

**Commitment and Preparedness of the Pre-service Teachers in Hungary and in Slovakia<sup>18</sup>****Edina Kovacs<sup>19</sup>**

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**Abstract**

Related to commitment and preparedness of teachers we can see similar questions and problems all around in Europe. It seems that women's high rate among the students in teacher training, academic achievement, which we can measure by grades or other indicators, and the commitment to the teaching profession are strongly connected to the image of teachers, the status of the teaching profession, and the expectations to the future to be teachers. So the first part of the study overviews how gender of students affects academic achievement and career choices. The second part of the study examines the database created in 2015 – supported by International Visegrad Fund – which includes the data of pre-service teachers studying at the Catholic University in Ruzomberok and at the University of Debrecen. My results show that that the image of the teaching profession is different in the two countries: we need further researches to tell what the exact differences are. The study also shows that the Hungarian students evaluate some dimensions of the teaching profession more positively. There are two important aspects: the prestige and the financial opportunities which are better in the opinion of the Slovak students, but these are not affecting their commitment at the first place. The male students in both countries are less attracted to teaching, and the reason cannot be only the relatively low pay, because there were no differences between genders in this item. Instead of it, there are several dimensions – including satisfaction with the teacher training and the vision of future professional development – together are the reasons that male students find other professions more attractive.

**Keywords:** higher education, pre-service teachers, gender

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## **Introduction**

The emphasis on the examination of the effectiveness, and commitment of students who are participating in the teacher training, has increased in recent years. Seeing the similar problems and issues throughout Europe, it appears that the expectations and features of the teacher role were shaped by social, economic and political processes that more or less took place at the same time in a similar way in the Euro-Atlantic countries.

Sometimes the most successful students leave the teaching profession: countries with successful education systems have been already selecting students at the admission of the teachers training. The less successful ones can only select when it comes to employing the newly graduated teachers. However it's obvious that the preparedness of teachers and their ability is a determining factor in education according to local and international analysis. (Mourshed and Barber, 2007; Sagi and Ercsei, 2012). Every third teacher, whom the students are being working together, would be somewhere else, but in school. This is also a problem, because if the young ones leave the teaching profession, they never develop the complex pedagogical knowledge (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012).

We see three phenomenon that are not so independent from each other: women's large scale appearance on the labor market, instead of working in family farms as was common in the past, occupations changed in structure between the two world wars, new professions appeared after the Second World War, as well as public and higher education expansion. The appearance of women as teachers of lower levels of education meant that the kindergarten teacher and the primary teacher's role contained primarily feminine attributes: it emphasizes the importance of personal attachment, concern and caring.

In the current teacher role there is a huge emphasis on the care for children, the well-developed social skills, and instrumental equipment knowledge that enables the teachers to teach heterogeneous groups. However, in one of Szabo's researches that was carried out among school principals she states, that in relation to the teacher's ability to assertiveness, in the descriptive model of reality. It appears rather bluntly that the teacher's ability to assertiveness is not incompatible with social values. Figula, while examining current teachers, came to the conclusion that this profession is rather chosen by people who have repressive personality traits. These people have a dependent interpersonal attitude and they repress their aggression. They are also looking for loving interactions, they are tolerant and sociable however, they counter their negative impulses (Figula, 2000; Szabo, 1998; Szabo, 1997).

This should not be ignored when we examine students involved in teacher training. The high rate of women among the students, their academic achievement – or other measurable indicators – their efficiency, the probability that they leave or stay are not independent from the teacher's image, the status of the teaching profession, or the expectations for the future teachers. That's why we review further, how gender affects

students - and later in-service teachers – in their career and social effectiveness, and that the impact of what other features should also be considered in this regard.

In our earlier research studying new entrant teachers, we found that based on their grades, there is no difference between the academic achievement of education major graduates and non-education major graduates finishing their studies in 2007, 2008 and 2010. However, a particular tendency was displayed, namely that regardless of their gender, education majors seem to follow a feminine career strategy. More specifically, in the education major sample, both the percentage of graduate students and students planning to acquire an additional degree were higher, whereas, significantly fewer students intended to continue their studies in a PhD program (Kovacs, 2012; 2013) which is a tendency typically characterizing women. According to Fenyes (2009), women prefer acquiring additional degrees in order to have more cultural capital, however, they do not intend to continue their studies on a higher level of education, namely in a PhD Program.

In the case of education majors, the development of further indicators of achievement, such as competence, clearly has a major role since the knowledge and skills necessary for the teaching profession are complex. Based on some studies, this complexity includes, for example, cooperative skills, self-understanding and determination. Fonai claims that this strengthens the process of deprofessionalization. He refers to Etzioni's interpretation that as for feminized professions in general, but helping professions in particular, the attributes of typical female activities were transmitted to the profession itself. Besides, the traditional subjection is presented with the phenomenon that in this dimension, the given profession is classified only as a semi-profession not as a profession (Etzioni, 1969; Fonai, 2012).

This can be an explanation for the status-loss of the profession since though founded in a different perspective, the relevant literature consistently claims that the core value and expectation of the teaching profession is caring, which is also perceived as a general expectation during teacher training. However, in Ireland, caring as a core value of the profession is even included in the Codes of Professional Conduct. Caring is often presented as an ethical dimension and/or interpreted as responsibility for the quality of relationships. In addition, reflected in traditions and stereotypes, caring is rather identified with the female gender (Drudy, 2008; Weiner, 2001).

