
Meets friends a few times a month or more often	88.1	83.8	84.1	72.7	0.000
Adj. Stan. Res.	2.9	-0.2	-0.2	-3.9	
Goes shopping or to plazas a few times a month or more often	60.4	46.3	53	43.1	0.000
Adj. Stan. Res.	3.7	-2.1	-0.4	-2.7	

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (subsample of Hungary) (N=1223)

Our data show that excessive academic involvement does not eventually compensate for the deficiencies of cultural capital. Low-status students, especially drifters, have only limited knowledge of what a student is supposed to do in higher education, what opportunities are at their disposal, and what habitus they have to acquire so that the institutionalised cultural capital can be incorporated.

#### RESILIENT TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

Among teacher education students the proportion of resilient students is outstandingly high, whereas that of drifters is approximately the same as in other fields of study. This

implies that it is the more successful of disadvantaged students who find their way into teacher education. As for more advantaged students, it is also the more successful of them (the beneficiaries) who opt for teacher education, whereas indifferent prodigals would rather avoid this profession. The difference between the two badly performing groups is also noteworthy: it is rather drifters (the disadvantaged group) who want to be teachers. The above data therefore suggest that teacher education has a “force field” that attracts resilient, (i.e. successful, disadvantaged or both) students (Table 4).

*Table 4. The distribution of the four groups between teacher education and other students (row percentage).*

	<b>Indifferent prodigals</b>	<b>Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Drifters</b>	<b>Resilient students</b>	<b>Total</b>
Teacher education students (n=191) (%)	33	14.1	32.5	20.4	100
Adj. Stan. Res.	-2.9	0	0.4	4	
Other students (n=953) (%)	44.4	14.3	31.2	10.2	100
Adj. Stan. Res.	2.9	0	-0.4	-4	

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (subsample of Hungary) (N=1223)

Those aspects of social differences that emerge in teacher education were investigated by a comparison of the four groups within and outside teacher education. Teacher education students’ academic involvement was usually stronger than other students’, but they tended to underestimate their own investments. Within teacher education, the figures describing resilient students and beneficiaries were closer to each other than in the full sample: resilient teacher education students’ responses did not stand out so much as other resilient students’, so their advantage decreased over teacher education students in the winner group. Within the winner group, teacher education students’ academic involvement was higher than other students’. It was also remarkable that indifferent prodigals seemed less disappointed with academic ideals – except for their low class attendance – and showed indifference to a lesser extent in teacher education than in other fields. Drifters, however, seemed even more helpless in teacher education than outside of it. On the whole, teacher education is an area greatly affected by social determination, which is supported by the facts that drifters’ academic involvement was lower and resilient students’ advantage smaller than in the full sample.

As regards free time activities, comparisons between teacher education and other students usually indicate that the former group has more resilient features: their cultural consumption is higher, and they pursue less frequently those activities that are believed to take students’ time away from studying. Within teacher education, beneficiaries’ and resilient students’ cultural capital variables approach each other, and significant differences either disappear or lose their significance. The changes are due to resilient students’ catching up in going to museums/exhibitions, but in all other variables they are due to beneficiaries’ falling behind.

To sum up, within teacher education resilient students' advantage in academic involvement disappears, and their cultural consumption is not higher than that of resilient students in other fields. The disadvantage experienced by drifters also leads to the conclusion that our hypothesis, namely that teacher education has an effect that compensates for disadvantages, is not confirmed by the variables we worked with. It is only in terms of a belief in the usefulness of studies that resilient teacher education students stand out.

## CONCLUSION

Our paper investigated inequalities in higher education through a comparison of resilient students, beneficiaries, drifters and indifferent prodigals.

The main conclusion of our analysis is that it is academic involvement that resilient students are the most successful in, and they insist on meeting manifest academic expectations even more than do well-performing students from a more favourable background. Although their cultural consumption is high, it remains below beneficiaries', which suggests that their knowledge is too fragmented and they have too few opportunities to catch up in making the most of the university years intellectually. Resilient students are overrepresented in teacher education as opposed to indifferent prodigals, who prefer other fields of study. We have discovered a special feature of the inequalities present in teacher education. Besides the fact that in teacher education both academic involvement and cultural consumption are usually higher, the differences between the two well-performing groups are less marked, as resilient students' advantage disappears and drifters fall spectacularly behind.

Our findings invite further investigation, especially at points of transition – whether sudden or continuous – between different stages of education. It is also worthwhile to conduct further research, bearing in mind the inner stratification of higher education, as hidden forces of social inequality produce different patterns in enclaves – not necessarily visible because entrenched within the boundaries of a faculty – controlled by certain interest groups.

Furthermore, an in-depth comparison between resilient students and drifters would help to clarify the cause of the two groups' different achievement, the social driving forces that stimulate resilient students and the negative forces that hold drifters back.

A detailed analysis of resilient students' disadvantages listed in our paper may promote the compensating effect of teacher education in a twofold way: firstly, students themselves have to cope with their own disadvantages, and secondly, they will have to be prepared as teachers to handle their own students' disadvantages. The process of capital acquisition these students have (at least partly) gone through can be looked upon as a kind of resource they can pass on to their future students. It is also crucial that there should be helping personnel in education who have faced up to their own disadvantages (Fehérvári & Liskó, 2006; Ceglédi, 2015b). Nevertheless, it must be allowed that “teaching practices or teachers' professional ideology can never be traced back directly and fully, if at all, to their origins and social class” (Bourdieu, 2003a, p. 15). It is an important task of teacher education to topicalize low-status teacher education students' ethos regarding their class of origin and their present class (Bourdieu, 2003a; 2003b) so that resilient students will



not be integrated into an education system that generates and maintains inequalities but, instead, will be instrumental in overcoming social determinisms.

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## TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN MINORITY AND MAJORITY EDUCATION

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### Abstract

Language, education, and politics are three factors that are closely related to one another and play a crucial role in the life and survival of minority communities. In this paper questions of minority education are touched upon. The standard and efficiency of minority schools have several aspects, but basically it is the personal characteristics of the teachers and their professional and pedagogical training that can make their work successful. This is the main reason why teacher education has become the primary concern of higher education in a minority environment, so much more so given that teacher education is a part of education that reproduces itself and its higher or lower quality can determine all the other aspects of education. Needless to say, then, that teacher education in a minority setting, as well as the future teachers themselves, should be examined from several perspectives. The present study focuses on the analysis of what has motivated teacher education students to choose this career, what pedagogical values they consider to be of primary importance and what goals they would like to achieve in the future. We are convinced that teacher education students begin to consider their future aims at an early stage during their studies. What we aim at is not just a description of the present situation or a presentation of case studies but also the representation of the factors which are hidden behind the different phenomena; therefore our results are interpreted in a majority vs minority context. The empirical data are taken from the IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 database based on the questionnaires completed for the project “Regional networks providing professional services and research support for teacher education in the North Plain region” (Hung. abbreviation: SZAKTÁRNET). The data were collected from the state-funded regular and self-financed students of the higher education institutions that can be found within the catchment area of Debrecen University, both in Hungary and beyond the borders (Ukraine, Romania) in the autumn of 2014. The survey included 1729 people that had just begun their university studies or were close to graduation. What the results clearly show is that the differences between the groups of students follow from variables appearing at context level. The contextual factors present in the countries, the potential of their education systems and other social effects affecting the student population have created different types of community orientation, which will shape the aspects of their pedagogical work in the future.

## INTRODUCTION

Hungarian ethnic minority groups have existed in the Carpathian Basin since the Trianon Treaty, which concluded the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. To date, none of these minority communities is homogeneous, neither in terms of their socio-demographic nor their economic situation, not to speak of their numerical proportion. It follows from these different features that the educational processes that characterise them also diverge (Csete et al., 2010), but what can be stated in general is that their share in school education and the results they achieve lag behind those of the majority nation in every region, a tendency which is growing ever stronger and more noticeable in higher education as well (Keller, 2004; Molnár & Molnár D., 2005; Veres, 2013). This phenomenon may have several underlying reasons. On one hand, the countries of the region are characterized by a delayed expansion in education compared to the general European expansion processes (Kozma, 2011). On the other hand, there is a shortage of available courses and institutions in the native language. The negative influence of demographic processes cannot be neglected either. Many choose a majority institution or begin their university studies in Hungary, in the expectation of a successful career (Keller, 2004; Molnár & Molnár D., 2005; Veres, 2013). The key aspect of education in the native language is teacher education for the minorities, since teacher education is the self-reproducing element of the whole education system. Under favourable conditions it either generates a spiralling rise in standards or reproduces itself, but its various levels can also mutually damage each other. The failure of public education affects higher education, and vice versa (Csete et al., 2010). What Barabási adds to all this is that the quality of teacher education is most illustrative of the quality of the education system as a whole (Barabási, 2002). That is the reason why the present paper is designed to examine teacher education and teacher education students beyond the borders from various points of view. The fundamental question raised in the paper is closely connected to the course of research that has yielded results proving that teachers' mastery exerts a measurable influence on students' school careers, especially in educational environments that pose a challenge (Bacskaï, 2013; Sági & Ercsei, 2012). What we argue for is that students belonging to ethnic minorities are in a situation that can be considered specific, therefore the role of their teachers is increasingly important. Previous research has provided unequivocal evidence that minority communities experience several disadvantages, which has considerably diminished the popularity of careers embedded in the national culture or involving local commitment (Takács, 2015). Under such circumstances the question of who will become pedagogues for minority communities is undoubtedly a pressing one. Our research will target the recruitment of pedagogues, their impact on student communities as well as their social adaptation to the career chosen and their commitment to it. The present research is also aimed at examining the teacher education programmes for Hungarian ethnic minorities, the social backgrounds that students come from, the motivations behind their choice of this career, and the values and goals that they think are closely related to education and that they intend to reach. What we strive to achieve in our analysis is not only a description of the current circumstances of minority teacher education, or a presentation of case studies, but also an understanding of factors influencing all this at a contextual level; therefore the results will be interpreted in a minority-majority relationship.

In a minority environment a teacher is expected to perform a so called extended role, since minority education in the native language has many more functions than majority education. Where do minority teacher roles and the expectations raised derive from? The question can be answered by considering the general social claims made on the education system and (claims made by communities in the narrower sense of the word). The functions and duties teachers are expected to fulfil can be described in the broadest sense on this basis. Perhaps it is in Trencsényi 1988 that the most comprehensive discussion of roles can be found and in which a tripartite division is presented. He holds the view that the roles teachers perform are determined by their emotional involvement in their work and by their relationship to their pupils. Trencsényi's typology, complemented with Zrinszky's (1994) pedagogical model and interpreted in a minority context, makes it clear that minority teachers and institutions of education have many more responsibilities to help their pupils with the processes of socialization than do their colleagues working in majority education. It follows from this that minority teachers' work as instructors and educators receives heavier emphasis than it does in a majority environment. Research in the sociology of education, however, rarely pays any attention to the components of minority education. We are convinced that the educational values and pedagogical goals of teacher education students begin to emerge as early as during their training period. In the empirical part of the study I will concentrate on these features.

#### MINORITY AND MAJORITY TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN A CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

In the analysis below, the data concerning the sample of teacher education students are given in a majority vs minority comparison. Hungarian students living in Hungary, Romanian students living in Rumania and Ukrainian students living in the Ukraine are listed as belonging to the majority, whereas ethnic Hungarian students living in the Subcarpathian region, Partium, in Transylvania and in the Székely region make up the minority group. This typology shows the following distribution:

*Table 1. Number of minority and majority teacher education students.*

	N=
Minority teacher education students	288
Majority teacher education students	268
Total:	557

Source: TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=557)

One of the greatest differences between the two groups lies in their respective social backgrounds. It is taken as a fact by research in educational sociology that the families students come from closely interrelate with their academic career, because "what young people coming from families with different backgrounds receive in terms of financial and procedural support as well as intellectual encouragement depends greatly on the level of the parents' learning" (Pusztai, 2015, p. 77). Although the structure of education has been

expanding continuously both in Romania and in Ukraine in recent years and the level of education has also been rising, upward social mobility is mostly single-step and is mainly due to structural changes, and is still favourable to the majority society. The education of minority parents gradually decreases from lower to higher levels, for which the Soviet-type restrictive education policy with its intention to eliminate ethnic minorities is responsible (Csata, 2004; Molnár & Molnár D., 2005). Our data corroborate the trends of previous years and clearly show that the parents of majority students are more highly qualified, with a significantly greater proportion ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) of fathers and mothers having graduated from university or college than those in minority families.

Experts in the sociology of education no longer debate the fact that the ambition of an individual to enter higher education is shaped by several circumstances besides cultural factors. The social capital that a family has accumulated appears as a source of power which can even supersede the determining force of cultural capital (Pusztai, 2004; 2009). The extent of social capital within the family was determined by the frequency of the 12 activities listed in the questionnaire in such a way that those filling it in could give a score from 1 to 4 (1 meaning 'rarely' or 'never', as opposed to 4 meaning 'very frequently').

*Table 2. Social capital within families belonging to different nationalities (average values on a four-grade scale).*

How often do your parents	Minority (N=288)	Majority (N=268)	Anova
Talk with you	3.2	3.42	**
Talk with you about culture, politics, public issues	2.63	2.72	ns
Talk with you about books and films	2.52	2.6	ns
Talk with you about a teacher's career	3.01	3.24	**
Ask you about your free-time activities	2.92	3.17	**
Involve you in housework	<b>3.19</b>	<b>3.11</b>	ns
Inquire about your studies	3.16	3.32	ns
Inquire about your friends	<b>2.49</b>	<b>2.42</b>	ns
Give you financial support	3.13	3.26	ns
Organize and share cultural programmes with you	2.51	2.63	ns
Encourage you in your studies	3.12	3.25	ns
Contact your teachers/instructors	<b>1.95</b>	<b>1.64</b>	***

\*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\* $p \leq 0.01$ , \* $p \leq 0.05$

Source: TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=557)

The results show that although minority parents are less educated than majority parents, they are more energetic in certain activities: they contact their children's teachers more frequently, they are more interested in who their friends are and involve them in housework more often. While it is true that minority parents talk about a teacher's career, urge their children to study harder or demand an account of their achievements less often, even these values are relatively high (above 3). It can be concluded that minority parents lag behind in activities that really require a higher level of social capital but, realizing the

importance of higher education studies, they try to do their best in any way they can to support their children in becoming successful students

Earlier research reveals that the minority students in the region have less financial capital than their majority peers. We also included the objective and subjective economic indicators in our research by measuring consumer durables. Considering these indices, neither the subjective, nor the objective indicators show any remarkable difference. Over three quarters of the student population questioned said that “they have got everything”. Out of ten durable consumer goods, majority students owned an average of 5.8, while their minority peers had 5.6, which is not a significant difference. It should be added immediately that the subjective judgment of one’s financial position is based on a system of values in every particular case. A student and/or his family would hardly be satisfied with their economic situation in a community in which material values are given primary importance.

In a minority environment, denominational affiliation is crucial not only from a religious perspective but also to national identity. Studies in the sociology of religion state that the level of religiousness is the highest in those post-socialist countries where commitment to a religion also serves as a basis of national identity, as in the Ukraine or Romania (Doktór, 2007; quoted in Pusztai & Fényes, 2013). A result published in an earlier study makes it clear that denominational affiliation as a contextual variable has a decisive influence on the performance of minority students in the different dimensions of their studies (Márkus, 2014a; 2014b).

The database used for the present study has also supplied ample material for the analysis of students’ religiousness along several dimensions. We have examined their denominational affiliation and the self-evaluation of their religiousness as well as the practices of their individual and public worship. What our results demonstrate is that minority students are more active in all spheres of religiousness. More of them belong to a denomination than their majority peers. It is worth mentioning that only 1% of the minority students said they did not belong to any denomination, whereas this rate exceeded 10% in the majority group. The self-evaluation of the extent to which they consider themselves religious also reveals a higher proportion of those who follow the rules prescribed by a Church and of those who practise individual worship. In comparison with this, the proportion of minority students is smaller than that of the majority group in non-religious categories. The questionnaire also measured the degree of individual and collective religiousness. What makes collective religiousness important is its clear and unequivocal function in laying down values and norms. Individual worship, on the other hand, helps integrate this function with one’s own character, which makes it very important in a minority setting (Pusztai, 2009). Forms of individual and collective worship (frequency of prayer, attending church services) also reveal considerable differences between the two groups. Three quarters of the minority students attend religious community events daily or at least once a week, whereas their majority peers do so much less frequently (38.3%). Differences of a similar magnitude can be found in individual worship practices (75 vs 43.5%). The divergence in each case is significant and the data reflect the tendency verified by historical experience: “Hungarian ethnic minorities regard religion and its institutions as the safest means of keeping their own cultural roots and use them to maintain their identity partly because there are hardly any other means available” (Tomka, 2000, p. 14).



In what follows, I will touch upon how motivated students are to engage in their studies. As mentioned before, to be a minority teacher is especially problematic, since the obligations included in it are undoubtedly context-dependent and are determined by particular values. That is why it is important to examine what is was that motivated people who chose this career and what educational values and goals they consider to be of special importance.

The questionnaire contained 15 statements, all concerning different aspects of motivation. The interviewees were asked to indicate if they had been motivated by any of these factors. Then the motivations were arranged in an order according to how frequently they had been chosen. The conclusion arrived at was that both groups of students had opted for a teacher's career because they wanted to acquire more knowledge and, later, to have better prospects of finding employment. Differences between the minority and majority groups arose in the respective languages of studies, the prestige of a subsequent career and future personal contacts. We also sought the causes of these differences. Later analysis unequivocally showed that minority students made less conscious decisions when it came to choosing a major. In this group, the proportion of those who would like to take up a job as a teacher in all circumstances after graduation is significantly ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) lower (49.5%; in the majority group it is 72.7%). It is probably the narrower spectrum of training in Hungarian beyond the borders that is to be blamed for this, because it is dominated by teacher education rather than training in other fields. It is typical of minority students to first choose a course in the native language, then select a professional field from those offered, i.e. when making choices they are not governed by their belief in the importance of working as a teacher.

In the rest of the present analysis, some basic questions regarding the students' future pedagogical work such as educational values and goals will be dealt with. In the research, responses were sought as to what students considered to be their most important pedagogical task; how they thought it met the challenges presented by their communities and by society. Furthermore, the questions were designed to find out if there were any special features typical of either minority or majority students on the basis of teachers' functions and roles. A sense of responsibility and sincerity were the chief values to be handed down (considered to be very important by 60% of the interviewees in both groups); what, however, deserves special attention is that nurturing children to be independent, unselfish and loyal were much more important for those in the minority group than for the majority. Respect for others, hard work and economy were also more highly valued by these respondents.

Further analyses highlighted other issues as well. Using factor analysis, we separated four types of value orientation<sup>1</sup>: general humanistic, leadership-oriented, community-spirited religious, and conformist attitudes (the last representing an approach adapting to social routine). The general humanistic attitude regards values such as sincerity, responsibility and self-reliance as fundamental. The values articulated for the community-spirited type are religious faith, unselfishness and obedience. Finally, the conformist type prefers good behaviour, politeness and tolerance.

Factor analysis can be considered to be successful in itself, since it reveals certain normative structures. It can be statistically verified that there are latent structures to which students' educational values are attached.

<sup>1</sup> Factor analysis, Varimax rotation, the four factors cover 57.8% of the full variance, KMO=0.924

In the next section of the analysis I transformed the individual value preferences into a scale from 0 to 100, in which 0 indicates that the given type of orientation is not characteristic of the students at all, while 100 means that all the student population acknowledges it. The comparative study of minority-majority value orientation revealed that a humanistic approach to education is typical of both groups. Minority students ranked community-spirited religious values second, whereas for those in the majority group conformity and leadership orientation came last.

The average values differ remarkably only for community-spirited religious orientation, being much more typical of the minority than of the majority. For the former, the ‘handed down’ values such as religious beliefs, obedience, unselfishness and loyalty are more important than they are for the majority.

*Table 3. Comparison of minority and majority value orientation types (average values on a 100-grade scale).*

	Humanistic**	Leadership	Collective (community-spirited) religious***	Conformist*
Majority (N=210)	79.99	47.05	58.88	69.2
Minority (N=231)	76.58	44.92	67.01	66.44

\*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\* $p \leq 0.01$ , \* $p \leq 0.05$

Source: TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=557)

As far as educational goals are concerned, it is important to understand their importance, which means that they should be clearly set. It is really vital to find out what pedagogical tasks are regarded as essential by the teachers of the future from either group and how they can respond to the challenges of society and to those of their smaller communities. Another key issue in carrying out pedagogical programmes is the distribution of tasks between school and family, which should be based on consensus (Pusztai, 2011). Using factor analysis, we distinguished four types of student orientation, which can be considered a result in itself.<sup>2</sup> The success of factor analysis in this survey (see the data on students’ educational values) means that students are beginning to form a clear idea of the most important aspects of education.

The different types of student orientation were given the following labels: cooperative, innovative, instruction-centred, and a fourth which represented an extended interpretation of a teacher’s role. What can bring about a cooperative pedagogical approach is expert communication and cooperation with the parents as well as other members of the teaching staff. The innovative type is characterized by commitment to new educational trends and methodological diversity. As opposed to this, instruction-centred orientation is represented by students who put a special emphasis on conveying knowledge and skills development in their work. Finally, teachers with an extended interpretation of their roles believe that paying attention to their pupils’ personal problems is almost as important as transmitting new knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> Factor analysis, Varimax rotation, the 4 factors cover 65% of the whole variance, KMO=0.932

In the table below students' preferences are presented on a scale from 0 to 100, in which 0 indicates that the orientation type is not typical of the students at all, whereas 100 means that the given orientation type covers all the students. The comparison of the minority-majority orientation types reveals that in both groups the cooperative approach is dominant, but innovativeness is also an example they would like to follow. Marked differences can be seen between the instruction-oriented attitude and the extended perception of a teacher's role. In the pedagogical styles of majority students instruction-oriented techniques are given primary preference, which means pedagogical work in the classroom, including the transmission of knowledge and development of skills. As for minority students, they are inclined to accept an extended role for the teacher, allowing for the formation of pupils' personalities as well as establishing a closer relationship with them.

*Table 4. Comparison of minority and majority students' orientation types (average values on a 100-grade scale).*

	Cooperative	Instruction-oriented	Extended role	Innovative
Majority (N=120)	77.96	74.9	37.72	73.49
Minority (N=157)	76.34	70.47	41.62	73.79

\*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\* $p \leq 0.01$ , \* $p \leq 0.05$

Source: TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=277)

## SUMMARY

In my study, I have undertaken a comprehensive analysis of teacher education students coming from both the ethnic minority and the ethnic majority. I have examined the students' social background, their motivation for having chosen a teacher's career as well as their future pedagogical goals and the values they regarded as important. Our results have shed light on essential differences between the majority and minority students in each particular case. Research experience gathered over many years has been corroborated by the large discrepancies in the social status of the representatives of the two respective groups. Minority parents' level of education and material welfare lag behind those of their majority counterparts. On the other hand, there are significantly more religious students, who also practice their religion, in the minority group. This fact is in accordance with historical experience and, apart from religion functioning as an orientation towards particular values, it is also viewed as a means of expressing one's identity.

As far as the choice of a major and a future career are concerned, minority and majority students differ mainly in the language of instruction, in the prestige of a future career and in the connections that can be built later on. However, it is generally true that most of them are motivated by their higher education studies, the acquisition of advanced knowledge and the attainment of a more favourable position on the labour market after graduation. The differences in their future pedagogical goals and educational values depend on the diversity of influences deriving from their social positions and the minority communities

they belong to, which result in diverse types of community orientation. This is the reason further research should also include the regional differences between communities living beyond the border.

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## HUNGARIAN TEACHER EDUCATION IN ROMANIA IN THE LIGHT OF MINORITY LEARNING PATHS

Stark, Gabriella Mária

### ABSTRACT

The goal of our paper is to present the constantly changing system of Hungarian teacher education in Romania. We are looking for the answers to the following questions: what are the particularities of Hungarian teacher education in the Romanian education system? How does teacher education fit into the minority learning paths? The interpretative framework is formed by minority learning paths; these paths of minority education are approached as a meso level explanatory factor, with the teacher education approach as a macro level explanatory factor. Using document analysis we processed rules and laws related to majority and minority teacher education. We concluded that the minority Hungarian teacher education system has several connection points with the majority education system; continuous transformations are meant to strengthen the pursuit of standardization and centralization.

### INTRODUCTION

According to Szabó (2009, p. 142), “teacher education in the European Community is carried out with the application of different educational methods and styles, due to different historical and cultural development paths. Teacher education reflects the different requirements and norms of education systems at the same time”. However, the influence and, sometimes, pressure of intended European standardisation have also appeared in the teacher education of some countries. In our study we venture to describe the system of Romanian teacher education. Thus, by presenting the context of Romanian teacher education, we attempt to give a complex picture of the characteristics of Hungarian-language minority teacher education in Romania.

In our study we investigate Hungarian-language minority teacher education as a macro-level, ethnically neutral, explanatory factor of minority education, in strong correlation with minority learning paths, which we consider as meso-level explanatory factors which correlate with ethnicity (Papp, 2012a). We do not attempt, however, to describe micro-level explanatory factors (i.e. family background, knowledge of the official language of the state, motivation, etc.) in this study.

In our study of minority learning paths, we shall explore the characteristics of minority learning paths from preschool to university, and then investigate teacher education as a learning path and describe the characteristics of Hungarian-language teacher education.

## MINORITY LEARNING PATHS IN THE LIGHT OF LITERATURE

In the literature we can encounter the equivalents of the following terms: student paths, learning paths, educational paths, school careers. By student paths we usually mean “the paths which lead through the school system, and go through levels of education which are determined by the system for students”; this primarily concerns formal education (Imre, 2010, p. 53). Learning paths, which consist of levels of education and transitions, refer to school careers, and, according to Papp (2012a, p. 14), can be understood on macro and meso levels. Boudon “understands one’s school career as a series of transitions, that is, at the end of each period of school, students and their parents have to make a decision about further studies and a suitable school” (Boudon, quoted by Csata, 2004, pp. 107-108). School career can be interpreted as the process of transition between different levels of education. In Bukodi’s interpretation, the focus is placed on decisions regarding further studies; he compares school hierarchy to a “tree of decision”, in which we investigate how family background influences the decisions which are made at each juncture (Bukodi, 1998, p. 160).

In the case of learning paths, one of the key questions is relevance in the labour market; therefore the questions raised by these learning paths are often concerned with the changing education market, effectiveness (Imre, 2006; 2010), and related to this, attrition, as well as failure at school (Fehérvári, 2012). Cărtână (2000, p. 111) points out, when investigating attrition in a Romanian context, that the proportion of school dropouts increases due to discrepancies between the changing education system and labour market demand, and also because education is now only compulsory at primary school.

