

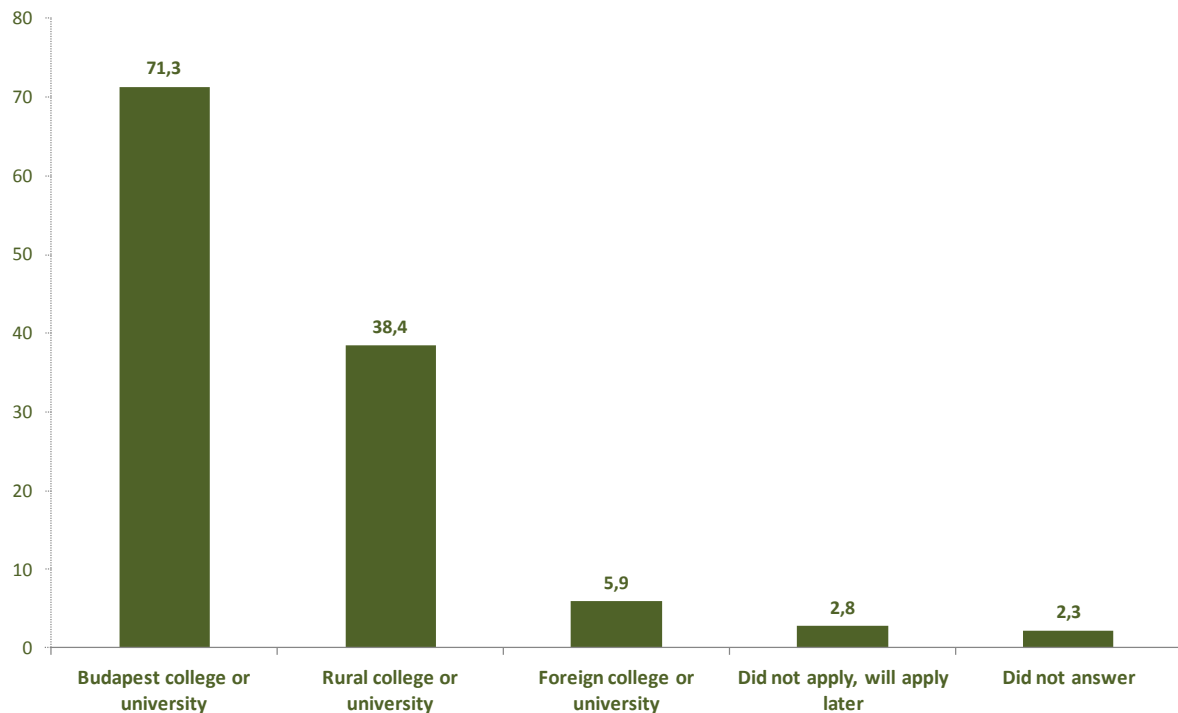
An increasing number of Hungarian students apply to British universities

Between 2006 and 2013 the number of Hungarian high school graduates applying to British universities increased significantly, by nearly 2.7-fold, while other Visegrad countries were characterized by much lower growth rates. Besides, the research of IEER examining the prospects for further studies also reveals that regional disparities in further education are discernible within Hungary. Children from the underdeveloped Northern and Great Plains regions usually don't apply for universities in Budapest or abroad, whereas in the region of Central Hungary students most often choose the most prestigious universities of Budapest. The study was conducted on graduating students at thirty Hungarian state high schools; the results are based on 704 responses.

The vast majority of the respondent high school graduates (82%, 575 persons) would like to continue their education after graduation. Their grade point average is 4.25 while for others it is only 3.33. Among those applying to university economics, engineering and medicine are the most popular areas of study and also many prepare for careers in the natural sciences.

This year, the majority of respondents (71%) applied to a college or university in Budapest while 38% applied to a higher education institution in rural areas. Nearly 6% (34 persons) applied to a higher education institution in abroad (as well) (see Figure 1) who are typically boys with good academic results and have a father with higher education, who works at a managerial or intellectual level, or is even an entrepreneur. Most of them applied to tuition-free institutions and many of them want to stay abroad for the long term. The most popular destination is Britain.

