



Intentions of High School Students for Higher Education

– Summary in English –

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The Institute for Economic and Enterprise Research operated by the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IEER or GVI in Hungarian) is a non-profit economic research institute indulging in applied research in several subfields of economics. Our mission is to provide empirically and theoretically substantiated knowledge and analysis of the economic and social processes that influence the actual situation and perspectives of Hungarian economy and Hungarian companies.

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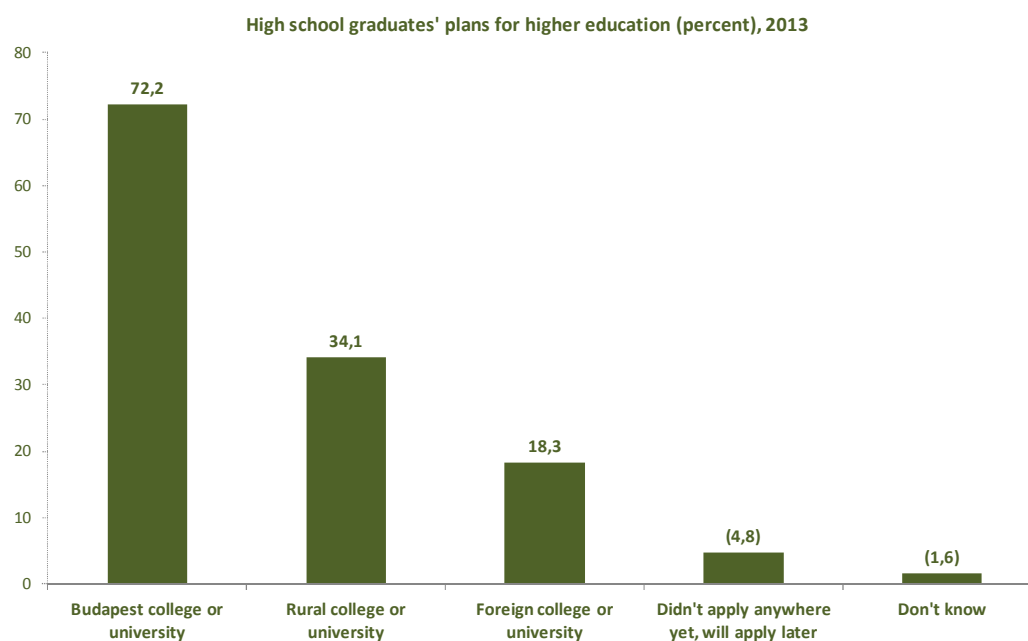
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The objective of the latest research of IEER was to get survey-based information on the intentions of high school students for higher education and how these intentions change by various high school and student traits. The survey was carried out by a brief self-administered questionnaire at a sample of secondary schools selected on the basis of several criteria. Nevertheless the sample design could not be proportional by some important features (e.g., high schools' ranking by admission rates, geographic location, or student composition). During the selection process high schools were classified into two groups based on admission rates – elite and non-elite high schools – and in addition to high schools from Budapest, several from rural areas were included as well.

The study took place from 23 April to 26 June 2013, using a quota method on the basis of high school rankings. Students from six selected Budapest and rural institutions completed a questionnaire on paper or online – answering questions by computer or smart phone. Our results are based on the responses of 592 high school students.

The results show that among high school graduates who wish to continue their education (126 people), the majority (72%) applied this year to a college or university in Budapest, and 34% to a rural college or university. Higher education institutions abroad were chosen by 18% of high school graduates – the most popular destination being Great Britain.