When exploring the effects of family background, research has shown the father’s level of education as an influencing factor (Veres, 1998; Péter, 2002). Furthermore, it has been found that “the mobility chances of children of parents with low levels of education are quite low, which is considered by experts as a serious problem in terms of preserving intellectual talent” (Veres, 1998, p. 7).

According to Papp (2012a, pp. 14-15), alongside relevance in the labour market, the question of learning paths is pervaded by majority–minority relations as well as the context of ethnic and minority policy in a minority environment; therefore, alongside the education market, effectiveness, and attrition, the other aspect of learning paths is the question of minorities. The problem of minority learning paths regards Romani culture in many cases, nevertheless, the situation of Hungarians outside of Hungary is also present (Papp & Csata, 2013).

In the case of minorities which have every level of education available in their own language, learning paths can follow minority paths as well; thus, Papp (2012a, pp. 14-15; 2012b, p. 405) underlines two typical learning paths in the function of majority–minority relations as well as the context of ethnic and minority policy. One extreme can be the purely minority learning path, i.e. when minority education is preferred in each transition between different levels of education. The other extreme is the majority path, which includes the possibility of assimilation. Sorbán and Dobos (1997) argue that opting for education in the language of the majority is a channel of assimilation. Hungarians outside Hungary, as research conducted among them has shown, consider the choice of school as a dimension of assimilation, and believe that choosing a majority school weakens their original identity (Gyurgyík, 2002). They define assimilation as a phenomenon which

loosens, reevaluates, or cuts the ties which make up their minority community's linguistic and cultural identity, and as a series of exits (or perhaps the final exit) from their minority's cultural system of relations (Sorbán & Dobos, 1997).

Papp (2012a) argues that, since the political transition in Romania, the minority learning path has undergone a fourfold expansion; at present, around half of the age group educated in Hungarian pursues further studies in Hungarian-language higher education institutes in Romania. Naturally, we may encounter, alongside purely minority learning paths, mixed-language learning paths as well: it is more and more typical to find that parents decide to send their child to a Romanian-language school so that the child "may learn Romanian" (Sorbán, 2012). A mixed, alternating learning path can form part of a conscious strategy according to which parents choose their child's school at lower levels of education, while at higher levels of education, students might change the language they study in due to the one-sided or even poor variety of degree programmes to choose from.

It can be seen from many studies, including the Kárpát-Panel (Carpathian Panel Research Project), that the knowledge of the language of the majority is often inadequate (Csata et al., 2007, p. 21). Researchers of the project emphasise that the higher the level of education, the less likely students are to follow minority learning paths (Csata et al., 2007, p. 28).

Research conducted by Sorbán and Nagy (2006) shows a micro-level motivation for choosing teacher education learning paths: the choice to follow minority learning paths is also based on language barriers, i.e., young people's inadequate knowledge of the language of the majority might influence whether they take part in minority education.

The minority learning path which we investigate (Papp, 2012a) can be traced in the Hungarian-language teacher education context in Romania. Students who apply for minority teacher education generally pursue their studies in Hungarian (in primary education: ISCED 1-2; in secondary education: ISCED 3; in higher education: ISCED 5-6). Below, let us explore the Hungarian-language teacher education system, as a subsystem of the majority teacher education system.

## THE POSITION OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE HUNGARIAN-LANGUAGE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ROMANIA

Minority teacher education presents the characteristics of the national (majority) teacher education, but at the same time it has its own distinctive features. As we have already mentioned in the introduction, we consider teacher education one of the explanatory factors of minority education. According to the official interpretation, Hungarian-language minority education is a form of minority education in Romania, and operates alongside minority education in Czech, Croatian, German, Armenian, Romani, Serbian, Slovak, Turkish, Tatar, and Ukrainian (Fóris-Ferenczi, 2007, p. 46). Given the social and political position, proportion, and historical and educational traditions of Hungarians who live in Romania, Hungarian-language minority education forms a special element of the education system; thus we can interpret minority education as a subsystem of the education system. As a subsystem, it has some of its own (minority, ethnic, institutional) characteristics, yet formally, it has the typical attributes of the widely defined Romanian education system (Papp, 1998, p. 74). Fóris-Ferenczi (2004) argues that, in order to understand or solve the specific problems of Hungarian-language minority education, one



must bear in mind the relations existing in the entire Romanian education system, which follows the traditions of the French education system.<sup>1</sup>

Fóris-Ferenczi (2007, p. 45) emphasises that inertia is the most characteristic defining factor of minority education in Romania. The position of Hungarian-language minority education cannot exist independently of the relations of the entire Romanian education system. According to Fóris-Ferenczi (2007, p. 94), two tendencies can be observed: forced adaptation to certain changes in the system (i.e. the examinations system, the organisational structure of schools), and diverging lines of development along major globalisation trends (i.e. the variety of degree programmes, the institutional system which works with schools, and integrational policy). This is significantly influenced by demographic factors, differences in the network of schools, and the presence of the minority in subsystems which support education. These characteristics also apply to the teacher education segment of the education system.

The importance of minority teacher education, considered as a high-priority field by experts, is also reinforced by linguistic rights: education in the native language is a fundamental right, which can be guaranteed through the establishment of a complete education system in the mother tongue (i.e. education in the native language from preschool to university). Experts argue that it is especially important to educate professionals in fields in which language is not “transparent” (i.e. teacher education, media, theology and religious teacher education, the helping professions, legal education, medical education, musical and drama education) (János-Szatmári et al., 2012, p. 91).

Hungarian-language teacher education in Romania can be considered a subsystem of Romanian teacher education. The latter education system is quite diverse, as teacher degrees can be obtained at several levels of the education system and at several institutions. Adjustment to European trends and hesitation are typical phenomena of the education system. Every academic year, a ministerial order regulates which institutions are entitled to offer teacher education (as a function of fulfilled standards of accreditation). In the academic year 2014/2015, it is Government Decision no. 580/2014 which regulates the sector, alongside the Law of National Education.

The Law of National Education no. 1/2011 has brought about significant changes in the entire education system; the new legislation has transformed higher education as well as teacher education in a major way. We must emphasise the transformation of teacher career path models as one of the most significant changes in teacher education. According to the teacher career path model introduced in the Law of National Education, teacher education consists of 3 years of bachelor studies, 2 years of master studies, and 1 year of internship (Law of National Education, 236/1. §). The first, three-year, theoretical cycle can only be pursued at universities, in the form of accredited programmes; and those who study to become teachers are now required to obtain a master’s degree in didactics (Law of National Education, 236, 238. §). In order to become a teacher, one must finish the first two cycles of the Bologna multi-cycle education system and complete a year of internship in an education institution, overseen by a mentor teacher. According to the emergency Government Decision no. 92/2012, teachers who have yet to acquire a higher education degree are granted a six-year respite to obtain a bachelor’s degree at a university as an addition to their education.

<sup>1</sup> The French education system is characterised by encyclopaedic traditions and principles, such as universality, rationality, and utility (Szabó, 1998; 2009).

Some of the characteristics of the Law of National Education with respect to teacher education are overregulation and the deprivation of universities' autonomy. According to 237/1 §, the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, as the main funding body, determines the curricular requirements of teacher education. This applies to subject teacher education (with the strict regulation of the curriculum of the master's degree programme in didactics) as well as the strict curricular regulation of preschool and primary teacher education (Aracis, 2015).

By analysing the characteristics of teacher education in Romania, including minority teacher education, we can find differences in the education of preschool and primary school teachers, and subject teachers, despite the uniform career path model. In the following, we shall explore the education of the latter subgroups in detail.

### SUBJECT TEACHER EDUCATION

According to the uniform teacher career path model laid down in the Law of National Education, teacher students have to take part in a master's degree programme in didactics after having obtained a bachelor's degree. However, the new education model has not come into force yet, as Ministerial Order no. 5745/2012 changed the teacher career path model laid down in the Law of National Education, bringing the continuing education model for teachers in grades 5-12 back into force. According to this order, previously discontinued institutions for teachers' continuing education have started to operate again, and continue to organise pedagogic modules, even though this right was removed earlier by Ministerial Order no. 3481/2012. Teacher qualification can be acquired as a separate module in teacher education, which has just become two-phased (Szabó-Thalmeiner, 2009; Birta-Székely, 2012). Those who wish to teach in grades 5-8 have to complete, alongside their university degree, the first level of the pedagogic module by obtaining at least 30 credits. Those who would like to teach in secondary school or higher education (post-secondary education<sup>2</sup>, university) must complete the second level of the pedagogic module by obtaining 30 credits as well as a master's degree in didactics. The curriculum of the master's degree programme in didactics is regulated by Ministerial Order no. 3841/2012, while the curriculum of the pedagogic module is regulated by Ministerial Order no. 5745/2012.

The structure of the two-level pedagogic module:

*Level 1* (preparatory phase): 30 credits have to be acquired in pedagogical-psychological and methodological subjects. Offers a qualification for primary school (grades 5-8) teachers.

*Level 2* (phase of deepening): at least 30 additional credits have to be acquired in pedagogical-psychological and methodological subjects. Offers a qualification for secondary school teachers, which also allows teachers to be employed in post-secondary and university education.

The pedagogical module can be completed in two ways: firstly, as a regular, full-time student, completing level 1 during the bachelor's programme and level 2 during the

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<sup>2</sup> One of the characteristics of the Romanian education system is the post-secondary education (post-lyceum), which is a two-year programme, for which one can apply even without a baccalaureate diploma. Post-lyceum education is mainly offered in the fields of medicine, tourism and economics.

master's programme. Secondly, as a postgraduate student who did not acquire teacher qualifications at university and wishes to get them now, completing the two levels at once. In the academic year 2014/2015, according to Government Decision no. 580/2014, 57 universities offer teacher education, 3 of these in the Hungarian language, which means that the minority learning path in teacher education has fewer options than the majority, alternating path.

*Table 1. The variety of degree programmes in Hungarian-language higher education in Romania, with special regard to teacher education in the academic year 2014/2015.*

Type of institution	Institution	Number of degree programmes	Locations <sup>3</sup>	Hungarian-language teacher education
Public sector institutions	Babeş-Bolyai University	58	8 (5)	Preschool and primary school teacher education Teacher education
	University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Târgu-Mureş	2	1	--
	University of Arts Târgu-Mureş	8	1	--
	University of Oradea	1	(1)	Preschool and primary school teacher education
	University of Bucharest	1	1	--
Private sector institutions	Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania	30	(3)	Teacher education
	Partium Christian University	13	(1)	Teacher education
	Protestant Theological Institute of Cluj-Napoca	1	1	Preschool and primary school teacher education (since 2012)
Off-site departments	Corvinus University of Budapest – Miercurea Nirajului	1	1	-
	University of Debrecen – Oradea	1	1	-
	Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary – Târgu-Mureş	1	(1)	Preschool and primary school teacher education
	Edutus College – Odorheiu Secuiesc	4	1	-

Source: adapted from Csata et al., (2012, p. 76)

*Table 1* shows that there are only 12 institutions which offer Hungarian-language higher education; 5 of these are public, 3 are private institutions registered in Romania, while the other 4 institutions are off-site departments of Hungarian universities or colleges (Csata et al., 2010, p. 76, pp. 109–122). Hungarian-language teacher education is concentrated at Babeş-Bolyai University but is also offered at two private universities

<sup>3</sup> The numbers in brackets represent the number of locations where teacher education is carried out.

(Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Partium Christian University). There are fewer options to follow minority learning paths than majority paths in this case as well. This lack of options is one of the problems of minority education and teacher education: the Hungarian-language education system offers relatively limited possibilities for learning paths, and minority students have fewer options than majority students. On a macro level, it is the education system which sets the boundaries for choosing learning paths which lead to the teaching profession; on a meso level, it is the structure of schools, the teaching community, and the learning paths themselves, and on a micro level, it is family capital, personal motivations, and the knowledge of the official language of the state (based on Papp, 2012a). The differences between the requirements of the education system and personal expectations may result in crash points in the learning paths: commitment to the profession might be a motivation for the decision to start teacher education, but so might be language barriers and the fact that in some regions teacher education is the only possibility for someone wanting to study in Hungarian (Stark, 2015).

#### PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER EDUCATION

Ministerial Order no. 5745/2012 altered the career path model for preschool and primary school teachers as well as other teachers: preschool and primary school teachers are not required to have a master's degree in didactics, as their university diploma entitles them to be employed as teachers (17/2 §). In other words, preschool and primary school teachers need to have a bachelor's degree (although until 2018 a secondary qualification is also sufficient).

Preschool and primary school teacher education is now realised on two levels in Romania: there are preschool and primary school teacher courses on a secondary and a university level; both are offered in the education system at the same time, and preschool and primary school teachers with qualifications on both levels are also employed at educational institutions at the same time.

#### *Preschool and primary school teacher higher education*

Since the introduction of the Bologna process in Romania, preschool and primary school teacher education is conducted on a university level, in contrast to the previous college-level course<sup>4</sup> (Law no. 288/2004 concerning higher education; Keller, 2004; Szabó-Thalmeiner, 2009). The transformation of the course involves changes in structure and content. The course provides a double qualification, as it trains students to become preschool and primary school teachers at the same time. Graduates get a bachelor's university diploma which certifies that they are specialised preschool and primary school teachers, and also become classified teachers. With the university diploma, graduates can enter the second cycle of the Bologna multi-cycle education system, i.e., they can apply for a master's degree programme (Bura, 2008, pp. 168–169). The structural transformation of the preschool and primary teacher course has also resulted in changes in content, the ratio

<sup>4</sup> For a thorough investigation of college-level preschool and primary school teacher education, see: Keller (2004) and Szabó-Thalmeiner (2009).

of pedagogical-psychological and cultural subjects, restructured pedagogic practice, etc. (Barabási & Antal, 2008; Barabási, 2008, p. 20, pp. 60–61; Szabó-Thalmeiner, 2010, pp. 37–38).

In the academic year 2014/2015, according to the Government Decision no. 580/2014, 26 universities offer preschool and primary school teacher education, 4 of these in the Hungarian language. Table 1 shows that Hungarian-language preschool and primary school teacher education, just like teacher education, is concentrated at the centre panel in Cluj-Napoca and at off-site departments (Târgu Secuiesc, Târgu-Mureş, Satu Mare, Odorheiu Secuiesc) of Babeş-Bolyai University,<sup>5</sup> but is also offered at the University of Oradea, Partium Christian University, and the off-site department of a Hungarian institution (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary – Târgu-Mureş).

### *Preschool and primary school teacher secondary education*

Secondary teacher education (Szabó-Thalmeiner, 2009) upholds a great tradition in Romanian public education; famous lyceums/secondary schools specialising in teacher education (Oradea, Aiud, Odorheiu Secuiesc, etc.) represent to the public a basis of comparison in their evaluation of the teaching profession (Szabó K. A., 2006). Fóris-Ferenczi (2007, p. 55) reports that in Romania, preschool and primary school teachers are traditionally educated to a secondary level. Due to this deep-rooted tradition, secondary teacher education cannot be easily discontinued. Secondary schools specialised in teacher education still operate, despite the ongoing effort to discontinue this form of teacher education; nevertheless, their standard has decreased, and they mainly serve as preparatory institutions for teacher education on a university level, i.e., they offer the possibility of a double teacher education path for those who are interested in the teaching profession.

The Law of National Education (236/2 §) held out the prospect of discontinuing secondary teacher education, and Ministerial Order no. 5347/2011 (1/4 §) has established that from 2012 on, pedagogic lyceums cannot offer preschool and primary school teacher education, transforming these into institutions where infant nurses are educated. However, the emergency Government Decision no. 92/2012 brought teacher education in these institutions back into force: it temporarily allowed them to educate preschool and primary school teachers (emergency Government Decision no. 92/2012, I/11 §). This also shows the hesitation and backward steps which are general characteristics of the renewal processes of the education system.

In the academic year 2014/2015 Hungarian-language preschool and primary school teacher courses are offered at the following pedagogic lyceums: Târgu Secuiesc, Cluj-Napoca,

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<sup>5</sup> Santiago argues that the underrepresentation of minorities in higher education can be compensated through different measures: off-site departments and institutional representation in the areas heavily populated by minorities, distance education, a higher education market which adapts to linguistic and cultural needs, and financial solutions which may increase the participation of marginalised groups in higher education (Santiago et al., 2008, quoted by Salat, 2012, p. 50). Off-site departments as well as institutional representation appear in Hungarian-language minority education in Romania, as Babeş-Bolyai University has off-site departments in towns where the Hungarian minority is very significant (Odorheiu Secuiesc, Sfântu Gheorghe, and Gheorgheni are now becoming important centres of education), and institutional representation is characteristic of teacher education: the Department of Pedagogy and Applied Didactics, which includes preschool, primary school, and other types of teacher education, is present in Cluj-Napoca as well as Târgu Secuiesc, Târgu-Mureş, Satu Mare, and Odorheiu Secuiesc (see: Stark, 2013).

Târgu-Mureş, Oradea, Aiud, Odorheiu Secuiesc, and Zalău. These secondary institutions can form a preparatory element in teacher education learning paths, as most students from these schools continue to teacher education courses (i.e. mostly preschool and primary teacher education, but also secondary teacher education courses) on a university level. The crash points investigated in the description of teacher education above can be observed in the case of preschool and primary school teacher education even more clearly, as this type of education is offered in several regions, thus, alongside the commitment to the teaching profession, regional availability and language barriers can again be motivations for the provision of teacher education (Stark, 2015).

### *Hungarian-language teacher education – Summary*

Let us now consider the summary of the models of subject teacher education, preschool and primary teacher education in *Table 2*.

*Table 2. Hungarian-language teacher education in Romania.*

<b>Education model</b>	<b>Subject teacher education</b>	<b>Preschool and primary school teacher education</b>
Education model regulated by the Law of National Education (2011)	Bachelor's (3 years) + master's (2 years) + internship (1 year)	Bachelor's (3 years) + master's (2 years) + internship (1 year)
Education model regulated by the Ministerial Order no. 3841/2012	– <i>uniform education</i>	– <i>uniform education</i> Bachelor's only
Temporary education model regulated by the Ministerial Order no. 5745/2012	Grades 5-8: bachelor's + pedagogic module level 1 Grades 9-12: bachelor's + pedagogic module levels 1 + 2 + masters	
	– <i>continuing education</i>	– <i>parallel education</i>

Source: own compilation

Reform processes in Romania are generally characterised by hesitation and backward steps, phenomena which can be observed in teacher education as well: even though the Law of National Education introduced the uniform teacher career path model and brought it into force in 2011, shortly thereafter, other Ministerial Orders have altered this legislation; thus, for preschool and primary school teachers, the former education model has been reintroduced – temporarily, until 2018.

## SUMMARY

In our study we have shown the main characteristics of the Hungarian-language teacher education system in Romania in the light of minority learning paths. Our analysis was primarily based on Ministerial Orders and legislation which regulate teacher education. We have shed light upon consecutive and overlapping forms of education (especially for preschool and primary school teachers), the dependence on and connections with the Romanian majority education system, the poor variety of minority learning paths, as well as possible discrepancies between the education system and personal expectations. During our investigations, we have found that parallel to the majority education system, the minority teacher education system is the subject of constant change, which has been accelerated by the introduction of the Bologna multi-cycle education system. The constantly changing context of education policy has resulted in the permanent redefinition of the multi-cycle education model, but even this redefinition has been characterised by hesitation, stepping back, and increasing efforts towards centralisation.

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## THE CONTRIBUTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO THE CHOICE OF CAREER

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### COMPARISON OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS AND STUDENTS IN OTHER FIELDS OF STUDY BY THE SECTOR OF THEIR FORMER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

#### Abstract

The attraction of the teaching profession is a well-researched issue. Researchers who try to explain this choice of career often observe, apart from social background factors, the strong influence of a particular value system or a sense of vocation. In our earlier regional research, we treated teacher education students as a group within the student population. In our present analysis, while attempting to construct their profile, we investigate the question of whether teacher education students have different characteristics depending on the sector of the secondary schools they graduated from. Our findings show that graduates of denominational secondary schools are overrepresented in teacher education, and their self-selection is rooted in their special conception of vocation based on spirituality.

#### THE HIDDEN FEATURES OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

When examining the attraction of the teaching profession, researchers usually search for specific and convincing variables, but what they often find to be an even more powerful factor than social background is motivation rooted in a special value system and a sense of vocation (Wilson et al., 2006; Jancsák, 2012). In our earlier regional research, in which our main focus was not on teacher education, we treated teacher education students as a segment of the student population and studied their integration into the world of higher education. It was then that our attention was drawn to their special features. We learnt that students who participated in teacher education mainly came from low-status areas and big families but it was their cultural background rather than social status that was really different. The difference between the value orientation of their home environments and that of the student population might have been the reason why their intragenerational integration into campus society proved to be weaker than average, while they gave unusually high priority to intergenerational ties. The asymmetry of their integration, however, did not promote their attachment to the institution (Pusztai, 2012).

We also observed that the proportion of religious students was higher in teacher-training and a larger proportion of students entered this field of study from denominational secondary schools than from other sectors (Pusztai, 2012). The phenomenon can be attributed to the coincidence of educational values fostered in church schools and the preferences leading to one's choice of the teaching profession. The aim of our present study is to identify those values and preferences. Our analysis, in which the focus is on teacher education students and other students are mentioned only by way of comparison, is centred around the question of whether students entering teacher education from the non-state sector have a head start in their careers.

## SELF-SELECTION AND SPIRITUALITY

Looking for the criteria for selection in the phase in which a student prepares for a certain profession, we might suspect that the decision-making process is influenced by one's distinctive world view, value orientation and spirituality (Boudon, 1998). In her analysis of the different ideological and value preferences that lie behind the concepts of work, career and vocation, Bocsi (2015a) emphasises that the concept of vocation does not only express a sense of professional identity, a conviction about the general social mission of the profession and its inherent moral value, but that there is also a transcendent element, even in its secularised interpretation. Among the factors affecting the success of one's teaching career it is the experience of work as a vocation and strong commitment that are frequently referred to in the literature (Bryk et al., 1992; Palmer, 2003; Woolfolk Hoy, 2008). Organisation research at the turn of the millennium also came to the conclusion that what makes employees capable of doing efficient work are not only their qualifications, cultural background and personalities but also their spiritual characteristics. As a result, another aspect of human capital has been brought into the focus of investigation (Milliman et al., 2003; Pawar, 2009; Karakas, 2010). The central issues of research into the impacts of spirituality in the workplace are whether organisational and individual patterns of spirituality are associated with the distribution of work values, what impact they have on the achievement of employees and the organisation as a whole and what the mediating factors are (well-being, interpretations of work or relationships between fellow-workers). Further questions are how spirituality in the workplace promotes employee satisfaction, cooperation at work and joint work performance (Milliman et al., 2003; Pawar, 2009; Karakas, 2010), and how it can eventually become a source of social capital for a community.

Spirituality in this sense primarily has to do with the individual's search for answers to ontological questions and for meaning, during which they try to locate their own existence – and, of course, their work – in the universe, often within a transcendent framework (Rosta & Földvári, 2014). When it comes to measurement, spirituality certainly proves to be an intangible concept, different from the much more firmly established concept of religiosity, which can be measured by specific indicators of religious practice. According to research on students' spirituality, increasing spiritual awareness during one's university years is a developmental process which often interprets and integrates changes in other fields of life, including professional socialisation (Astin et al., 2011). As the anticipating phase of professional socialisation usually begins before students formally enter higher education (Huber, 1991; Weidman et al., 2001), it also deserves some investigation. Denominational secondary schools deliberately lay great emphasis on making their students conscious of spiritual perspectives when preparing them for career choices and for finding a purpose in life (Morvai & Sebestyén, 2014). Whether their decisions will really reflect that sensitivity is still an open question, even if those students have already undergone self-selection when they entered secondary school.

## GRADUATES FROM DIFFERENT SCHOOL SECTORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Having looked at both the history of research into the comparison of students of different sectors and contemporary studies in Central Europe, we came to the conclusion that research most often deals with the comparison of secondary students' academic achievement (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Sander & Krautman, 1995; Pusztai, 2004; 2009) as well as possibilities for helping disadvantaged or minority students to avoid failure and achieve success (Greeley, 1982; Evans & Schwab, 1995; Neal, 1997; York, 1996; Frigy & Albert-Lőrincz, 2013). In our search for the explanation for student achievement we focused on how students' careers were affected by school sector. We can provide an excellent control for cross-sectional student surveys if we are able to compare the long-term academic progress and development of students coming from different sectors. A suitable time for the first control is a few years after leaving school, as university students' choices are no longer forced by the norms of their former schools and we will have little difficulty distinguishing superficial, conformist adaptation from internalised models of behaviour. One important research trend analyses the external and long-term impacts of school sectors (Greeley, 1963; Brinig & Garnett, 2014; Evans & Schwab, 1995). The study of external impacts follows the changes in health and crime indices in the environments of denominational students, whereas research on long-term impacts focuses on intersectoral differences in entrance to higher education, behaviour as citizens and commencement of employment (Evans & Schwab, 1995; Neal, 1997; Wolf et al., 2001; Lauglo & Tormod, 2006; Pusztai, 2009). Some authors have come to the conclusion that students of denominational schools perform better even after the impacts of social background variables were filtered out (Pusztai, 2009). The explanation is either sought in the domain of religion and spirituality in the broad sense, (Greeley & Rossi, 1966; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Finke, 2003; Astin et al., 2011) or it highlights the role of special values, norms, time dispositions and interpretations of work and free time, all of which can be acquired in a social setting (Coleman, 1988; Pusztai, 2004).

### QUESTIONS AND DATA FOR ANALYSIS

Research involving higher education students rarely has the capacity to provide an analysis of their pre-university academic careers of sufficient depth to shed enough light on the particular school sector. Therefore comparison of students coming from different sectors is really exceptional. Our research, relying on comparative international surveys, has laid special emphasis on this aspect as in the cross-border educational region we surveyed<sup>1</sup> it was non-state-sector schools that filled the institutional gap in the field of secondary studies after the political transformation.

Like most other studies, we make a distinction between the state and non-state sectors, and, within the non-state sector, between institutions mostly financed and – in return – controlled in certain respects by the state, and absolutely independent institutions.

<sup>1</sup> We launched our research on the region comprising the cross-border areas of Hungary, Ukraine and Romania at the turn of the millennium and it is still continuing under the auspices of the Center for Higher Education Research and Development (CHERD-Hungary) at the University of Debrecen (Kozma&Pusztai, 2006; Pusztai, 2011).

