

NATIONAL-LEVEL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROPOSAL

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Objective of the strategic document

A key element of the Learning by Doing project is to develop a national-level vocational education and training concept. The purpose of the document is to prepare a proposal for policy makers in order to introduce a vocational education and training model in the development of the current vocational education and training system that best suits the demands of the economy. Subsequent to a situational analysis, the document makes proposals for modifying the current vocational education and training system and recommends points of intervention that facilitate a demand-oriented model.

Objective of the concept

The purpose of the present document is to compile a package of proposals that respects the strategic concepts of the current vocational education and training system and preserves the basics of the overall vocational education and training system while suggesting minor changes which can have a significant impact and through which the entire vocational education and training system will become more efficient and attractive. The concept will be forwarded to the relevant professionals and policy makers, thus establishing the foundation of the roundtable to be implemented within the project's framework. Therefore, the concept also serves as a point of departure for a debate by summarizing what was outlined at the Learning by Doing workshops, while also taking into consideration the current concepts of vocational education and training policy.

General introduction to the project

Within the framework of the Danube Transnational Programme, the overall purpose of the project co-funded by the European Union and the Hungarian State is establishing effective vocational education and training that serves labour market demands in the countries of the Danube region through the capacity development of the local operators, thus significantly contributing to the intelligent progression of the region.

Specific goals of the project:

- the capacity development of the stakeholders with interests in the reform of vocational education and training through study trips and cross-border knowledge-sharing,
- reinforcing the national and transnational cooperation between the concerned operators, by drafting a handbook facilitating the effective reform of vocational education and training and its adaptation, and furthermore, through the establishment of a knowledge centre dealing with vocational education and training knowledge transfer,
- assessing the situation of the individual countries/regions, developing national and regional-level strategies and policy recommendations.

Throughout the project, using the definition of the concepts and objectives related to vocational education and training as a point of departure and after developing country-specific scenarios, we can move on to the level of long-term regional/national strategies and policy recommendations as a process supported by the range of devices to be developed (Handbook on the transformation of the vocational education and training systems of the Danube region, transnational Knowledge Centre in the Danube region). The handbook will be a compilation of the most important factors related to the transformation of the vocational education and training systems of the region, whilst as a transnational institution and forum, the knowledge centre will focus on monitoring the transformation of the vocational education and training systems and supporting their processes with expertise through the means of knowledge-sharing.

Due to the theme and regional relevance of the project realized over a nearly 30-month period, it has a strategic nature, in which all the countries of the Danube region are represented; not only will it involve the chambers, but also the national-level agencies of most countries.

General introduction to the vocational education and training system

The state-regulated segment of vocational education and training:

(a) within the school system:

- vocational education and training programmes implemented in VET schools, as regulated by the Act of 2011 on public education and the Act of 2011 on vocational education and training; as well as

- that pursued in higher education, regulated by the Act of 2011 on National Higher Education; furthermore

(b) vocational education and training programmes outside the school system, regulated by the Act of 2013 on adult training and the Act of 2011 on vocational education and training.

In the case of the former type, the participants are pupils with a student status in higher education, as opposed to adult training, where they have a contractual relationship with the training institution.

Vocational education and training in the school system

Recent reforms

The new acts on vocational education and training and public education adopted in 2011 significantly reconfigured the structure of vocational education and training, as well as its content, financing and management systems as well as delegating key tasks to the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MKIK). As of the 2013/14 academic year, the duration of apprenticeship training has been decreased from its previous 2+2 years to three years, while the ratio of professional and practical training has significantly increased (based on the model of dual learning), whilst the vocational education and training content has increased in other vocational education and training programme types offered on the upper secondary level. Concurrently, the higher education vocational education and training programmes have been entirely integrated into higher education and the qualifications offered by their programmes have been removed from the National qualifications register.

The reforms introduced since 2015 were based on a new policy document and focused on three main objectives:

- (a) serving the demands of the economy by training more skilled workers and technicians;
- (b) reinforcing dual learning by raising the number of (practical) training sites (companies) and the participants involved in the training, for the sake of strengthening practice-oriented training and reducing early school-leaving; furthermore
- (c) improving the vocational education and training system by improving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the training, through which it can become more flexible and attractive and thus its prestige can be increased.

In order to facilitate the attainment of this goal and for the sake of the professional progression of skilled workers, they introduced the possibility of acquiring the second National

qualifications register skills certification in school-based vocational education and training. Additional measures served the transformation of the training and management system as well as the dissemination of the dual learning model.

The reconfiguration of the training system and renaming vocational education and training programmes (as of the 2016/17 academic year)

- (a) The former secondary vocational schools have been relabelled as vocational grammar schools, furthermore, they boosted the ratio of vocational education and training and practical training in secondary years (on the upper secondary level), thus allowing pupils to acquire a vocational secondary school leaving examination certificate, which provides eligibility for at least one occupation.
- (b) The former vocational school has been renamed as a secondary vocational school, which currently (subsequent to the vocational education and training programme) provides pupils with an (optional) two-year, post-secondary general training programme that prepares them for a school leaving examination that serves as a pre-requisite for studies in higher education.
- (c) The previous special vocational school was renamed as vocational school

The reconfiguration of the management and institutional system (as of July 2015)

As of July 2015, all state-funded VET schools (with the exception of those falling under the Minister of Agriculture) have been taken under the management of the Minister for vocational education and training, due to which most of the previously widespread mixed profile schools (offering both general and vocational education and training programmes) were terminated; these schools were integrated into 44 vocational education and training centres, each encompassing 3-10 member organisations for the sake of improving the efficiency of their operation and coordination.

Measures aimed at expanding dual learning (training contract training)

The policy document of 2015 set the objective of increasing the ratio of those involved in training contract programmes from 40% to 70% in apprenticeship training by 2018, whilst increasing those involved in post-secondary vocational education and training from 8% to 25%. For the sake of facilitating training contract-based, work-oriented education, they introduced

the chamber guarantee system. The act on vocational education and training was amended in a way that the practical training of pupils can take place at school if there is no suitable company-based training site, which is to be verified by the Chamber in writing (as of July 2015). However, the training contract option has been expanded to those involved in adult education.

The latest reforms

The purpose of the law amendments adopted in December 2017 was to further fine-tune the vocational education and training system (Government of Hungary, 2017). The most important changes were aimed at making the vocational grammar school more flexible and expanding training contract-based programmes:

- (a) they amended the content of the vocational secondary school leaving examination as of the 2019/2020 academic year, separating the acquisition of the auxiliary professional qualification, which became optional and thus the secondary school leaving examination of the professional subject focuses on the sector's shared content;
- (b) the 11th and 12th years of the vocational grammar school allowed for concluding a training contract insofar as the training programme provides an appropriate number of practical classes;
- (c) it has become possible to conclude a preliminary training contract in the year preceding the first vocational education and training year, thus facilitating entry into the training contract system;
- (d) they expanded the range of organisations authorised to conclude training contracts in the Social and pedagogy sectors and in relation to the professional qualifications tied to the Minister of Defence, thus involving budgetary institutions, foundations, associations and ecclesiastical legal persons.
- (e) the legislation was aimed at preventing business organisations conducting practical training as their main activity in receiving subsidies from vocational education and training contributions as it was also disadvantaging micro-businesses; at the same time, however, they set a limit for the number of pupils to be accommodated at micro and small enterprises at twelve (discounting disadvantaged and special education needs pupils);
- (f) they introduced the possibility of establishing shared sector training centres for enterprises.