Examining of excellence, we have to mention some studies note that besides academic performance, there are other factors, such as institutional embeddedness and satisfaction with both the training and teaching practice that influence teacher attrition. Consequently, even though the statement that better performing students leave the teaching profession is valid, it is undoubtedly simplified (Bruinsmaa and Jansena, 2010; Pusztai, 2012). In addition, the interpretation of achievement is also problematic: does it exclusively refer to academic performance or we should take into consideration other academic activities and certain competences, as well?

## **The Characteristics of Teachers in Hungary and Slovakia**

As we have already mentioned, the teaching profession-related phenomena and problems are quite similar in all European countries, despite the fact that although sometimes there are only small differences, there can be significant differences that we can observe between the culture and education system in the countries. In the case of Hungary and Slovakia regarding the situation of the education system and the teacher's state we can recognize many similarities.

The education systems of the two countries even during the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy – while the two states were parts of the same empire – formed and developed similarly. In the 20th century both the country's educational system developments were influenced by the operation of the typical socialist states. Therefore, due to the weakening of the system a very significant education reform was launched in Hungary in 1985 and in Slovakia (then Czechoslovakia) in 1986.

In the 1990s such uniformity effects were no longer valid: Slovakia - after an independent Czech and Slovak state formation – for a few years placed great emphasis on strengthening the national character of education, and in Hungary the new national curriculum was created for public education.

However, we can still see the similarities rather than the differences, due to the expansion of education, accession to the European Union and participation in the related programs, and then the introduction of the Bologna system (Kosova and Porubsky, 2007).

One of the most significant parallels is shown in the teacher's salary: the table below (Table 1) shows the wages of the entrant and the wages of teachers with more than 10 years of teaching experience, in some European countries. It can be seen that there is only a little difference between the wages of kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers, whoever secondary school teachers as entrants or after years and years of teaching can expect better wages in the majority of countries.

Between the beginner and experienced teachers' salary the average difference is one and a half, which is true in the case of Slovakia, while in the Hungarian secondary education the possible salary is almost doubled. Comparing the Visegrad countries that are in a similar situation, both the Hungarian and the Slovakian teachers' salaries are average, but significantly lower than the OECD and EU average.

Table 1. Teachers' salary in 2013, in euro

	Kindergarten		Primary Education		Secondary Education	
	Minimum wage	Maximum wage	Minimum wage	Maximum wage	Minimum wage	Maximum wage
OECD average	28 057	43 448	28 854	45 602	31 348	50 119
EU 21 average	28 386	43 273	29 123	45 001	31 738	50 175
Hungary	10 212	16 051	10 654	17 497	11 642	22 083
Czech Republic	15 286	19 662	16 680	22 236	17 244	24 130
Poland	10 362	17 200	10 362	17 200	19 600	21 518
Slovak Republic	9 153	11 360	10 241	13 864	10 241	13 864
England	30 289	44 269	30 289	44 269	30 289	44 269
Finland	25 855	29 385	30 587	40 160	34 008	45 900
Italy	27 288	40 119	27 288	40 119	29 418	46 060
Spain	35 881	50 770	35 881	50 770	40 308	56 536

Source: Education et a Glance 2015

The situation is similar when we look at the teacher's unfavourable age composition, or the decrease regarding the attractiveness of the profession, and in the challenges of teachers such as the information explosion or the changing parental expectations that they need to face as well. The teaching profession image can be characterized by the following: it is consisting primarily of resignation, passive resistance to change, lack of preparedness against the individualization of education, the fear of losing the job and the acknowledgement of the low prestige of the teaching profession (Engler et al, 2014).

The teaching profession is chosen by students with the similar attitudes in both countries. In Slovakia in addition to gender, the socio-economic background plays an important role: the childhood of pre-service teachers are characterized by a caring family background and an interest in other people. 27 percent of them had a teacher in the family (Hanesova, 2014).

In Hungary, more research is showing that the pre-service teachers, whether women or men, significantly value helping others more than the high income among other work values. The relationship is stronger between the students who are practicing to be lower-level teachers. The choice of academic subject field is an affecting factor as well. The result of a research that was carried out at the University of Debrecen, the ideal professional according to the art students who are in the teaching major, is knowledgeable, flexible, wise, helpful, empathetic and successful in interpersonal relationships. In contrast according to the science faculty students with teacher majors, the emphasis is on the fact that ideal professionals have practical knowledge, has the ability to synthesize knowledge and has good language skills, while being flexible and helpful were also considered important. (Fonai, Marton and Cegledi, 2011).

### **Characteristics of Hungarian and Slovak Students in Teacher Training**

Aim of this study to compare the Hungarian and Slovak students who are studying at the University of Debrecen and at the Catholic University in Ružomberok. Based on the literature, we assumed that there will be no significant differences between the students neither in the two countries nor in their commitment neither in their achievement. The

male students of both countries tend to plan to leave the teaching profession, but this is affected not only by gender but their perception of the teaching profession and to the satisfaction of the training as well.

The database of this research was made in 2015. The questionnaire contained three main blocks, in addition the independent variables. The first block measured their thoughts about teaching profession and their aims. The second block measured their beliefs about the prestige of teaching profession and their achievement. The third block measured their satisfaction with teacher training. During the analysis, I primarily used cross-table analysis.

