

2.3 APPLICATION TO AND ADMISSION INTO UPPER-SECONDARY EDUCATION

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The progression into secondary education has a fundamentally important effect on the future educational path of students, and consequently, their future career path in the labour market and their success (see for example *Kézdi et al*, 2008; *Horn*, 2014, *Makó–Bárdits*, 2014, *Hajdú et al*, 2015). In past years, significant changes have been made in the schedules and contents of vocational training schools,¹ which – combined with the changes in the labour market environment – may influence students' plans and opportunities regarding further education. In this subchapter, we present how the proportion of those applying to, and those admitted into, particular types of secondary schools changed between 2005 and 2017, and how the proportion of those applying to, and those admitted into, schools offering vocational training changed, by vocational groups.

The analysis is based on the data of the Information System – Secondary School Admission Database (KIFIR) on the period between 2005 and 2017. This database contains the application and admission data of students applying for secondary education having completed the eighth grade of elementary school (or the fourth or sixth grade, in the case of eight- and six-year secondary schools).

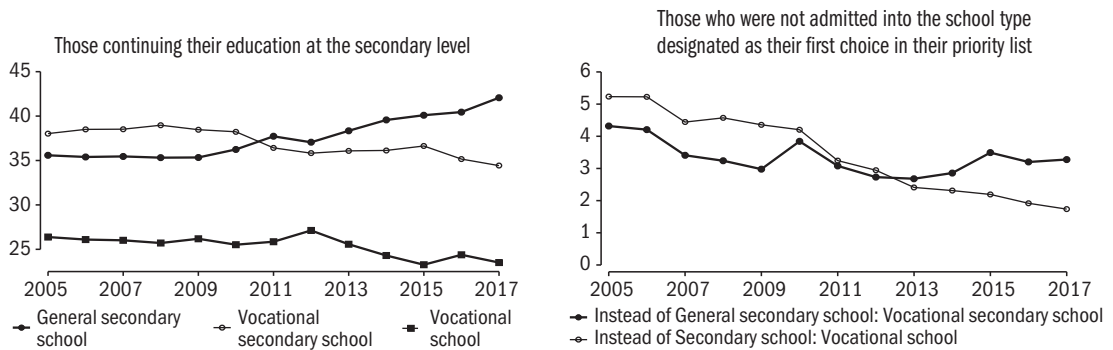
Secondary schools rank applicants based on their elementary school and entrance examination results. Taking these, and application priorities into consideration, a central admission algorithm determines which student gets admitted into which school. A small number of students do not get admitted into any of the schools via this application and admission process, because they applied only to schools that either rejected them outright or filled their numbers with applicants that ranked higher. These students will look for a school where they can continue their studies personally, but this database does not contain the results of that process. In the analysis, we presumed that these students would study in the school type with the lowest prestige in their application list, but at the same time, this group is not included in the analysis regarding the vocational groups. Their rate dropped from 8 percent in 2005 to 3 percent in 2017.

In the analysis, we present rates relative to the number of students studying in secondary education in the given school year. This is the sum of all applicants who had completed the eighth grade of secondary school (presuming that students who did not get admitted anywhere in the first round of the admission process would also continue to secondary education) and the number of students who gained admission to eight- or six-year secondary schools. We did not take into consideration students applying unsuccessfully to eight- or six-year secondary schools, as they will go into secondary education after completing the eighth grade of elementary school.

¹ One change worth highlighting is that the length of training in vocational secondary schools (named vocational schools until 2016) has been reduced to three years in 2013, replacing the former 4- or 5-year training period. Since 2016, the proportion of vocational content in the training material and of professional practice/traineeship has increased significantly in vocational grammar schools (named vocational secondary schools until 2016), while the hours of general education subjects have seen a decrease. First, state-managed vocational training institutions were transferred to the Ministry of National Economy in 2015, which organised the various institutions into vocational training centres. Then in 2018, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology was appointed to be in charge of secondary vocational training institutions.

Figure 2.3.1 shows the changes in the shares of school types in secondary education (figure on the left); the proportion of students who were not admitted into the school type designated as their first choice in their priority list; and the type of school they were admitted into instead of the school type designated as their first choice in their priority list (figure on the right). After 2012, the rate of applications to vocational schools started decreasing following the stagnation observed between 2005 and 2011, and by 2017, less than a quarter of students wanted to get admitted into this school type. The rate of applications to general secondary schools grew between 2009 and 2011, and then continued to grow after 2012; this is the school type in which the highest number of students wish to continue their studies. Vocational secondary schools are considered decreasingly popular among students. The rate of students applying to this type of school decreased both in 2016 and 2017. The majority of students can continue their studies in the school type of their choice (right side of Figure 2.3.1). The rate of those who only managed to gain admission into a vocational school instead of a general or vocational secondary school that provides a secondary school diploma decreased from 5 percent in 2005 to 2 percent in 2017, and the rate of those who had no choice but to study in a vocational secondary school instead of a general secondary school decreased from 4 percent to 2 percent.

Figure 2.3.1: The proportion of those continuing their education at the secondary level and those who were not admitted into the school type designated as their first choice in their priority list, by school type, 2005–2017 (percentage)

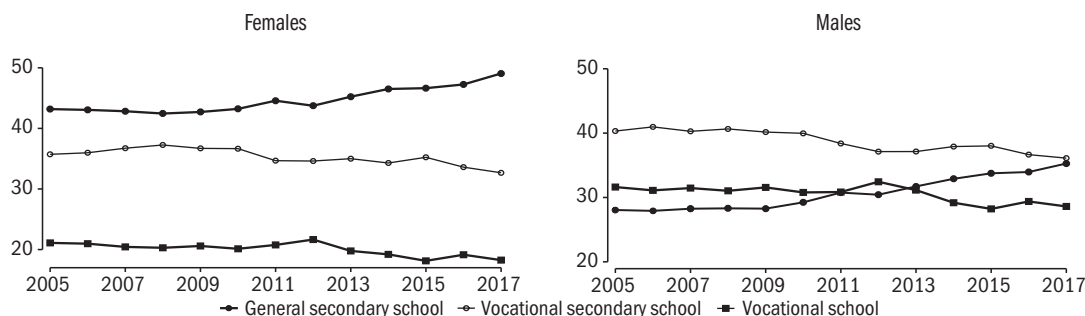


Source: Authors' compilation.