The conditions for the operation of the vocational education and training system

Training institutions

Upper secondary and post-secondary vocational education and training in the school system (public education system) is conducted at VET schools, which offer one or multiple vocational education and training programmes. In 2015, the state-funded VET schools were taken over by the Minister for vocational education and training from the Minister of Education before integrating them into vocational education and training centres. Currently, there are 44 vocational education and training centres with a total of 380 member institutions, maintained by the Ministry for Innovation and Technology. Schools providing agricultural vocational education and training are operated by the Ministry of Agriculture and these 46 schools belong to the Network of Agriculture-Vocational Education and Training Schools. The Minister of Interior and the Minister of Defence as well as higher education institutions also maintain vocational education and training schools for their respective sectors. Pursuant to the Act on public education, churches, businesses, foundations, associations, etc. can also maintain schools which receive state subsidies from the central state budget based on their agreement with the Minister for Vocational Education and Training. The ratio of pupils studying at VET schools maintained by churches significantly increased since 2010, whilst the ratio of those at foundation schools has decreased: in the 2015/16 academic year, the ratio of pupils in the former was 11% with 7-8% in the latter, whilst 5-6% studied at other non-government maintained schools.

Practical training

The ratio of theoretical and practical training in vocational education and training is determined by the National qualifications register professional qualification and examination requirements. Involvement in work-oriented education and particularly, training contract based training are also incentivized by legal and financial means. Although there are two legally accepted forms of training at workplaces, the act on vocational education and training gives preference to training contract-based training forms:

- (a) training contract: the pupil concludes an agreement with the company; the apprentices receive a monthly cash benefit and are eligible for social security coverage;

(b) cooperation agreement: the agreement is concluded between the school and the company and pupils are only entitled for cash benefits for the 3-5 month-long summer internship.

The training contract-based training is monitored by the MKIK; the Chamber is responsible for the accreditation and registration of training sites, supporting pupils in concluding the contracts and registering the training contracts. As of July 2015, the practical training of pupils can only be pursued at a school if there is no suitable company-based training site, which is to be verified by the Chamber in writing. Training contracts can be concluded from the first year of vocational education and training, however, in the first (9th) year of secondary vocational schools and vocational schools, practical training can only be carried out at the school or at a company training workshop dedicated solely to practical training (with the exception of summer internships).

Based on the cooperation agreement of the practical training school and the business entity, practical training can only be carried out under special circumstances:

- (a) if the ratio of practical training is less than 40%;
- (b) if the practical training is organised by the school and only the summer internship or supplementary training is carried out at the company;
- (c) if the practical training is carried out at a budgetary organ; or
- (d) if a training contract cannot be concluded.

As of 2015, training contracts can be concluded for adult education, however, the monthly allowance for evening or correspondence training is 60% and 20%, respectively, of the full-time education. As of the 2018/19 academic year, the 11th and 12th years of the vocational grammar school allows for concluding a training contract insofar as the training programme provides an appropriate number of practical classes.

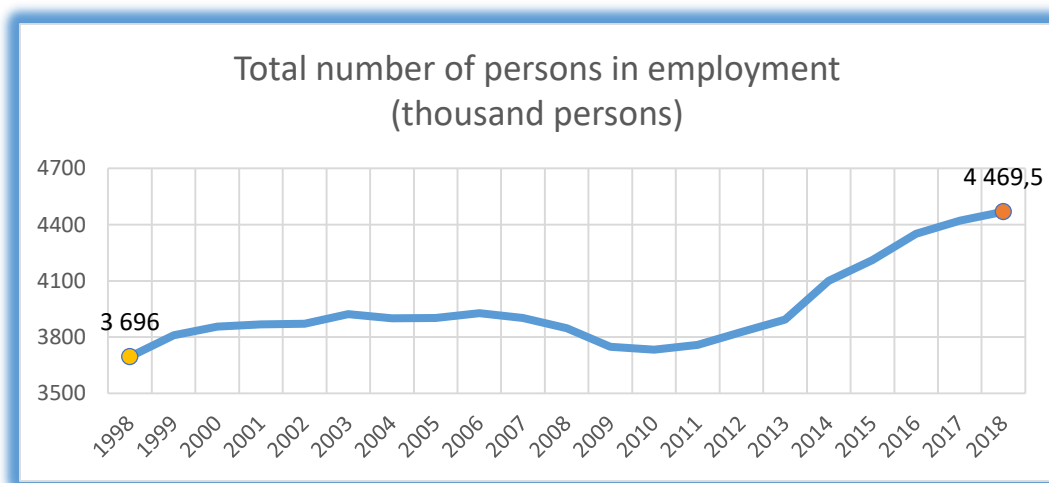
Currently, at the majority of vocational grammar schools, practical training is still carried out at school or at a workplace based on a cooperation agreement, and the majority of secondary vocational school pupils are involved in dual (training contract) learning.

Source: Vocational education and training in Europe – Hungary, NOVETAL (Cedefop ReferNet Hungary), 2018

The objective of the vocational education and training system

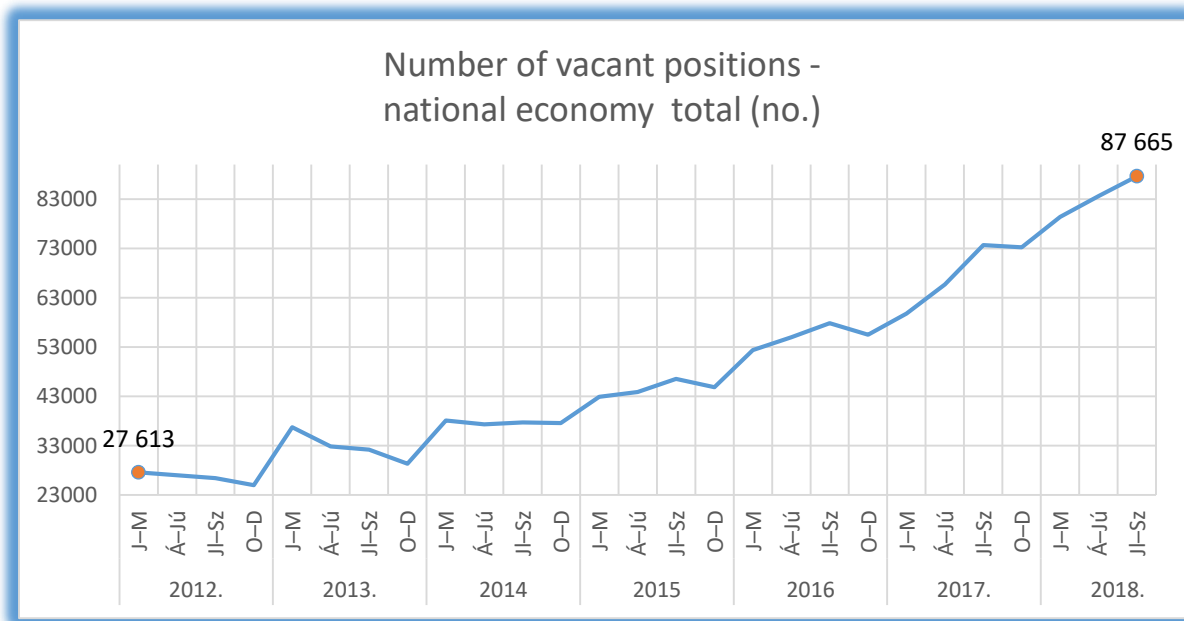
The primary task of vocational education and training is adjusting the labour market to the demands of the economy, providing it with an ample supply of professionals with appropriate knowledge. The challenge of the near-future is ensuring that the availability of professionals supports economic growth. Over the recent years, employment in Hungary has significantly increased at an ever-accelerating rate. Currently, the total number of persons in employment stands at 4.4 million (see Diagram no. 1).