The situation of the two higher education institutions is similar. The University of Debrecen is at the Northern Great Plain region of Hungary, located 226 kilometers from the capital. The Catholic University in Ružomberok is in Central-Slovakia, located 262 kilometers distance from the capital. There are other teacher training colleges or universities 50-60 yards from both institutions, but both universities have great regional catchment area (Figure 1). Students of the Catholic University in Ružomberok mainly come from Central-Slovakia, but about a third of them from East-Slovakia, and slightly more than 10 percent of them coming from West-Slovakia. Most part of the students of the University of Debrecen come from Hajdú-Bihar and Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg county, but there are students also from Heves, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplen and Jasz-Nagykun-Szolnok county. There is no significant effect to West-Hungary, but some students also come from these areas. At the same time it cannot be ignored that Debrecen is the main town of Hajdú-Bihar county, so there are students who come from a „main town”, although we can see the migration - mostly to the capital and mainly concerning the students with better academic achievement (Cegledi and Nyusti, 2011; Engler et al, 2014).

Figure 1. Teacher education Institutions in Hungary and in Slovakia



Source: own edition

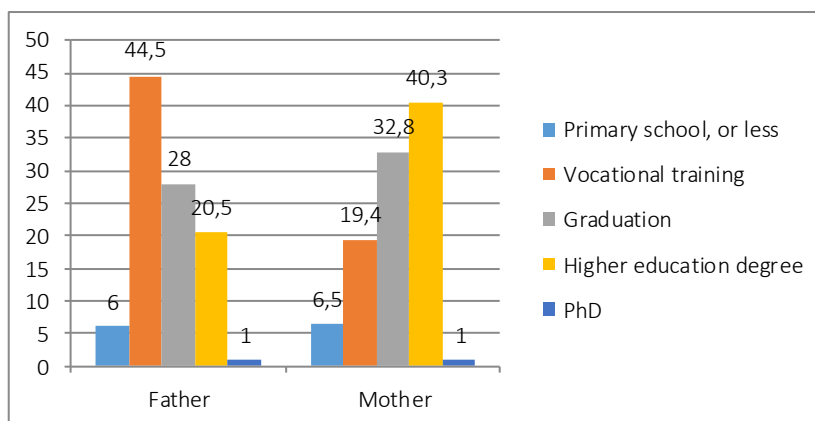
During the research were asked the students in teacher training of both institutions. In Hungary this means students in Master Education, and those students in Bachelor Education who have taken 50 credits module necessary for future teacher master programs and the students of undivided teacher training. In Slovakia this means both the Bachelor and Master students in teacher education. The entire sample consist 204 students from Debrecen and 130 students from Ružomberok. The results are not representative, hence, the statements cannot be generalized to the education major of these countries, yet I consider that they support a more thorough understanding of the topic and mean a good basis for future comparative research. I focus on gender dimension, so it was important that the gender ratio be representative. Among the students in Debrecen: 71.4 percent of women, 28.6 percent of men, while in the sample 73 percent of women, 27 percent of men. Among the students in Ružomberok 79.8 percent of the students are women, 20.2 percent men, and in the sample: 80.9 percent women and 19.1 percent men.

The average age of Slovak students is 22.8 years. 65.4 percent of students have participated in BA and 34.6 percent of them in MA education. The average age of Hungarian students is 22.7 years. 41.4 percent of students have participated in undivided training, 14, 8 percent of them in BA, 43.8 percent of them in MA education.

In connection with these facts we have to keep in mind two things: students who study in the Bologna system can choose at the end of their BA education while students who study in the undivided teacher training already made their decision and it can affect their commitment. Another important difference between the higher education system of the two countries that students with kindergarten majors can take part in BA education in Slovakia and they can continue their studies in teacher MA which is not possible in Hungary. The Hungarian kindergarten teacher education is done separately. Previous researches show that Hungarian students in kindergarten teacher education have worse cultural and financial background than the other students with education majors (Kovacs, 2014).

The highest level of education of mothers is typically higher in case of the Hungarian students: more than 40 percent of them have higher education degree. Among the fathers is relatively large number (44, 5 percent) with vocational qualifications, while three-quarters of mothers have at least graduation (Figure 2). Teacher degree has 27 percent of mothers and 7.9 percent of fathers.

Figure 2. The highest level of education of parents in Debrecen (%)



In case of Slovak students I examined the parents of students with kindergarten majors separately, because of the Hungarian differences mentioned earlier. The results show that – according to the previous Hungarian cases – the parents of students with kindergarten major have lower education level than the other students. Fathers of the students in teacher training in both countries have similar finished education level (Figure 3), but among the mothers of the Hungarian students have more who have higher education degree. But there are more parents with PhD in the Slovak sample (Figure 4). Teacher degree has 9.1 percent of mothers and 3.1 percent of fathers.