In Hungary, approximately one fifth of public education institutions belong to the non-state sector.<sup>2</sup> Owing to the different nature of nation state traditions in Romania and Ukraine, the role of churches in education is different there. The denominations representing the majority Romanian and Ukrainian population have not laid claim to institutions of public education; church-run schools are mainly related to national minorities.<sup>3</sup>

All over Europe, states demand uniform education requirements and a common curricular framework as a condition for financing institutions of public education, so that citizens have the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for employment (Pusztai, 2004). In Hungary, church and foundation-run schools are also subsidised by the state. The schools of minority Hungarians, however, are not financed by the Ukrainian and Romanian states but receive support from Hungary.

Our analysis is based on the combined database from the second phase of the TESSCEE survey (Teacher Education Students Survey in Central and Eastern Europe II.) conducted in the higher education Partium region in the border region of Ukraine, Romania and Hungary as well as in the Serbian province of Vojvodina, and the IESA survey (Institutional Effect on Students' Achievement in Higher Education). Our questionnaire was completed by 1729 full-time students, including 572 teacher education students within the framework of the SZAKTÁRNET project (TÁMOP-4.1.2.B.2-13/1-2013-0009) in the autumn of 2014.<sup>4</sup>

Almost one-fifth (18.4%) of our respondents entered higher education as graduates of denominational schools<sup>5</sup>, while only 1% came from other private institutions. The proportion of former denominational students varied by country: whereas one sixth of Hungarian and Romanian respondents came from denominational schools, one third did so in Ukraine (in the Subcarpathian region). Among teacher education students alone nearly one fourth (23.3%) came from denominational schools in contrast to other students among whom the proportion was lower (15.9%). The difference was even more striking when we broke down the sample's church school graduates by their field of study: a very high proportions (42%) were studying to be teachers. The corresponding rate is lower among state school graduates: 31% of them continued their studies in teacher education. It can be concluded that denominational schools in the region play a crucial role in supplying universities with future teachers.

From our point of view it is also significant which school type students are trained

2 In the academic year 2012-2013, 22% of grammar schools were church schools and 19% were private schools or run by foundations. As for secondary technical schools, 10% were church schools, 27% were private or run by foundations. 19% of grammar school students attended church schools and 5% attended private or foundation schools; with secondary technical school students the corresponding figures were 8% and 23%, respectively. 13% of primary schools were church schools, 5% were private or run by foundations. The proportion of primary school pupils attending church schools and private or foundation schools were 12% and 2%, respectively.

3 In Romania, in the year 2012-2013, 22% of kindergartens, 1.1% of primary schools and 4.5% of secondary schools belonged to the private sector. Owing to orthodox education traditions, church schools are classified as vocational state schools, yet there are also church schools classified as private independent. In the year indicated above, out of the 73 functioning private church schools there were 15 where the language of instruction was Hungarian (Romania, Institutul National de Statistica, Sistemul Educational in Romania, Bucharest, 2014). As in Ukraine the regulation of private education is somewhat deficient; there are only 205 independent schools, which are labelled as profit-oriented, accounting for 1% of secondary schools and 0.5% of secondary students (Association of Kyiv Private Schools). Most Hungarian church schools belong to this category.

4 For details of the survey, see the Preface.

5 Romanian and Ukrainian statistics classify church schools as foundation-run institutions; in the present study we regard them as church (denominational) schools because of their ideological background.

for. Although the proportion of teacher education students training to be subject teachers (in upper primary and secondary education, ISCED 2-3) was around two thirds in each of the three regions, in Hungary it was kindergarten and lower primary teacher education (ISCED 0-1) where the proportion of church school graduates was higher than statistically expected (38%), whereas in the other two countries it was subject teacher education where the rate of church school graduates was significantly higher than that of state school graduates. The differences cannot be attributed to the characteristics of the available types of training. The sector of the institution of higher education does not influence the choices of students from various school sectors, i.e. graduates of denominational secondary schools in the region do not insist on continuing their studies in a denominational institution of higher education. One of the reasons might be that the variety of training offered by the region's denominational HE institutions – attended by only 1.5% of our respondents – is rather limited, so what really matters is the sector of the secondary school.

Since we wanted to find out about the characteristics of different school sector graduates who continued their studies in teacher education and other fields, we established four student categories: state school graduates in fields other than teacher education (TE), church school graduates in fields other than teacher education, state school graduates in teacher education, and church school graduates in teacher education. In this paper we will be comparing the demographic and social features as well as the academic careers of those groups and will be attempting to establish predictors for the assessment of certain dimensions of their future performance as teachers.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL FEATURES OF THE STUDENT GROUPS

It is essential to analyse the composition of the respondents in the region. On the one hand, our data confirm the previously noted tendency for teacher education to be more attractive to women than to men in each of the three countries. On the other hand, the gap between the sexes is not so wide – it does not rise above 10% – in the Hungarian sample as in the other two countries. The reason may be that in Hungarian teacher education the share of subject teacher education, which has a relatively strong appeal to men, is greater. As Hungary has seen some recent government measures aiming to increase the prestige of the teaching profession, and the proportion of men is a sensitive indicator of changes in prestige in any profession, it will be worth following gender distribution in teacher education in the next few years. In this respect, we did not find intersectoral differences significant, although the percentage of male teacher education students was slightly higher (21.2%) among church school graduates than among state school graduates (18.2%). However slight the difference, the figure is over the critical one-fifth ratio (Drudy et al., 2005).

*Table 1. Respondents' gender by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (column percentage).*

	State school graduates in fields other than TE	Church school graduates in fields other than TE	State school graduates in TE	Church school graduates in TE
Male	32.3	30.2	18.2	21.2
Female	67.7	69.8	<b>81.8</b>	78.8
N=	899	172	434	132

The underlined figures indicate that the percentage in the given cell is higher than expected in a random distribution. Level of significance: p=0.000

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

The distribution of students by their former places of residence clearly shows that teacher education students come from lower-status areas than other students. This is in line with our earlier research, but it is an important novelty that church school graduates come from an even less urban background than state school graduates. Relying on our data from Hungary, Romania and Ukraine, we have already pointed out that denominational schools, which are very often boarding schools, play a major role in overcoming inequalities rooted in places of residence (Pusztai, 2004). Our present data also reveals that denominational schools are more intent on guiding students from a rural background towards teacher education than state schools. At the same time, as a larger proportion of graduates opt for teacher education from the denominational sector, they are overrepresented there regardless of their place of residence (e.g. 30.5% of church school graduates from cities study to become a teacher, whereas only 21.8% of state school graduates from cities do so). This correlation holds true in each of the three surveyed countries, with a smaller gap between the two student groups in Hungary than in Ukraine. Romanian teacher education institutions also have more church school graduates from a rural background, while in other fields of study it is denominational graduates from cities that are overrepresented.

*Table 2. Respondents' places of residence at the age of 14 by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (column percentage).*

	State school graduates in fields other than TE	Church school graduates in fields other than TE	State school graduates in TE	Church school graduates in TE
Rural	27.5	30.1	<b>50.5</b>	<b>64.3</b>
Small town	<b>40.1</b>	<b>45.2</b>	29.8	21.7
City	<b>32.3</b>	24.7	19.7	14

The underlined figures indicate that the percentage in the given cell is higher than expected in a random distribution. Level of significance: p=0.000

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

Research in recent decades has shown that parents' education levels are lower among teachers than among other degree holders (Ferge et al., 1972; Nagy, 1997). Our entire

present sample, as well as the Romanian and Ukrainian subsamples, suggest that the education level of parents of students entering teacher education from the church sector is even lower. However, in the Hungarian subsample, church school graduates' fathers have a slightly lower, while their mothers have a slightly higher, level of education than the parents of their peers from state schools, so on the whole, parents' education level indices are somewhat higher in the church sector. It is an issue of debate whether it is mothers' or fathers' education that determines the individual's future social status and cultural activity more powerfully. Longitudinal studies carried out before the expansion of higher education concluded that mothers' education usually influenced their children's plans for higher education and the cultural climate of their environments, while fathers' education influenced their future professional status (Róbert, 1990). In our present sample, the fathers of Hungarian teacher education students coming from either sector had a lower level of education than the fathers of other students, but from the church sector it was the children of relatively better educated mothers that entered teacher education.

*Table 3. Parents' education by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (column percentage).*

	State school graduates in fields other than TE	Church school graduates in fields other than TE	State school graduates in TE	Church school graduates in TE
Primary	6.2	9.6	10.5	9.7
Secondary	53.4	44.1	54.1	61.1
Higher education	40.4	46.3	35.5	29.2

Level of significance:  $p=0.000$

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

Another important characteristic of a student group is the quality of their previous school careers. Over half of the Hungarian students entered higher education from four-year grammar schools. The proportion of students from this school type is higher among teacher education students than among students of other fields in the church sector. In the state sector, students coming from secondary technical schools are overrepresented (20%), whereas in the church sector it is students from six- and eight-year grammar schools that are present in an outstandingly large proportion (22%). The difference is essentially rooted in the intersectoral differences within the school system and applies equally to students at teacher education and other institutions. In Romania and Ukraine, students from each school sector have their distinctive school type patterns. The most typical ones in the church sector are grammar schools with a focus on humanities and languages. During their secondary studies, over half of the students had extra private lessons, which was more common among students aspiring for fields other than teacher education. Private lessons preparing for language exams were mostly taken by state school students aspiring to take non-teaching degrees, whereas private lessons preparing for entrance exams and better marks were mainly taken by state school students aspiring to take a degree in teaching. Denominational students wanted or could afford to turn to private education to a somewhat lesser extent.



## RELIGIOSITY AND EDUCATIONAL VALUES

Pre-millennium surveys on the religiosity of teachers showed that a somewhat larger number of respondents from the young age groups identified themselves as religious. This was because during the decades of socialism practising believers had been kept away from teaching, both by selection and self-selection (Gereben, 1995; Nagy, 2002). Data from after the millennium showed an increase in religiosity among teacher education students (Jancsák, 2015; Pusztai, 2012). Religious self-identification is certainly a task that depends on the context, therefore its use in international comparative analyses demands a certain amount of caution. Owing to the invisible influence of various reference groups, the items of the scale can have different meanings to communities that experience religion with different intensity (Pusztai & Fényes, 2014). Our data do not only confirm that applicants for teacher education are generally more religious and denominational school graduates are overrepresented among them, but they also reveal that a relatively high proportion of denominational students who apply for teacher education are actually practising church members. This statement also holds true in each regional subsample, in which between one fifth and one third of church school graduates who study in fields other than teacher education identify themselves as practising church members, whereas among teacher education students the corresponding rate varies between over a half and nearly two thirds. That is to say, differences in religiosity between teacher education and other students are greater among church school than among state school graduates.

*Table 4. Religious self-identification by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (column percentage).*

	State school graduates in fields other than TE	Church school graduates in fields other than TE	State school graduates in TE	Church school graduates in TE
Practising church member	9.1	<b><u>33.8</u></b>	<b><u>32</u></b>	<b><u>60.8</u></b>
Religious in his/her own way	40.7	45.7	46	34.4
Uncertain	8.7	7.9	7.1	3.2
Non-religious	<b><u>31.8</u></b>	7.9	10.9	.8
Atheist	<b><u>9.7</u></b>	4.6	4	.8
N=	858	151	422	125

The underlined figures indicate that the percentage in the given cell is higher than expected in a random distribution. Level of significance:  $p=0.000$

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

As regards religious practice, in accordance with respondents' self-identification, one end of the scale is state school graduates in fields other than teacher education, and the other end is church school graduates in teacher education. However, there are slight differences between the individual countries. In Hungary, state school graduates in

teacher education are less active in their personal and collective religious practice than the corresponding student groups in the other two regions<sup>6</sup>, but they are more active than state school graduates in other fields. In the light of sociological research carried out in this age group it is no surprise that personal religious practice is more widespread than collective, but it is to be noted that the discrepancy between the two is the smallest among church school graduates in teacher education and the largest among church school graduates in other fields. On the whole, it is teacher education students whose personal and collective religious practice shows the smallest discrepancy.

*Table 5. Personal and collective religious practice by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (column percentage).*

	State school graduates in fields other than TE	Church school graduates in fields other than TE	State school graduates in TE	Church school graduates in TE
<i>Prays</i>				
Often	40.6	<b><u>76.3</u></b>	<b><u>73.1</u></b>	<b><u>91.8</u></b>
Rarely	<b><u>19.1</u></b>	11.5	11.8	5.7
Never	<b><u>40.3</u></b>	12.2	15.1	2.5
N=	837	156	417	122
<i>Goes to church</i>				
Regularly	15.9	<b><u>45.9</u></b>	<b><u>50</u></b>	<b><u>83.6</u></b>
Rarely	<b><u>45.8</u></b>	43.3	35.3	12.5
Never	<b><u>38.3</u></b>	10.8	14.7	3.9
N=	845	157	422	128

The underlined figures indicate that the percentage in the given cell is higher than expected in a random distribution. Level of significance:  $p=0.000$  in both data sets

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

The analysis of educational values in this paper can provide us with significant information in several respects. When young adults are asked how important they think certain characteristics are when it comes to bringing up the next generation, researchers assume that the answers will contain a list of characteristics that are constructed and viewed as valuable by respondents' social milieu (family members, schoolmates and friends as they reflect upon one another). The items will obviously include goals to be achieved during one's career and ways of behaviour which lead to these goals (Bocsi, 2015b). During the factor analysis of educational values we looked for a hidden typology which can be identified in our respondents' thinking through the detection of the co-occurrence of variables. In the end, we identified the following types<sup>7</sup> of students' educational value orientation: (1) adapting humanistic, (2) traditional collective, (3) pragmatic individualistic. The ideal of the adapting humanistic type consists of several universal collective values and the tolerant acceptance of others; they would in fact educate

<sup>6</sup> Of course this is in line with data on the religious practice of the entire population in each country.

<sup>7</sup> Factors account for 50.93% of the variance. The comparison of group averages was done with standardised factor scores.

their students to become constructive conformists. The ideal of the traditional collective type is the altruistic, loyal and committed member of a traditional (religious) community, whereas pragmatic individualists would encourage concentrated and persistent action to promote self-fulfilment.

Relying on relevant literature, we predicted that teacher education students' educational value preferences would be located at the intersection of traditional and universal values (Bocsi, 2015b). Values described as adapting humanistic, closer to the universal end of the scale, were more typical of the rather miscellaneous group of other students. Teacher education students in our sample were predominantly inclined towards traditional collective values, which were unanimously preferred by church school graduates and partly by state school graduates, who were also attached to pragmatic individualistic values. Focusing on the differences by country we found that in the Hungarian sample the proportion of state school graduates who turned away from traditional collective values and replaced them with pragmatic individualistic ones was much higher than in the full sample.

*Table 6. Educational value factor preferences by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (means of standardised factor scores).*

Sector and field of study	Adapting humanistic	Traditional collective	Pragmatic individualistic
State school graduates in fields other than TE	.038	-.090	.025
Church school graduates in fields other than TE	.012	.032	-.201
State school graduates in TE	-.010	.048	.019
Church school graduates in teacher education	-.265	.328	-.103
Total	-.003	-.003	-.009
ANOVA	0.05	0.001	NS

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

Examining the correlation between students' religiosity and their educational value preferences, we found that the adapting humanistic type was overrepresented among those who are religious in their own way, as was the traditional collective type among practising church members and the pragmatic individualistic type among definitely non-religious students.

## STUDENT GROUPS' MOTIVES FOR CAREER CHOICE

The choice of a degree course at an institution of higher education is, on the one hand, a long-term decision influenced by one's value orientation, disposition and motivation and, on the other hand, a partially rational decision made under the force of circumstances perceived by students and their families and based on the rational consideration of

available resources and opportunities at the time of leaving secondary school (Boudon, 1998). Before the expansion of higher education, the decision to enter higher education appeared as a central outcome indicator in studies of education sociology, but since then it has become a more complex issue and the focus of research has shifted to interpretations related to the choice of institution, the location of the place of study and the planned duration of studies.

Our respondents appeared to be much more committed to their particular fields of study than to the institutions, to which the Ukrainian respondents showed the least attachment. We applied factor analysis to detect hidden patterns in arguments for entering higher education and for the choice of institution and degree course. Students' responses were finally classified into five factors<sup>8</sup> named (1) safe career, (2) following intergenerational patterns, (3) studying free of charge in one's mother tongue, (4) relationship and knowledge orientation, and (5) moratorium orientation. It took us by surprise that it was students from Hungary who gave high priority to studying free of charge in their mother tongue. This argument probably has to do with the discourse on the recent boom – also among secondary school graduates – in going abroad to study. It was also surprising that higher education as an investment in a safe career (respected profession, steady income, good employment and promotion prospects) was a typically more widespread motive among teacher education students in each of the three countries. In a minority position the significance of teacher education is obviously greater, but among students from Hungary we have never encountered such opinions before. This might be due to students' positive expectations aroused by the introduction of certain teacher education scholarships and teachers' life career models.

Our paper focuses on the teacher education input of the various sectors of public education. Among church school graduates in Hungary the most popular motives were safe career and moratorium; in Romania it was safe career, whereas in Ukraine there were no intersectoral differences in this respect.

*Table 7. Safe career as a motive for career choice by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (column percentage).*

	State school graduates in fields other than TE	Church school graduates in fields other than TE	State school graduates in TE	Church school graduates in TE
No	<u>69.8</u>	60.6	38.4	38.2
Yes	30.2	39.4	<u>61.6</u>	<u>61.8</u>
N=	533	94	281	76

The underlined figures indicate that the percentage in the given cell is higher than expected in a random distribution. Level of significance:  $p=0.000$

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

<sup>8</sup> Factors account for 63.04% of the variance.

*Table 8. Free education in one's mother tongue as a motive for career choice by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (column percentage).*

	State school graduates in fields other than TE	Church school graduates in fields other than TE	State school graduates in TE	Church school graduates in TE
No	47.7	53.2	<u>56.9</u>	60.5
Yes	<u>52.3</u>	46.8	43.1	39.5
N=	533	94	281	76

The underlined figures indicate that the percentage in the given cell is higher than expected in a random distribution. Level of significance:  $p=0.029$

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

As for intergenerational patterns, relationship and knowledge orientation, and moratorium orientation, there were no significant differences among the groups, although state school graduates in teacher education were overrepresented with respect to the last motive (it was mentioned by two thirds of them). An outstanding difference between countries is that Romanian and Hungarian teacher education students mentioned a safe career as the main argument for entering higher education, whereas in Ukraine the same opinion was only characteristic of state school graduates in teacher education. The moratorium-oriented attitude was outstandingly typical among Hungarian state school graduates in teacher education.

## INDICATORS PREDICTING SUCCESS

During our recent research we have attempted to establish the concept of student learning outcome in higher education, and identify its indicators (Pusztai, 2011; Pusztai & Kovács, 2015). We have been searching for predictors showing the degree of success students are likely to achieve in their future jobs. In our view, some of the most important predictors are attitude to work in general and one's chosen career in particular, as well as students' interpretations of these. Apart from generally accepted outcome indicators, there are some special predictors useful in the analysis of the teaching profession such as commitment to one's career, tolerance towards outsiders and interpretation of work.

The majority (60%) of responding teacher education students would definitely like to work as teachers, nearly one third (27.5%) of them thought they were likely to do so and slightly over one tenth (12.5%) of them would rather work in other fields or were still undecided. No more than a quarter of the respondents found it possible that they would abandon their teaching careers within ten years. However, this varied from country to country: while less than one fifth of Hungarian and Romanian respondents planned to give up teaching, in Ukraine the corresponding rate was 50%. This was probably due to the feeling of insecurity because of the political crisis and economic recession at the time of the survey. Although intersectoral differences remained below significance level, there was a noticeable persistence – almost a tendency – among church school graduates, as only 26.6% of them planned to give up teaching as opposed to 29.9% of state school graduates. Half of those persisting in the teaching profession and one third of those planning to give it up were practising church members.

Our survey mapped tolerance levels by asking respondents about their attitudes towards eight different student groups. The attitudes were examined in three dimensions: acceptance as fellow students, flatmates or boyfriend/girlfriend. We presumed that the closer the relationship, the greater the distance kept from that particular group. The eight groups, selected with the reality of students' social environments in mind, were the following: Roma, national majority and national minority students, fellow nationals in a minority, foreign students, students with disabilities and low-status students.<sup>9</sup>

As regards the number of outsider groups acceptable in the given forms of relationship, students were the most open towards fellow students (6.2), followed by flatmates (4.9) and they were the least tolerant when it came to acceptance as boyfriend/girlfriend (3.7). All surveyed student groups produced the same pattern, i.e. the closer the relationship, the greater the distance kept from outsider groups. As for the individual countries, our Hungarian and Romanian sample produced the same result, but, surprisingly, Ukrainians were less tolerant towards fellow students than flatmates. Above all, they wanted to avoid their own country's majority and other minority students, suggesting that they would have difficulty accepting the multi-ethnic composition of their places of study. This can be interpreted as a sign of their fear of losing the opportunity to study in their mother tongue. Romanian students were the most open towards fellow students (6.5) and flatmates (5.5), while Ukrainians towards girlfriends/boyfriends (4.1). Hungarians appeared to be quite reserved towards flatmates (4.7) and boyfriends/girlfriends (3.4).

During our analysis we formed indices from the items of each relationship type; these were then summarised to form total indices, which were used to calculate standardised z-scores<sup>10</sup>. The sample group averages of the variables constructed through this process were then compared. When comparing the tolerance levels of teacher education and other students, we found that the former group was significantly more tolerant in all respects. The comparison of teacher education students coming from different school sectors revealed that church school graduates were on the whole more tolerant than average. They were more tolerant than state school graduates in accepting others as flatmates or boyfriends/girlfriends, but they were less open when it came to fellow students. When we looked at our data broken down into countries it became obvious that the reserve observed towards outsider fellow students was due to the results of the Ukrainian subsample. The explanation may lie in the conflict-ridden political climate there and government policy which threatens to restrict national minorities' rights to education and the use of their mother tongue. As for indicators of religiosity, it was frequent churchgoing that was the most associated with tolerance.

<sup>9</sup> Our questionnaire also included the category religious student, but this was excluded from our analysis so that there would be no distortions in favour of church school graduates.

<sup>10</sup> Standardised scores were calculated by forming z-scores which showed the extent and direction of the deviation from the mean. Their value was positive if the individual was more tolerant than average, it was negative when they were less tolerant and it was 0 when the tolerance level was around average.

*Table 9. Tolerance towards various student groups by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (means of standardised factor scores).*

	<b>Fellow student</b>	<b>Flatmate</b>	<b>Boyfriend/ girlfriend</b>	<b>All relationships</b>
State school graduates in fields other than TE	-.027	-.103	-.057	-.084
Church school graduates in fields other than TE	-.064	-.079	-.172	-.109
State school graduates in TE	.064	.136	.118	.130
Church school graduates in TE	.026	.221	.124	.131
Total	-.001	-.007	-.007	-.009
ANOVA	NS	0.000	0.004	0.005

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

Expectations about one's future work and the character of work orientation do not only reflect one's value system but can also predict one's future professional status and performance. Whether student expectations are individualistic or community-centred, material or post-material can not only reveal students' initial attitudes at the time they enter higher education but also their orientation shaped by the type of institution and the place and field of study (Veroszta, 2010). During the factor analysis of our data we identified five constructions of ideal work.<sup>11</sup> As we proceeded with our data, we saw recurring interpretations, which attracted students in varying degrees (Pusztai, 2009; 2011). In our present survey the most popular interpretation was the experience-centred concept of work. This interpretation looks upon work as an interesting way of spending time and a source of experiences. The demand for absorbing tasks that offer a sense of achievement and for a pleasant working environment calls to mind the characteristics of free time activities rather than the organisational hierarchy of work. The second most popular interpretation was the harmony-seeking one, which emphasises conflict-free work and tries to preserve the harmony of the individual and their closest relationship networks. The third interpretation on the popularity list was the altruistic image of work. The most highly appreciated aspects of work in this case were responsibility, helping others, achievement, and benefiting the wider community. The opportunity for meeting people and doing teamwork was also among the priorities. In comparison to our earlier research it was a novelty that this time the need for autonomous decision-making was the strongest in this particular interpretation. The next interpretation, the independence-seeking image of work underlined liberation from the organisational structure, the main expectations being flexible working hours and no inconvenience related to work. The least appreciated ideal of work was the career-oriented interpretation with expectations of high income, promotion and job security.

When we made comparisons by field of study alone, the most popular interpretations among teacher education students were the altruistic and harmony-seeking concepts of work. Intersectoral comparisons of the entire sample showed that church school graduates

<sup>11</sup> We compared group averages with standardised factor scores.

preferred experience-centred and harmony-seeking work and they attached the least importance to the career-oriented interpretation. When we compared the four groups of our sample, we found that church school graduates in teacher education stood out, with the altruistic concept being the most popular with them. The same interpretation was the least attractive to church school graduates in other fields. This is in line with the difference between the two groups in terms of religiosity. The experience-centred interpretation was a priority among church school graduates in teacher education, and it was the least important to state school graduates in the same field. The most career-oriented group was state-school graduates in other fields. Independence was sought by church school graduates in teacher education rather than by their peers from state schools. The adjustability of work and private life was more important to church school than state school graduates in other fields. All indicators of religiosity were favourable for the altruistic and harmony-seeking interpretations, whereas independent work was the ideal of definitely non-religious or non-practising students. The career- and experience-oriented concepts of work were outstandingly popular with non-religious and definitely non-religious groups, whose members do not, or only rarely, have any personal or communal religious practice.

*Table 10. Expectations about future work by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies (means of standardised factor scores).*

	Altruistic	Experience-centred	Career-oriented	Independence-seeking	Harmony-seeking
State school graduates in fields other than TE	.476	.564	.553	.531	.496
Church school graduates in fields other than TE	.457	.638	.505	.476	.629
State school graduates in TE	.558	.492	.426	.417	.520
Church school graduates in TE	.691	.660	.309	.606	.617
Total	.516	.559	.491	.500	.526
ANOVA	.000	.006	.000	.001	.020

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

As we can see, students pursuing the same field of study share their top preferences of work-related values: the most important value for teacher education students is altruism and for other students, experience-centred work. However, the second place was taken by different items: both state-school graduates in teacher education and church school graduates in other fields opted for the harmonious and family-friendly nature of work. The other two groups differed considerably, both from each other and from the other groups: state school graduates in other fields put the career-oriented approach in second place, whereas church school graduates in other fields opted for the experience-centred approach. There were marked differences in the least popular interpretations as well. Altruism was least popular among all students who did not study to be teachers, but among teacher education students the answer depended on the sector again: independence was the least important value to state school graduates and career to church school graduates.



