



Primary School Students' Interest in Further Education and Career Choices – 2018

Summary

This is a brief summary of the most important findings of the national career guidance study of 2018. The study focuses on the pre-career, seventh-grade primary school students' interest in further education and career choices. The 2018 survey was conducted by the Hungarian Chamber of Industry and Commerce (HCIC). Experts of its territorial chambers surveyed 9228 seventh grade pupils.

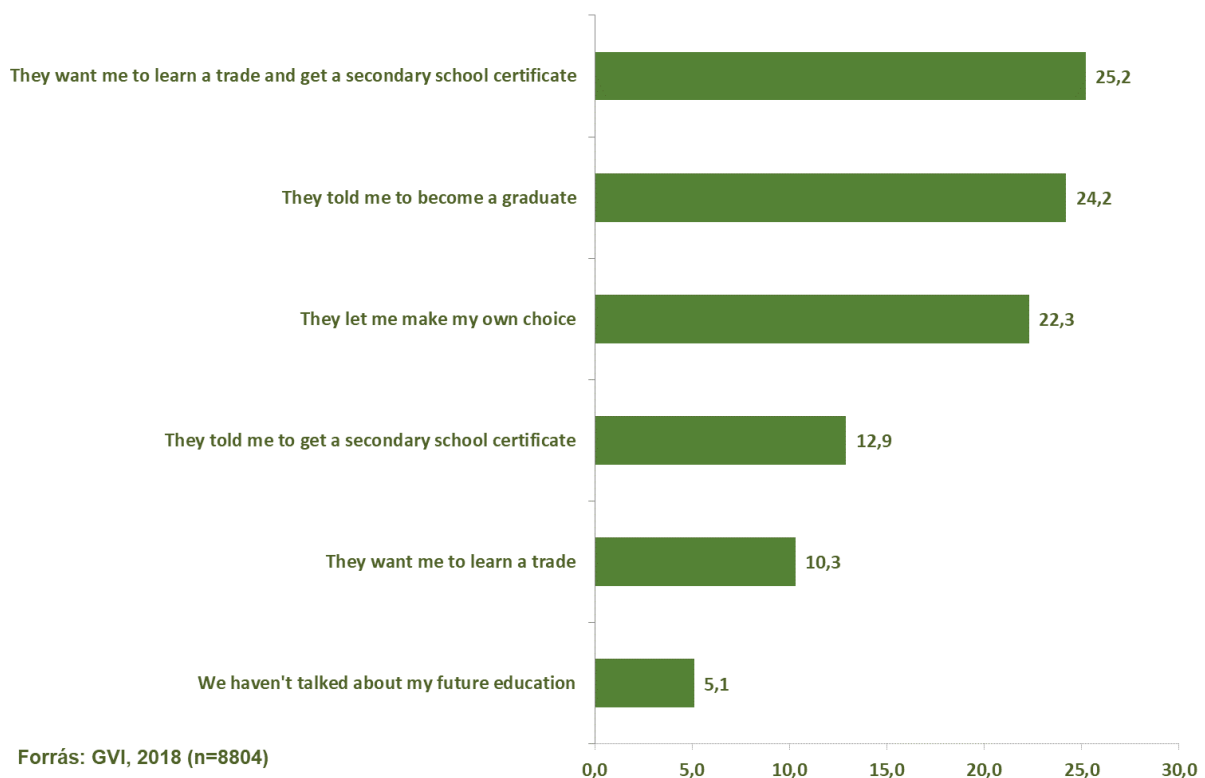
Counties were represented proportionally, based on the number of their school-leaving eight graders in 2017. The sample was weighted by the schools' location in greater regions; by the schools' results at the central competency assessment of 2017; and, finally, by the number of their seventh-grade pupils. Since the required data for weighting were available for 9071 students, the following findings are based on the answers of these 9071 students.

Results show that almost everyone (92%) has already considered further education possibilities. The majority (85%) talked with their parents about it, 70% discussed it in home room class, 34% went to a school career orientation day, and 24% relied on older friends to gain information.