Figure 3. Education level of fathers of Slovak students, based on majors (%)

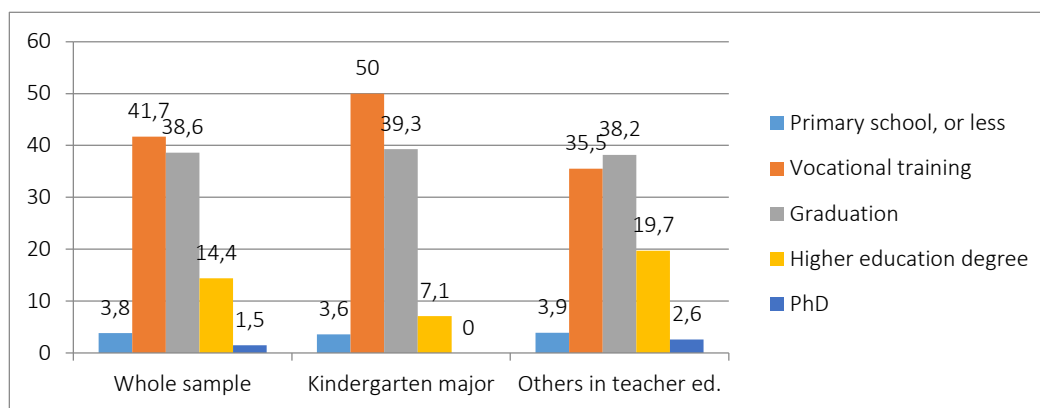
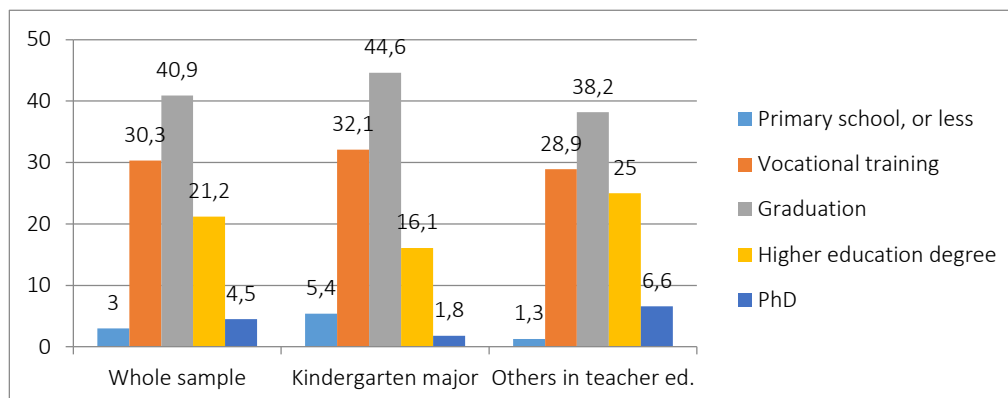


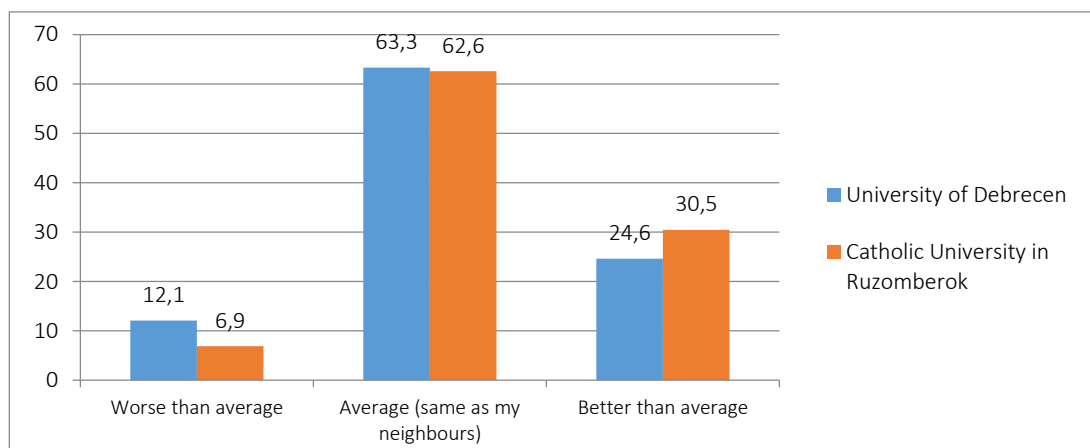
Figure 4. Education level of mothers of Slovak students, based on majors (%)





The financial background of the students is quite similar (the question was what they think about the financial situation of their family now, and when they were 14 years old). “Better than the average” were chosen by more Slovak students than Hungarian students, and there were no significant differences between the students with kindergarten major and the others (Figure 5). So the students in BA with kindergarten major have not the same characteristics than the Hungarian students in kindergarten teacher education.

Figure 5. Financial situation of students' family (%)



About the township: the ratio of students from small town and from larger cities is similar in the two countries, as it was expected, knowing that students from surrounding regions get to these institutions. The 12.5 percent of Hungarian students come from main town of a county: this confirm the drain-effect of the capital. None of the Slovak students live in a main town or capital, and the difference is filled with students coming from villages, so the two extremes are quite different between the University of Debrecen and the Catholic University in Ružomberok.