*Table 10. Popularity of the characteristics of work regarded as ideal by secondary school sector and field of higher education studies.*

	1	2	3	4	5
State school graduates in fields other than TE	experience-centred	career-oriented	independent	harmonious	altruistic
Church school graduates in fields other than TE	experience-centred	harmonious	career-oriented	independent	altruistic
State school graduates in TE	altruistic	harmonious	experience-centred	career-oriented	independent
Church school graduates in TE	altruistic	experience-centred	harmonious	independent	career-oriented

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1729)

Church school graduates in teacher education showed special features in this respect as well. The preference for the altruistic and experience-centred interpretations and the almost complete neglect of the career-oriented approach suggest the birth of a sense of vocation that is based on spiritual resources.

### SUMMARY

During our earlier research what captured our attention was that the proportion of church school graduates and students practising their religion was higher among teacher education students than among students in other fields of study. In our present study we have investigated whether church school graduates in teacher education have any distinctive features as opposed to state school graduates in the same field, and if they do, what those features are. According to our findings, among church school graduates in teacher education the proportion of male students is higher, there are more students from villages and parents' education level is lower than average. It must be noted, though, that regardless of school sector, teacher education students' fathers have a lower level of education, and in the church sector it is the children of better educated mothers that enter teacher education. Church school graduates have taken fewer private lessons, which is most probably due to their lower socioeconomic status and the lower status of their places of residence.

Students entering teacher education are more religious than other students, and church school graduates are overrepresented among them. There is a higher proportion of practising church members among church school graduates who enter teacher education. Teacher education students from denominational schools prefer traditional collective values, whereas their peers from state schools partly opt for traditional collective, and partly for pragmatic individualistic values as their guiding principles in the education of future generations. When trying to identify predictors of success we found the most important ones were commitment to the teaching profession, tolerance towards outsider groups and the conception of work. Most respondents would like to find employment in the teaching profession and slightly fewer church than state school graduates plan to give up teaching. Church school graduates in teacher education are generally more tole-

rant than average and while they are more open regarding acceptance of an individual as a flatmate and boyfriend/girlfriend, their tolerance of the diversity of fellow students varies by region. They display special features with respect to work-related values as well. The preference of the altruistic and experience-centred characteristics and the almost complete neglect of the career-oriented approach suggest the birth of a sense of vocation that is based on spiritual resources.

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## TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

### AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' CHILD-REARING VALUES IN A CROSS-BORDER AREA

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#### ABSTRACT

The aim of our study is to give a theoretical background of TE students' child-rearing values and analyse their preference-systems with the help of a quantitative analysis. We suppose that the system of teachers' child-rearing preferences is an important research question because it is one of the most important elements of the institutional milieu. Children's way of thinking changes during the school years. The influence of their teachers plays an important role in this process even if this is not the only factor. In our empirical research we used the TESSCEE II. 2014 database. The database included 635 teacher candidate students from cooperating higher education institutes (in Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, and Serbia). Our analysis examined the background and explanatory variables regarding differences in teacher candidates' child-rearing values.

#### THE CONCEPT OF CHILD-REARING VALUES

One of several areas of value studies is the investigation of child-rearing values. Even though there are many theoretical papers and studies available on the subject of child-rearing principles, we rarely encounter an accurate definition. The Childcare Value Scale uses five criteria to measure child-rearing values, which are related to parental roles, positive and negative impressions of child-rearing, the need for support from others in the parents' environment and parents' feelings for and opinions about their child (Mori et al., 2012). According to Mori et al., this definition is made up of personal opinions, values and expectations related to how one cares and provides for one's child (Mori et al., 2012). However, parental aspirations are not included in this definition, although they are important because the upbringing of a child can be an area for self-actualisation, and the personality traits which parents would like their child to have may be the guarantor of success. In their studies Friedlmeier et al. also lay emphasis on the factor that indicates what abilities parents want to develop in their child (Friedlmeier et al., 2008). These abilities presumably help progress on channels of social mobility, or social reconversion. Parental aspirations are, however, not necessarily linked to such progress in every case, as one of the parents' goals might be integration into the communities in contact with the family.

## CHILD-REARING VALUES AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The formal settings of child care indicate the cultural codes of the external environment, but they can also differ from them. These differences may be due to the system of formal settings or the preferences of the institutions. In terms of schools, we can state that pedagogical trends, the head teachers' way of doing things, the sector (i.e. private, public or denominational) and the professed ideologies all influence the prevailing concept of the child, and thus child-rearing values, as well. There is a great divergence in the different concepts of children which appear in different political systems: the behaviour expected from students in a dictatorship is markedly different from what is expected in a democracy. Various questions arise in connection with the child-rearing values of institutions. One of the important questions is what impact potential differences in the values of the family and the institution have on pedagogical work done at schools or the relationship between parents and teachers. Another important question is whether potential differences in the values of the parents and the institution are the result of the parents' voluntary choice (if not, then we may allow for some kind of mechanism that resembles double socialisation.) The influence of educational institutions is an extremely important topic of investigation, as children spend a considerable amount of their time at school. The mind-set and pedagogical practice of preschool teachers, and primary and secondary education teachers, as we have seen in the case of the family, all affect children: their child-rearing values fundamentally determine their ideas related to students; furthermore, they have an impact on communication during classes, as well as their handling of hierarchy, and probably even on the evaluation processes. These scales of values are principally important in the investigation of the milieu of institutions (Buchbinder et al., 2006). We should avoid, however, modelling these milieus solely on the basis of teachers' influences.

The characteristics of formal educational systems, such as their highly hierarchical and regulated nature, expect children to have special abilities. To fulfil the expectations of such institutions, one requires abilities that can be utilised, among others, in Weberian bureaucratic structures. Some social classes adapt to ideas and practices expected in formal education more easily, which may also influence their success.

Friedlmeier et al. emphasise that school employees' working conditions and children's sociocultural background also shape child-rearing values (Friedlmeier et al., 2008). Both Hungarian and international studies have shed light upon the fact that there are differences in men's and women's child-rearing values (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005; Myyry, 2008; Ryckman & Houston, 2003). This implies that the child care patterns of institutions are also determined by the gender ratio of teachers, which may cause a change towards female preferences on lower ISCED levels, where the ratio of female teachers is more significant compared to other levels. The massive presence of traditional gender roles may be expressed in the fact that institutional ideas and practices for boys and girls are different.

Teachers' child-rearing values are one of the most important bases of the institutional scale of values. These structures are influenced by intellectuality as well as social background (a middle class background in this case). Large-scale studies have shown that some items (e.g. discipline, cordiality, good conduct, religious belief, thrift) are preferred by groups of lower status, while others (e.g. creativity/fantasy, leadership skills, determination, tolerance) are related to higher status or intellectuality. Generational

differences can also be seen from research results: older people prefer so called “world-sustaining”, while younger people “world-saving” values (Szabados, 1995). International studies have explored the differences between countries as well as the characteristics of different social classes (e.g. Mori et al., 2012; Friedlmeier et al., 2008). Suizzo has found in a sample from the United States that, among other things, factors related to traditional thinking and benevolence are less likely to be present among people with higher levels of education (Suizzo, 2007).

The value preferences of Hungarian society show rational, secular and closed patterns (Keller, 2009), which, according to the research by Hofstede, are accompanied by masculine, individualistic elements as well as a relative lack of toleration for hierarchies and insecurity (The Hofstede Centre, n.d.). If we analyse child-rearing values, honesty, sense of responsibility, independence and respect towards others are the most accepted items, whereas fidelity, imagination, religious belief and leadership skills come at the end of the list (Csurgó & Kristóf, 2012). Hungarian society's child-rearing values seem to be rather community-oriented and secular according to the received data, while we cannot find signs of performance-orientation among them to the same extent. If we analyse the Hungarian educational system as an important context of child-rearing values, we can emphasise its selectivity and formal, Prussian-like characteristics. With respect to the popularity of the teaching profession, it is important that we view the rather disadvantaged sociocultural background of teacher education students and the fact that the status and recognition of the teaching profession in the Hungarian labour market is far from perfect, as factors that shape the attitudes of teacher education students. This latter fact might deter some students with a status-oriented mentality from this profession.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILD-REARING VALUES IN THE LIGHT OF EMPIRICAL DATA

During our analysis we tried to discover whether there are significant correlations between the effects, also discussed in literature, and the 17 child-rearing values<sup>1</sup> which we investigated. Participants had to rate the items on a five point scale. In our empirical study we used the TESSCEE II. 2014 database of the “Szaktárnet” pedagogical panel research project, involving 635 teacher education students, who studied at one of the cooperating higher education institutions located in the cross-border area of Romania, Ukraine and Hungary, also known as the historical “Partium” region, or in the Serbian province of Vojvodina (Babeş-Bolyai University, University of Debrecen, Debrecen Reformed Theological University, Mukachevo State University, College Of Nyíregyháza, Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute, Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania, University of Novi Sad, Uzhhorod National University, University of Oradea). In our analysis we used the mean and order of each value; furthermore, we conducted an analysis of variance and, in connection with this, ANOVA tests.<sup>2</sup>

Our analysis included gender, parents' three-value level of education, place of resi-

1 The following values appeared in the survey: good conduct, cordiality, independence, hard work, honesty, sense of responsibility, patience, imagination/fantasy, respect towards others/tolerance, leadership skills, self-discipline, thrift, determination/steadfastness, religious belief, selflessness, obedience, fidelity/loyalty.

2 The results of the ANOVA test can be found in Appendix.

dence at the age of 14, objective and subjective financial situation, country of the current institution and ISCED levels of future employment as explanatory variables.

Not only did we investigate the extent to which each child-rearing value is important to teacher education students, but we also explored how important these values are to the students compared to each other, which was achieved by adopting the method of ranking. The use of this method was necessary because in some cases there did not seem to be differences between values, as every value was important to teacher education students.

#### EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' CHILD-REARING VALUES

Our research findings also affirm the fact that there are differences between men's and women's child-rearing values, in accordance with the literature. In our study we found a strong correlation between the gender of the teacher education student and child-rearing values in every case; in addition, women gave higher values to the formation of each child-rearing value. We found the greatest differences with obedience, fidelity/loyalty, and respect towards others/tolerance and good conduct, which resonates with the characteristics of traditional gender roles. In contrast, the smallest differences between genders were found in thrift and leadership skills. The latter item is rather associated with male roles; thus this result also implies that the presence of social genders in contemporary child-rearing values cannot be described by traditional characteristics alone. We can attempt to explain the phenomenon on different grounds: Kovács (2014) argues that the teaching profession has essentially feminine characteristics, therefore men who wish to become teachers cannot be characterised "purely" by elements of a masculine mentality. Fényes (2014a; 2014b) points out those students' ideas about gender roles seem to diverge from traditional patterns. As for the order of child-rearing values (Table 1), a sense of responsibility came first, while religious belief was last for both genders. The greatest difference in the order can be observed in relation to fidelity/loyalty, which women ranked 4 places higher. The difference for thrift and independence is three places, and both of these qualities had a higher rank in the men's list. While women ranked respect towards others higher in the order of values compared to each other, men ranked self-discipline and imagination as more important. This shows a more mixed picture than previous studies (Takács, 2008), as self-discipline and imagination were also ranked higher by men in other cases; however, independence emerges in the ratings of our respondents as a value mostly preferred by men. Leadership skills also tend to be mainly preferred by men, but in our case no significant difference could be seen between genders in this regard. Educating for thrift was ranked higher by women, and not by men, in similar studies. At the same time it is important to emphasise that these studies investigated society as a whole and did not focus on teacher education students' child-rearing values (Takács, 2008).



*Table 1. Order of teacher education students' child-rearing values by gender (means of a five-point scale).*

<b>Men (n=105)</b>		<b>Women (n=484)</b>	
sense of responsibility	4.38	sense of responsibility	4.76
independence	4.3	honesty	4.72
honesty	4.26	respect towards others/tolerance	4.69
cordiality	4.19	cordiality	4.66
respect towards others/tolerance	4.18	independence	4.65
self-discipline	4.13	good conduct	4.63
good conduct	4.12	patience	4.55
patience	4.1	self-discipline	4.51
imagination/fantasy	4.03	fidelity/loyalty	4.45
determination/steadfastness	3.97	determination/steadfastness	4.39
hard work	3.95	imagination/fantasy	4.38
thrift	3.95	hard work	4.33
fidelity/loyalty	3.85	obedience	4.24
selflessness	3.84	selflessness	4.22
leadership skills	3.62	thrift	4.19
obedience	3.61	leadership skills	3.87
religious belief	3.2	religious belief	3.63

Source: TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=635)

The institutions in the study are located in four countries (Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Serbia). We found a significant correlation for every child-rearing value between the country in which teacher education students studied and the extent to which they considered the need to promote each child-rearing value. Serbian students rated every child-rearing value the highest except for religious upbringing (Table 2). Respondents from all countries considered religious upbringing and leadership skills to be values that one must convey to one's child the least, while good conduct, cordiality, independence, honesty, a sense of responsibility, and respect towards others/tolerance were seen as the most important values to convey; thus it seems that child-rearing values have a universal pattern in the region. Ukrainian students thought child-rearing values were the least important. By comparing the results of students from Romanian and Hungarian institutions we found that most child-rearing values were more highly rated by Romanian students, except for hard work, a sense of responsibility, self-discipline and thrift; these differences, however, are not considerable. The greatest difference among respondents was found in religious upbringing, which received a full point better rating on a five-point scale from Romanian students than it did from Hungarian students. Religious upbringing is clearly the most important in Romania out of the four countries. It is worth noting in connection with this that previous studies have also shown that the ratio of the religious population in Romania is outstandingly high compared to other countries of the region (Kiss, 2009). 90% of teacher education students studying in Romania in the database

identified as having Hungarian nationality, which is also important because we know from literature that Hungarians in Transylvania, due to their minority status, see religiosity as one of the means of preserving their identity (Kiss, 2010). The order of child-rearing values compared to one another reveals that in Hungary, Ukraine and Serbia a sense of responsibility was ranked highest; in Romania a sense of responsibility came second, slightly behind honesty. There was a significant difference regarding cordiality, as it was ranked second by teacher education students of Ukrainian institutions, whereas students of the other countries ranked it fifth or sixth. Cordiality as a child-rearing value is one of the elements of a traditional mentality; thus it is possible that the sociocultural background of the Ukrainian subsample also influenced the position of this item. Hard work was considered more important by Hungarian students, while patience and imagination/fantasy was more important to Serbian students. Thrift had the highest position among Hungarian teacher education students, but it still only came twelfth. Fidelity/loyalty had the lowest position (13) among Hungarian students compared to other countries; it had higher but similar positions among students of other countries (8-10). According to Hungarian studies (Csurgó & Kristóf, 2012) tend to rank those four values the highest which had the first four positions in our case as well, although we can see that students of the other three countries of the sample ranked them high in a relatively similar way.

*Table 2. Order of teacher education students' child-rearing values by country of the higher education institution (means of a five-point scale).*

Hungary (n=187)		Romania (n=159)		Ukraine (n=188)		Serbia (n=63)	
sense of responsibility	4.78	honesty	4.77	sense of responsibility	4.48	sense of responsibility	4.89
honesty	4.68	sense of responsibility	4.75	cordiality	4.46	respect towards others/tolerance	4.86
independence	4.65	independence	4.69	respect towards others/tolerance	4.43	honesty	4.86
respect towards others/tolerance	4.63	respect towards others/tolerance	4.68	honesty	4.43	independence	4.81
cordiality	4.59	good conduct	4.67	independence	4.37	patience	4.78
good conduct	4.58	cordiality	4.64	good conduct	4.32	cordiality	4.75
self-discipline	4.53	patience	4.62	patience	4.25	good conduct	4.75
patience	4.46	fidelity/loyalty	4.54	self-discipline	4.22	self-discipline	4.68
hard work	4.35	self-discipline	4.52	fidelity/loyalty	4.2	imagination/fantasy	4.67
imagination/fantasy	4.35	determination/steadfastness	4.43	determination/steadfastness	4.18	fidelity/loyalty	4.63
determination/steadfastness	4.29	imagination/fantasy	4.36	hard work	4.14	selflessness	4.57
thrift	4.27	selflessness	4.3	imagination/fantasy	4.14	determination/steadfastness	4.57
fidelity/loyalty	4.23	obedience	4.22	obedience	4.13	hard work	4.52
selflessness	4.07	hard work	4.2	selflessness	3.96	thrift	4.49
obedience	3.94	thrift	4.16	thrift	3.89	obedience	4.48
leadership skills	3.65	leadership skills	3.88	leadership skills	3.85	leadership skills	4.17
religious belief	2.95	religious belief	3.86	religious belief	3.84	religious belief	3.68

Source: TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=635)

A significant correlation could be seen between several child-rearing values (good conduct, cordiality, independence, honesty, a sense of responsibility, patience, tolerance, determination/steadfastness, obedience, and fidelity/loyalty) and the ISCED level on which teacher education students will be employed. It can be observed in connection with this that students who plan to work on lower ISCED levels (i.e. preschool and primary school teachers) considered forming certain child-rearing values in future generations to be fundamentally more important (Table 3) than others. If we investigate their order of child-rearing values, we can see that most child-rearing values generally have the same position in each order; there are only four of them (good conduct, respect towards others, obedience, thrift) that show some, although only two-position, differences. Good conduct and obedience were ranked higher by preschool and primary school teacher students, while soon-to-be subject teachers ranked respect towards others and thrift more highly. This implies different ideas about children as well as the fact that teachers on lower ISCED levels expect behaviour to be more conforming.

*Table 3. Order of teacher education students' child-rearing values by the ISCED level to which their current education trains them (means of a five-point scale).*

ISCED 0-1 (n=117)		ISCED 2-3 (n=425)	
honesty	4.83	sense of responsibility	4.67
sense of responsibility	4.82	honesty	4.61
independence	4.78	respect towards others/tolerance	4.56
good conduct	4.77	independence	4.54
respect towards others/tolerance	4.75	cordiality	4.54
cordiality	4.73	good conduct	4.48
patience	4.62	patience	4.43
fidelity/loyalty	4.54	self-discipline	4.41
self-discipline	4.54	fidelity/loyalty	4.3
determination/steadfastness	4.48	determination/steadfastness	4.28
imagination/fantasy	4.43	imagination/fantasy	4.27
hard work	4.31	hard work	4.24
obedience	4.29	thrift	4.13
selflessness	4.29	selflessness	4.1
thrift	4.19	obedience	4.09
leadership skills	3.84	leadership skills	3.79
religious belief	3.63	religious belief	3.48

Source: TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=635)

Neither the father's nor the mother's level of education showed a significant correlation with child-rearing values; nor did the index of their objective financial situation. For subjective financial situation we created a binary variable<sup>3</sup>; and according to the results

<sup>3</sup> One group contained respondents who reported having everything they needed ('We have everything, we can afford some bigger expenses like holidays and we can also save up', or 'We have everything but we cannot afford bigger expenses'), and the other group contained those whose families had financial problems ('We sometimes cannot cover our living expenses' or 'It often happens that we cannot cover our living expenses').

obtained in this way, teacher education students saw their financial situation as quite favourable: only 11% said that their families had financial problems. There was a significant correlation between financial situation and child-rearing values in four cases: leadership skills, religious belief, selflessness and obedience. All of these values were more important to respondents in a better financial situation. We observed the greatest difference, almost one full value point, in the importance attached to religious upbringing (see Table 4). This is just the opposite of what Szabados (1995) found in his research targeted at Hungarian society in the 1990s: at that time religious belief was valued more by lower-status groups. Still, our sample did not only include Hungarians living in Hungary, and the role and social basis of religion may have undergone changes during the past two decades. We should also keep in mind that it was a sample of students we worked with, which was not at all representative of the whole Hungarian society. There were remarkable differences in ranking with respect to honesty, fidelity/loyalty, fantasy and thrift; the two former values were placed higher by students in a better, and the two latter by students in a worse, financial situation. On the whole, almost all child-rearing values were ranked higher by students from more well-to-do families.

*Table 4. Order of teacher education students' child-rearing values by their families' subjective financial situation (means of a five-point scale).*

<b>Well-to-do families (n=521)</b>		<b>Families facing financial problems (n=66)</b>	
sense of responsibility	4.69	sense of responsibility	4.73
honesty	4.66	respect towards others/tolerance	4.66
respect towards others/tolerance	4.6	independence	4.59
independence	4.59	honesty	4.57
cordiality	4.59	cordiality	4.53
good conduct	4.55	good conduct	4.51
patience	4.48	patience	4.48
self-discipline	4.45	self-discipline	4.41
fidelity/loyalty	4.36	imagination/fantasy	4.3
determination/steadfastness	4.33	determination/steadfastness	4.27
imagination/fantasy	4.32	fidelity/loyalty	4.24
hard work	4.28	hard work	4.12
selflessness	4.19	thrift	4.08
obedience	4.18	selflessness	3.79
thrift	4.16	obedience	3.76
leadership skills	3.86	leadership skills	3.6
religious belief	3.65	religious belief	2.79

Source: TESSCEE II, 2014 (N=635)

In our database, 54% of teacher education students came from rural areas (isolated farms or villages), 29.2% of them from small towns and only 16.8% of them from county seats or from the capital. This distinctive distribution is rooted in the region's typical settlement structure. The place of residence at the age of 14 correlated significantly with three child-rearing values (imagination, religious belief and obedience). Although most child-rearing values were more important to respondents from small towns, we found some exceptions: independence was ranked higher by respondents from county seats, and religious belief and leadership skills by respondents from villages (Table 5). With respect to the place of residence, the difference in the evaluation of religious belief was the greatest between the smallest and largest categories. Teacher education students from the capital or county seats found religious upbringing less important than their peers from villages, although by a very small margin. This phenomenon can also be detected at the level of the entire population (Takács, 2008). As for obedience, the big discrepancy was between small towns and county seats as respondents from small towns and villages considered this value much more important. Imagination was ranked highest by students from small towns, closely followed by students from county seats and the capital. Rural respondents were behind by two decimal points. A sense of responsibility was ranked the highest, regardless of place of residence. As regards imagination, there was a more significant discrepancy, as respondents from county seats ranked it five places higher than respondents from villages. This tendency, again, also applies to the entire population (Takács, 2008). There is a somewhat smaller difference – four places – in the evaluation of independence and good conduct. Independence was ranked the highest by respondents from county seats, even three places higher than by their peers from small towns. Good conduct was more appreciated by respondents from villages and small towns. Unlike in earlier research findings and owing to the special position of the region, leadership skills had the highest score in the smallest places, whereas thrift received the lowest score there. However, this bears relevance only when it comes to ranking.

*Table 5. Order of teacher education students' child-rearing values by their places of residence until 14 years of age (means of a five-point scale).*

<b>Rural area (farm or village) (n=322)</b>		<b>Small town (n=173)</b>		<b>County seat or the capital (n=98)</b>	
sense of responsibility	4.68	sense of responsibility	4.72	sense of responsibility	4.69
honesty	4.62	honesty	4.69	independence	4.64
cordiality	4.59	respect towards others/tolerance	4.65	honesty	4.62
respect towards others/tolerance	4.58	cordiality	4.63	respect towards others/tolerance	4.58
good conduct	4.56	independence	4.61	patience	4.52
independence	4.56	good conduct	4.58	cordiality	4.47
self-discipline	4.42	patience	4.54	imagination/ fantasy	4.42
patience	4.41	self-discipline	4.49	self-discipline	4.41
fidelity/loyalty	4.34	imagination/fantasy	4.44	good conduct	4.41
determination/steadfastness	4.33	fidelity/ loyalty	4.38	fidelity/loyalty	4.28
hard work	4.24	determination/steadfastness	4.36	hard work	4.24
imagination/ fantasy	4.21	hard work	4.32	determination/steadfastness	4.19
obedience	4.17	selflessness	4.22	thrift	4.15
selflessness	4.15	thrift	4.2	selflessness	4.01
thrift	4.11	obedience	4.19	obedience	3.86
leadership skills	3.87	leadership skills	3.82	leadership skills	3.69
religious belief	3.73	religious belief	3.38	religious belief	3.22

Source: TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=635)

## CONCLUSION

During our research we investigated factors that we thought, on the basis of literature, could influence child-rearing values. As we have pointed out in the theoretical part of our paper, those factors may exert their influence in opposite directions, either increasing or decreasing the importance of certain values to the individual. We observed a considerable difference between genders in their attitude to child-rearing values. The countries where the institutions were located also mattered greatly in this respect. When we analysed our data from the point of view of the ISCED level of the training, we found that future preschool and primary teachers attributed a more significant role to each child-rearing value. Classic background variables such as parents' level of education or objective financial situation did not have any real correlation with child-rearing values, although certain values were more appreciated by those whose subjective financial situation was above average. When we looked at students' places of residence at 14, we observed remarkable differences, especially when we compared respondents from villages and county seats or the capital. Our overall conclusion is that the results of our research carried out among

teacher education students in the region are not in line with the results of earlier research concerning Hungarian society. The fact that we surveyed students from various countries is only a partial explanation. Other factors lying behind the difference are the characteristics of life as an intellectual, the institutions of higher education, commitment to the teaching profession and the influence of special social background factors.

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## INTERNET RESOURCES

The Hofstede Centre (n.d.). <http://geert-hofstede.com/hungary.html> (Accessed: 24.06.2015.)

## APPENDIX

*The results of the ANOVA tests*

	Gender	Country of the current institution	ISCED-level	Father's three-value level of education	Mother's three-value level of education	Place of residence at the age of 14	Subjective financial situation	Objective financial situation
good conduct	.000	.000	.000	.659	.836	.155	.683	.463
cordiality	.000	.015	.006	.613	.067	.210	.547	.488
independence	.000	.000	.001	.227	.180	.468	.963	.877
hard work	.000	.002	.413	.483	.549	.583	.129	.924
honesty	.000	.000	.001	.351	.226	.563	.301	.755
sense of responsibility	.000	.000	.020	.330	.454	.789	.661	.536
patience	.000	.000	.015	.279	.518	.141	.931	.838
imagination/ fantasy	.000	.000	.062	.242	.783	.006	.881	.517
respect towards others/ tolerance	.000	.000	.008	.358	.783	.512	.469	.776
leadership skills	.014	.002	.644	.562	.336	.254	.041	.462
self-discipline	.000	.000	.131	.931	.119	.579	.716	.801
thrift	.013	.000	.555	.876	.802	.602	.496	.547
determination/ steadfastness	.000	.002	.023	.406	.784	.251	.602	.181
religious belief	.002	.000	.305	.935	.177	.000	.000	.253
selflessness	.000	.000	.078	.125	.450	.246	.001	.282
obedience	.000	.001	.048	.858	.217	.018	.001	.498
fidelity/loyalty	.000	.000	.006	.208	.069	.629	.287	.900



## TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND STATE OF HEALTH

Kovács, Klára

### ABSTRACT

Our study investigates teacher education students' state of health and leisure activities in a cross-border region and examines how their state of health and well-being are affected by their leisure activity patterns, health behaviour, social background variables and whether they are studying to be a teacher. We used the databases of two questionnaire surveys conducted among students of higher education in the cross-border areas of three countries in the first survey, and four in the second (N=306; N=1792). Our findings reveal that social and sporting activities help students find meaning in their lives and set goals that lead them towards personal fulfilment, whereas excessive use of alcohol produces the opposite effect. Studying to be a teacher in particular also has a positive effect, but students characterised by mostly solitary leisure activities tend to be undecided about the meaning of their lives.