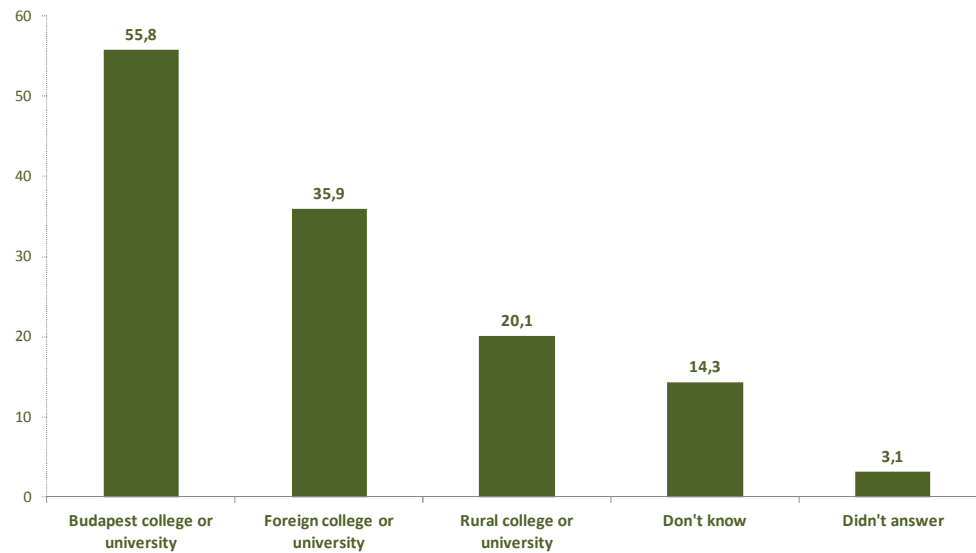


Source: IEER (N=126)

As for the further education plans of respondents in grades 9-11 (448 persons), more than half (56%) would like to continue their studies at a college or university in Budapest. The second most popular destination of those in grades 9-11 is to continue their studies abroad: 36% of these students would like to apply for a foreign higher education institution. Only 20%

indicated a rural college or university, and 14% of them do not know yet where they would like to pursue their studies. Among those students in grade 9-11 who plan to study abroad, the largest proportion prepare to do so in Great Britain (38%) followed by the U.S. (19%). For nearby Austria and Germany, only 14% and 10% of respondents prepare to apply.

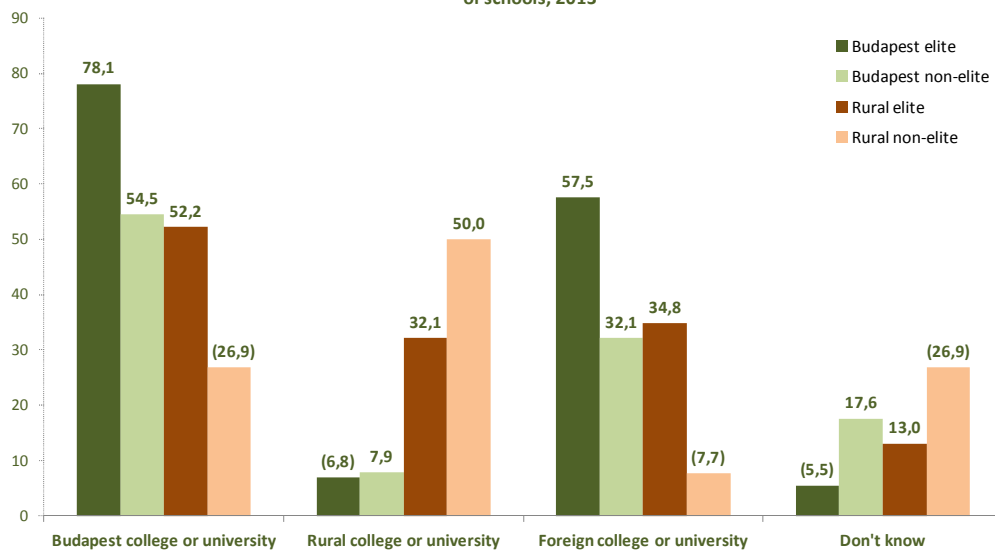
9-11 grader high school students' plans for higher education (percent), 2013



Source: IEER (N=512)

Of pupils in grades 9-11 from elite high schools of Budapest, 58% plan for further studies abroad. Over a third (35%) of rural elite high school pupils plan to do the same, while the figure for rural non-elite high schools students is much lower. Those considering further studies abroad are also typically among those with the best grades.