Figure 1: High school graduates' plans for further education (percent), 2014

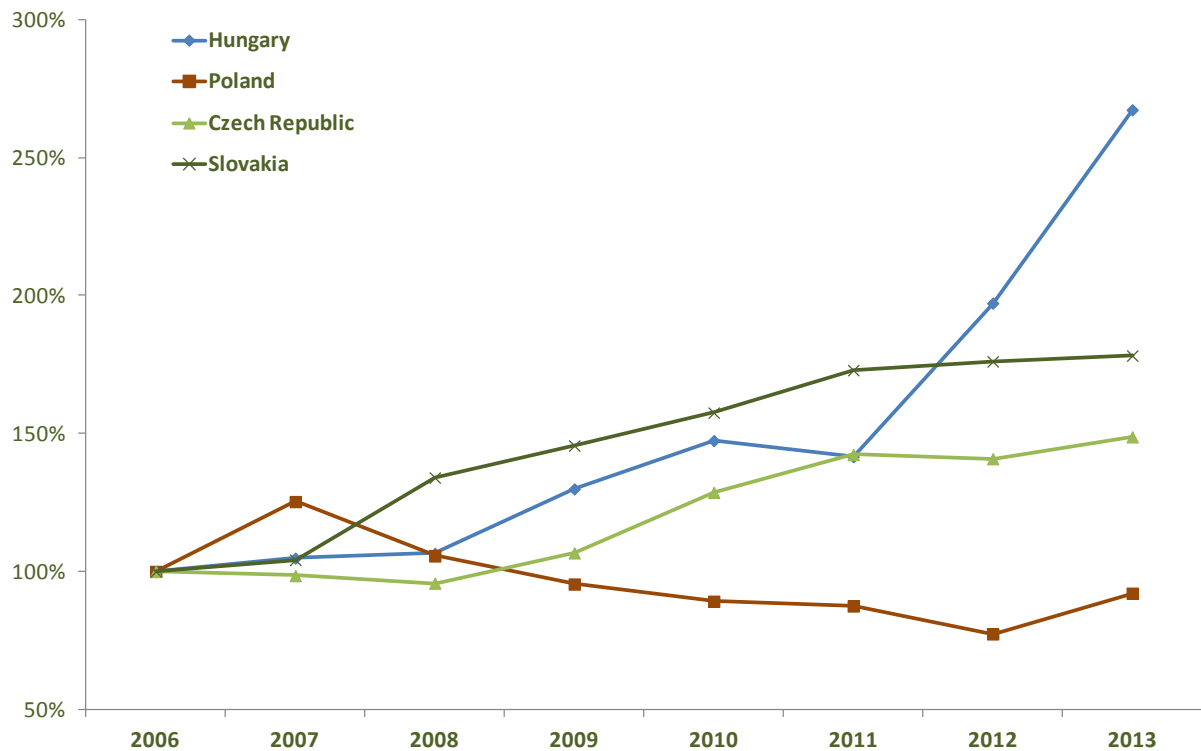


Source: IEER (N=575)

Note: respondents were allowed to choose more than one answer

This is also reflected in data on the number of applicants at British universities: there was almost a 2.7-fold increase between 2006 and 2013 in the number of Hungarian students applying to Britain. This trend was reinforced especially after 2011, when the Hungarian data began to diverge from the rest of the Visegrad group of countries: in the last two years the number of Hungarian youths applying to British universities increased by 80 percent (see Figure 2). In this respect Hungary is unique among the Visegrad group of countries as the number of applicants from other countries was rather stagnant or experienced low growth rates in the past two years.

Figure 2: Changes in the number of applicants to British universities from the Visegrad countries between 2006 and 2013 (2006=100%)

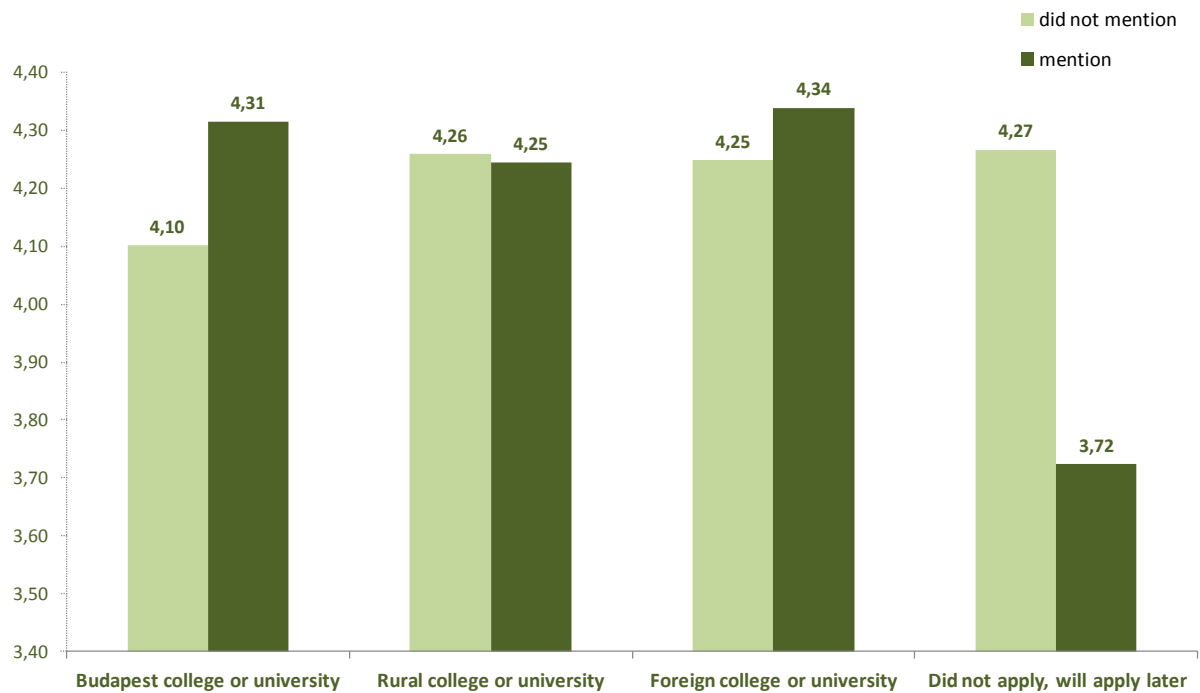


Data source: <http://www.ucas.com/data-analysis/data-resources>

The majority of those not wishing to continue their education (69%) are interested in obtaining skills either through a vocational school or a course outside the vocational education system; 26% would like to work abroad, while 15% would like to work in Hungary.