### INTRODUCTION

The study of teacher education students' state of health is important for several reasons. First of all, research has shown that although the frequency of unhealthy habits is relatively low among them, their mental state is much worse than the average for their age group (Veresné Balajti, 2010). Besides, it is a cause for concern that they give a lower priority to a healthy lifestyle than the average population (Bodóczy, 1993; Rajki, 1996), although it has been proved that teachers, especially P.E. teachers, have a great influence in educating their pupils to lead a healthy lifestyle (Ménesi et al., 2013). Our study investigates teacher education students' state of health and leisure activities in a cross-border region including Hungary, Romania, Ukraine and Serbia and examines how their state of health and well-being are affected by their leisure activity patterns, health behaviour, and social background variables, and whether they are studying to be a teacher.

As a theoretical background, we took the so called positive approach of the sociology of education, which aims at the identification of social-protective factors (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) that contribute to the individual's well-being and enable them to take full social responsibility. In our opinion, social and sport-related leisure activities may function as such protective factors. However, health is also affected by risk factors such as smoking, alcohol consumption and use of drugs, all of which pose a high risk to the student age group.

For our analysis, we used the databases of two questionnaire surveys conducted among students of higher education in the cross-border areas of three countries in the first survey,

and four in the second (TESSCEE I. 2014, N=306; IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014, N=1792).<sup>1</sup> The first survey concerned only students of teacher education; the second was extended to students from other majors as well, and students from Serbia were also included. In this way, we had a broader basis for comparison.

## FACTORS PROTECTING AND PROMOTING HEALTH

A safe family background and strong friendship ties are indispensable for coping with everyday problems. If one is capable of building up a strong and efficient supportive social network relying on either parents and family or friends, this will also be beneficial to one's health. The existence – or lack – of relationships, and their quantity and quality determine one's physical and mental health, so they function as major protective factors. Young people who are involved in stable relationships are less inclined to depression, less susceptible to psychosomatic diseases and less likely to use substances that can damage their health (Kovács & Pikó, 2010).

However, peer influence, manifesting itself as peer group pressure in the course of the “initiation” process, is one of the obvious predictors of young people's substance abuse. That is why friends who smoke or consume alcohol are major risk factors in this respect. Peer influence is closely related to the restructuring of relationship networks in adolescence: there is an increasing need for independence from parents and, at the same time, peer groups play a more and more important role (Pikó, 2010). Peer groups perhaps have an even more powerful impact among students of higher education. Students no longer look upon elitist lecturers as role models but become attached to their own small communities such as sports groups or student associations, interiorising their norms, habits and value preferences (Pusztai, 2011). With all this in mind, we want to know whether students' social and other leisure activities have a positive or negative effect on their subjective assessment of their state of health.

It is well known that the beneficial effects of sport can be observed in all three dimensions (physical, mental and social) of health (Pikó & Keresztes, 2007; Brassai & Pikó, 2010), and therefore they lend themselves to subjects of study. Our earlier research results showed that those who did sports regularly in their free time had a 1.7 times higher chance of feeling healthy than those who did no sport at all, but no more than occasional involvement in sport lowered the chance of feeling healthy (Kovács, 2014). The question therefore arises of how active ways of spending free time, and doing sports in particular, affect students' health.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

The primary question of our research is what factors affect the health and well-being of teacher education students and other students who study at faculties that also offer teacher education.<sup>2</sup> We presume that social and sporting activities have a positive effect on one's complex health index and well-being, whereas solitary activities as well as hazardous forms of health behaviour produce the opposite effect.

<sup>1</sup> For details of the survey, see the Preface.

<sup>2</sup> In order to compare students who study to be teachers with those who do not, we selected those faculties that also offer teacher education and chose our sample from their population.

In our first survey we measured the participants' state of health with the General Health Questionnaire – 12, and in the second we used the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (Martos & Konkoly Thege, 2011; Robu, 2013; Brassai, 2011) to measure their well-being, and a supplemented version of the Leisure Time Activities Questionnaire to map leisure activities. Students' leisure activities were isolated with factor analysis in both surveys. To identify forms of health behaviour, we asked questions about the frequency of smoking, use of alcohol and drugs and the frequency of doing sport. The answers from both surveys were placed on a scale ranging from 0 to 100. The same was done with leisure preferences. To examine the factors affecting health and well-being, we included traditional social background variables (as explanatory variables) in our regression analysis: age, sex, place of residence, parents' education, subjective financial status, and whether the person surveyed was studying to be a teacher (this was necessary because the second survey involved other students as well).

## RESULTS

### STUDENTS' LEISURE ACTIVITIES

In our first survey, conducted among teacher education students alone, we identified six different ways of spending one's leisure time: 1. consuming – primarily hanging around in shopping centres and going to cinemas, which are often located within the shopping centres; 2. music-related and social activities – meeting and chatting online with friends, listening to music, partying etc.; 3. sporting activities – team sports, visiting sports events, doing extreme sports; 4. artistic and cultural activities – creative writing, reading, doing art, attending concerts and exhibitions, visiting museums etc.; 5. doing exercise – jogging, walking, cycling; 6. digital activities – using the computer, watching TV.<sup>3</sup> In accordance with earlier results, music-related and social activities were mostly popular with women, whereas sports activities were popular with men (Bocsi, 2013; Kovács, 2011). It should be noted that there was no connection between students' leisure activities and their parents' education. Surprisingly, hanging around in shopping centres was not as popular with students from big cities (41.7 points) as with students from small towns (52.3 points), who were followed by students from villages (45.1 points). That may be due to the fact that people from smaller settlements do not have easy access to this form of entertainment and to such a wide range of goods, and when they move to big cities to study they are shocked by the abundance of opportunities for consumption. Students from Debrecen (46.2 points) and Ukraine (42 points) did not go to shopping centres and cinemas as often as their peers from elsewhere in Hungary (51.2 points) and Romania (49 points), although one must be aware that in Beregszász (Berehovo) in Ukraine there are neither shopping centres nor cinemas. Sporting activities were the most typical among students in Beregszász and Debrecen (although the scores were rather low in both groups: 38.4 and 32.3, respectively) and the least so among students elsewhere in Hungary (26.7 points). Digital devices were the most frequently used by students from Debrecen (66.5 points) and least frequently by their Romanian peers (57.5 points).

Going to shopping centres and cinemas was not only associated with students'

<sup>3</sup> We used the maximum likelihood method and direct oblimin rotation. Explained variance: 44%.

original places of residence but also with their financial status: those whose subjective financial status was below average were the least likely to go there (40.1 point), average students went there more often (47 point), and those who were better off than average had the highest score (54.7 point) Students training for ISCED levels 0 and 1 also spent a lot of time in shopping centres, while those who training for ISCED levels 2 and 3 preferred sport and digital activities (*Table 1*).

*Table 1. Intensity of consuming, sporting activities and use of digital devices among teacher education students training for ISCED 0-1 and ISCED 2-3 (average scores of a 100-grade scale).*

	Training for ISCED 0-1	Training for ISCED 2-3
Going to shopping centres and cinemas	49.6	43.1
Sporting activities	28.7	34.4
Using digital devices	59.6	65.1

Source: TESSCEE I. 2014 (N=252)

During our second survey (IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014), in order to merge variables, we also performed factor analysis, which resulted in a distinction among four sets of leisure preferences.<sup>4</sup> The first set included going to the theatre, exhibitions, museums and classical concerts and was tagged high-culture consuming leisure activities. The second set included attending parties, meeting friends, chatting, using social websites, going to shopping centres, attending pop concerts, watching TV and films at home, and so these were tagged social-partying leisure activities. The third set, called sports-and-games leisure activities included sports games, attending sport events, doing extreme sports, swimming, cycling, hiking and group games. The fourth set of preferences consisted of such solitary leisure activities as reading, creative artistic activities and jogging/walking.

There were significant differences between the sexes in their leisure activities: the main preferences among men were sporting activities (31.9 and 27.5 points), whereas women preferred social-partying activities (59.9 and 52.9 points) and consuming high culture (27 and 24.4 points). The differences among the students of the participating institutions also manifested themselves in three leisure preference areas: sporting activities were the most popular with Ukrainian students (32.6 points), followed by Romanian, Serbian (from Subotica) students and Hungarian students from Debrecen, while students from elsewhere in Hungary had the lowest score (24.1 points). On the other hand, solitary activities were the most typical among students from Debrecen (59.6 points) and the least typical among students from elsewhere in Hungary (52.7 points). Students from outside Hungary were also the most attracted by high culture: Romanians scored 31 points, Ukrainians 28.9, and Serbians 25.9, whereas students from Debrecen had the lowest score (22.5 points) (*Table 2*). The latter results may be due to the fact that in the neighbouring countries cultural institutions such as minority Hungarian theatres play an outstanding role in preserving Hungarian traditions and national identity among ethnic Hungarians and help pass down the national heritage to future generations. Leisure preferences did

<sup>4</sup> We used the maximum likelihood method and direct oblimin rotation. Explained variance:36.7%.

not show any correlation with the students' places of residence or their parents' education. Our results revealed the more health-conscious lifestyle of teacher education students – although their scores (29.3 and 26.8 points) were also relatively low – and their openness to art and high culture (28.3 and 23 points).

*Table 2. Average leisure preference scores at the teacher education faculties of the surveyed institutions (average scores of a 100-grade scale).*

	Sports and games	Solitary activities	Consuming high culture
University of Debrecen	26.4	59.6	22.5
Elsewhere in Hungary	24.1	52.2	23.3
Ukraine	32.6	57.7	28.9
Romania	29.5	57.3	31
Serbia	28.2	57.7	25.9

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (subsample of teacher education faculties) (N=1149)

#### FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

In our first survey we used the WHO's health questionnaire to measure students' subjective state of health. Their average health level was 61.3 points. Men (64.6 point) and Romanian-speaking respondents (69.1 point) claimed to be significantly healthier than women (59.8 point) and Hungarian-speaking respondents (60.3 point). On the whole, it was students from Romanian institutions who felt the healthiest (65.9 point), followed by students from elsewhere in Hungary (60.1), Ukraine (60) and students from Debrecen (58.5). ISCED 2-3 education students' assessment of their own health reflected their worries and the more stressful nature of their studies (59 points) as opposed to ISCED 0-1 students (64.1 point). In accordance with the results of our former surveys on students' subjective well-being (Baltatescu & Kovács, 2012; Kovács, 2014), teacher education students' assessment of their physical, mental and social well-being (i.e. their complex health) is also associated with their subjective financial status. The highest score (66) was produced by those whose financial status was above average; the second highest by those who were around average (61.5) and the lowest by those who were below average (59.3). Parents' education and place of residence did not make any difference.

In the second survey we measured students' well-being with the Meaning in Life Questionnaire<sup>5</sup>, which was designed to find out how students relate to the issue of meaning in their lives; whether they are searching for it, or have found it and whether they give it any thought at all. Belief in the meaningfulness of life is an important component of students' well-being as they are at a stage when they must find their place in the world

<sup>5</sup> The items and factor loadings of the sense of meaning in life: My life has a clear sense of purpose (.865). I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful (.809). I have discovered a satisfying life purpose (.779). I understand my life's meaning (.772). The items and factor loadings of searching for the meaning in life: I am looking for something that makes my life feel meaningful (.761) I am always searching for something that makes my life feel significant (.755). I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life (.761). I am searching for meaning in my life (.617).

and set the kind of goals that help them make the best use of their life experiences. All this may be crucial to their psychological and mental state. As in previous studies, the statements were classified into two groups: one indicated the sense of meaning in life, the other indicated the search for meaning.<sup>6</sup>

Students' uncertainty and disunity were also reflected in the fact that they scored 58.5 and 54.7 points on average, i.e. the majority had a sense of, or searched for, the meaning of their lives but nearly as many of them did not. Different social and explanatory background variables produced differences, mainly in the sense of meaning in life. However, the results were not affected either by parents' education nor the place of residence. There was a significant difference in both areas with regard to sex: women had a higher average score than men (60.2 and 55.5 points in the sense of meaning in life and 56 and 52 points in the search for meaning). Serbian students had by far the strongest sense of meaning in life (72 points), followed by Hungarian students from outside Debrecen (59.8 points), Romanians (58.5), Ukrainians (58.3) and students from Debrecen (56.6). The results reveal that students from Debrecen need more attention from their institutions during their studies so that they can find the purpose of their lives and set goals for themselves which help them find happiness and fulfilment in the world. The underlying reason may be that the University of Debrecen is much larger and more populous than the other institutions surveyed, therefore its faculty has less time and energy to deal with students individually. Smaller higher education institutions within the country or outside the borders of Hungary place greater emphasis on community events and are more successful in integrating more individualistic students.

Teacher education seems to have a positive effect on students' ability to find the meaning of their lives, as teacher education students had a much higher score than other students (62.2 vs. 54.4 points). Teacher education students are further differentiated by the field of education they are trained for: upper primary and secondary teacher education students found it more important to find meaning in life than lower primary and pre-school teacher education students (56.5 vs. 52.5 points) (*Table 3*).

*Table 3. Average scores of the two factors of well-being among teacher education students and other students at teacher education faculties (average scores of a 100-grade scale).*

	Sense of meaning in life	Searching for meaning in life
Teacher education students	62.2	55.6
Other students	54.4	53.9

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (subsample of teacher education faculties) (N=1153)

The rest of our research focused on how students' health and well-being were modified by the joint effect of various leisure activities, forms of health behaviour and the main social background variables. We did not find any significant correlations during our first survey, which may have been due to the small sample size. That was why we decided to extend our research. In the IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 survey we used regression analyses

<sup>6</sup> We used the maximum likelihood method and direct oblimin rotation. Explained variance: 58%. Reliability of the included variables: Chronbach's alpha= .808.

to find out which factors affected the two dimensions of well-being we had established. In accordance with our presumptions, sports and games as well as social and partying activities were the ones that increased the sense of meaning in life among students studying at teacher education faculties. When we included all variables, the otherwise positive effect of solitary leisure activities disappeared. The explanation possibly lies in the communal nature of the two former activity types: students who tend to take part in such social activities in their free time are more likely to meet contemporaries with whom they can discuss their future plans, doubts and problems and who can help them make plans for their lives if they happen to be more experienced. Such communities are the sources of social capital with individual experiences and information adding up to shared knowledge to rely on when planning one's future.

In contrast, as we had expected, excessive consumption of alcohol turned out to be a risk factor decreasing the level of well-being. Causality, however, might also work the other way round: students who are less certain about what to do with their lives are more likely to opt for harmful ways of coping with their problems in their state of relative hopelessness. From the point of view of teacher education institutions it is an important result that teacher education contributes to students' finding a meaning in life and making them conscious of this meaning, but this may be partly due to the fact that teacher education students are as much involved in social leisure activities as other students and sporting activities are even more popular among them. On the whole, it is clear that the above activities also bring about a positive effect through teacher education, but in the future it would be worth excluding the added value of teacher education and the effect of support from family and friends. All the above correlations were valid regardless of social background; although the socio-cultural variables included did not have any significant influence, the correlations held true in the presence of all the variables examined. As regards the search for meaning in life, it was only solitary leisure activities that turned out to be significant: students who primarily spent their free time doing solitary activities did not have such a strong sense of meaning in life and had more difficulty finding it; they were typically at a stage in which they were searching for it. Consequently, solitary leisure activities count as risk factors against well-being among students at teacher education faculties. The lack of a supportive community, the importance of which was emphasised above, results in students' uncertainty about what to do with their lives (*Table 4*).

Table 4. Factors affecting the two dimensions of well-being (linear regression coefficients).

	Sense of meaning in life			Searching for meaning in life		
	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta
Partying and social activities	.040	.085*	.102*	.071*	.056	.046
Sports and games	.060	.098*	.096*	-.036	-.044	-.032
Solitary leisure activities	.086*	.058	.056	.096*	.093*	.092*
Consumption of high culture	.009	-.016	-.037	-.004	.007	-.006
Heavy drinking		-.160*	-.136*		.049	.059
Smoking		-.051	-.051		-.018	-.018
Taking drugs		-.057	-.055		-.051	-.051
Doing sports		.009	.022		.020	.021
Age			.053			-.005
Sex (0 male, 1 female)			-.009			-.043
Place of residence (0 rural, 1 urban)			.022			.029
Father's education (0 has no degree, 1 has degree)			.016			.012
Mother's education (0 has no degree, 1 has degree)			-.004			.017
Subjective financial status			.029			.009
Studies to be a teacher (0 no, 1 yes)			.137*			.030
R <sup>2</sup>	.016	.058	.077	.015	.019	.023

\*p≤0.05

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014

## CONCLUSION

In our paper we used the databases of two successive surveys of a longitudinal study to analyse the leisure activities, health behaviour habits and well-being of the students of the University of Debrecen, the College of Nyíregyháza and institutions of higher education in Romania, Ukraine and Serbia (University of Novi Sad) which also offer Hungarian-language instruction. The results reveal that in the first survey, which was conducted exclusively among teacher education students, there was a much more varied pattern of leisure activities than in the second, which included other students as well. On the whole, teacher education students are different from the average student population in their leisure preferences: they are not so strongly influenced by the fashionable trends of consumer society and have a greater tendency to participate in activities related to high culture.

Similarly, there is a positive correlation between health risk behaviour and teacher education: teacher education students are less likely to smoke, consume alcohol or drugs or even experiment with these, which suggests a high level of health consciousness. This is all the more important as they are expected to set an example to their future pupils, make them aware of the harmful effects of those substances and discourage them from becoming users.



When examining the effects of leisure preferences, forms of health behaviour and social background variables on health and well-being, it was only in the case of well-being that we found a significant correlation. Apparently, social and sporting activities are instrumental in students finding meaning in their lives and setting goals for themselves, the achievement of which (and the path which leads there) can give them fulfilment, satisfaction and the hope of a balanced life. In contrast, excessive alcohol consumption has a negative effect on well-being. Studying to be a teacher is also a positive factor, while students pursuing solitary leisure activities are still searching for the meaning of their lives.

Owing to lack of space, this paper could not present the social, risk and supportive factors that influence various forms of health behaviour. They are to be treated in a later study, as is the comparative analysis of the institutions in the individual countries. Teacher education students' stronger sense of purpose in life also needs further investigation: to what extent is it due to the training itself and to students' inter- and intra-generational relationship networks?

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## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TEACHER AND NON-TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' VOLUNTEERING

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### ABSTRACT

In this paper we compare volunteering and the type of volunteering (traditional or new) of higher education students from teacher education and non-teacher education courses. Our research question is what affects volunteering and the type of volunteering besides the field of training, and whether the effect of the field of training still exists if we control for the effects of other explanatory variables. In the theoretical part we define volunteering and discuss the types and motives of volunteering based on the literature. We also examine what affects volunteering (e.g. the effect of socio-demographic variables, values and religiosity). In the empirical part of the paper the HERD project database was used. The data collection took place in a particular Central and Eastern European region, called "Partium". We use logistic regression models and cluster analysis. Contrary to our hypothesis the field of training (teacher education students or not) did not affect the likelihood of volunteering, after controlling for the effects of country and religiosity. Beside this, our results show that it is only in the Hungarian sub-sample that teacher education students' motivations for volunteering are mostly traditional (i.e. they volunteer, because they want to help others).

### INTRODUCTION

Our study, which was conducted with the help of HERD database, focuses on the differences between teacher education students and other students in their voluntary work, in the cross-border region of Romania, Ukraine and Hungary, also known as the historical "Partium" region. It is important to investigate volunteering in higher education, as nowadays voluntary work is becoming more and more popular among students; furthermore, alongside traditional voluntary work a new type of volunteering has appeared which counts as work experience, and may be listed in a student's Curriculum Vitae (Hardy et al., 2010). Since there have as yet been few studies focusing on the voluntary work of higher education students in Hungarian and international literature, and international comparative investigations have not dealt with Central-European tendencies (maybe because volunteering is a relatively new phenomenon in the area), it is especially important to investigate the voluntary work of students in this region.

In our study we investigate the differences in the incidence of voluntary work in different fields of study (i.e. teacher education or other types of education), and we also explore the different forms of volunteering (i.e. traditional or new types of voluntary work). We also focus on the factors that (besides the field of study) affect voluntary work and the

form it takes, and on the question of whether the impact of the field of study is still present when allowing for the effects of other explanatory variables. We investigate the influence of gender, the country of the institution, social background (cultural and financial capital) and religiosity. The different types of voluntary work are classified according to students' motives for volunteering through cluster analysis.

The research on volunteering among students is also important because voluntary work is an indicator of student learning outcomes in higher education. Volunteering is a sort of interim variable between the impact of studies and the development of students' competences. Voluntary work exerts a positive influence on students' academic achievement, and just like higher education as a whole, it develops other competences necessary in real life, as well as active, conscious citizenship and a sense of responsibility. In addition, volunteering helps in students' socialization for work, and volunteers, especially those who do new forms of volunteering, later find employment more easily (Astin & Sax, 1998; Hesser, 1995; Eyler et al., 1997; Mabry, 1998).

According to international quantitative studies, volunteering positively influences students' cognitive and moral development; through voluntary work their identity is strengthened, they develop spiritually and ethically, and their social and interpersonal capabilities, as well as their leadership and communication skills, are improved. A possible social output could be a reduction in stereotyping, a better understanding of cultural, racial and ethnic groups, greater social responsibility, active citizenship and finally, an increased tendency to undertake voluntary work later on (Eyler et al., 2001).

The above mentioned positive effects of volunteering, as well as the competences and skills it develops, could be especially important for soon-to-be teachers because of the helping and educating characteristics of the profession, and the model role assumed by teachers; a further reason is that in Hungary from 2011 community service at secondary schools (a sort of "compulsory voluntary work") is a requirement for completing the school leaving exam, and future teachers will be involved in this process as well.

## THE TYPES AND MOTIVES OF VOLUNTEERING

The common characteristics of volunteering are the following: it is by nature non-compulsory; it is undertaken for the benefit of others (i.e. individuals, organisations or society as a whole); it is not paid for; it is, however, mostly conducted in an organised way (Wilson, 2000; Cnaan & Amroffell, 1994; Handy et al., 2010; Dekker & Halman, 2003). According to the findings of Inglehart (2003), in contrast to Putnam's predictions (2000), nowadays volunteering is not decreasing, but the way it is defined is expanding. New types of voluntary work are appearing; alongside traditional motives (i.e. helping others), modern motives (e.g. career building) are becoming relevant; furthermore, contemporary youth seem to do voluntary work in the context of newer, more flexible and less permanent organisational frameworks (mostly in charity and sports organisations).

The motives for voluntary work can thus be altruistic, instrumental (egoistic) or mixed. Traditional volunteering is based upon altruistic motives (it is good to help others), and social interaction and community are also important. The motives for modern volunteering are mainly career building, personal and professional development, spending free time usefully, networking and acquiring work experience. Among young

people mixed motives are common as well, e.g. career building volunteers also consider it important to help others (Czike & Kuti, 2006; Stefanescu & Osvat, 2011). Alongside voluntary work which can be listed in the Curriculum Vitae (and on which the study of Handy et al. (2010) strongly focuses), younger generations also do recreational and postmodern volunteering (where participation itself is important; because it is good to be together with others and because it gives identity; an example of this could be participating in green or peace organisations).

It is not only sociologists, but also psychologists who have investigated the motives for voluntary work. The most commonly used measuring scale (Volunteer Functions Inventory Scale) was developed by Clary et al. (1998). This scale consists of 30 questions regarding the motives for volunteering, which are then organised into 6 factors. In Hungary Bartal and Kmetty (2011) used Clary's VFI scale in a modified form on the adult population (there were 59 questions about the motives for volunteering which produced 15 factors). In our study, as we focus on young people, we only investigate the motives for volunteering with six questions (see below), but we plan to use a wider list of motivational questions in our further studies.

## WHAT INFLUENCES VOLUNTEERING?

According to "social resource theory", higher levels of economic capital (e.g. income), of human capital (e.g. level of education) and of social capital (e.g. the reach of the network of relations, membership of organisations, political attachment, religious activity) increase the likelihood of volunteering (Wilson, 2000). In addition, respondents' gender, age, religiosity and scale of values can also exert an influence on volunteering. International studies have shown that socio-demographic variables have a lesser impact on voluntary work than religiosity and the scale of values, and that within religiosity religious practice in a community (i.e. church-going, frequenting religious micro-communities) primarily increases the occurrence of volunteering (Voicu & Voicu, 2003). Our present study only investigates students taking part in higher education; furthermore, we place a special focus on the type of education (i.e. teacher education or other types of education), although we also investigate the influence of socio-demographic variables, religiosity and the country of the institution on volunteering.

Handy et al. (2010) explored the influence of volunteering done in secondary schools on the voluntary work of higher education students. In Hungary compulsory community service at secondary schools was introduced in 2011; its effect, however, cannot be measured yet, since the first pupils who have to take part finish secondary school in 2016 (see Bodó (2014) for more on compulsory community service). In addition, Wilson (2000) investigated the impact of the voluntary work of parents on respondents' volunteering, but unfortunately in our study there was no data regarding this.

## RESEARCH ISSUES AND HYPOTHESES

In our earlier works (e.g. Fényes, 2014) we explored in detail the volunteering of students at the University of Debrecen. Between 2005 and 2010 the occurrence of regular voluntary

work among students rose from 2-3% to 7%; and in 2010 the proportion of regular or occasional volunteers was 26% in the sample. According to our hypothesis, there will be an increase in that proportion in the data for 2012 compared to the results of 2010; furthermore, since our present study includes students from neighbouring countries (i.e. students from Romanian and Ukrainian institutions of higher education) as well, and volunteering is more common among them (see Fényes & Pusztai, 2012), the occurrence of volunteering will also increase for this reason.