Students' education plans and their parents' advice

Parents most often suggested (in 25% of all cases) that their children should learn a profession and acquire a secondary school certificate. A similar proportion (24%) of parents advised graduation. 22% of pupils were told to be allowed to make their own choice. 13% were advised to get a certificate of secondary education while 10% were advised to obtain a profession, respectively. 5% have not discussed the matter with the parents yet (see figure 1.)

Figure 1. Distribution of pupils by the level of qualification their parents would like them to acquire (per cent), 2018



Furthermore, the majority (80%) of pupils were given the advice by their parents to learn a trade or a profession they would like to pursue. About 55% were advised to choose a trade or profession that pays well.

Further education plans included college/university studies (36%), trade- and secondary school education (23%). 15% of pupils wanted trade qualifications, while a

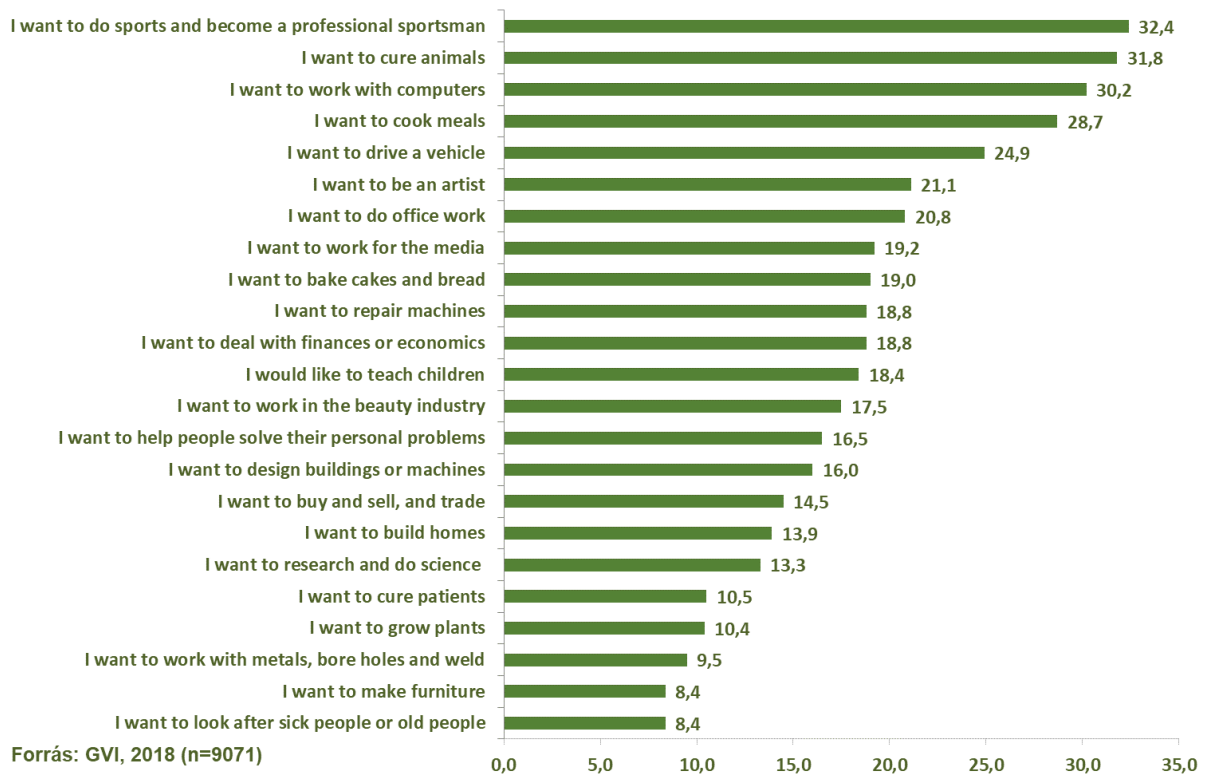
trade school certificate was targeted by 12%. 9% of the pupils aimed to acquire a grammar school certificate, and 5% would like to become qualified technicians. Only 1% chose not to continue school (see figure 2.)

