

DOI: 10.7251/EMC1401019R

Datum prijema rada: 3. april 2014.

Datum prihvatanja rada: 2. jun 2014.

UDK: 37.014.542:316.644

Časopis za ekonomiju i tržišne komunikacije

Godina IV • broj I

str. 19-30

PREGLEDNI RAD

SYSTEM OF ENROLLMENT INTO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Bojan Ristić

Phd, The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade powerfactory, Belgrade,
btristic@hotmail.com

Aleksandra Stojković

Master in economics, Belgrade Business School

Abstract: *The European Union, by adopting the Copenhagen declaration, set up the foundation for creating the unique educational system with which all the member countries as well as the countries surrounding them should harmonize their educational systems. However, the legislative framework for system of enrollement into secondary school was partially designed. The same applies to Serbia where the same area has not been adequately designed. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to find an efficient solution for this important issue. It presents an expertise model projected in order to contribute to defining and creating a new system of enrollment into secondary school not only for Serbia but international community as well.*

Key words: *education, system, expertise.*

Jel classification: *I21, I28,*

SECONDARY EDUCATION FEATURES

The organization of the enrollment system into state/public secondary schools depend on various factors, some of the most significant ones being general development level of a country, educational tradition, country's educational system taken as a whole etc. Hence, to fully appreciate this paper, it is necessary to tell more about the structure and current situation of secondary school system in certain countries.

Having in mind its role, secondary education is a part of educational system whose structure is very complex and length may cover up to ten years. Therefore, the largest differences regarding secondary education of certain countries are in its structure. Regarding its length, secondary education includes students of the age from 10 to 19, and in most cases it is divided into junior and senior secondary education. Following such a model, junior years are focused on general education, while senior ones are focused on vocational. Within such a system, regardless of its structure, secondary education offers a wide range of vocational options students can choose according to their wishes and abilities. It has to be added that more and more intensive activities regarding career guidance and orientating have been carried out with the view to facilitating the choice of adequate school and reducing disproportion of need for qualified vocational profiles at the labour market

Within existing secondary education systems, there are models where certain age groups of students enter certain levels or categories of secondary education (Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia, 1988).. For instance, students in some countries enter secondary education at the age of 10, while in other, at the age of 14. Besides, in some countries, students attend senior secondary education from the age of 14, while in others, from the age of 16.

General secondary education is available to all students regardless of their abilities and knowledge. But to enter vocational secondary schools meeting certain demands is necessary, which leads to candidate ranking according to their abilities and learning achievements in previous education.

Generally, there are four models of secondary education today and they are as follows:

- Secondary education divided into two levels- junior and senior;
- Secondary education with compulsory general part, followed by different forms of senior non-compulsory part;
- Secondary education where curriculum studied on weekly basis comprises general and vocational subjects;
- Secondary education which combines three previously mentioned models.

The following should be pointed out regarding the given models:

- The feature of the first model is that junior and senior level of education is most often provided within the same schools. There are, however, certain differences. Students in some countries, such as Germany, Austria, Holland,

acquire general knowledge at junior level, while general knowledge is extended through senior level in some other countries, such as Luxemburg;

- The model characterized by compulsory general education and further, non-compulsory vocational education, exists in France, Italy and Greece. This model of education is usually conducted in different schools. Compulsory general education is realized according to the same curriculum in the secondary schools known as grammar schools, colleges or lycée etc. Senior education is provided in vocational schools specialized for various educational profiles;
- The model which comprises general and vocational curriculum tightly combined is realized in Portugal, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland. Students are directed from the very beginning of secondary education towards certain educational profiles;
- The fourth model, combining the elements of the all previously mentioned ones, exists in Spain, England, Wales and Ireland. This model is very similar to the combined (the model no.3) one, though the general curriculum is studied in the first phase and vocational is carried out after it.

It should be added that students are allowed to transfer to another school, which is legally regulated upon passing certain subjects exams and/or additional exams.