According to the results of our logistic regression model of 2010, only those from a better social background (i.e. students in better financial circumstances, children of more highly educated mothers) did voluntary work during their university years in this region; in addition, religiosity significantly increased the frequency of volunteering (see Fényes, 2014); and this is what we expect to find in our present study as well. In our earlier studies we could not separate teacher education students and other students, thus we could not measure the influence of this indicator of the type of education. According to our previous results (Fényes, 2014), there were differences in volunteering between faculties: students who studied to enter a helping profession (e.g. kindergarten teacher, professions in public health, doctor, pharmacist), and even students from faculties of humanities or music did more voluntary work than their other peers. Therefore we presume the following: 1) Since teaching is a helping profession, voluntary work experience is more common among teacher education students than other students, even when allowing for the effect of other variables such as gender, country of the institution, social background and religiosity. 2) Our other hypothesis is that the motives of teacher education students for volunteering are more traditional (i.e. they volunteer to help others), also because of the helping characteristics of the profession, while modern motives (e.g. career building) are more common among other students.

## DATA, VARIABLES AND METHODS

Our analysis is based on the database of the HERD research („Higher Education for Social Cohesion Cooperative Research and Development in a Cross-border Area” (HURO/0901/253/2.2.2.)). The data collection took place in the Partium region, which is a historically cross-border region of Hungary, Romania and the Ukraine.<sup>1</sup> The data collection took place mostly in the Hungarian speaking higher education institutions<sup>2</sup> of the three countries in 2012 (N=2728).

The dependent variables investigated: has the student done voluntary work during his or her studies, and if yes, what were his or her motives? (Volunteers could choose from 6 possible options; and multiple answers could be given as well). The independent variables: gender of the student, whether or not the student takes part in teacher education (later

1 In present-day Hungarian usage, „Partium” refers only to the Romanian part of the historical region, but we defined it differently, by concerning the historical usage of „Partium”.

2 University of Debrecen (in Debrecen, Hungary), Kőlcsey Ferenc Teacher Training Institute of Debrecen Reformed Theological University (in Debrecen, Hungary), 3 faculties of College of Nyíregyháza (in Nyíregyháza, Hungary), Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Teacher Training College (in Berehove, Ukraine), Faculty of Humanities and Natural Sciences with the Hungarian Language of Education of Uzhgorod National University (in Uzhgorod, Ukraine), Partium Christian University (in Oradea, Romania), University of Oradea (in Oradea, Romania), Emanuel University (in Oradea, Romania) and the Branch of Babeş-Bolyai University in Satu Mare (in Satu Mare, Romania).

referred to as the type of education), country of the institution of higher education (i.e. Ukraine, Romania or Hungary), social background (multiple variables for the cultural and financial background of the student) and finally, religiosity (separate variable for students religious in a churchly way (i.e. who follow the teaching of the church) and students religious in their own way). In our research we used cross tabulation, logistic regression and cluster analysis with the help of the SPSS programme.

## FINDINGS

The first two tables reveal that approximately 30% of students have been volunteers during their university years, which is higher than our previous result from 2010 (26%) at the University of Debrecen; but this may be due to the fact that the sample includes students from Romania and Ukraine, where volunteering is more common (see Table 2). Among Hungarian students only, the occurrence of volunteering in higher education has somewhat decreased, in contrast to what would be predicted by our hypothesis. This phenomenon may have been caused by the difference in the questions, as in 2010 we asked how frequently (never, yearly, monthly, weekly) the student had done voluntary work, while in this case (2012) we asked whether the student had done any voluntary work at all during university years. It is also not clear whether the students meant the same thing when thinking about volunteering in the two surveys, and also in different countries. Unfortunately, in this database we do not have any other explanatory data that would provide a better understanding of the problem, but we plan to address these factors in later qualitative research.

*Table 1. Occurrence of volunteering among teacher education students and other students (column percentages).*

	Teacher education students	Other students	Total
Has done voluntary work (%)	35.9	27.8	29.8
Has not done voluntary work (%)	64.1	72.2	70.2
Total number of students (N)	637	1883	2520

Level of significance:  $p=0.000$   
Source: HERD 2012 (N=2728)

*Table 2. Occurrence of volunteering broken down by country of institution (column percentages).*

	<b>Students of Romanian institutions</b>	<b>Students of Hungarian institutions</b>	<b>Students of Ukrainian institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Has done voluntary work (%)	38.8	20.8	31.2	29.8
Has not done voluntary work (%)	61.2	79.2	68.8	70.2
Total number of students	1242	1246	109	2597

Level of significance:  $p=0.000$   
Source: HERD 2012 (N=2728)

*Table 1* shows that teacher education students tend to do significantly more voluntary work during their university years in the region we are studying, which is in accordance with our hypothesis. However, since there are significantly more teacher education students in the sample from Romania and Ukraine (the cross tabulation is not displayed here), we may start to suspect that the variable for the country of the institution might influence whether there is in fact a difference between the voluntary work of teacher education students and other students. Another cross tabulation (not shown here) reveals that among teacher education students the proportion of students religious in a churchly way is significantly higher, which may increase the possibility of voluntary work among them (see Fényes & Pusztai (2012) for more detail about the effect of religiosity). The more intense religiosity of teacher education students may be explained by the fact that more religious students opt for this career in the first place because of its helping character. Pusztai (2012) and Pusztai et al. (2014) have shown in their studies that teacher education students differ from their peers not only as regards religious self-identification (i.e. they include more students who are religious in a churchly way as well as students religious in their own way), but also that they are characteristically active members of religious communities (e.g. church communities or smaller religious communities), which might imply that they are more likely to do voluntary work later.

Thus the question arises whether there is a difference in the voluntary work done by teacher education students and other students when allowing for the effect of religiosity and the country of the institution. To find out more about this, let us consider our regression models, in which we investigate the factors that influence volunteering together.



*Table 3. Factors influencing volunteering according to the results of logistic regression models, with the gradual inclusion of independent variables (odds ratios).<sup>3</sup>*

Independent variables <sup>4</sup>	Exp (B)	Exp (B)	Exp (B)	Exp (B)	Exp (B)	Exp (B)
Gender	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Teacher education student or not		1.46***	NS	NS	NS	NS
Country of the institution			2.3***	2.42***	2.41***	1.93***
Father's education				NS	NS	NS
Mother's education				NS	NS	NS
Father's reading habits				1.25*	1.29*	1.26*
Mother's reading habits				1.47**	1.5**	1.43**
Financial problems					1.4*	1.41*
Possession of durable consumer goods – parents' index					NS	NS
Possession of durable consumer goods – students' index					NS	NS
Holiday					NS	NS
Subjective financial situation					NS	NS
Place of residence					NS	NS
Religious in a churchly way						2.84***
Religious in their own way						1.37*
R <sub>L</sub> <sup>2</sup> (%)	0	0.5	3	4	4.4	6.7

The significance of Wald statistics is displayed along Exp (B) values (\*\*\*p≤0.001, \*\*p≤0.01, \*p≤0.05). R<sub>L</sub><sup>2</sup> marks the fit of the model (the decrease of -2LL in percentages).

Source: HERD 2012 (N=2728)

3 Because of the correlation of independent variables we chose the gradual inclusion of variables method, which shows the change in the original effects after the gradual inclusion of all other variables. In our first model we only included gender; in our second model gender and the type of education were included; our third model contained gender, the type of education and cultural background variables; in our fourth model financial background variables were also included; and in the final model we included religiosity and all of the variables above.

4 Dependent variable: whether or not the student has done voluntary work during university studies. Independent variables: gender (1: male, 0: female), teacher education student or not (1: yes, 0: no), country (1: student of Romanian or Ukrainian institution, 0: student of Hungarian institution), the education of father and mother (the parents' number of completed years of school), reading habits of father and mother (1: parent reads regularly, 0: parent does not read regularly), financial problems (1: there are financial problems in the family, 0: no financial problems), parents' and students' index (index of the possession of durable consumer goods 1-10), holiday (1: family goes on holidays, 0: family does not go on holidays), subjective financial situation (financial situation compared to an average family from the country 1-10), place of residence (1: urban, 0: rural), religious in a churchly way (1: self-identifies as following the teaching of the church, 0: does not self-identify as such), religious in their own way (1: self-identifies as religious in his or her own way, 0: does not self-identify as such).

Our most important finding is that the increased likelihood of volunteering among teacher education students, which has also been shown in the cross tabulation above, ceases after including the variable for the country of the institution (religiosity probably weakens the impact of the type of education, but this cannot be observed now due to the order in which variables are included). The final model also shows that the influence of social background is ambiguous. The parents' higher cultural capital increases the probability of volunteering, although it is not their level of education, but their reading habits which seemed to be strong predictors, in contrast to our findings of 2010 where the mothers' level of education increased the likelihood of voluntary work (it is true, however, that no data on the parents' reading habits was available at that time). Financial problems in the family also increase the likelihood of volunteering; so a better financial situation tends to be a hindering factor. While in our 2010 study a better financial background exerted a positive influence on students' voluntary work, here financial problems increase this possibility (even when running the regression on the Hungarian subsample, as our 2010 research only investigated students from the University of Debrecen). According to literature (Wilson, 2000), it is more likely to be people from better social backgrounds who do voluntary work; nevertheless, in this region a better cultural background increases, while a better financial background decreases, the likelihood of volunteering. The positive influence of a less favourable financial situation may be explained by the fact that greater solidarity and the intention to help others develop in these students due to their frequent financial problems, therefore they do voluntary work more frequently.

Religiosity, especially if an individual follows the teaching of the church, clearly increases the possibility of volunteering, which is in accordance with our previous findings (see Fényes, 2014; Fényes & Pusztai, 2012) as well as with international literature (Voicu & Voicu, 2003). This explanatory variable has the strongest effect in our model. Those who follow the teachings of a church are nearly three times as likely to do voluntary work; but even those who are religious in their own way are almost 1.5 times more likely to volunteer. Another important finding is that students' gender, their parents' level of education, their places of residence and other variables of their financial background do not influence volunteering.

An interesting finding is that students at Romanian and Ukrainian institutions are more likely to do voluntary work than their Hungarian peers. The variable for the country of the institution exerts a slightly stronger influence after allowing for the effect of the students' cultural background (as parents of Ukrainian and Romanian students tend to read less); however, since financial problems occur more frequently in Romania or Ukraine, the effect of the above mentioned variable decreases minimally after allowing for the effect of the financial background variables. Finally, it can be shown that the variable for the country of the institution has a notably weaker impact when allowing for the effect of religiosity (i.e. Romanians and Ukrainians are more religious), yet it still remains significant. Romanian and Ukrainian students are almost twice as likely to volunteer as Hungarian students. This may be due to the problem encountered with the definition of volunteering mentioned above, since we have considered the fact that among Romanians and Ukrainians there are more religious students as well as teacher education students, and we have also allowed for the differences in financial and cultural background. Another reason for the greater volunteering of Romanian and Ukrainian students could be the economic state of the two countries, which may induce solidarity among people.

Nevertheless, it is also possible that the Romanian and Ukrainian samples contain more volunteers of the new type, while in the Hungarian sample traditional motives could be more common. This latter relationship will be investigated later.

Subsequently, we compare the motives for volunteering among teacher education students and other students. To do this we have conducted a cluster analysis based on the six motives for volunteering among those who have already been volunteers (N=775). As a result of the analysis we have been able to distinguish three groups of students.

*Table 4. Cluster centres based on the motives for volunteering (1 stands for yes answers, 2 stands for no answers in the survey).*

	Cluster of mixed motives	Cluster of traditional motives	Mixed motives, but not CV-related
Can be listed in CV	1.00	1.89	2.00
Acquiring work experience	1.03	1.65	1.05
Making friends and acquaintances	1.05	1.81	1.01
Helping others	1.09	1.22	1.05
Spending free time usefully	1.24	1.53	1.30
Learning languages	1.35	1.93	1.46
N=	259	220	296

K-means cluster method, 3-cluster solution

Source: HERD 2012, subsample of volunteers (N=775)

In the first cluster all motives are important; in the second cluster helping others is the only motive, thus this identifies the group of traditional volunteers; finally, in the third cluster all motives are important except the fact that volunteering can be listed in one's Curriculum Vitae; therefore in this case motives are mixed as well. Volunteers are distributed relatively equally in the three clusters, even though only 220 people are solely traditional volunteers, as the others have mixed motives. It must also be noted that helping others is important for all volunteers, thus we have not found volunteers solely of the new type.

Contrary to our hypothesis, the proportion of teacher education students does not differ significantly in the three clusters, although it is somewhat higher in the traditional volunteers group. Since there can be major differences between countries (and since the proportion of teacher education students varies from country to country), we have investigated the variance of the motives for volunteering from that perspective as well. According to our findings there are significantly more volunteers from Romania and Ukraine in the two clusters of mixed motives (furthermore, in the third cluster there are significantly more students from Ukrainian institutions, therefore it seems that in their labour market voluntary work experience is not yet important for employers). Thus among Romanians and Ukrainians volunteering with mixed motives is more common. This may be due to the poor financial condition of students studying there, which might imply that they are in need of better jobs that could be acquired through voluntary work experience. Notwithstanding, it is interesting that students may choose volunteering which provides work experience over paid employment.

The proportion of solely traditional volunteers is the highest in the Hungarian subsample, but even here only 33% of students are purely traditional volunteers. Let us now investigate the differences between teacher education students and other students in this subsample.

*Table 5. Differences in the motives for volunteering between teacher education students and other students (row percentages).*

	Cluster of mixed motives	Cluster of traditional motives	Mixed motives, but not CV-related	Total (N, %)
Teacher education students	22.9	51.4	25.7	35 (100)
Other students	27.8	30.6	41.7	216 (100)

Level of significance:  $p=0.05$

Source: HERD 2012 (subsample of volunteers studying in Hungarian institutions) (N=251)

When investigating the motives for volunteering depending on the type of education only in the Hungarian subsample, we find significant results (Table 5). It can be seen that among those Hungarian teacher education students who have done voluntary work, the proportion of those volunteering with solely traditional motives is significantly higher (i.e. this is characteristic of more than half of teacher education students), which is in accordance with our hypothesis. In the other two countries, however, there is no difference between teacher education students and other students in this regard; teacher education students in these countries, just like other students, are driven by mixed motives. For teacher education students of Romanian and Ukrainian institutions career building, networking and spending free time usefully are also important besides helping others, which may be explained by the poor financial state of the two countries.

## SUMMARY

According to our previous findings a quarter of students have done voluntary work during their university studies; our present findings show that this proportion has increased to a third, but the reason for this increase is the fact that Romanian and Ukrainian students have been included in the sample, among whom volunteering is more common. Contrary to our hypothesis, the type of education (i.e. teacher education or other types of education) does not influence whether or not a student has done voluntary work, since the original correlation disappears when allowing for the effects on volunteering of religiosity and of the country of the institution. It can also be seen that the country of the institution and religiosity have the strongest impact on volunteering, but volunteering is also influenced by the parents' reading habits and financial problems. It would be worthwhile to investigate the influence of community connections of any kind besides the impact of belonging to a religious community; this notion may be further explored in one of our future studies. It is only in the Hungarian subsample that our findings concerning the motives for volunteering show the phenomenon that among teacher education students' purely

traditional motives are more common. All in all, the students' motives for volunteering are somewhat mixed, as modern motives (e.g. career building) have also appeared alongside the goal of helping others.

Our investigations have revealed that it is worthwhile to compare teacher education students with their peers as regards the occurrence and the type of volunteering. It is an important finding that even though teaching is a helping profession by nature, teacher education students do not do voluntary work more frequently than other students during their university studies. It can be shown, however, that the motives of those teacher education students who have actually done voluntary work are more traditional; helping others seems to be more important to them, especially in the Hungarian subsample. Therefore we believe that the willingness of teacher education students to volunteer should be increased, for example through the establishment of career offices, where students could get information on the voluntary work available to them, or maybe through including volunteering in the curriculum. This is also particularly important because of the 2011 introduction of compulsory community service at schools and the competences (listed above) that volunteering develops.

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## TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PLANS

Dusa, Ágnes Réka

### ABSTRACT

The goal of the study is to explore the factors that help or hinder the international mobility plans of teacher education students from the cross-border region lying between Romania, Hungary, and Ukraine, also known as the historical Partium region. The mobility patterns and attitudes of teacher education students are compared with the mobility plans of other students, which puts the analysis of our findings in a more complete context of higher education.

The topicality of the question is due to education policy and higher education research findings, according to which participation in international student mobility helps acquire special competences which benefit students in their professional advancement as well as in their chances of finding employment in the labour market. Nevertheless, not participating in exchange programs may lead to the appearance of new types of inequality in mass higher education.

The present study uses the student database IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1792). According to statistical data on international student mobility, somewhat surprisingly, teacher education students have more mobility experiences and plans compared to other students. Just as with the findings of previous surveys in the cross-border Partium region, this study has also proved that international mobility is increased by the parents' higher level of education, a better subjective financial situation of the family, and the students' knowledge of foreign languages. Hindering elements were organised into four factors; however, it was only in the first factor that a difference was observed between teacher education and other students.

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION

International student mobility appears in many studies (and analyses of higher education policy) as an individual or institutional effectiveness factor, while some researchers do not regard mobility in itself as higher education effectiveness, but attempt to show the effects of the internationalisation of higher education and the influence of studies (partially or entirely) pursued abroad from many perspectives.

As we have already summarised the positive effects of student mobility in general (Dusa, 2015), here we only list a few major findings. Students' personal autonomy increases, their self-image becomes more complex during their studies abroad, although having said this, their tolerance and self-confidence are not guaranteed to increase as well (Nash, 1976). Many analyses confirm that student mobility positively influences language learning attitudes: students, having arrived back home, try to preserve their knowledge of

foreign languages for a longer period of time, use their knowledge of the language acquired abroad more confidently (Dwyer, 2004), and also start learning new languages readily (Norris & Steinberg, 2008). After their return, students tend to challenge themselves in several fields of science and acquire more degrees (Norris & Steinberg, 2008); they are more open to doctoral programmes and establish international professional connections more easily (Dwyer, 2004; Messer & Wolter, 2007). At the same time, independence, ingenuity, and the ability to find one's way in the world (Sutton & Rubin, 2004) as well as intercultural competences develop (Franklin, 2010).

Mobile students have an advantage in the labour market (Dwyer, 2004), are more open to multinational corporations as well as to jobs where they have to work with people of other languages and cultures (Norris & Steinberg, 2008; Franklin, 2010). In contradiction to this, Teichler et al. have found that the advantages of international education experience in the labour market were significant in the nineties; however, since then they have largely decreased (Teichler et al., 2011).

Relatively few studies have explored the mobility experiences of teacher education students. Aydin has investigated Turkish students who study to become English teachers and take part in the ERASMUS programme. On one hand, the development of language skills could be demonstrated. On the other hand, the most exciting findings regarding our current topic were the changes in career development: students approached different educational and institutional processes and systems much more consciously, and adopted new, previously unused methods of teaching languages. Nevertheless, they had problems with orientation in bureaucracy and because of the significant differences in the curricula of the home and host institutions (Aydin, 2012).

According to Jaritz (2011), it is necessary to increase the number of international exchange programmes in teacher education, because that would be the easiest way for students to acquire the abilities necessary for a confident knowledge of foreign languages, and for intercultural competences. Jaritz argues that as it is increasingly expected of young people to comprehend global processes and to find their way in the modernising world, they can best prepare for this if their teachers have their own experiences, high-level intercultural competences, and openness to the world.

According to the 2013 Hungarian survey Eurostudent, it is characteristic of Hungarian students' ERASMUS participation that students studying humanities (7.8% of them), among them primarily those participating in language degree programmes, are the most likely to complement their education in Hungary with semesters abroad. They are followed by those who study economics (6.8%) or social sciences (6%). In contrast to this, only 2.5% of teacher education students have studied abroad. The Eurostudent survey also investigated mobility plans; and this is where teacher education students' lack of motivation becomes really obvious: only 16.4% of them have never studied abroad but plan to do so at the same time, while 34% of students who study to work in the medical field would like to study abroad, although only 2.5% of them have done so. Mobility plans are also high in the case of students on degree programmes where the mobility ratio is high (Kiss, 2014).

Similar findings could be shown among mobile Hungarian students in 2010 from another perspective as well. 39% of students participating in international student mobility study economics, 21.6% of them humanities, 8.3% of them law and administrative studies or engineering (also 8.3%), while only 2.3% are involved in teacher education (Kasza, 2010).



The Graduate Career Tracking System (DPR) investigated the mobility of graduated students during their university years. During the whole of their education 5.7% of teacher education students pursued a part of their studies abroad. The most mobile fields of education as regards realised mobility were law (13.3%), arts (15.3%) and humanities (15.4%). Kiss has concluded that students of faculties with low prestige tend to study abroad less, while students of degree programmes which are highly prestigious, even internationally, are more likely to apply for scholarships abroad (Kiss, 2014).

We hereby note that the correlation is not necessarily causal; it can possibly be traced back to a third cause instead, namely to higher status and, consequently, to a better knowledge of languages and a better economic situation.

## ANALYSIS

During the analysis we primarily used the student database IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014, but in some cases, TESSCEE I. 2014, a database which involved teacher education students, was used for comparison as well.<sup>1</sup> During the empirical survey students' international educational mobility was investigated through multiple questions. We were curious as to whether students had already taken part in exchange programmes. We also asked them whether they wished to study abroad during their years in higher education. It was also important to examine, along with realised and not realised student mobility, those who did not participate in mobility: what hardships and hindrances make it more difficult to study abroad? What hinders mobility: simple lack of motivation, or other factors as well? In the following, before starting the detailed analysis, we shall summarise the data relating to these mobility plans.

## GENERAL FINDINGS

Of all interviewed students, 1702 answered questions with respect to higher education mobility experiences. 11.2% of respondents (N=201) have already been abroad as a student. Students of the University of Debrecen have the least foreign educational experience in percentage terms (9.4%). At other Hungarian institutions this proportion is only slightly higher (12.8%), and is similar to interviewed students from Partium and Transylvania (Romania) (13.1%) as well as from Vojvodina (Serbia) (14.3%). Students of institutions in Zakarpattia Oblast (Ukraine) have the highest mobility experiences (20.2%). It is true however, that respondents who were not from Hungary, especially those from the subsample of Zakarpattia Oblast, named Hungary as the country of their previous studies abroad. Students spent 4 months in another country on average, but most respondents spent less time studying abroad (73 one month, 33 two months).

A fairly strong correlation can be shown between the mobility experiences of teacher education students and other students: among teacher education students more have been abroad. When considering these findings, however, we must bear in mind that among teacher education students there are many not studying at Hungarian institutions, who have high mobility experiences. If we investigate mobility experiences only at Hungarian

<sup>1</sup> For details of the surveys, see the Preface.

institutions or only at the University of Debrecen, we find that the significant correlation between one's education and former studies abroad ceases. Nevertheless, it can still be shown that as a tendency, more teacher education students have studied abroad during their years in higher education.

*Table 1. Realised and planned international student mobility among teacher education students (row percentages).*

	Yes answers	No answers
Mobility experiences of teacher education students	16.6	83.4
Mobility experiences of other students	9	91
Mobility plans of teacher education students	39.2	60.8
Mobility plans of other students	30.8	69.2

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1792)

Following this we need to consider planned, future mobility. Of the interviewed students, 34.1% (N=559) responded positively to the question of whether they planned to study abroad during their years in higher education. Soon-to-be teachers were much more open to educational mobility: as one can see in the last two columns of Table 1, 39.2% of the interviewed teacher education students wished to study abroad, while only 30.8% of other students did so ( $p=0.001$ ). Among teacher education students, more than half (58.1%) of those who study to become foreign language teachers answered yes to the question of whether they planned to study abroad, while this ratio was 37% among those who study to be other teachers ( $p=0.001$ ).

In our previous surveys (TESSCEE I. 2014, HERD 2012<sup>2</sup>) interesting deviations could be observed by country in the higher education region investigated. In the first survey (TESSCEE I. 2014), among first-year teacher education students, 31.9% of Hungarian students, 30.5% of students of Romanian institutions, and 62.7% of students taking part in Ukrainian education reported planning studies abroad. The 2012 HERD survey showed similar results: it was also Ukrainian students who had greater mobility plans (Dusa, 2012). Likewise, the 2015 survey has revealed that 30.9% of the students of the University of Debrecen, 17.6% of students of the other Hungarian institutions investigated, and 38.8% of students from Partium or Transylvania (Romania) plan higher studies abroad. Among students from Zakarpattia Oblast (Ukraine), similar to the trends of the previous years, the proportion of those who plan mobility is outstandingly high: 63% ( $p=0.00$ ).

The childhood place of residence shows quite a significant correlation with later educational mobility plans. Of those who grew up in a rural environment, 33.4% would like to study abroad in the future; this proportion is lower among those who were brought up in a small town, i.e. 30.1%; while the highest proportion (40.5%) is among people who lived in a county seat or capital at the age of 14. When focusing only on teacher education students, the correlation remains significant ( $p=0.05$ ): 38.8% of those who grew up in

<sup>2</sup> Higher Education for Social Cohesion Cooperative Research and Development in a Cross-border Area (HURO/0901/253/2.2.2.). Professional leader: Tamás Kozma

villages, 32.5% of those who were raised in small towns, and 47.4% of those who lived in a county seat or capital at the age of 14 answered yes. The higher mobility of people raised in rural areas may also be explained by the fact that most Ukrainian students grew up in villages due to the typical settlement structure of Zakarpattia Oblast. Except for this unique case, the influence of settlement hierarchy on international student mobility follows the literature, i.e., urban background increases later mobility (Bauwens et al., 2008).

The father's/foster father's level of education has an impact on the child's mobility plans ( $p=0.02$ ), but the mother's/foster mother's influence is even stronger ( $p=0.00$ ). The higher the parent's level of education, the more likely it is that the child plans to study abroad. Furthermore, we know from Hungarian and international literature that higher education students who have studied in a foreign country for a period of time are more likely to have parents whose level of education is higher (Bauwens et al., 2008; Czakó & Koltói, 2012).

Finally, we also had the opportunity to explore the correlation between planned mobility and the subjective financial situation of the family. Those who think of their family as being in a better financial situation than an average family in their country are more likely to consider later university or college studies abroad ( $p=0.006$ ). The difference is even more obvious for teacher education students: in this case, when comparing families with subjective financial situations that are average or below average with families who are above average, the effect of the subjective economic position of the family on students' international educational mobility plans can be shown even more clearly ( $p=0.011$ ). We have also concluded from our previous investigations that it is the subjective financial situation that has a stronger impact on mobility plans rather than the objective financial situation (Dusa, 2012). This correlation has been pointed out by Georgina Kasza as well (Kasza, 2010).