On average students with the best half-year grade-point average apply to foreign and Budapest post-secondary institutions, while students with lower results generally go for rural universities and colleges, and those with the lowest averages are found among those who postpone their applications (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Grade point averages of high school graduates by planned further studies, 2014



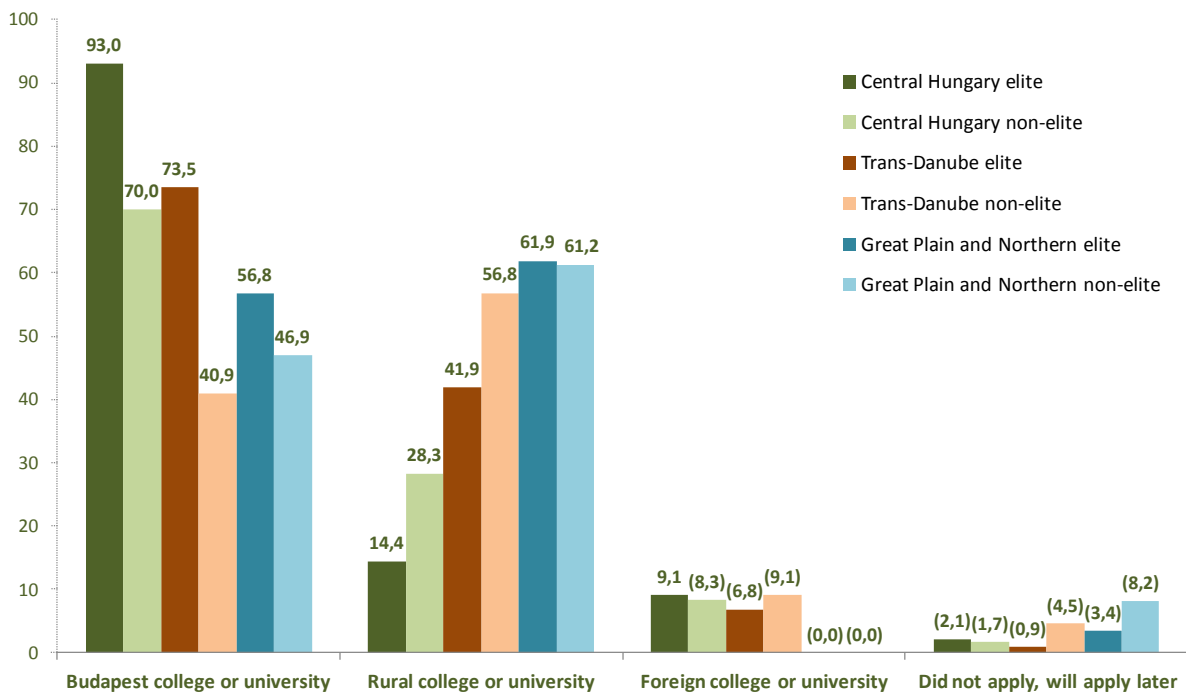
Source: IEER (N=519)

Note: respondents were allowed to choose more than one answer

High school students were grouped by regions and by the average results of their high schools on national competency measurements. It can be stated that students from the “elite” high schools of Central Hungary generally (96%) go on to post-secondary schooling after graduation. The lowest rate of post-secondary schooling can be found at non-elite high schools of the Trans-Danube as well as the Northern and Great Plains regions (57%).

Regional disparities of Hungary are discernible in further education as well. Children from the underdeveloped Northern and Great Plains regions usually don’t apply for universities in Budapest or abroad whereas in the region of Central Hungary students most often choose the most prestigious universities in Budapest. The highest percentage of those applying to a Budapest post-secondary institution are students from both elite and non-elite high schools in Central Hungary as well as elite high schools in the Trans-Danube region. The converse is true for a graduate from non-elite high schools in the Trans-Danube region as well the Northern and Great Plain regions. The highest proportion of those applying to a rural post-secondary institution are students from both elite and non-elite high schools in the Northern and Great Plain regions as well as non-elite high schools in the Trans-Danube region. Those applying abroad are solely high school students from Central Hungary and the Trans-Danube region (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: High school graduates planning to continue their education by the type of school (percentage), 2014



Source: IEER (N=575)

Note: respondents were allowed to choose more than one answer. Results less than ten are indicated in parentheses.

Considering the impact of student and school characteristics separately, it can be seen that among high school graduates the chance for further education is the highest for those students who have a university-educated white-collar father, have good academic results, speak a foreign language, and attend an elite high school. In addition, students from Central Hungary and Budapest are also more likely to apply for admission to a higher education institution.