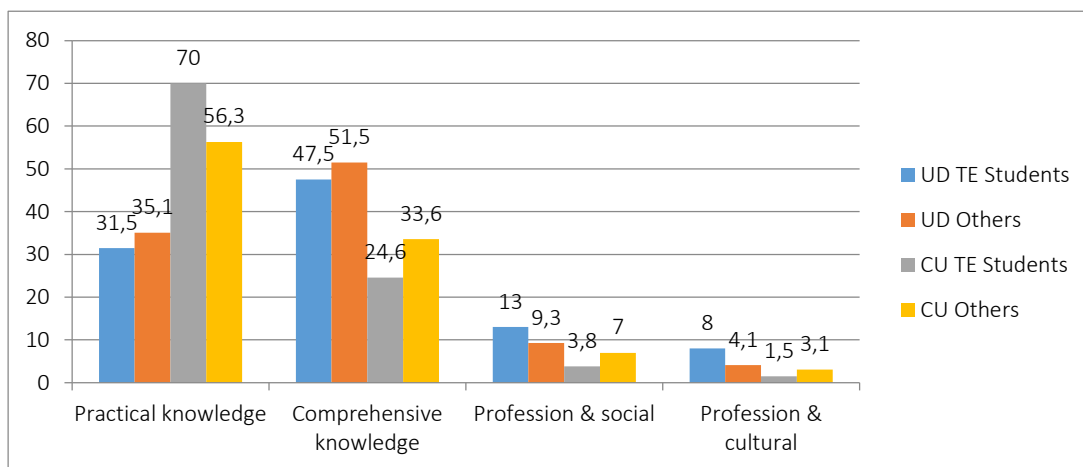
### Correlations between Students' Achievement and Commitment

Graduation outcomes of the Hungarian students are a little bit better, but the difference is less than a half credit: on a 5 grade scale (1 means poor and 5 means excellent) average of Hungarian students is 4.6, and average of Slovak students is 4.3.

There was a question about the most important aim of higher education in the questionnaire. The students can choose practical or comprehensive knowledge, or professional knowledge and guidance to social or cultural issues together. Also asked what they thought about other students' opinion, so we can tell how much they think others see their studies really intellectual education. Based on this, the Hungarian students have more traditional image of higher education: the most important aim of higher education is the comprehensive professional knowledge transfer to them and more than 20 percent believes that the university has to guide in social and cultural issues too. In addition, they consider this is less important for other students. This

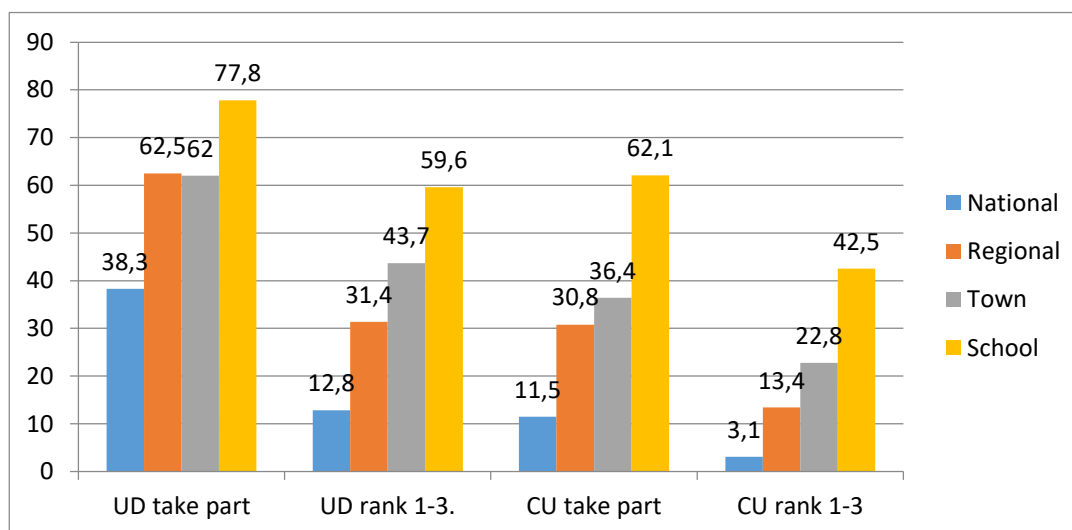
means that they see themselves in more intellectual role than other students. In contrast, the Slovak students are more practical, they want professional knowledge transfer. However, they believe that other students prefer a comprehensive professional knowledge, or wider knowledge transfer (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Students' opinion about the aim of higher education (%)



Probably not from this unrelated that the Hungarian students are more successful in academic competitions than the Slovak students. Although take part on the national or regional competitions can be affected by distance of a city or village, application to a school competition only depends on the intention of a student – and maybe his or her teacher. The participation rate is higher among Hungarian students, it seems, this is more important for them (Figure 7). There is no significant difference by gender in both countries; activity of men and women is similar.

Figure 7. Taking part and ranking on academic competitions (%)



More Hungarian students had applied to teacher training at the first place: 75.4 percent, this ratio is 61.1 percent among the Slovak students. We can observe similar difference

to the intention of working as a teacher. There are more Hungarian students who want to teach at the first place. There are a similar proportion of those students who want to teach only if they get a good job and those who want some other kind of work but apply for a teacher position too in both countries. However more Slovak students answered that they do not want to teach at all (Table 2).