In the survey there were questions with respect to students' relationships (marital status). As expected, relationships influence mobility intentions: 21.5% of those who lived with their partner, domestic partner, or spouse, reported intending to study abroad, 33.8% of those in a relationship (not cohabitating, however) and 37.6% of singles answered that they planned to study in a higher education institution of a foreign country for some time. The differences between the groups are even greater for teacher education students.

Student mobility can also be affected by one's knowledge of foreign languages. Pusztai and Nagy have pointed out that more than two thirds of students from the Partium region who have mobility plans are able to read and write in one or more foreign languages, while this is only true for less than a half of non-mobile students (Pusztai & Nagy, 2005). Czakó and Koltói (2012) have made similar findings among students of Eötvös Loránd University. The students' knowledge of languages was measured by an objective index, i.e. whether they had passed any language exams. The number of language exams passed is in a significant correlation with student mobility for all interviewed students as well as for teacher education students. Nevertheless, the greatest difference can be found between students without any certificate and students who have an advanced level certificate (as well as possibly an intermediate certificate in another language); not between those who have one intermediate language exam and people without certificates. This calls our attention to two things: the lack of a certificate in languages can indeed be a hindering factor in student mobility; at the same time, the possession of such certificates in itself does not increase the proportion of those who wish to study abroad significantly. It is

also possible that passing a language exam does not necessarily guarantee a confident knowledge of a language, therefore students may not believe that having a certificate will help them prosper in a foreign higher education institution.

Finally, we asked students in which country they planned their education abroad. Our findings can be easily interpreted through the typical mobility channels of international student mobility (Langerné, 2009; Rédei & Kobilka, 2007; Marginson, 2008). Student mobility towards Hungary is made easier by the common culture and language for Hungarians outside of Hungary (Polónyi, 2010). Furthermore, Hungarians outside of Hungary have strong mobility intentions, which may explain why so many of them mentioned Hungary as a possible foreign country to study in. Another attribute of mobility channels is the greater volume of movements from the East to the West. In the present study too, countries in Western Europe and North America were listed the most.

#### FROM MOBILITY PLANS TO REALISED MOBILITY – THE HINDRANCES OF STUDENT MOBILITY

It is generally characteristic of all forms of geographic mobility that mobility plans (i.e. the mobility potential of a social group) are higher than actual realised mobility. The mainstream research on international student mobility tends to look for the cause of immobility in the differences deriving from the parents' economic and cultural capital (see: González et al., 2011; Wiers-Jenssen, 2011; Kemény, 2005; Danka, 2010; Finger, 2011).

In our survey we had a separate set of questions regarding which hindering factors students considered as the least or the most hindering (Table 2). The mean of the students' answers shows that among both teacher education students and other students, the factors which keep students from studying abroad the most are fear of an extra financial burden, insufficient knowledge of foreign languages, distance from relatives and friends, and finally, the danger of losing semesters due to the problems deriving from the transfer of credits. As regards the least hindering factors, differences can be observed between the two groups, which can also be seen from the order of the means of hindering factors. Among teacher education students, poor academic performance, the feeling of limited access, and motivation are less hindering factors. While for teacher education students the accreditation of their international studies in their home countries seems to be a hindering factor, other students are more likely to hope that they can use their foreign studies at home as well; and this is a significant difference between the two groups. If, in the following, we only concentrate on the deviations from the mean, we find that teacher education students are more afraid of losing semesters on their course, tend to believe that studies abroad cannot be easily integrated into their course in their home country, and fear the complicated regulations of the host country more.

*Table 2. Difference in the mean points of factors which hinder international student mobility between teacher education students and other students (mean values of a four-point scale).<sup>3</sup>*

	Teacher education students		Other students		ANOVA
	mean	rank	mean	rank	
Financial burden	3.14	1	3.11	1	NS
Insufficient knowledge of foreign languages	2.98	2	2.95	2	NS
Distance from relatives and friends	2.86	3	2.85	3	NS
Fear of losing semesters	2.75	4	2.64	4	0.05
Studies abroad cannot be easily integrated	2.64	5	2.29	9	0.000
Fear of unknown life situations	2.44	6	2.49	5	NS
Lack of information provided by own institution	2.4	7	2.3	8	NS
System of regulations	2.38	8	2.26	10	0.035
Studies abroad cannot be effectively put to use in Hungary	2.35	9	2.03	12	0.000
Poor academic performance	2.32	10	2.36	6	NS
Limited access	2.26	11	2.33	7	NS
Lack of motivation	2.21	12	2.25	11	NS

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (N=1792)

For the sake of further interpretation, the twelve items have been organised into four factors to show whether there is a structure among the hindrances; finally, the twelve items have been organised into four factors.<sup>4</sup> Individual fears in connection with university or college studies, which make studies abroad appear useless from academic and professional points of view, have been put into the first factor. In the second factor we find items related to system-wide problems: limited access to mobility programmes or lack of information provided by one's own institution, both of which show the selective nature of mobility programmes. Statements referring to lack of motivation as well as the fear of unfamiliar life situations and the insufficient knowledge of foreign languages have been organised into the third factor. Finally, in the fourth factor we find the distance from family and friends, and, with very low factor weight, the extra financial burden. Only in the first factor can differences be observed between teacher education students' and other students' factor means, which implies that it is teacher education students who tend to have individual fears in connection with studying. In the other three factors no significant differences can be shown between teacher education students and other students.

<sup>3</sup> indicates "is not/would not be a problem", while 4 indicates "is/would be a serious problem".

<sup>4</sup> Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure: 0.781, Bartlett significance: 0.000. Explaining 43.386% of the total variance.

## SUMMARY

In our study we have explored the plans of higher education students of a cross-border region regarding participation in international student mobility and factors which help or hinder that mobility. As for already realised international student mobility, we have seen that a higher number of teacher education students have studied abroad for a period of time. Teacher education students seem more motivated when it comes to planned mobility as well. However, compared to all interviewed students, the proportion of those who plan to study abroad during their years of higher education is relatively high (34.1%, N=559). In accordance with Hungarian and international research on higher education mobility, we have found that mobility plans strongly correlate with the place of residence, the parents' level of education, subjective financial situation, marital status and the number of language certificates. It is again important to note that these correlations are not unambiguously causal.

There are many factors which may hinder participation in international mobility. The factors which hinder most are extra financial burden, insufficient knowledge of foreign languages, distance from relatives and friends, and finally, problems with the transfer of credits. Teacher education students are more afraid of losing semesters in their courses, tend to believe that studies abroad cannot be easily integrated into their education in Hungary, and also fear the complicated regulations of the host country more.

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## PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION

### POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF LINKING TEACHER EDUCATION WITH DISADVANTAGE COMPENSATION

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#### THE EXAMPLE OF THE MOTIVATION STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAM

##### ABSTRACT

The Hungarian education system fails to compensate for the disadvantages experienced by students from less favourable backgrounds. One way of resolving this issue could be a reform of teacher education in Hungary. This paper highlights why it may be beneficial to give priority to the issue of disadvantage compensation in the theoretical and practical training of teacher education students. In order to reinforce this idea, the paper illustrates the possible positive effects on teacher education students with a real-life example. Through the results of an interview study and based on the experiences of project coordinators, we argue that linking the education of teacher education students with educational disadvantage compensation programs – which can have a favourable effect on the views of teacher education students concerning disadvantaged students, on their self-reflective thinking, as well as on the development of innovative pedagogical instruments – provides a unique opportunity in the professional development of teacher education students. Furthermore, these solutions may alleviate educational inequalities in the short term by providing a solution for certain challenges teachers have to face in the school. In the long term, teacher education students receiving a more adequate training may enter the labour market well-prepared for their profession.

##### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

###### THE BENEFITS OF DISCUSSING THE ISSUE OF DISADVANTAGE COMPENSATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The relationship between one's unfavourable family background and failure at school is a well-documented phenomenon; furthermore, it is very characteristic of Hungary. The Hungarian education system cannot mitigate the disadvantages of disadvantaged students; on the contrary, the system further amplifies these disadvantages, primarily by assigning students with unfavourable backgrounds to one school or class (Csapó et al., 2014). While it is true that the mitigation of this selection requires system-level reforms, this must be accompanied by reinforcing the importance of managing the differences among students in the classroom.

It is difficult to separate the problems resulting from the flaws in teacher education from those resulting from the selective, segregating mechanisms of the education system. However, most likely training in its current form is not effective in preparing teacher education students how to teach students from different social backgrounds,



especially students from poor families who often struggle with serious learning problems, in a personalized manner. Although it would be challenging to describe the society of teachers in a comprehensive way, we can conclude that the selective Hungarian education system and the practice schools – i.e. the schools where teacher education students teach during their practice – which are typically attended by students from more favourable backgrounds, train teachers who may not have any experience in teaching disadvantaged students at the start of their career.

A further starting point for linking teacher education with disadvantage compensation programs could be to include the organization of school programs which are not strictly linked to education, as these programs are likely to be terminated first due to the increase in the workload of teachers. Experience shows that extracurricular programs significantly influence students' attitude to school and their learning motivation, and this is especially true for students who are likely to experience failure at school (e.g. Eccles & Templeton, 2002; Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Pusztai, 2009). This is particularly important because teachers most often mention motivational problems in connection with the educational failure they face when teaching disadvantaged and Roma students (see Fejes, 2005).

Since in many cases the elimination of segregation also prejudices the – suspected or real – interests of middle-class parents, teachers, with their central role in the success of integration, may be the key actors in promoting social acceptance. However, this active role requires teachers to realize the relationship between disadvantaged status and school success and they also need to be confident in applying this knowledge.

#### THE FRAMEWORK OF THE MOTIVATION STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAM

At the beginning of the 2007/2008 academic year, the University of Szeged, Institute of Education, with the support of the Roma Education Fund and in cooperation with NGOs, organised a mentor network in order to support the desegregation measures in Szeged (Szűcs & Kelemen, 2013). Within the framework of this Program, multiple disadvantaged and Roma pupils, who were transferred to new schools, received help from mentors at the school. The Program relied on the work of university/college students, especially teacher education students and other students training for helping professions (hereinafter referred to as mentors or student mentors). The primary aim of the Student Mentoring Program (known as the Motivation Student Mentoring Program as of 2012) was to support the academic development and social integration of children who were transferred to new schools due to the desegregation process. In addition, the facilitation of the professional development and social sensitivity of teacher education students was an indirect objective of the Mentoring Program.

In the 2008/2009 academic year, the primary schools affected by the desegregation measures (Szűcs, 2013) in Hódmezővásárhely also joined the Program. After the pupils affected by the desegregation measures graduated from primarily schools and continued their studies in other institutions, mentoring was not terminated at the primary schools, and other pupils requiring help at the participating schools were enrolled in the Program. Since the 2013/2014 academic year, the Program has been operating within the framework of the Motivation Educational Association as an afterschool program (Tanoda) in the buildings of the Association. However, this paper focuses on the mentoring activity at schools.

The theoretical preparation of student mentors was supported by a university course looking at the relationship between difficulties arising from the disadvantaged and minority position and failures at school, as well as discussing actual research data in the field and possible practical solutions, with special focus on desegregation and mentoring. Another weekly course, the mentor meeting, created the ground for discussing administrative tasks, operational tasks, and other questions, problems and experiences arising from the mentoring work. The theoretical course was compulsory for every student mentor in the semester when they joined the Program, and attendance at the mentor meetings was expected from all student mentors throughout the Program. Furthermore, through methodological and internal training sessions, among others, the Student Mentoring Program provided several opportunities for the participants to acquire the competences required to be successful as mentors (see Fejes et. al., 2014).

Some of the student mentors received grants as a compensation for their work in the Program. Considering the time invested, the grant was a minimal amount: even the lowest hourly rates offered for any student work were higher than the grant. In our experience, the primary motivation for joining the Student Mentoring Program was the opportunity to put into practice the theory learnt at the university, as well as the opportunity for professional development. The 'exploitation' of this development in the labour market was made possible by a certificate students received for participating in the Program, as well as certificates from the professional training sessions they attended within the framework of the Program. Student mentors also had the advantage of receiving university credit points for the university courses they participated in as part of the Program. For many of them another attractive feature was that they could receive professional support and they found the research area for their papers and MA theses in the field of equal opportunities in education (e.g. Balázs, 2011; Bereczky & Fejes, 2013; Szabó, 2008). Students in receipt of the grant, that is, student mentors who spent at least 8 hours a week at their assigned school had the following tasks and duties: regular meetings with mentees, following up their situation, tutoring work, liaising with parents, organising joint programs with majority pupils, cooperative thinking with mentees and teachers in order to find solutions to school-related problems, development work based on the mentees' individual needs and requests, solving individual cases, supporting the channelling of information between the school and the parents, mediation work, data collection with regards to the Program, and administration.

Other student mentors, who did not receive payment for their work, were called volunteers. They spent an average of 3 hours at the school every week, thus their level of task involvement was different from that of the student mentors who received payment. Some of them carried out specific tasks just like the paid mentors but they worked with fewer mentees. Another group of volunteers supported the work of the student mentors, for example, in organising social programs and leisure activities.

The majority of the time spent with mentees consisted of learning together. Many combinations of learning support were formed within the Program. These can be categorized as follows:

- after school, as day-care or learning activities, in the form of individual or group learning,
- during school time, i.e. teacher education students could take the children out of the lessons (similarly to the practice of mentor teachers, special educators, and developmental teachers), in the form of individual or group learning – mostly in the case of skill-related

subjects, but sometimes including main subjects, too; depending on the decision taken by the teacher and the topic of the lesson,

- the teacher education student would sit next to the mentee during a lesson, usually supporting one mentee for the whole of the lesson,
- dual teaching: the teacher education student took part in the lesson and carried out the same or similar tasks to those of the teachers.

In most of the sessions, learning support was a group activity that mostly took place after school, where student mentors could support their mentees in completing their homework and preparing for lessons. They could also help school work by giving skill-related developmental tasks and activities to the children.

With the majority of the pupils, the most visible sign of difficulties was a significant lagging behind in their studies. At the same time, it was essential to involve the children in activities that could indirectly influence learning support, for example building a positive attitude towards school and learning. Besides, influencing social relationships was also one of the important objectives as regards peers, teachers and student mentors alike. Shifting mentor-mentee relationship towards a positive experience was crucial because pupils were often mentored in their free time, meaning they could decide whether they wanted to participate in the afternoon activities or not.

## THE RESEARCH

In our qualitative research, we analysed the in-depth interviews made with student mentors participating in the Student Mentoring Program in the first (2007/2008) and fourth (2010/2011) academic years. We defined several research questions; however, the relevant research question from the perspective of this study was as follows: How can our initiative contribute to the process of becoming a teacher? We used the phenomenological in-depth interview developed by Seidman (2002) and analysed 54 interviews in total. We describe how the Program affected teacher education students by summarizing the results of the interview study (see Fejes & Szűcs, 2013) as well as our experiences as program coordinators (see Fejes et al., 2014). Due to length restrictions, we do not publish extracts from the interviews in this paper.

## THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM ON TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

### The results of the interview study

Working with the target group provided teacher education students with practical experience and made these future teachers change their viewpoints on certain issues so that they will be able to give more adequate answers to issues related to disadvantaged children as practising teachers. The results of our interview study suggest that by focusing on the problems of disadvantaged students, student mentors had the opportunity to consider the education of these pupils from a perspective which allowed them to see the shortcomings of the present educational practice. According to our analysis, this may have a positive effect on the attitudes and views of teacher education students concerning disadvantage

compensation. What is more, mentoring work required the teacher education students to take up a role which entails learning and expanding an innovative set of methodology techniques that take into account the differences between pupils as well as their individual needs. Student mentors often found themselves in situations where they had to take an active role at schools in adapting new activities or finding new solutions to some of the pupils' learning difficulties. Such a role surely supported teacher education students in taking an innovative and active approach in their career. The flexibility of the mentoring work and the learning problems of pupils which could not be ignored inspired student mentors to experiment with new techniques and apply a self-reflective approach.

Participating in the Student Mentoring Program not only supported the professional development of teacher education students but also had a significant influence on their attitudes towards the Roma minority. Although we were not faced with extreme views during the recruitment interviews, obviously the subject of the Program already pre-selected the candidates. However, some applicants stated that, among other reasons, they applied for the Program because they wanted to find out whether the negative views prevalent in Hungarian society about the Roma minority were true or not. We found that the Student Mentoring Program helped teacher education students to overcome many of their stereotypes and misconceptions.

Our interview study may not in itself prove that linking teacher education with initiatives like the Student Mentoring Program is definitely more effective than other forms of practical training. Teacher education students probably undergo similar favourable attitude changes as a result of other organized, practical experiences; however, our results bolster the idea that it is reasonable to renew teacher education in Hungary by giving more emphasis to certain topics that are currently ignored. Another question, which is difficult to answer, is whether the implementation of such programs in the training, i.e. the mandatory participation of teacher education students in such programs also leads to success, since the underlying motivation and attitudes of the volunteers who join such programs may play a key role both in the operation of the program and the personal development of the teacher education students.

## PROGRAM COORDINATION EXPERIENCES

Reality shock, or the first critical year(s), refers to the phenomenon that after the sterile, theory-oriented teacher education, beginner teachers are caught unprepared by most of the tasks teaching at schools entails (Nagy, 2004). This was especially true for student mentors, since they worked with the most problematic pupils, they experienced success relatively rarely, and their relationship with the teachers was quite often not without conflicts (see Fejes et al., 2014). We believe that by providing the teacher education students with the opportunity to see the work of teachers in real-life circumstances, by creating ground for the regular exchange of experiences as well as by organizing discussion forums where mentors could tell the others their specific problems and by team building, our Program played an important role in alleviating the intensity of the reality shock.

Dual teaching and the two-teacher model are not unknown expressions at schools; however, it is difficult to define them and the Hungarian literature does not give us much assistance here, either. In the Program, we used these terms when referring to the

activities of the student mentors in certain schools, and when referring to the cooperation between student mentors and teachers in certain situations. In our understanding, dual teaching has various levels. At one end of the scale it means that the mentor supports the mentee during the lesson, while at the other end the mentor teaches a certain part of the lesson with or without the participation of the teacher. We are of the opinion that this kind of cooperation between the teacher and the teacher education student was especially important for the student mentors in their process of becoming teachers. The experiences gained by student mentors were valued by the labour market as well. We received feedback that in several cases, when our mentors applied for teaching positions or for positions dealing with equal opportunities in education, or when they applied for further studies abroad or for au pair jobs, the reference letter proving their participation in our Program brought them clear advantages. Moreover, the schools we cooperated with also benefited from the Program since they had the opportunity to get to know the student mentors and fill their vacancies with teachers who were already integrated members of the teaching staff. Several of our student mentors were hired on a full-time or part-time basis by the school where they used to work as mentors.

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

Initiatives like the Student Mentoring Program may contribute to mitigating the disadvantages of pupils in the short term, while in the long term, they may help to better prepare teacher education students for their profession. Such programs may also play a role in decreasing the level of counterselection in the teaching profession. Hungarian data shows that the composition of the teaching staff is less favourable at schools where the ratio of disadvantaged pupils is above the average (Varga, 2009). One of the consequences of teachers' counterselection is that teachers are usually less educated in these institutions; the proportion of less competent teachers is above the average. Preparing teacher education students within the framework of our Program or other similar programs may bring progress in this field through changing the prestige of the pedagogical work of dealing with disadvantaged pupils, through improving teachers' self-confidence and knowledge, and moreover through linking beginner teachers with schools. The practical experiences gained, as well as the relationships established during their training may to a great extent help in the future decisions of beginner teachers concerning their career (Maier&Youngs, 2009).

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## THE EFFECT OF STUDENT'S COMMITMENT ON CAREER

Engler, Ágnes

### ABSTRACT

The aim of our study to find the connection between family and career commitments among students in higher education. It was realized in our earlier national and regional research that the achievement of students with families was excellent. A stable relationship and child raising exerts a necessary effect on their advancement along a professional path. The population examined were part-time students. Researching full-time students from this perspective is not possible because of their low proportion in higher education institutions. Furthermore, according our results we assume a connection between attitude to relationship and commitment to a profession, and we tried to research cultural and social capital from the perspective of this kind of commitment.

### CONNECTIONS BETWEEN RELATIONSHIP CULTURE AND PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT

In our study we examine the connections between relationship culture and professional commitment from a particular perspective. We attempt to map students' study attitudes on the basis of the relations and romantic relationships in their private lives. The idea of examining the correlation between professional and relationship culture, which at first glance would seem weak, comes from our previous research findings which show that there is in fact a strong correlation between relationship stability and professional success (summarised in Engler, 2014). Looking at the correlation between private life and professional career, as shown through study, we might claim that the intertwining of cultural and social capital could be imagined in a model where a correlation can be revealed between the attitude towards relationships and the commitment to one's studies in the milieu of higher education. In other words, we find it possible that those who have favourable attitudes towards social relationships seem to have strong academic and professional aspirations.

As regards attitudes towards socialisation, especially social relationships, we do not rely on classical psychological theories – Freud, Piaget, Erikson, Mead etc. –, but focus instead on capital theories, which approach one's studies as a form of human capital investment. Of the different types of cultural capital, defined by Bourdieu (1998), we can investigate both embodied and institutionalised cultural capital. The former is attained subconsciously; it accumulates in the family from early childhood on and influences how one acquires and handles interpersonal relationships. In Bourdieu's opinion it can be realised without restraint in families with strong cultural capital, where capital is

accumulated during the socialisation period. In the case of social capital within the family, Coleman (1998) also emphasises the importance of care in the family in enabling the maximisation of capital. Since behavioural patterns and schemes acquired in the primary socialisation environment become organic parts of one's personality, the relationship culture that appears in a later period of life (i.e. that of young adults), which we examine now, is a function of the amount of accumulated cultural capital.

In higher education institutions there are two basic levels on which one can exercise, develop or change the interpersonal communication attained through family rites and traditions. Young people exchange information with and transfer thoughts among one another, while they also communicate with older generations. Pusztai (2011) provides a thorough investigation of the nature of intergenerational and intragenerational relationships in higher education. In her opinion, fellow students are the most important agents in the socialisation process in higher education, as they offer social support to one another and circulate information; furthermore, they can also encourage commitment to academic goals and convey behavioural patterns. By analysing teachers as agents of socialisation, she points out that the role of teachers as information providers has changed through massification (the influx of large numbers of students into higher education), while in the teaching profession, which has become structured, there are different attitudes towards communicating expected norms (Pusztai, 2011). The analysis of teachers' and students' relationships cannot be shown here, yet we are aware that the social capital which appears in higher education is most relevant in these relationships and has a significant impact on academic success (see e.g. Moiseyenko, 2005; Heuser, 2007; Sooda et al., 1993; Hughes, 2011).

In the present study we investigate relational attitudes limited to romantic relationships. We know from various investigations that Hungarian society is mainly characterised by traditional relationships and family models, preferring marriage to alternative types of relationships, while the desired number of children is steady at around 2 (see, for example Kamarás, 2001; Pongrácz & Spéder, 2002; Kopp & Skrabski, 2003; Spéder, 2004; Tóth, 2012). Fewer children are born than desired, however, as in Hungary the number of live births is decreasing; the overall fertility rate is 1.3. The difference between the number of children parents desire and those actually born can be traced back, among other things, to the longer time spent studying as well as discriminative and inflexible phenomena in the labour market which affect starting a family, but it is also related to family policy changes (see e.g. S. Molnár, 2001; Frey, 2003; Gábos, 2003; Blaskó, 2005; Koncz, 2006; Földházi, 2013). A desire for alternative relationships and to be consciously single, both of which have shown a slight increase in the last decade, appear more often among the younger generation (Utasi, 2004; Pongrácz, 2009; Temesváry, 2014).

There are various circumstances which influence the desire to start a family and its realisation, such as the effect of the norms and values conveyed by the family or the strong impact of cultural capital, namely the father's level of education (for women) and the qualifications of the individual (operating in a different way for each gender) (Bukodi, 2001). By investigating the data from previous censuses (between 1999 and 2011) it is evident that the decrease in the number of marriages cannot be compensated for by the increasing number of cohabitations, and the ratio of single young men, but especially that of single and highly qualified young women of childbearing age, has significantly increased (something which does not necessarily represent a conscious choice to be single) (Statistikai Tükör, 2014 [Statistical Review, 2014]).



We have found in our studies over the past ten years (2005–2015) that young people's plans before graduation to start a family have not essentially changed: they mostly wish to marry and have at least 2.1-2.3 children on average (see e.g. Engler&Torny, 2008; Engler, 2011; 2013). Thus it seems that in the perceptions of the younger generation of intellectuals the desire for stable relationships is still present, but that these relationships are delayed or not even formed. In what follows we do not seek explanations for prevailing relationship trends, but we try to compare relational attitudes in different dimensions in higher education, before the entrance to the labour market.

## SAMPLE

Our analysis is based on the combined database from the second phase of the TESSCEE survey (Teacher Education Students Survey in Central and Eastern Europe II.) conducted in the higher education Partium region in the border region of Ukraine, Romania and Hungary as well as in the Serbian province of Vojvodina, and the IESA survey (Institutional Effect on Students' Achievement in Higher Education). Our questionnaire was completed by 1729 full-time students, including 572 teacher education students within the framework of the SZAKTÁRNET project (TÁMOP-4.1.2.B.2-13/1-2013-0009) in the autumn of 2014.<sup>1</sup>

## RESULTS

### RELATIONSHIP TRENDS IN THE STUDENTS' SAMPLE

At the time of the survey 2% of students were married (N=38), while 9% lived with their partner (N=143). The proportion of singles was 45%, and 41% were dating a boyfriend or girlfriend (with whom they did not live together). Thus, among students in the sample the proportion of singles and those in some form of a relationship was relatively similar. The difference between genders in the type of relationship is significant ( $p=0.000$ ), as more men were single during the survey: 54% as opposed to 41% of women.

In the survey we asked those who were in a romantic relationship about the future of their relationship. 48% of the 842 students involved in the survey definitely planned to marry, while 27% preferred long-term cohabitation. As far as their plans were concerned, the institution of marriage was particularly over-represented among women; at the same time, an equal proportion of both genders planned to cohabit. It can thus be observed that women desire a lasting relationship, while men tend to think of their relationship as temporary significantly more often, and they do not plan to stay together with their partner as much as women do.

40% of the students interviewed in the survey thought that the choice of partner was important, therefore they would rather not rush it. A quarter of the respondents wished to wait for the partner with whom they would spend the rest of their lives. A third of the students reported that they did not look for the company of the other gender solely to avoid loneliness. Significantly more women gave answers which pointed towards committed,

<sup>1</sup> For details of the survey, see the Preface.

long-term relationships. Men were more interested in occasional, uncommitted romantic relationships without any concrete plans.