A significantly higher proportion of females study in general secondary schools than males, while a higher proportion of males continue their studies in vocational secondary schools and vocational schools. After 2012, the growth of the proportion of males continuing their studies in general secondary schools began to speed up, and the composition of the school types of males continuing their education after elementary school has been significantly rearranged. In 2017, the highest number of males continued their education in general

and vocational secondary schools, and the rate of those doing so in vocational schools dropped below 30 percent (*Figure 2.3.2*).

Figure 2.3.2: The proportion of those continuing their studies in secondary education, by school type and gender, 2005–2017 (percentage)



Source: Authors' compilation.

Secondary vocational applications (vocational secondary school, vocational school) were aggregated into 12 vocational groups. The changes in the proportions of these can be followed in *Table 2.3.1* both separately by school type and combined. In a few vocational groups, education or training is conducted *only* or *predominantly* in one of the school types (such as health care, IT, economics, administration).

Table 2.3.1: The percentage of those continuing their studies in vocational secondary schools or vocational schools, among those continuing their education at a secondary level, by vocational groups, 2007, 2017

Vocational group	Vocational secondary school		Vocational school		Combined	
	2007	2017	2007	2017	2007	2017
Not classified	1.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	1.3	0.0
Health care	1.7	2.0	0.2	0.0	1.9	2.0
Social, education	2.2	3.8	0.3	0.7	2.7	4.5
Mechanical engineering	5.3	3.4	4.4	4.8	9.6	8.1
IT	6.1	5.7	0.6	0.3	6.7	6.0
Construction	1.0	0.7	2.9	1.5	3.9	2.2
Chemical and light industries	2.3	1.2	3.0	1.8	5.4	3.0
Economics, administration	4.9	4.2	0.2	0.2	5.1	4.4
Trade and commerce	4.5	2.4	2.5	2.0	7.0	4.4
Agriculture, food industry	2.0	1.6	3.2	3.8	5.2	5.4
Other services, public services	1.1	4.2	1.2	0.3	2.3	4.5
Transport	1.8	1.6	0.5	0.8	2.3	2.3
Vocations not listed in the Hungarian National Qualifications Register (OKJ)	0.0	0.0	0.01	0.0	0.01	0.0
Hospitality and tourism	3.1	3.0	3.8	6.3	6.9	9.3

Source: Authors' compilation.

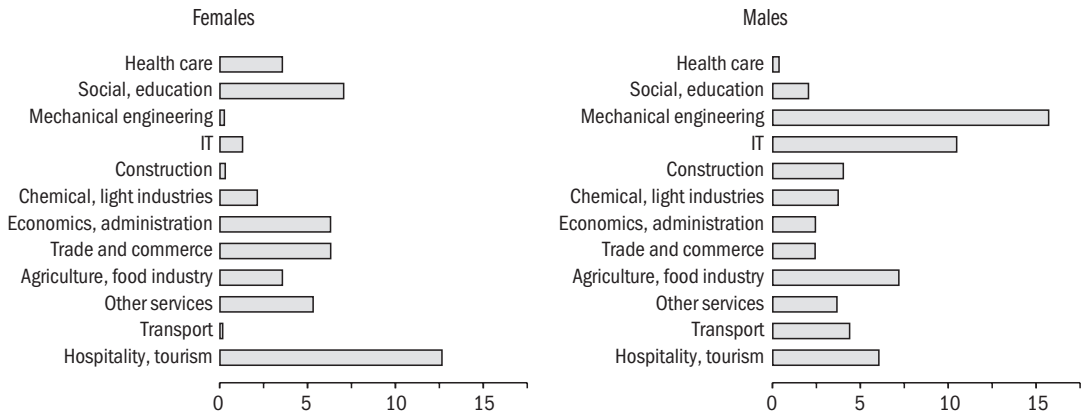
Participation rates decreased in the mechanical engineering-electrical engineering-electronics vocational group and the construction, chemical and light industries and trade and commerce vocational groups. Participation increased in the social and service industries, education, arts, hospitality, tourism and other services, and in public services vocational groups.

These changes occurred in certain vocational groups parallel to a rearrangement among school types. Thus, in the mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, electronics vocational group, the rate of training programmes offering a secondary school diploma shrank, just as in the trade and commerce vocational group. In other vocational groups, such as in the social services, education and arts vocational group, the rate of training programmes offering a secondary school diploma increased.

Overall, the rate of those continuing their studies in vocational secondary schools decreased within the technical vocational groups, while the rate of the trade and commerce and economic services vocational groups increased. The share of technical vocational groups decreased in vocational schools as well, while the rate of those continuing their studies in a human services field increased.

Significant differences can be found between vocational groups by gender as well, which is shown in *Figure 2.3.3*. While the majority of females continue their studies in the fields of trade and commerce and services, the majority of males choose a vocation within the fields of industry or IT (see more in *Csillag et al, 2019*).

Figure 2.3.3: The proportion of those continuing their studies after elementary school, by gender, 2017



Source: Authors' compilation.

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