Diagram no. 1 (Source: HUNGARIAN CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE (3))



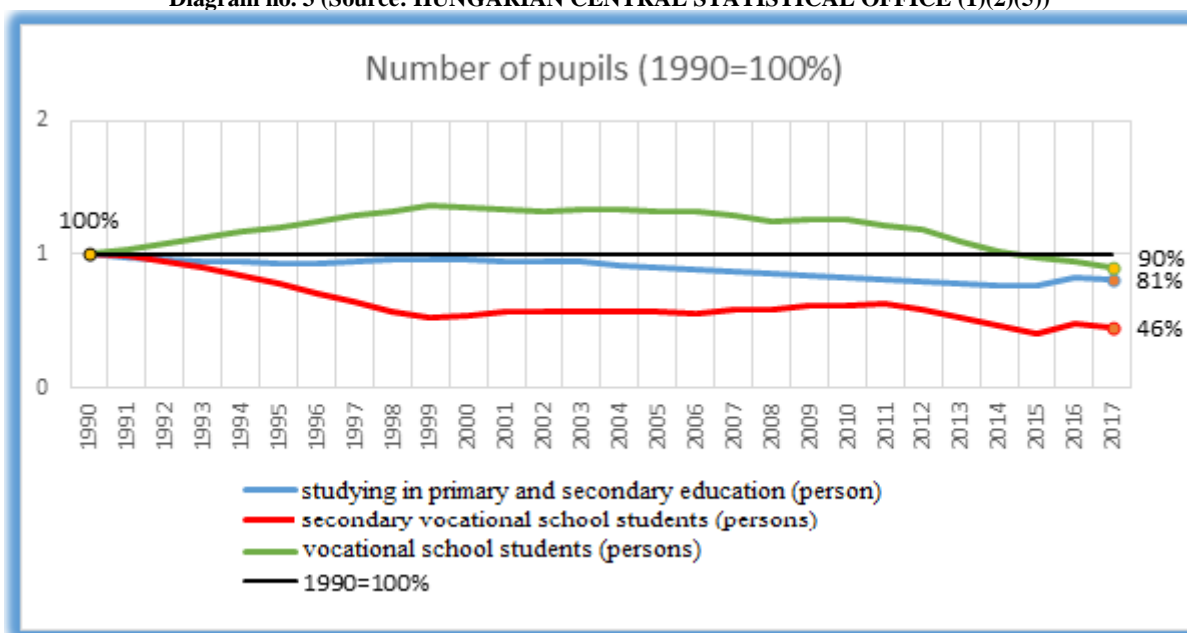
Apart from increasing the number of persons in employment, economic recovery has also resulted in a significant increase in vacant positions. According to the estimates of experts, the 87.7 thousand vacant positions shown in the statistics (see Diagram no. 2) is actually numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

Diagram no. 2 (Source: HUNGARIAN CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE (4))



Sustainable economic growth is a key element of a vocational education and training system that prepares pupils for the challenges of modern production. Furthermore, reducing the skills shortage is an indispensable condition for stable economic growth, therefore a vocational education and training system capable of producing an appropriate supply of experts will have an important role to play in this process.

Diagram no. 3 (Source: HUNGARIAN CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE (1)(2)(5))



“The reduction in the number of pupils due to demographic changes is not evenly distributed within the education system: the dramatic reduction in numbers had a particularly

disadvantageous impact on vocational schools. Based on the surveys, disadvantageous deviations in the quality of the skills and knowledge of pupils also impacted vocational education and training.” Juhász (2016) Diagram no. 3 clearly shows that the decrease in secondary vocational schools is significant even when compared to the reduction in the number of pupils in primary and secondary schools (under 25 years of age, the 225 thousand pupils dropped to approximately 100 thousand persons). Although the vocational grammar school somewhat compensated for the decrease in the number of secondary vocational school pupils, this advantage has vanished by now. Therefore, the number of persons involved in vocational education and training falls short of the levels measured in 1990 by 130 thousand pupils.

Through the establishment of vocational education and training centres, the adult education schooling numbers have significantly increased. On 1 October 2015, nearly 21 thousand pupils enrolled in adult education. Even considering the natural saturation of adult education, this number can be stabilized around 30-35 thousand persons over the years to come.

SWOT Analysis

The Hungarian Education System

Strengths

- Dual vocational education and training has been introduced
- The vocational education and training system is opening up to the labour market needs
- There are experts for education and training content development
- Flexible potential of vocational teachers
- There is an increasing number of adult learners
- The expansion of adult education reflects to initial vocational education and training

Weaknesses

- The education system is supply driven, it is not interoperable in a lot of cases
- VET is not enough attractive, career guidance needs improvements
- Content and methodology of education and training are outdated, new methodologies have not yet been properly introduced
- Early school leaving
- Deficient cooperation between secondary level VET and HE

Opportunities

- Good macroeconomic indicators
- Increasing financial resources for development areas
- Well-defined employer requirements
- Stable population growth, predictability
- Young employees (16-24 ys) as labour market reserves

SWOT

Threats

- VET can partly serve regional economic needs
- Decreasing labour market reserve, increasing employment and unequal regional distribution
- Lack of competence of minor, however long term job seekers
- Unequal rate of automatization in different vocations
- Students with strong basic competence disabilities from primary education
- Low rate of SMEs taking part in employee training

Proposals for the renewal of the vocational education and training system, risks

1.1 Renewal of available professions

In Hungary, the training structure has become fragmented: over 700 professions are listed in the National qualifications register. Apart from the fact that this complicated and opaque system impedes the efficiency of career orientation, it also fails to support lifelong learning. Cooperation established between a modern VET school and business entities provides an opportunity for differentiating school and non-school-based training systems. In the case of many professions, the advancement of digitalization and technology - even in the medium term - results in changes of such an extent that vocational qualifications can become useless on the market without refreshing their content.

PROPOSAL

The school-system is unable to keep up with the rapid progression of technology, therefore it would be advantageous to separate sector competencies required for lifelong learning and the continuously upgrading technical knowledge based on these competencies. The school-system can effectively teach basic competencies in the form of base professions, yet it is recommended to provide access to market skills based on these competencies within a short-cycle, flexible training framework that is not tied to age. One of the key tasks is the renewal of professional content through the involvement of market operators.