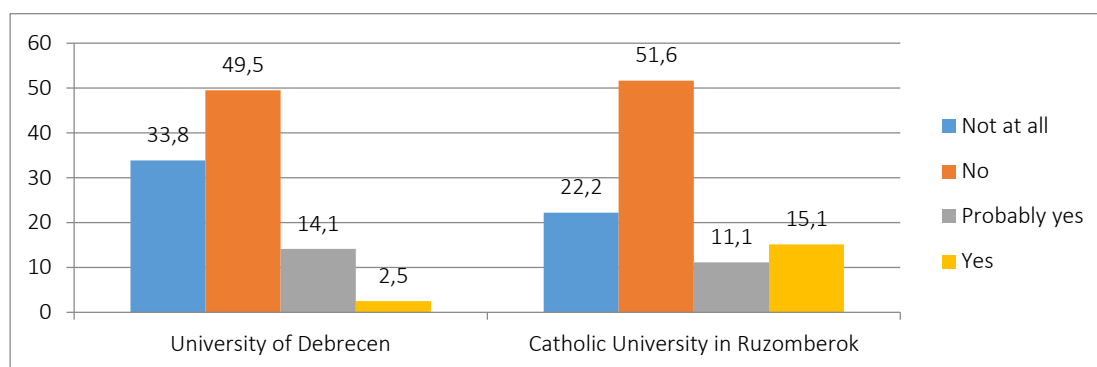
Table 2., „Do you want to teach after graduation?“ Students’ answers (%)

	University of Debrecen	Catholic University in Ružomberok	Total
Yes, I want	83.8	72.9	79.5
No, I don’t want	16.2	27.1	20.5

Source: authors’ own source, Chi square: 0.012

Another question was if they want to leave the teaching profession in the first 5 years. The middle field is similar in both countries, the big differences there are in the extremes: far more Hungarian students said to be sure to stay in the school, while many more Slovak students think that do not remain there in any case (Figure 8).

Figure 8., „Would you leave the teaching profession in the first 5 years?“ Students’ answers (%)



Source: authors’ own source

The starting and the leaving the teaching profession is strongly influenced by gender, as we expected based on the literature. Surprisingly, there is no significant difference between Hungarian male and female students in the intention of starting their teaching career. But more male students think that they might leave the teaching profession later. Less male students at the Catholic University in Ružomberok think that they want to teach than female students, and two-thirds of them think that would not remain in the teaching profession (Table 3).

Table 3. Correlation between gender and leaving the teaching profession (%)

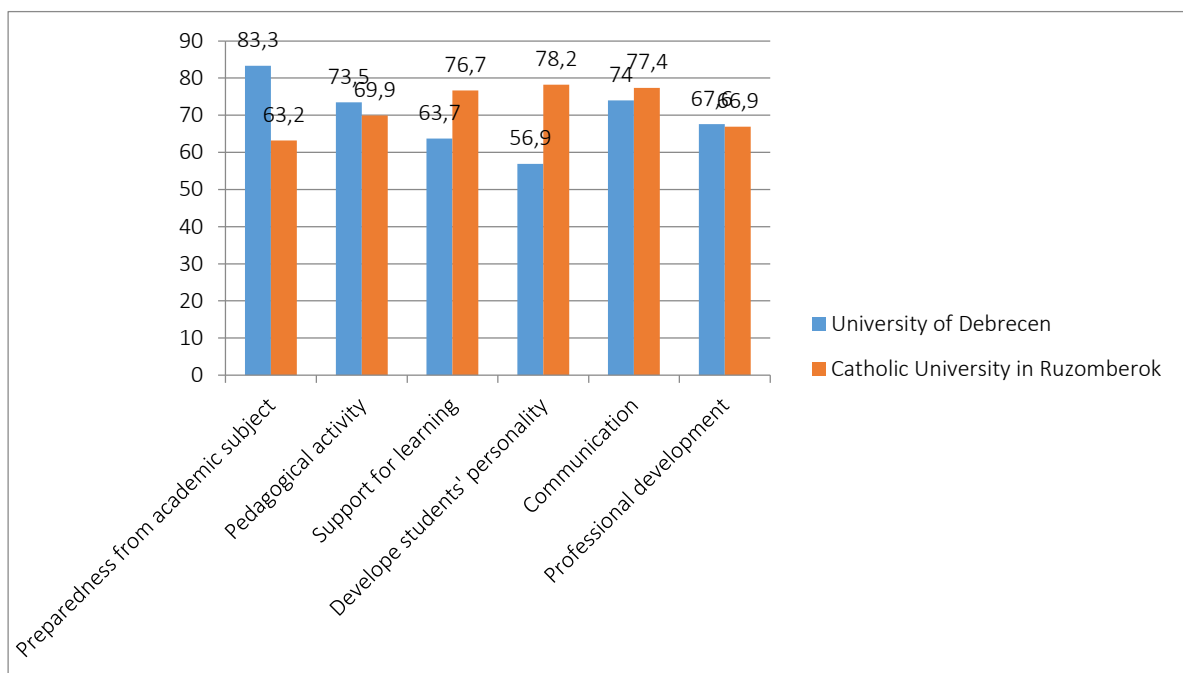
		Women	Men	All	Chi square
Want to start teaching career, UD	Yes	85.9	78.2	83.8	Not significant
	No	14.1	21.8	16.2	
Will leave the teaching profession, UD	Yes	85.2	69.1	80.9	0.010
	No	14.8	30.9	19.1	
Want to start teaching career, CU	Yes	84.9	20	72.5	0.000
	No	15.1	80	27.5	
Will leave the teaching profession, CU	Yes	77.4	36	69.5	0.000
	No	22.6	64	30.5	

Source: authors’ own source

## Correlations between Commitment and Perception of the Training and the Teaching Profession

By the literature the satisfaction with the training and the feeling of competence can be one of the most important factors which can influence the commitment. That is why I asked the students how satisfied they are with the specific components of their training. Results show that the Slovak students are more satisfied with the most components of their training than the Hungarian students. The only exception is the “preparedness from academic subject” (Figure 9). This fact does not explain why more Slovak students want to leave the teaching profession, but we can see that in case of Slovak students there are stronger correlation between their satisfaction and commitment. From the viewpoint of gender the female students are more satisfied with their training than male students, in both countries.