#### GROUPS OF STUDENTS BASED ON ATTITUDES TOWARDS RELATIONSHIPS

Using the variables for the attitudes towards relationships we created a relationship index.<sup>2</sup> Having created the index, we investigated which explanatory variables influenced commitment or a lack of it in relationships. During the logistic regression models the dependent variable was the presence or lack of commitment, while gender, parents' level of education, respondents' place of residence (until 14 years of age), the country of the institution of higher education and religiosity were independent variables (*see Table 1*).

*Table 1. Factors influencing commitment in relationships (odds ratio).*

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Gender	0.625***	0.590***	0.596***	0.583***	0.589***	0.610***
Father's level of education		0.755	0.912	0.871	0.876	0.872
Mother's level of education			0.577*	0.599*	0.609	0.594*
Place of residence				1.017	1.035	1.072
Country of the institution					0.900	0.976
Religiosity						1.327**
-2 Log likelihood	2226,620	1978,725	1864,446	1845,007	1844,245	1838,845
Cox & Snell R Square	0,010	0,013	0,016	0,017	0,017	0,021
Nagelkerke R Square	0,014	0,018	0,022	0,023	0,023	0,028

\*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\* $p \leq 0.01$ , \* $p \leq 0.05$

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014

The impact of the variables affecting the relationship is rather weak; the models are not particularly explanatory. According to our hypothesis, attitudes towards relationships might be influenced by the place of residence, that is, smaller communities might have a tradition-preserving effect. In a similar way, we expected that Hungarians outside Hungary may show more traditional attitudes, but our hypotheses regarding the geographical place of residence were not correct, as no significant correlation could be observed. Religiosity has the strongest impact, both for those who regularly or occasionally practise religion in a community, and for those who identify as religious without belonging to a denomination. Religiosity increases the desire for lasting relationships by 30%. A cross-tabulation comparison done with other variables regarding religiosity clearly shows that the nature of relationships is closely correlated with both the respondents' and their families' religious behaviour. Those committed to a relationship, as well as their family members, go to church more often, are more likely to belong to a denomination and pray more often (the

<sup>2</sup> Variables that form the basis of the relationship index: desire for long-term relationship, importance of relationship, waiting for a suitable partner, timing of the relationship, desire for relationships without commitment, acceptance of singleness. The mean of the index: 3.6.

significance in each case is  $p=0.000$  or  $0.001$ ).

Social gender identity shows a very significant effect in every model, which is not surprising considering the above. We expected social capital also to be higher in families with higher cultural capital; however, only the mother's level of education shows a weak effect. Other important background variables would be the number of siblings and the number of people living in the same household, but no such variables appeared in the survey.

We divided the surveyed students into two groups based on the relationship index, after we had calculated the mean of the index. We called the group of students with an index below the mean non-committed; the group with an index above the mean were called committed. In the latter group there are respondents who consider relationships to be an important value, choose their partner carefully and plan on having a long-term, lasting relationship, or at least they are oriented towards this idea. 64% of the respondents belong to this group. The non-committed group consists of young people who consciously choose not to care about the quality and future of their relationships, do not desire a steady relationship and prefer alternative forms of romantic relationships (36%).

#### CONNECTIONS BETWEEN RELATIONSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

We investigated the connections between relationship and professional culture through the analysis of questions regarding the concrete studying process, and have found the following significant deviations. A committed student does the following more often: asks questions during lectures ( $p=0.014$ ), makes presentations ( $p=0.006$ ), carefully corrects a paper before handing it in ( $p=0.026$ ), works on a paper which requires comparison or the use of information from multiple sources ( $p=0.009$ ), approaches a topic from various perspectives for a written or oral task ( $p=0.045$ ). There is a greater probability ( $p=0.009$ ) that non-committed students go to classes unprepared, spend less time preparing for courses ( $p=0.007$ ), and fail or postpone exams more often ( $p=0.017$ ).

It is clear from the results that the attitudes of students belonging to the two groups differ significantly. Students who belong to the committed group as regards relationship behaviours have a sense of vocation in their academic work as well; this attitude, which means that one views knowledge as a value, can be described as a value rational action in the Weberian sense (Weber, 1987). According to their answers, by their own admission they do everything they can to live up to expectations, and they seem to enhance their knowledge in a thoughtful and goal-oriented way. Students with looser relationship commitments do not seem to be determined and steadfast in their academic duties, they have a relaxed attitude towards their higher studies, and their behaviour shows goal rational characteristics (Weber, 1987). A question might be whether this indicates a general attitude toward studying, or requirements and expectations are neglected as the years spent studying are prolonged.

On the attitude scale featuring positive statements there is no significant deviation in the scale of values as regards studying: both groups agree in the same proportion that lending lecture notes, reading compulsory literature and preparing well in subjects which are essential for one's course are things which must be done. The non-committed, however, agree with the following, unacceptable, statements significantly more: it is acceptable

to skip classes regularly ( $p=0.000$ ), it is acceptable to get a degree without any actual academic achievement ( $p=0.000$ ), it is acceptable to buy a thesis for money ( $p=0.001$ ), it is acceptable to cheat regularly ( $p=0.004$ ).

If we define studying full-time in higher education (i.e. taking part in regular training as opposed to correspondence training) as the primary activity of students, then we can consider studying as a job and colleges or universities as workplaces. In this context students' attitudes can indicate their professionalism as future employees, obviously allowing for the influence of personality development and the dynamics of the circumstances. Furthermore, attitudes towards relationships and generating social capital in higher education also foreshadow the directions of social, and especially professional, integration. These observations are reinforced by investigations which turn our attention to the strong correlation which exists between the motivation experienced during one's studies and professional success. Dunifon and Duncan (1998), for example, have shown in a panel study that motivation and self-direction significantly influence one's future career in the labour market (interestingly the correlation with cognitive abilities is not significant).

Given the reasons mentioned above, we were curious as to what the professional expectations of the two groups in the study could be. Looking at the students' plans for the teaching profession, there is a relatively small difference between those who plan to be teachers and those who do not ( $p=0.027$ ): the ratio of teacher education students is 38% in the committed group, and 33% in the non-committed group. 90% of the committed and 85% of the non-committed teacher education students plan to become teachers after graduation. Among the answers given to the question why students opted for teacher education, the following three deviations, characteristic of the non-committed, could be found: admission was easy ( $p=0.002$ ), student life is appealing ( $p=0.005$ ), they could not find a place anywhere else ( $p=0.03$ ).

While investigating professional plans for the future, we found the strongest correlation in the desire to align professional and private life ( $p=0.002$ ): committed students expect to have enough time to spend time with their family alongside work to a much greater extent; what is more, having a steady job and working close to home are important to them. It is significantly characteristic of non-committed students that they desire a higher income ( $p=0.024$ ), want to be able to decide freely about their work ( $p=0.006$ ), desire freedom in decision-making situations ( $p=0.016$ ) and prefer undemanding jobs ( $p=0.05$ ). It can be clearly seen, alongside the priorities of the expected career paths, that for committed students, besides entering the labour market, considering their future family is already important, while those who have not yet considered this aspect of life tend to have more individual-centric professional plans.

## SUMMARY

To summarise the above, we can say that the patterns of bonding observed in relationships resonate with the interpersonal contacts that develop in higher education. We have noted various deviations in the academic activity carried out at universities and colleges. Members of the committed group actively take part in classes, meet the requirements they are set and show sufficient preparation. Those who belong to the other group invest less

time and energy in studying; they meet (or do not meet) the requirements by approaching them “from below”. In a similar way, the attitude of the two groups towards higher studies is essentially different. Therefore we may presume that this attitude can be perceived as a general orientation towards studying, not a new attitude that has developed due to changed conditions after years of study.

It has been interesting to observe how expectations and desires oriented toward the world of work can fit into all these. Committed students elevate their professional expectations to a community (family) level, while young adults from the other group organise their lives in an egocentric way, giving priority to existential expectations. Thus it seems that the group of students who “actively invest” in their studies, namely the group of committed students, develop quality relationships and plan to actively invest social capital in the future as well. “Passive investors”, that is, non-committed students, expect a high rate of return in the labour market, which they are likely to enjoy alone or in a loose social network due to their weak bonding in relationships.

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## TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' AND LAW STUDENTS' IMAGES OF THEIR PROFESSION

Fónai, Mihály

### ABSTRACT

This study compares two widely different university courses and the image of their related professions in terms of student recruitment and their motives for choosing university courses. It is based on the assumption that when students try to choose a university course, the reason behind the choice is partly the difference in status of the various career tracks. The specific motives for high status and prestige lawyers, and law students are related to status, influence on others and interest enforcement, while teacher education students do not favour these factors to such an extent. The identities and similarities in their image of professions are created by the mutual nature of being a student. The data analysed in this paper are from the TESSCEE I. 2014 and IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 databases of the research project SZAKTÁRNET, conducted under the auspices of CHERD-Hungary.

### INTRODUCTION

In this study I compare students' images of a profession from two fields of study which occupy very different positions in society. The legal profession has high prestige, whereas the teaching profession is showing symptoms of de-professionalisation. A few decades ago it was still among the highly respected professions, but since then, for various reasons, teachers have lost their high status and the high prestige of their profession. More precisely, the loss of esteem they are held in by society has manifested itself in varying degrees in the different segments of the profession. The position of a given profession certainly determines the image of it held by students who have chosen that field. As there are remarkable differences between the two student groups, we also expect differences in their images of their profession, i.e. their motives for career choice and career expectations.

### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The theoretical framework of the questions studied includes sources and previous research on social status and prestige, career choice and career expectations.

In Weber's approach, prestige or, more precisely, the honour best owed by society, is an effective claim made according to one's situational status, based on positive or negative privileges, and which includes one's lifestyle, formal education and the prestige of one's birth or profession (Weber, 1987, p. 303–308). The prestige of each occupation or profession is entirely different, which also means that beyond, but in close connection

with, the honour received from society, the status components of the occupations are also different. As far as terminology is concerned, the concept of prestige seems to be more comprehensive, although the theoretical literature is rather inconsistent and uses the terms prestige and status interchangeably (Léderer, 1977; Márton, 2013; Fónai, 2014; Hargreaves, 2009, p. 217).

There is a connection between recruitment and the social status and prestige of a profession, since the recruitment of each profession is different and it is very difficult to tell whether the high prestige of a profession is due to the particular type of work involved, or derives from the social groups from which people enter that profession. This also has to do with how closed a professional group is (Fónai, 2012a; 2013). As this study focuses on similarities and differences between graduate professions, its subject matter leads us to different theoretical and empirical interpretations of the role of higher education in reproducing or reducing social inequalities.

There are several theories explaining the choice of career and university major. Some of them investigate direct influences and the actors who exert them; others are concerned with the processes behind the decisions, such as the correlations between achievement at school and entering higher education, and between entering higher education, choice of career and social background viewed as part of the process of mobility (Róbert, 1986). Career choice and decisions are influenced by one's parents, school and friends, as well as other actors, but, to a great extent, entering higher education is a question of students' independent decisions (Boudon, 1981; Mare, 1981; Molnár, 1989; Róbert, 1986). The findings of the research related to the Talent Development Program of the University of Debrecen (DETEP) showed that students looked upon career choice and entering higher education as their independent decision. However, the analysis of the results still confirmed what previous research and literature had concluded, namely that parents exercised a strong background influence on the choice of high-prestige majors, that the two sexes had different choice mechanisms and mothers had a strong influence on their daughters' career choice (Márton, 2013). One of the most important findings of that research was a detection of differences in the career choice decisions of students from various faculties and majors, which was due to the different student composition of faculties and the different disciplinary socialisation of degree courses (Fónai, 2009; 2010a; Márton, 2013; Hargreaves, 2009, p. 217).

## HYPOTHESES

H1: The first hypothesis is related to parents' education – a factor that best determines and expresses social status. I expect that, in accordance with the prestige hierarchy of professions, parents' level of education is higher in the case of law students than in the case of teacher education students (Fónai, 2010b; 2014; Gáti, 2010; Kiss, 2011).

H2: The second hypothesis is related to the values behind the choice of major. I presume that the values underlying law students' choices are mostly materialistic, whereas it is post-materialistic values that matter more to teacher education students (Bocsi, 2013; Fónai et al., 2005; Fónai & Kiss, 2013; Pusztai, 2011; Veroszta, 2010).



## METHODS AND SAMPLE

The data analysed in this paper are from the TESSCEE I. 2014 and IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 databases of the research project SZAKTÁRNET<sup>1</sup>, conducted under the auspices of CHERD-Hungary.<sup>2</sup> In the spring of 2014, the online questionnaire was completed by 306 first year teacher education students – future kindergarten, primary and subject teachers – from the Partium region (a cross-border region in Hungary, Romania and the Ukraine). I used this database to compare the participating countries with respect to differences in the prestige of the teaching profession.

The second survey in autumn of 2014 also included students majoring in other fields, so the database was suitable for the comparison of teacher education and other students' images of their professions. (The total number of respondents was 1792). In this study I used the second database to compare the career choices of law students from the University of Debrecen (N=66) and teacher education students (N=131) from the same institution. The latter group included would-be kindergarten teachers but did not include future primary teachers as there is no such course at the university.

## RESULTS

### STUDENTS' SOCIAL BACKGROUND

There are significant differences between the students of the two majors regarding place of residence and parents' level of education. The differences are smaller in students' gender distribution: two thirds of law students and three quarters of teacher education students are female. The proportion of law students who come from an urban environment is quite high; only one fifth of them live in villages. The corresponding figure is one third in the case of teacher education students. There are much bigger differences in parents' education (*Table 1*).

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1 SZAKTÁRNET is a research project investigating the position of higher education with a special focus on teacher education. It aims to enhance the role of higher education in order to increase employment and to develop in north-eastern Hungary a theoretical and practical teacher education programme that meets the demands of a national and international knowledge-based economy and adapts to the requirements of the public education system.

2 Center for Higher Education Research & Development – Hungary, University of Debrecen

*Table 1. Parents' education among law students and teacher education students of the University of Debrecen (%).*

	Fathers' education		Mothers' education	
	Law students	Teacher education students	Law students	Teacher education students
Primary school or less	5	5.7	4.7	5.1
Vocational school	20	35	7	18.5
Secondary technical school	10	20.3	11.6	21
Grammar school	17.5	8.1	11.6	14.3
Post-secondary technical education	5	7.3	7	2.5
College	12.5	13	30.2	27.7
University	30	10.5	28	10.9
Total	100	100	100	100
N=	43	119	40	123
p=	p≤0.05		p≤0.05	

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II. 2014 (subsamples of teacher education and law students of the University of Debrecen) (N=197)

The tendencies apparent in the differences in parents' education correspond to the results of former research (Gáti, 2010; Kiss, 2010, Fónai, 2014). Since the number of responding law students was rather low, the extremely high level of mothers' education may have followed from the selection of the sample, but it is still noteworthy that mothers' level of education was higher than fathers', even if we allow for sampling errors. As the prestige of a profession largely depends on what social groups its members are recruited from, the status and prestige differences between the two student groups are partly shaped by recruitment processes.

Numerous studies on prestige have shown that there are significant differences in the evaluation of the teaching and the legal professions, as illustrated by the ranking of SIOPS, the Standard International Occupational Prestige Scale: as opposed to the 71-78 point score of the legal profession, the teaching profession (from kindergarten to secondary school teachers) received 49-62 points. A leading position enhances the prestige of teachers (Hargreaves, 2009, p. 218). The status of professions is also reflected by the income they can provide: in the USA in 2009 lawyers were the third best paid occupational group after surgeons and dentists, with an annual income of \$124,750, while secondary school teachers earned \$52,570 – 54,390, primary school teachers \$52,440 and kindergarten teachers \$49,770 (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2011, p. 194). The status of the two professions is similar in the light of Hungarian research as well, especially when we compare various aspects of "social honour". A public opinion poll in April 2009 carried out by Szonda Ipsos<sup>3</sup> inquired about the "social value" and "financial recognition" of 16 occupations (Szabó, 2011, p. 65). Secondary school teachers scored 4.89 on the social value scale and 7.44 on the financial recognition scale, which indicates a strong discrepancy.

<sup>3</sup> Szonda Ipsos is a public opinion poll institute.

The situation is similarly ambivalent in the other member countries of the Visegrád group (Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) (Fónai et al., 2014a; 2014b). The results are also confirmed by studies within the framework of the Hungarian Graduate Career Tracking System (HGCTS).<sup>4</sup> As regards the financial and social recognition of professions, lawyers were the first (45.7%) and secondary teachers of humanities were the ninth (0.5%) on the financial recognition list. On the social recognition list lawyers (53.3%) followed doctors, while secondary teachers of humanities were seventh (5.7%), and primary teachers were eighth (4.8%) (Hungarian Graduate Career Tracking, 2009; Fónai, 2010b). These figures indicate that the position of lawyers is much more congruent as their financial situation and prestige are close to each other; overall, they have high status. In contrast, responding students rated teachers' financial recognition rather low, and neither was their social recognition evaluated much more positively.

It is important to note that, as in the case of feminisation, the change in the social composition of certain professions is primarily a result. That is to say, the prestige of a profession does not become low because it is pursued by people from low backgrounds, but when a profession starts to lose prestige, it is abandoned and avoided by high-status people, so it opens up to people rising from the lower strata of society.

#### THE PRESTIGE OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN STUDENTS' EYES

The findings of the Hungarian Graduate Career Tracking System (Fónai, 2010b) confirmed our impressions as to the prestige hierarchy of professions. At the University of Debrecen, we analysed students' rankings related to their faculty (and thus, indirectly, to their major and the corresponding professions) within the framework of DETEP<sup>5</sup> (Fónai, 2010a; Márton, 2013). Law students ranked their major 6.95 on a ten-point scale, while they thought they were ranked 7.95 by "university public opinion" (Fónai, 2010b, p. 232). The corresponding figures in the sample of teacher education students, generated from the DETEP database, were the following: 7.47 – 5.63 in the Faculty of Humanities and 7.29 – 5.31 in the Faculty of Sciences (Fónai, 2012a, p. 118). As we can see, the prestige rankings displayed different patterns. Although law students ranked themselves lower, they thought others would rank them higher. In contrast, teacher education students ranked themselves higher than the way they perceived they were viewed from the outside world. This discrepancy makes it clear that teacher education students' evaluation of the positions of their major and their future profession is rather incongruous.

<sup>4</sup> The Career Tracking System was launched in 2010 in Hungarian higher education. It studies, by utilising international findings, active students' and fresh graduates' social backgrounds as well as their careers at school, in higher education and on the labour market.

<sup>5</sup> DETEP (Talent Development Programme of the University of Debrecen) was launched in 2000 as the first joint student programme of the integrated university. In the first phase, students were accepted into the programme through a three-step selection process: by completing Super's work value questionnaire, Raven's Progressive Matrices (intelligence test) and a questionnaire about their social background and motivation. In this phase, 3183 students entered the programme. Partly as a result of the Bologna process, the programme was modified in 2008 and 2010. The essence of the programme is talent development realised with the assistance of a tutor with the aim of raising the next generation of academic professionals. In the first phase, between 2000 and 2008, students' value preferences – including work values – showed a high degree of consistency, as I also point out in the present paper (Fónai, 2009; Fónai et al., 2005; Fónai & Kiss, 2013).

The TESSCEE I. 2014 international survey makes it possible to compare some elements of students' rankings and career expectations in the Partium region (regardless of their national or ethnic identity, *Table 2*).

*Table 2. Differences in students' own and the "university public opinion's" supposed evaluation of their major by country among teacher education students in Partium (means of an 8 point scale).*

Country	Own major ranked among other degree courses of the university	Thinks own major is ranked by university public opinion
Hungarian institutions (N=139)	5.48	4.99
Romanian institutions (N=82)	5.88	5.52
Ukrainian institutions (N=83)	6.42	5.62
p=	p≤0.05	p≤0.05

Source: TESSCEE I. 2014 (N=306)

As in the DETEP survey, students in each of the three countries perceived that their major was ranked lower by others than by themselves. It is interesting to observe the differences between the countries, especially if we also look at the rankings related to the teaching profession (*Table 3*).

*Table 3. Differences in the evaluation of the teaching profession by country among teacher education students in Partium (means of a five point scale).*

	Students from Hungary	Students from Romania	Students from Ukraine	p=
Prestige	2.87	3.35	3.14	0.000
Social influence	3.97	3.76	3.72	0.128
Ability to assert one's interests	3.15	3.25	3.36	0.297
Professional autonomy	3.18	3.26	3.16	0.750
Respect from others	3.18	3.68	3.61	0.001
Career opportunities	3.02	3.45	3.21	0.012
Financial recognition	2.55	2.46	2.9	0.011

Source: TESSCEE I. 2014 (N=306)

Although the small size of the sample calls for caution, there are both similarities and differences between students from the three countries regarding their career expectations as would-be teachers. The prestige and financial recognition of the teaching profession was considered moderate by all the three groups. What they considered significant was

the social influence of teachers, which implies a somewhat traditional image of the profession. The evaluation of teachers' ability to assert their interests and their view of their professional autonomy was rated upper medium in each country. On the other hand, there were significant differences in the evaluations of prestige, respect from others, financial recognition and career opportunities. Prestige and career opportunities had the highest score among Romanian teacher education students, followed by Ukrainians. Students in Hungary were the most critical about the future of the teaching profession, in all respects. Although we should keep in mind the limits of generalisations resulting from the small sample size, these discrepancies can be partly attributed to the persistence of traditional values, possibly including the traditionally high prestige of teachers as an important group within the intelligentsia, an attitude which is no longer present in today's Hungary (Fónai, 2010a). This speculative explanation, grounded in the special role of the intelligentsia, must be treated with caution, as the proportion of ethnic Hungarians is fairly high in our sample: three quarters of the Romanian and 90% of the Ukrainian students identified themselves as Hungarians. Since professionals with a national minority identity tend to view themselves as "intelligentsia" in the traditional sense, it may account for their expectations and opinions about the future position of teachers (Flóra & Szilágyi, 2012).

#### FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE OF MAJOR

Student groups taking different majors have essentially different motives for entering higher education and choosing the given degree course, which are closely related to prevailing stereotypes and expectations concerning the particular course or profession. Some of these were formerly measured with the help of Super's work value questionnaire, used in DETEP surveys. Students' value preferences were often similar in several value types, which follows from their being university students. The least attractive values were hierarchy, income, aesthetics and supervision. It was interesting to note that whereas there was considerable agreement on accepted values, there was a wide range of views when it came to rejected values. The latter ones were typically values the judgement of which depends on the individual, as opposed to the more stereotypical values adopted by certain age or professional groups. The values most favoured by law students and students from the faculties of humanities and sciences alike, including teacher education students, were variety, relationships, achievement, altruism, creativity, prestige and intellectual stimulation. Although we could not detect any significant differences, it appeared that students from the faculty of sciences were less altruistic, and prestige proved to be more attractive to law students (Fónai et al., 2005).

During the IESA-TESSCEE II. survey conducted in the autumn of 2014 the motives for the choice of major were measured with binary variables. The survey produced very illuminating results: the measured differences were partly due to the differences among the professions in question, whereas the similarities could be explained by respondents' common position as students and the characteristics of student life (*Table 4*). Still, there is no such phenomenon as a unified youth culture; most student surveys show segmented cultural and lifestyle patterns (Bocsi, 2013; Pusztai, 2011; Veroszta, 2010).

*Table 4. Factors influencing choice of major among law students and teacher education students of the University of Debrecen (percentage of the response “yes”).*

	Law students	Teacher education students	p=
To find a well-paid job	98.2	54	0.000
To have a better chance to achieve a leading position	78.8	19.5	0.000
To have a respected profession	94.1	73.4	0.001
To find employment more easily	92.3	70.2	0.001
To build an extensive relationship network	71.7	54.6	0.032
To be exempt from the tuition fee	32	45.5	0.072
To follow the family example	26	17.1	0.130
To enhance knowledge	96	90.8	0.205
To follow friends' example	16.7	11.8	0.271
To follow parents' and teachers' advice	44.2	38.7	0.303
To postpone starting work	21.6	17.5	0.336

Source: IESA-TESSCEE II, 2014 (subsample of law students and teacher education students of the University of Debrecen) (N=197)

On the basis of Super's Work Value Inventory we did not detect any significant differences between law students and teacher education students in the 2000s (but there were major differences between other faculties). In contrast, as regards choice of major, there were crucial differences between the motivations of the two groups. The differences indicated that law students were much more motivated by prospects of influence, power, position, income and prestige than teacher education students. Already at the stage of career choice, law students seemed to be influenced by the attributes rooted in the high status of the legal profession, which follow from the direct and indirect socialisation processes of the occupational group as well as outsiders' image of the legal profession (Fónai, 2014; Fónai et al., 2014a; 2014b). As research shows that among Hungarian lawyers the proportion of those whose predecessors pursued the same career is lower than among other professionals, e.g. teachers, we can conclude that instances of the profession have a very strong impact on aspirants, whose identification with the patterns and social characteristics of the legal profession (e.g. high status and prestige) starts well before they begin their studies. In spite of the significant differences, the motives “respected profession” and “finding employment more easily” are not only connected with high prestige: for teacher education students, the former means recognition in a sense that has little to do with status, and the latter may simply mean university graduates' better

position on the labour market. The most striking differences are in the appeal exerted by income, leading position and relationships, which are more important to status-oriented law students.

As for similarities, the most important motive shared by both groups is that the majority of students entered higher education and chose their major in order to enhance their knowledge, which can be regarded as a general trend (see Jancsák, 2014 for teacher education students' motives). The influence of family and school are also remarkable, especially in the opinion of law students, which is in line with other findings (Fónai, 2010a; 2010b; Kovács, 2014). Teacher education students in our sample did not claim to follow the family example to the extent that one would expect in the light of the national CTS results. In addition, there is an association between "family example" (i.e. whether there are any lawyers or teachers in the family) and following parents' advice. Finally, the postponement of starting work is not an attractive motive to responding students, so they do not look upon being a student simply as an extension of adolescence.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of the factors and tendencies shaping law students' and teacher education students' images of their respective professions confirmed our hypothesis on students' background, as there was a significant difference between the social background of the two student groups, which partly offers an explanation for the different prestige of the two majors. It must be stressed, however, that the connection is not a purely causal and deterministic one, since it is not the composition of the student population that accounts for the prestige of a major. In our international comparative study, the ranking of the statements about the position of the teaching profession sheds light on the fact that the order might be influenced by traditional stereotypes about being an intellectual.

Our hypothesis on the choice of major was also confirmed by our findings: law students' motives were much more materialistic, whereas the same motives did not influence teacher education students' choice of career. Both groups' primary motive for entering university was the enhancement of their knowledge.

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