Risks

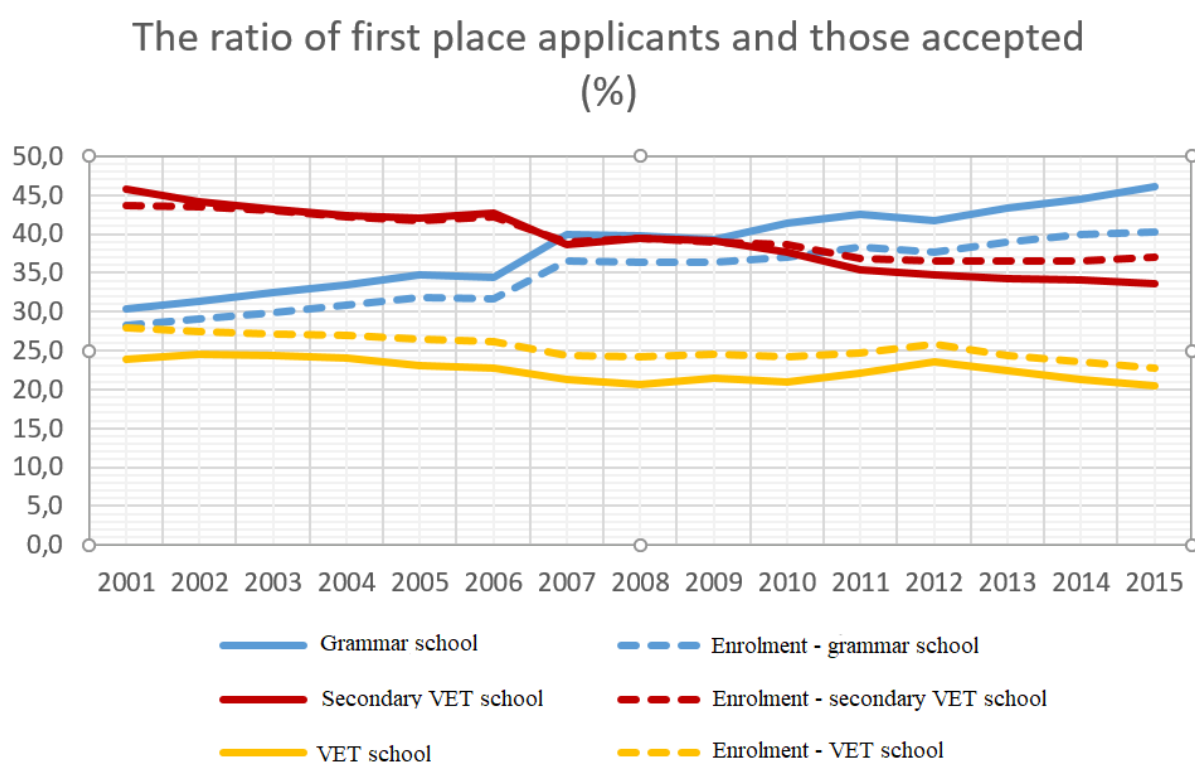
The content renewal of the National qualifications register is progressing at a slower than expected rate due to the great number of concerned parties, therefore the vocational education and training system is unable to react to the rapid changes dictated by economic growth.

1.2 Career orientation tasks

Diagram no. 4 shows the data of the first-place accepted applications of the secondary admission process over the last one-and-a-half decades. “Application, particularly applications marked at the first place do not truly indicate that the pupil will indeed begin their studies in

the form of training in question and instead are indicative of the needs and desires of the pupil.” (Híves, 2016) However, when examining the effectiveness of the career orientation activity, it is precisely such expressions of “needs and desires” that can be considered indicative. The admission results are also shown in Diagram no. 4, which reveal a more balanced situation amongst the various school types. This more balanced situation cannot be accredited to the success of career orientation activities, but rather to the impact of administrative admission obstacles (e.g. score-limits).

Diagram no. 4 (Source: Híves, 2016)



It's important to develop, from the early childhood age, competencies which make the individual capable of not only making decisions, but also renewal, change, flexibility and innovation. Successful career choice and, when necessary, the ability to change is also a necessity of society; it's important to have competent, motivated professionals in the appropriate positions who carry out relevant work that's important for society and who are happy to do so, in an effective manner.

In order to ensure that the generations to come are successful, it's indispensable for them to receive assistance from their families, as well as from teachers and career orientation experts. The cooperation of these three forums can provide assistance in answering individual questions, mapping out individual skills, raising interest and familiarizing career information.

One of the most obvious sources for the familiarization of the conditions and influencing factors of career orientation choices in the domestic professional literature is the annually updated analysis of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MKIK). This is a gap-fill publication; it provides a superb point of departure for those interested in the subject in familiarizing the attitude of pupils faced with career choices.

“As part of the data collection for the career orientation survey, seventh grade pupils - 9202 in 2016 and 9217 in 2017 - were surveyed by the professionals of the regional chambers. Nearly all of the pupils (91% in 2016, 93% in 2017) had dealt with the issue of pursuing further studies. Most of them (86-87%) indicated talking to their parents as a way of gathering information, 70-73% indicated form teacher classes for the same purpose and 24-25% acquired information through a school career orientation event.” (*Hajdu et al., 2016, 2017*) One of the key impressions of the review of the analysis is that the responses of the pupils practically show no sign of encountering any professional career orientation.” There is a deep-rooted tradition of parental advisory and form teacher classes measurable in decades, yet in themselves, these means are most likely unable to attract tens of thousands of pupils to the system of vocational education and training. Career choice events might indicate modern forums, yet the majority of these are obviously “classic” school career days.

In 2017, the National Office of Vocational Education and Training and Adult Learning (NOVETAL) performed a comprehensive data recording process through vocational education and training centres. Subsequent to the analysis of the content, the results were first published at the II Andragogy conference of NOVETAL’s Andragogy Research Group.

“Based on the research to date, there are a great number of ‘poor career choices’.” The operators within the school system do not find career orientation activities carried out at the institution in question to be necessary as they feel there is no need for career orientation in secondary schools once the students have chosen a profession.” (*Molnár 2017*) This is refuted by the great number of early school-leaver and drop-out secondary school pupils. In light of this realization, endearing the profession plays an increasing role in vocational education and training. One of the interesting findings of the survey is that despite all of the above, parents still feel they are well-informed in relation to career choices.

Recently, there has been a significant increase in the number of events supporting career choices. It could be worth structuring the events and determining their timing with a nation-wide review and coordination. On the level of the schools, it's necessary to support career choices in cooperation with professionals and the involvement of primary school teachers and influencers.

Risks

It can be surmised that the career orientation activity carried out in practice is significantly lagging behind in regards to the demand for the resupply of professionals on the economy's labour market. Classic career orientation institutions (parental advisory, schooling campaigns specially influenced by the mandatory schooling of secondary schools, further studies determined by learning outcomes) can be reinforced by new school types appearing in the vocational education and training reform, learning pathways, the modernization of the institutional system of vocational education and training, yet the failure to receive such support can significantly decrease the number of those applying for vocational education and training.

1.3 The right time for career choice

In the current Hungarian school system, pupils can decide at 14 years of age, subsequent to completing primary school, on how they wish to continue their studies. Some frequently reason that a 14 year-old child has yet to develop a maturity for making career choices that would make them capable of overseeing the pathways truly suitable for them and being aware of the possibility of making changes. Therefore, it is mainly the parents who make decisions that have a long-term influence on their lives: they choose a school for their children, ideally involving the child in the decision-making process. However, over the course of the learning pathway, specialisation is indispensable, therefore the general preparatory stage necessarily comes to an end at a certain age. Over the recent years, the attempted reforms have shown that the general education stage extended until the 10th grade has not contributed to increasing the efficiency of vocational education and training. Although the career choice has been postponed, it still hasn't resulted in more conscious decision-making. In fact, in many cases, the extended primary school studies and the accumulation of learning failures have deterred children from studying.

Those training programmes which time the general education tier that provides deeper knowledge after the successfully concluded professional studies can be deemed to be more successful. Another reason that goes against extending the general education tier until 16 years of age is the fact that by 16-17 years of age, young people are less susceptible to physical, manual labour, despite the fact that they can successfully compensate for their previous learning failures with the minor manual success of practice-oriented training.

PROPOSAL

The time of career choice should continue to be timed for the final year of primary school. It is recommended to offer a career orientation period representing the cumulative benefits of the catching-up years tested over the recent period to those who are unable to successfully complete their primary school studies on time. The duration of this period can be flexibly adapted to the reasonable time required for remedying the shortcomings discovered in the pupil in question.

Risks

If the non-vocational training stakeholders of the education system have no interest in supporting effective career choices made at the appropriate age, a portion of young people will be unable to reach a VET school where they can be enriched with learning successes on a flexible learning pathway that allows them to successfully acquire a qualification.