Figure 9. Satisfaction with specific components of the training (%)



Source: authors' own source

Our previous research has shown that those students who want to teach were significantly less satisfied with the practical components of their training. So in those cases not the excellent training was the motivation, rather the students who are strongly committed would like to gain their practical knowledge (Kovacs, 2014). This result appears in present research too: in case of Hungarian students there is only one component which correlates with the intention of teaching, and this is the preparedness from academic subject (Table 4). In case of the Slovak students the correlation is quite strong: those students want to teach, who feel well prepared and competent (Table 5).

Table 4. Correlation between satisfaction with the training and commitment, among the Hungarian students (%)

		Want to teach	Not want to teach	All	Chi square
Preparedness from academic subject	Not satisfied	13.2	50	16.7	0.024
	Satisfied	86.8	50	83.3	

Source: authors' own source

Table 5. Correlation between satisfaction with the training and commitment, among the Slovak students (%)

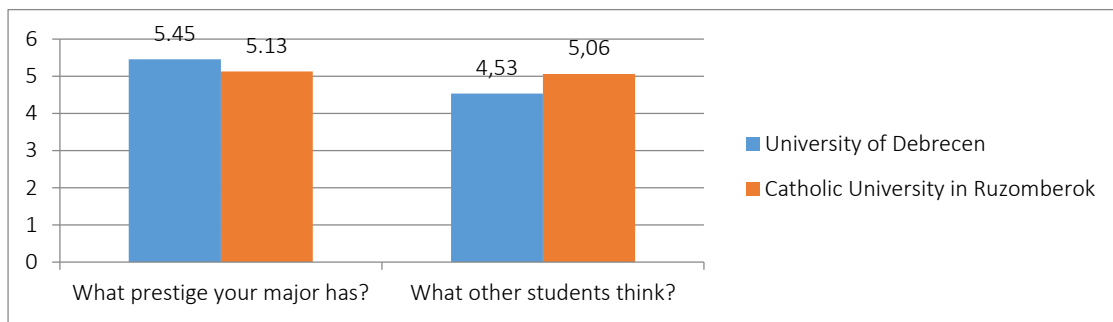
		Want to teach	Not want to teach	All	Chi square
Preparedness from academic subject	Not satisfied	28.9	58.3	36.8	0.002
	Satisfied	71.1	41.7	63.2	
Pedagogical activity	Not satisfied	21.6	52.8	30.1	0.001
	Satisfied	78.4	47.2	69.9	
Support for learning	Not satisfied	10.3	58.3	23.3	0.000
	Satisfied	89.7	41.7	76.7	
Develop students' personality	Not satisfied	11.3	50	21.8	0.000
	Satisfied	88.7	50	78.2	
Communication	Not satisfied	15.5	41.7	22.6	0.002
	Satisfied	84.5	58.3	77.4	
Professional development	Not satisfied	23.7	58.3	33.1	0.000
	Satisfied	76.3	41.	66.9	

Source: authors' own source

There were 12 items in the questionnaire about the students' aims as a future-to-be teachers. There are some significant differences, e.g. who wants to take care of students and develop their personality also really wants to teach. But there are some important items for professional development by the literature such as "follow-up of educational innovations" and "participation in high-quality professional training" – and there are no significant differences between those who want to teach and those who want to leave the teaching profession.

According to the literature, the decreasing prestige of the teaching profession makes the teaching career less desirable. That is why I would like to know what the students think about the prestige of the teaching profession. The question was: where they think their major is in an imaginary university rank. Also asked what they think about other students' opinions (who have not teaching major). On an 8 grade scale the students of both universities evaluate the prestige of the teaching profession quite similar, although the opinion of Hungarian students is more favorable, but the Slovak students believe that the "outsider" respect better (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Prestige of the teaching profession in an imaginary university rank



Source: authors' own source

As we see above, when students were asked about their own opinion, the difference is not significant between Hungarian and Slovak students. But the Slovak students think that the teaching profession has far more higher prestige in other students mind (Table 6).