Figure 2. Distribution of pupils by their scheduled time span in education after primary school (per cent), 2018



Among pupils, the most popular careers are related to sports, IT, veterinary medicine, and cooking (See figure 3).

Figure 3. Distribution of pupils by their future career plans (per cent), 2018



With regard to their future education plans, we found a significant difference between boys and girls. The father's educational background also proved to be an important influencing factor. Intellectual careers were more commonly found attractive by children whose parents had a better educational background. It was found that pupils generally want a job requiring qualifications similar to the ones their parents have.

In the regions, future career plans do not differ significantly, however, the region of Central Hungary boasts the most pupils choosing intellectual professions.

The pupils seem to have a broad idea about their future careers, and accordingly, they tended to choose 2-4 similar trades or professions that best matched their vision. The vast majority of pupils thought that the most important factor in their future career should be job security (98% thought so) and high salary (deemed important by 95%).

Results also show that the education plans of seventh grade pupils were heavily influenced by their living conditions. A child with an austere background generally had much lower ambitions than those whose families were more well-off. So, most young people living in worse conditions prepare to go to trade schools, and only a minority plans to enter higher education, much fewer than those whose families are richer.

Pupil profiles

The research also studied the ways in which pupils' personality traits and family backgrounds influence career decisions. For this analysis we employed broader categories (so-called student profiles) which include the fields of interest, basic psychological features, attitudes towards work, and future prospects.

The autonomy in work and opinion and the need for independence from the parents are characterised by an "*autonomy index*" developed by IEER. All things considered, it might be safe to say that the more qualified the parent, the more autonomous the child. Pupils who proved to be more autonomous than the others would generally prefer to study for many years, and they would also be more likely to choose intellectual professions requiring better schooling. The most autonomous would like to become researchers, social workers, media workers, doctors, bankers, artists, engineers or nurses.

„*Leisure time index*“ was developed to approximate how much pupils were leisure time-centred. This index was highest among children with parents holding secondary school certificates or degrees. It was also high for pupils targeting secondary/tertiary certificates and who planned to work in the beauty industry, the media industry, or who would do social work. Girls tended to set leisure time activities to the centre more than boys.

To approximate the interests in mechanics and metallurgy, we created a *mechanics/metallurgy index*. The mechanics/metallurgy index is far higher for boys than for girls. Many of the youth interested in mechanics and metallurgy probably come from poor families with physical worker parents of low education (who are e.g. skilled workers, temporary workers, auxiliary workers or trained workers, or unemployed.) After finishing elementary school, pupils with strong mechanical and metallurgical interests usually want to take part in tech education or in a three-year trade school training. However, many of them do not want to continue their studies. Their parents often want them to learn a trade and get a certificate of secondary education simultaneously. They also tend to suggest that the child should choose the father's trade and work for the family enterprise. So it might be safe to say that parents with a secondary education qualification would like their children to "inherit" their profession.

To grasp creativity and art talent in pupils, a „*creativity index*“ was created. Its value is significantly higher among girls. The highest index values were scored by children of intellectuals, pupils with long-term education plans (targeting e.g. a degree) and those who would choose a creative trade or profession (e.g. artist, psychologist, confectioner, baker, researcher, teacher, media worker).

Susceptibility to tertiary education and intellectual work was approximated with a “*degree index*”. Girls are more common to aim for a degree than boys. Results also show that parents who are graduates themselves usually pass down their ambitions to their children. Pupils who are more autonomous and hard-working tend to aim for a degree more often than the rest. The degree index is markedly high among pupils who claim to be good at puzzles, logic, maths, organisation and foreign languages.

Data show that the decisions made by pupils with regard to their further education and trade choices are strongly influenced by their parents in most cases.