1.4 The influence of school types on career choice

Today, in Hungary, the majority of children who choose a secondary school are more drifting than consciously making a choice and are unmotivated, settling with others making decisions for them. Within the family, choosing a secondary school is fundamentally influenced by the learning outcomes achieved at primary school: those with good academic achievements move on to grammar school (primarily due to their parents' influence or based on a family pattern so they could continue their studies in higher education), whilst those with poorer results must "merely" settle with a place at a vocational grammar school and the weakest study at secondary vocational schools. Additionally, the family also considers which vocational grammar school/secondary vocational school is located close to their home and in many cases, the professional training provided at the VET school and whether it is suitable for the child, or if they are interested in it at all are of secondary importance.

Therefore - although when choosing a vocational grammar school/secondary vocational school, certain skills and motivations might be considered (e.g. interest in IT, sporting ambitions, etc.) - in a great number of cases, it is merely the obligation of continued studies that plays a role in the choice.

The learning pathway offered by the vocational school

Diagram no. 5: Vocational school learning pathway after primary school (Source: self-edited)



“For the purposes of the school education of pupils with special education needs, a vocational school shall operate as a special vocational school in the event that it prepares for the vocational examination those students who are unable to keep the pace with the other students owing to their specific education needs.” (*Act on National Public Education Chapters 11A, 13/A. Article 55 (1)*)

“A phase of school education preparing for vocational qualification which starts after the phase of primary education and ends in the vocational school with the vocational training year set forth in the framework curriculum where the pupil receives a secondary qualification.” (*Act on National Public Education Section 5 (1) d.*) (Diagram no. 5)

The learning pathway offered by the vocational education and training BRIDGE.

Diagram no. 6 Bridge training learning pathway (Source: self-edited)



“Public Education and Vocational Bridge Programmes help pupils make progress and enroll in secondary education and vocational education and training or start working as well as acquire

the knowledge required to start a life of their own with complex educational activities that support academic, social, cultural, skill-based and personal development.” (*Act on National Public Education. Chapters 12. 14. Section 59 (1)*) (Diagram no. 6)

The Vocational Bridge Programme has a training duration of two years, during which pupils receive a scholarship.

Entry requirements:

- the pupil is at least 15 years of age and not older than 23 years of age by the end of the academic year in question.
- they must be in possession of no fewer than 6 completed school grades

Obtainable qualification:

- primary education certification
- partial vocational qualification

The secondary vocational school learning pathway

Diagram no. 7: The secondary vocational school learning pathway (Source: self-edited)



“A phase of school education preparing for vocational qualification which starts after the phase of primary education and ends in the eleventh training year.” (*Act on National Public Education. Chapter 3 Section 5§ (d)*)

The 9th-11th year is concluded with a professional examination. Insofar as the secondary vocational school prepares students for multiple vocational qualifications, the number of vocational education and training years - depending on the time of preparation - may differ between the various forms of vocational education and training and may be followed by a two-year training in preparation for the school-leaving examination. (Diagram no. 7)

“The secondary vocational school shall have three vocational training years of which

a) three shall be comprised of education of subjects in general education domains and vocational-theoretical and practical training necessary for obtaining the vocational qualification concerned, as well as

b) two additional years in preparation for the school-leaving examination.

Secondary vocational schools shall include institutions which, pursuant to the act on vocational education and training, solely provide vocational theoretical and practical training in the vocational education and training years.

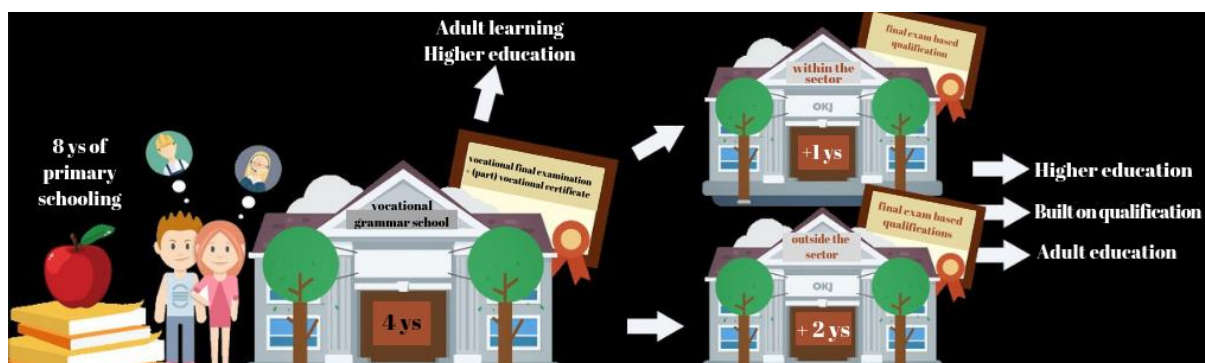
In the absence of primary school qualification, the following shall be the prerequisites for admission to a secondary vocational school:

a) the pupil has turned fourteen, and

b) has completed the school year organised in the secondary vocational school in accordance with the Vocational Bridge Programme.” (*Act on National Public Education Chapters 11, 13*)

Vocational grammar school learning pathway

Diagram no. 8 Vocational grammar school learning pathway (Source: self-edited)



“A phase of school education subsequent to primary education, which is aimed at obtaining a vocational secondary school leaving examination and the related professional qualification, preparing for further studies in vocational higher education or specialised employment. Beyond the four secondary school years (9th-12th) of general culture, it consists of a vocational training year as defined by the National qualifications register, offering both theoretical and practical training.” (*Act on National Public Education. Chapter 3 Section 5§ (d)*) (Diagram no. 8)

“In vocational grammar schools, the ninth year may be preceded by a language preparatory year.” (*Act on National Public Education Chapters 7 Section 9 (7)*)

Diagram no. 9: Adult learning pathway with primary school entry qualification (Source: self-edited)