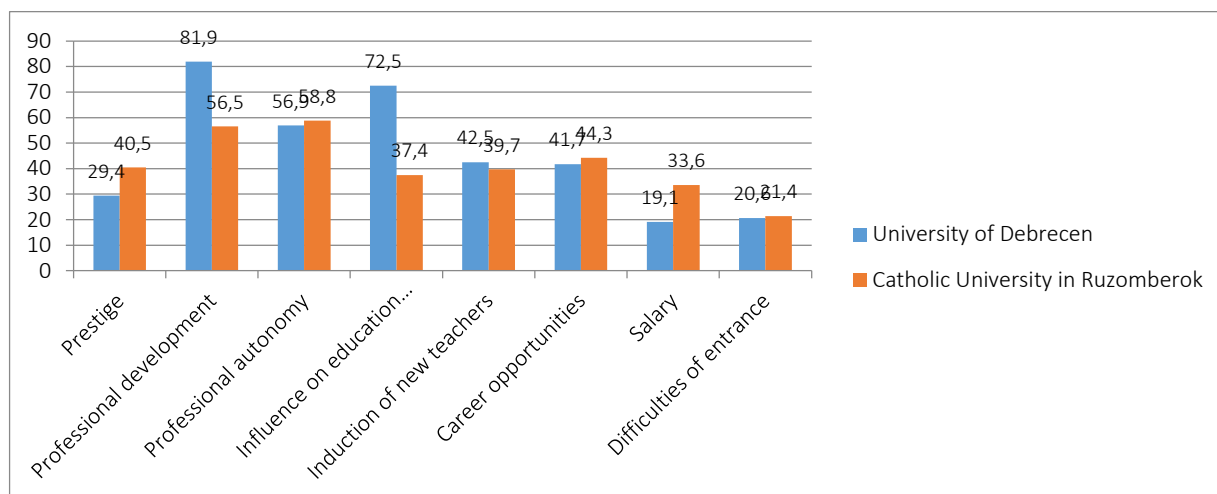
Table 6. Opinions about prestige by nationality (%)

	University of Debrecen	Catholic University in Ružomberok	Total
low prestige	27.5	21.8	25.2
average prestige	44.6	36.1	41.3
high prestige	27.9	42.1	33.5

Source: authors' own source, Chi square: 0.027

There is a list in the questionnaire which contains other dimensions of the teaching profession's appreciation, such as autonomy, professional development and career, induction of new teachers, and the salary. Comparison of the opinion of the Slovak and Hungarian students shows that that the Hungarian students see better opportunities for professional development and influence on education policy, while the Slovak students see the prestige and the salary better (Figure 11). Based on this, the dimensions cannot explain the differences in the commitment. But if we recall the traditional image of higher education of the Hungarian students, we will understand that the better professional development and the bigger influence on education policy can lead and keep them to the teaching profession.

Figure 11. Dimensions of the teaching profession's appreciation (%)



Source: authors' own source

I also examined that any difference can be shown by gender. There is no significant difference none of these characteristics in the Slovak sample by gender, female and male students see the teaching profession on a similar way. In the Hungarian sample there are three significant differences. Female students think that the opportunities of professional development are better, the professional autonomy and political influence are bigger (Table 7). If we add to this that more male students intend to leave the teaching profession, we will see that there is a correlation between gender, commitment and the appreciation of the teaching profession, but cannot tell exactly how they interact with each other.

Table 7. Appreciation of the teaching profession, according to Hungarian students (%)

		Women	Men	All	Chi square
Professional development	week	12.8	32.7	18.1	0.001
	strong	87.2	67.3	81.9	
Professional autonomy	week	36.9	60.0	43.1	0.003
	strong	63.1	40.0	56.9	
Influence on education policy	week	22.8	40.0	27.5	0.013
	strong	77.2	60.0	72.5	

Source: authors' own source

## Conclusions

First hypothesis was that social and cultural characteristics of the two university's pre-service teachers do not differ significantly from each other. This is also true as regards the midrange, but the Slovakian students are coming from a slightly better financial background, although more people are coming from villages than the Hungarians, and the parents' highest level of education is somewhat more favorable in Debrecen. In particular there are more graduates among mothers, and within the graduates there are many who have a degree in teaching.

Although there are no differences between the students of the two countries according to the academic achievement, the students in Debrecen were more active in high school academic competitions, even in the ones that were organized within the schools. Their image of the higher education is closer to the image of the classical intellectual training: primarily the students of the Catholic University in Ružomberok expect their institution to teach practical professional skills.

This shows that image that was created of the teacher profession differs in the two countries. To detect and identify what are exactly the specifics, requires further research. But the present study also shows that in some dimensions the students of the University of Debrecen evaluated the teaching profession more positively than others.

In two important aspects: in prestige and better material appreciation the status is better according to the Slovakian students; it seems this does not affect their commitment primarily.

According to the Hungarian students the opportunity for professional development and the influence on education policy is considered significantly better, and more women think these than men. Many among Slovak students think that they do not want to find a job as a teacher, and it is also more likely that if they are going to teach, they would choose a different profession within five years. The gender has a significant impact on the attrition: as expected, men are more interested in trying themselves in other fields. Surprisingly there are no gender differences in the intention on choosing this profession, just leaving the profession is considered to be more likely among men according to the students of the University of Debrecen.

Another strong influencing factor is the satisfaction with the training: those students who consider themselves more prepared felt better about teaching and rather wanted to teach. There is a particularly strong correlation in the case of the students of the Catholic University in Ružomberok, who are more satisfied with their education than the students in Debrecen except the preparedness of the academic subjects.

While the educational situation of the two countries is in many respects similar, it seems that the teachers' recruitment base - at least in the two regional universities that were examined - is different. Hungarian students in some dimensions grade the teacher profession as a rather classical profession, which is reflected in their expectations of the higher-education training and increases their commitment of this field of education. However, it seems that the approach of Slovak students is more practical. This is also confirmed by the fact that in their case the satisfaction with the training is significantly associated with the intention of choosing the profession. The male students in both countries are less attracted to teaching. The reasons are not just the relatively low salaries because there were no significant differences between the genders of this perception. Rather, it is likely that several dimensions - including the satisfaction with



the training, or the assessment of the latter professional development opportunities - together cause the male students to find other professions more attractive.

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