Higher education intentions among 9-11 grader students at six high schools within the four types of schools, 2013



Source: IEER (N=448)

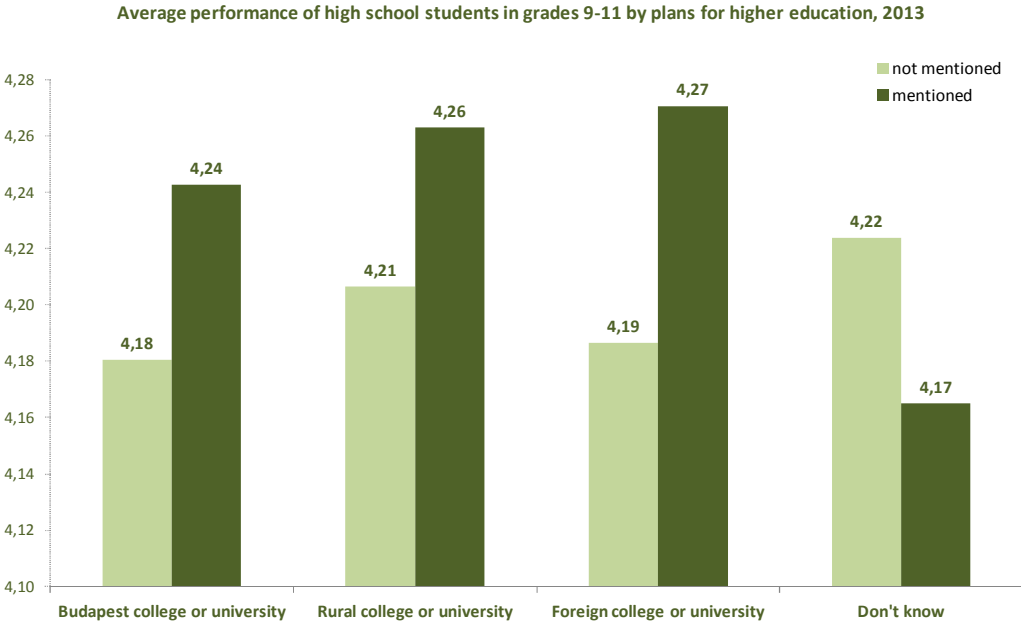
Examining the factors influencing further education abroad, based on the data available we estimated each factor independently of the effect of other factors. According to the results of this analysis the intention to study abroad differs most by the type of school. Those from elite high schools in Budapest are planning to continue their studies abroad more likely (with a more than twice bigger odds ratio) as those from rural non-elite high schools.

According to the results of this model the chance to study abroad -- apart from any other effect -- increases along with educational achievement. Between pupils of a particular school type, above average students are more inclined to plan the continuation of their studies abroad than students in the same place but with a worse academic performance.

The results also show that girls -- excluding any other influences -- plan to study abroad more often than boys. This may be related to the Hungarian government's 2013 policy of higher education. The conditions for further studies are more favorable (lower point limits for state-supported training, higher rates of state-sponsored training) at the engineering faculties -- which are typically chosen by boys -- than those for the humanities, for which mostly girls plan their further education.

Of course, all this does not mean that those who now indicate their intention to study abroad will actually do so one, two or three years from now, but it definitely points to a phenomenon which, if we like it or not, exists, and which in any case must be measured and analysed in the future -- uncovering its reasons as well.

The results of the intentions for further studies abroad can be also interpreted as the dissatisfaction encouraging migration, a global village feeling caused by the information society, or an increasing degree of integration into the European Union -- these factors appear in our results simultaneously as a mixture.



Source: IEER (N=356)

Thus the results are definitely indicate that – assuming no major changes to how domestic higher education institutions are run nor their funding -- to believe in a downward trend in the future for those planning their further studies abroad is baseless.

The results obtained underscore that mostly students with a good academic record, from elite high schools in Budapest and the countryside, have intention of continuing their education abroad. Those from rural non-elite high schools are less likely to want to continue their studies at a university in Budapest or in a foreign country and opt for higher education institutions in rural areas. Of particular interest are the differences between boys and girls in their intention for further studies abroad: accordingly, it shows the rational decision of students to adapt to government policy and try to get a start (even abroad) on their originally planned and desired direction for further education.