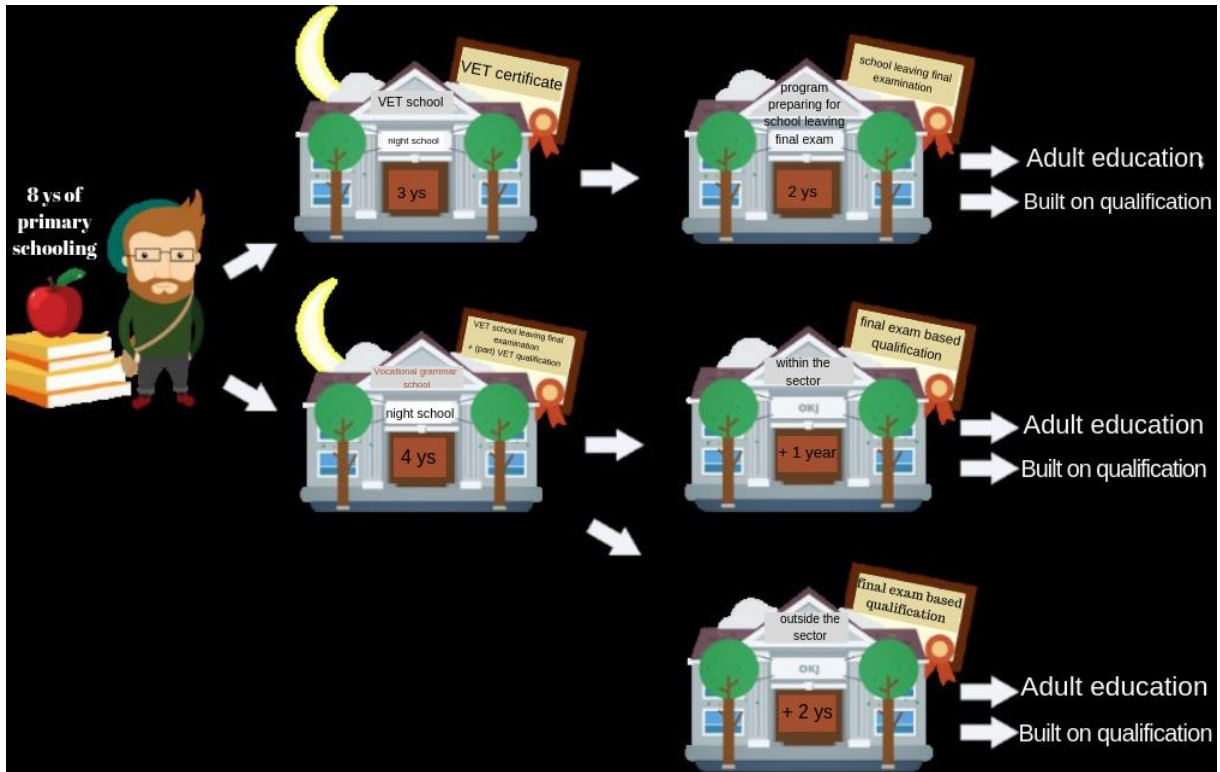
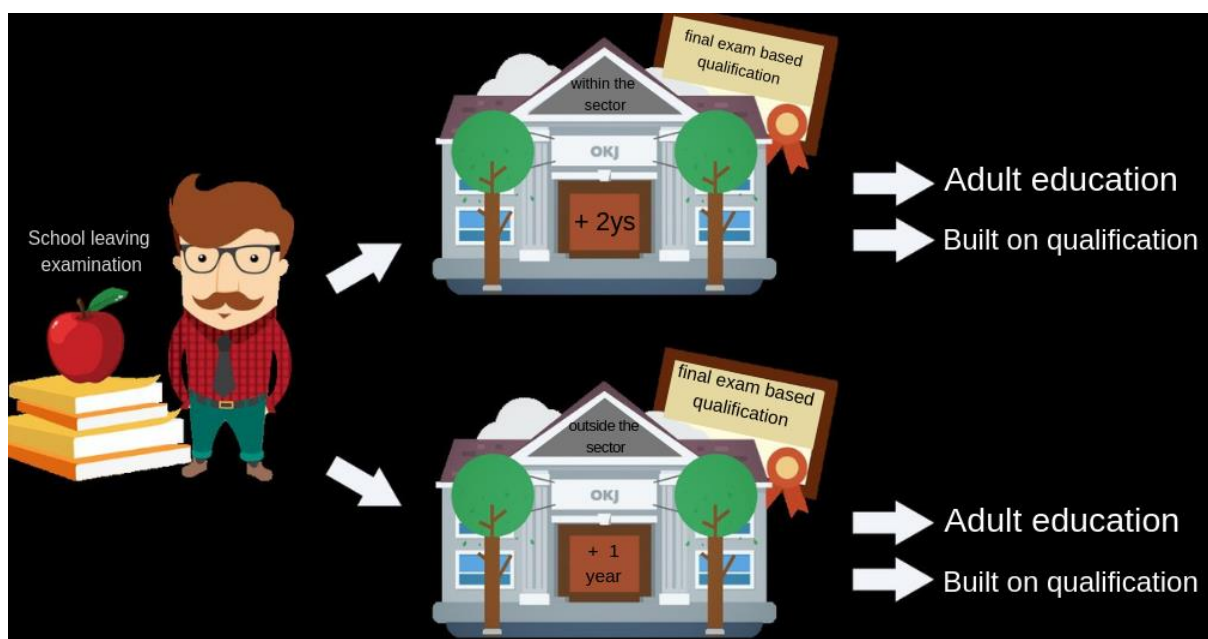


Diagram110: Adult learning pathway with general vocational school/apprenticeship training entry qualification (Source: self-edited)



Diagram no. 11: Adult learning pathway with school-leaving examination entry qualification (Source: self-edited)



“Primary education, secondary education comprised of vocational training and education in the school system and higher education that shall be interdependent, integral parts of the education system. Public education may be conducted as adult learning at any school level.” (*Act on National Public Education Chapters 1 Section 3 (7)*) (*Diagrams no. 9, 10, 11*)

The pupil shall continue his/her studies within the framework of adult learning from the school year when he/she turns sixteen. (*Act on National Public Education Chapters 33 Section 60 (2), (3)*)

“In adult learning, the education may be organised according to the work schedule of full-time education or according to evening, correspondence or other special work schedules. Adult learning education in VET schools may be organised for pupils in line with full-time education for those who lack a vocational qualification.”

Pupils who lack a vocational secondary school leaving examination appropriate to the branch of vocational qualification, (thus those in possession of a grammar school-leaving examination or a school-leaving examination appropriate to a different vocational qualification) may pass a professional examination at the vocational grammar school subsequent to two years of vocational education and training.

Apart from traditional career orientation elements, a scholarship system flexibly adapted to labour market demands can have significant influence.

The renewed vocational education and training system shouldn't be a "dead end" learning pathway. Through the consideration of the lower educational attainment/ curriculum content preceding the given level of school, further studies shouldn't entail a disproportionate loss of time.

Without increasing the prestige of the secondary vocational school, in the mid-term due to the drop in applications, this form of school might disappear, which can be compensated with the previously-mentioned scholarship programme, growing skilled worker wages and the labour market value of dual learning.

The activation of adult learning has a major labour market value, as it can make employment more flexible. It's recommended to support the reasonable decrease of the length of the programme by developing a curriculum based on a distance learning methodology. In the case of adult learning, the possibility of the consideration of previous knowledge receives particular emphasis.

Risks

The failure of certain schools to offer reforms concerning developmental-educational work that reinforces the attractiveness of the content can pose a significant threat. Only through the renewal of the methodology can the young people entering schools progress without significant levels of school dropouts until achieving the outcome demands in possession of competencies that can be put to good use on the labour market. This requires modern school content, methods and naturally, modern teachers.

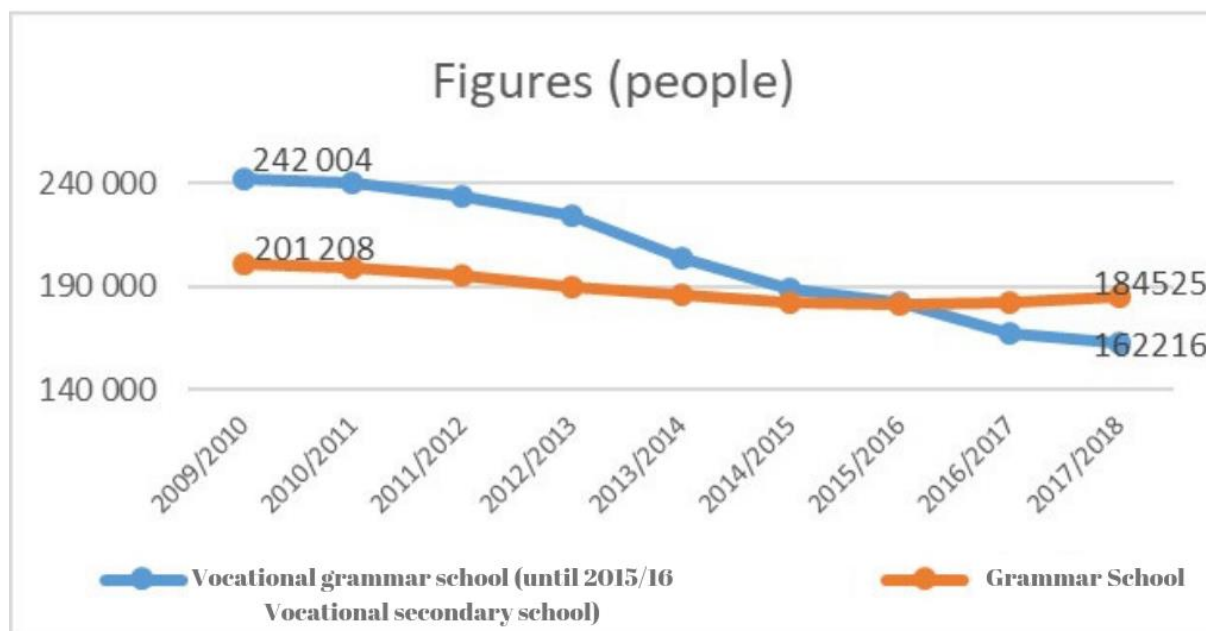
1.5 Further learning after the vocational grammar school

In the given school type, considering the possibilities for academic advancement, it's important to have a natural distribution in the skill levels of pupils. The in-class work of a teacher perfectly utilizing the tool of differentiation can be successful if the learning goal can be achieved by the majority of the class with a normal level of effort; for some, it will be necessary to catch up,

whilst others may receive tasks exceeding the learning goals for the sake of talent nurturing. Curriculum demands are hard to fulfil if the majority of the pupils can only achieve a minimal level of performance due to previously lagging behind. According to the proposal, special emphasis must be placed on having particularly talented students applying for vocational grammar schools. A key requisite for this is that specialised further education should pose no difficulties for the best performers. The vocational grammar school curriculum differs from that of a regular grammar school, therefore it is a valid assumption that specialised further education should be regulated according to the demands of the unique curriculum of vocational grammar schools.

The number of pupils at secondary vocational schools, as well as those studying at vocational grammar schools, has decreased since September 2016 (Diagram no. 12). When making schooling decisions, the pupil target group and their parents find the grammar school to be a more advantageous choice despite the facts of the labour market. The great number of foreign language classes offering the possibility of further learning and preparation for higher-level school-leaving examination provides the grammar school with prestige, despite the fact that the vocational grammar school offers professional basics according to the demands of the labour market in the same number of classes.

Diagram no. 12 (Source: HUNGARIAN CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE (6))

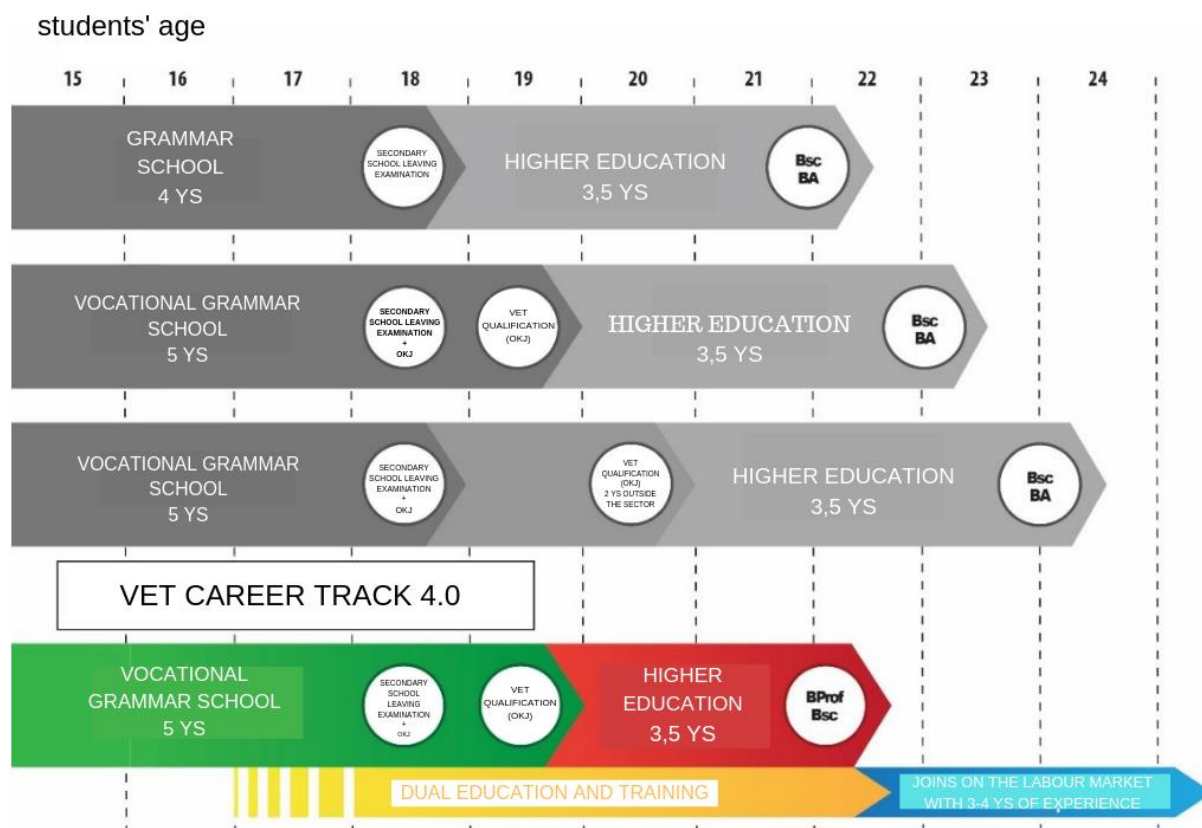


Specialised further education should be provided for the best students according to the conditions for the vocational grammar school type of institutions with active labour market involvement, allowing it to become one of the most important factors of attractiveness.

Establishing the legal grounds of entry conditions: The good, [B] and excellent, [A] marks of the complex vocational examination are the entry condition for the higher education vocational education and training learning pathway 4.0. The vocational education and training learning pathway 4.0 is only valid for specialised further education.

Developing a proposal for the consideration of credits: The vocational education and training learning pathway 4.0 provides the opportunity of attaining a degree at the same age as the grammar school pathway (Diagram no. 13). Higher education will consider the technical knowledge acquired during the basic level and National qualifications register training

Diagram no. 13 Vocational education and training learning pathway 4.0



Reinforcing dual higher education, developing more Bachelor of Profession (Bprof) outcomes: Subsequent to the vocational training and education year, higher education studies will continue in a dual form with active labour market involvement. In the model, the young adult entering higher education has been studying in a dual system since 11th grade, thus by the time they attain a degree, they have 3-4 years of valuable labour market experience.

Risks

Apart from the opportunities offered by modernization and favourable labour market conditions, there are also numerous threats that can impede the success of career orientation and can reduce the number of students involved in successful schooling. The stricter measures affecting higher education entry (requirements for higher-level school-leaving examinations and language exams) entering into force in September 2020 can have a significant negative impact on vocational grammar schooling in the near future. Fulfilling the entry conditions can be a major obstacle for vocational grammar school students and this realization can increasingly lead parents to opting for a grammar school. This way, we can lose the most talented technicians

of the future as they are the pupils for whom the possibility of further studies is of great importance.

1.6 Possibilities for the development of dual learning

The ratio of pupils involved in dual learning differ according to the various school types and sectors. Some of the noteworthy positive examples include catering and commerce. At the same time, however, there are sectors where organizing dual learning faces curriculum regulation challenges, whilst having pupils working at business organisations is alien to the market as well. The training workshop infrastructure of VET schools is in need of development and their equipment does not suit the practical professional curriculum content utilized in a school environment according to the current curriculum. The lack of skilled human resources is a cause for concern: one of the problems is the knowledge of vocational trainers working at schools that is becoming increasingly obsolete due to technological progression, whilst the other issue is that there is no resupply of vocational trainers. One of the reasons for this is the gap between the wages of vocational trainers and wages available as professionals on the market. The other reason is that the training of vocational trainers is inflexible (excessive length of studies, the difficulty of considering preliminary knowledge).

PROPOSAL

The further expansion of dual learning is reasonable as the knowledge that is truly valuable and useful on the labour market can be acquired the most effectively in this form. Ages that do not allow access to the labour market and the acquisition of basic professional competencies point to launching programmes for the development of school workshops. In higher grades, subsequent to the time spent in school workshops, it is justified to establish training sites that can serve as modern locations for practical training. Apart from corporations, even SMEs and educational institutions can be involved in creating training sites with suitably developed incentive schemes.

The restraints of the teacher's career model make it harder to employ professionals as vocational trainers, thus it would be advantageous to tailor the teacher's career model to the needs of vocational education and training. The most rapid and effective way of

dealing with the temporary lack of vocational trainers would be to re-employ retired colleagues. The lack of highly skilled vocational trainers could be remedied partly through the corporate further training of school teachers and partly by the educational further training of professionals employed at companies and their involvement in school education. Naturally, the interest of corporate instructors could only be established by providing them with competitive remuneration for their services and if the company delegating the professionals seeks to contribute to the success of vocational education and training by temporarily making do without their employee.

Risks

One of the challenges of the resupply of vocational teachers is evidenced in regards to the level of quality witnessed in rival school types. In vocational education and training, it's important to strive for allowing those employed in this field to have a level of professional prestige that is at least equal to teachers working in other school types. One of the key elements of this is to develop and implement a so-called vocational education and training career model. Instructors coming from the industry mustn't suffer from disadvantageous salaries for not being previously employed as public employees. Industry experience preceding the years spent in education can be one of the unique values of vocational education and training. An additional problem is that the current teacher wage system could possibly be unable to compete with the wages and prestige of professionals coming from the competitive sector even when introducing the vocational education and training career model.

The re-supply of retired or soon-to-be-retired vocational teachers can also pose major issues. It could be worth considering the common practice of the competitive sector according to which highly experienced employees on the verge of retirement are employed by companies in a position that suits their age. This also serves their individual satisfaction. The public wage system only provides a limited solution for the re-supply of those lost due to retirement; important changes should be made in the training of vocational teachers, the introduction of more flexible school schedules and the mentoring of graduates.

1.7 Establishing the brand of vocational education and training, the principles of a new marketing strategy

The problems encountered when examining the marketing tools utilized by schools are of a dual nature. On the one hand, there is a need for a marketing image that is relevant amongst Generation Z consumers, precisely the group from which the majority of pupils come from. On the other hand, it's also necessary to reposition the brand for the older generations due to the fact that when selecting an educational institution, we still trust the influence of parental value judgments. In order to maximize the number of students, we mustn't discard the possibility of considering the over-30 age group in adult learning as a potential group of pupils. Consequently, creating a new marketing strategy poses a dual challenge: it must clarify the difference in the communication needs of Generation Z as the primary target group and that of the older age group. The generational shift in regards to the primary target group (the first year of school-leavers of Generation Z born after the year 2000 is this year's group), furthermore the nadir of the brand story of vocational education and training in the 2000s both confirm the necessity of a dual-focused marketing strategy.

PROPOSAL

Communication with Generation Z, brand-building: the secondary school “providing innovative training programmes focused on practical knowledge with demands that can be met”.

The members of Generation Z have already encountered smartphones and the all-encompassing technological and communication explosion by age seven at the latest. It's important to understand that the information demands of children born after the year 2000 present a set of entirely new challenges for marketing experts, as well as for career orientation and education itself.

The target group must be reached in the virtual space with unit costs that make effective marketing communication significantly cheaper.

Communication with Generations Y and X, re-positioning: vocational education and training that “can be completed while working, providing competitive knowledge”

As opposed to Generation Z, no effective marketing strategy can be designed for the older generations without the communication seeking to boost the prestige of vocational

education and training in reference to the significant increase of wages on the market, good employment opportunities, the possibility of finding a stable workplace and the respect of qualified technician positions utilizing modern technology.

It's no exaggeration to say that the young pupils entering vocational education and training are “digital natives” with a highly rapid information processing ability, therefore they have a short attention span, yet are capable of multitasking. The communication with them and the way they are treated must adhere to new challenges with the indispensable prerequisite of precisely knowing the motivation of the new age group.

The use of virtual channels is not only second nature when acquiring occasional information, but also transforms the way of acquiring deeper knowledge. Providing education according to the demands of the new generation demands changes, flexibility and quickness as well as customizable options in the virtual space. The development of digital curriculum support is a superb opportunity.

Examining the motivations of Generation Z, the communication image of a modern vocational education and training institution emerges. It's important to stress the new skills in demand which can be briefly summarized as “a good profession is as good as a degree”, based on the service-oriented approach and the new educational features satisfying the demands of pupils and the labour market. Moreover, this idea is capable of appearing in both target groups at the same time and can be applied in all cases to the motivational priorities typical of the target group, thus allowing a unified image, while retaining the dual-focused marketing strategy.

Risks

The absence of digital developments can significantly impede the quality of the transfer of knowledge. Hosting classes with obsolete methodologies and devices can result in the young adults accustomed to the digital world turning away from formal schooling.

1.8 Digital developments

The content renewal of the 21st century school assumes the presence of a physical infrastructural capable of displaying digital solutions. This is also greatly supported by the ongoing developments related to the online networks of schools. However, the presence of the

physical digital infrastructure does not guarantee the regular, incorporated, classroom use of the methodology.

The need for curriculum development appeared due to the lack of vocational education and training textbooks and methodology-related materials as well as for the effective support of the great number of pupils involved in evening training and adult learning. Supporting the learning process is the main task of teachers and schools, as decreasing the drop-out rate and making learning more successful and effective is a social as well as an economic interest. Every educational-developmental process requires knowing those we are dealing with in order to make the process more effective and to create customized educational content. Curriculum development is carried out according to 21st century expectations and the full-scale application of the opportunities offered by digital technology. Additionally, curriculum development and educational innovation can be carried out amongst organisational boundaries, based on a professional foundation and with continuous methodological support instead of in an ad hoc, scattered manner. A digital curriculum can provide support for contact class activities as well as for independent learning in a way that adheres to modern educational principles (project-based treatment, group/individual tasks, text-based, visual and video content, tests and tasks suitable for the evaluation of preliminary knowledge, curriculum elements facilitating differentiation and interactivity, etc.) as well as guaranteeing professional and high-quality solutions.

PROPOSAL

The development of the digital skills of teachers is indispensable for the sake of methodological renewal, therefore it's recommended to support further training programmes that help acquire digital methodologies which can make in-class activities more attractive. This can be aimed at the use of ICT devices, yet for example, on a targeted, higher level, a further training programme aimed at mastering the skills of preparing a digital curriculum can yield immediate progression.

As described above, the modernisation of the classes of a particular teacher is a priority task, yet nationwide curriculum development can also yield significant advancements and high-quality content, which provides a few chosen professions with a comprehensive set of curriculums.

Having schools develop and convey skills and knowledge that can be put to use on the labour market is a social need. They should provide professional intelligence that makes the pupil capable of managing amongst continuously changing circumstances. Apart from the modernisation of curriculum content, an immediate task is the significant reduction of the lexical knowledge base as well as replacing frontal instruction with the cooperative acquisition of knowledge based on the activities of the pupils, as these require significantly more time.

Necessary financial resources

The modernisation of the vocational education and training system may require significant financial resources. Currently, the ever-growing effectiveness of European Union programmes providing the funding can support the transformations. The goals of the ongoing GINOP and VEKOP projects are well-suited to the challenges arising during the renewal of vocational education and training and provide key opportunities in the funding volume.

In the future, when planning the distribution of excess state revenue accumulated through economic growth, it's important to consider the needs of vocational education and training and the priorities of the next programming period on the provisions of EU funds must include the tasks related to the modernisation of vocational education and training.

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