The duration of secondary education in the countries whose system was studied is from 2 to 6 years. The duration of this phase of education should be considered in relation to the length of the previous phase, primary education. In countries where primary education is longer, the secondary one is shorter and vice versa. All combination considered, primary and secondary education usually last approximately 12 years. It is important to point out:

- Secondary education lasts 2 years only in Belgium;
- Secondary education lasts 3 years in Denmark, Ireland, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, England, Wales;
- Secondary education lasts 4 years in Spain, France, Holland, Austria and Scotland;
- Secondary education lasts 5 years only in Germany;
- Secondary education lasts 6 years only in Germany for certain educational profiles.

In countries where secondary education is divided into junior and senior, junior part usually lasts for a year or two, while the rest of the time is dedicated to senior part.

The age at which students usually start secondary education in European countries varies from 10 to 13 and it is directly dependent on duration of primary education. The students usually finish their secondary education in the above mentioned countries at the age of 15 to 19.

As regards the number of students per class, it varies from 15 to 35 in the European countries. The number of students per class in Germany and Italy is between 20 to 30, while it is between 20 to 35 in Denmark, Greece, Spain and Scotland. It should be noted that dependent on the place, number of students per class can be based on the decision of school management or local authorities.

For the purpose of this paper, it is necessary to present the data concerning the number of teaching days annually. This number depends on duration of school holidays and can be between 160 days (Iceland) to 216 days (Luxemburg).

Besides, a school week in most European countries lasts 5 school days, though there are countries where a school week lasts 6 days (Luxemburg and Italy). Still, there are countries (Germany, Iceland, Austria and Portugal) where school management decides whether a school week lasts 5 or 6 days. A typical school day in countries studied starts at 8 a.m. and finishes at 2 p.m. though in some cases, due to lunch break, school children are at school till 4 p.m. On the average, the number of classes per week is fewer at junior level than the one at senior level, being 30 to 44 at lower level and 28 to 44 at higher level (Ireland). Duration of a school class in most European countries is 45 to 55 minutes, with the exception of Ireland where a class lasts 40 minutes and Italy, 60 minutes.

As the previous paragraphs show, all the relevant factors of secondary education in European countries are considerably different as the result of their different educational traditions.

THE CHOICE OF EDUCATIONAL PROFILE

In order to analyze the secondary school enrollment system abroad, it is necessary to explain some facts regarding employment prospects and education system as a whole in different countries since these significantly affect their enrollment policy. Therefore, it is important to consider their social development planning policy.

The development planning is a top priority for governments of countries today. Considering that, the governments engage institutions and experts in various fields

with the intention to study the situation in a given country from different aspects, and taking into consideration their findings as well as achievements of contemporary science and technology, these institutions and experts make projections regarding a country's further development directions. As a rule, each development programme envisages measures that must be taken in order to realize it successfully.

Having that in mind, the countries undergoing the process of transition (Serbia is among them too) face numerous, often painful, changes which affect a large proportion of population. The changes in the field of economy (so-called "restructuring of economy") which should respond to new demands on market are inevitably followed by production reduction and huge redundancy, and sometimes lead to shutting down a large number of companies that used to be renowned. These changes do not affect only weak and small companies/enterprises, but up to that moment large and powerful ones well-appreciated abroad. All these have extremely negative implications for current employment situation and standard of living of population in transition undergoing countries. Consequently, all countries today (developed ones and those undergoing transition) are necessarily obliged to carefully plan their economic and social development, which presents the basis not only for enrollment planning into schools/institutions at secondary/higher education level, but key factor for education development planning. In the same way, country's projected/planned development should provide the basis/foundation for career guidance of students in their final grades of primary education.

This is the reason why the EU countries have made great effort over last years to develop youth career guidance, which together with other enrollment-related activities facilitates significantly the realization of planned enrollment into secondary schools. Therefore, it is important to present current practice related to students' choice of profession.

The very essence of professional choice is a personal decision of a person enrolling a secondary school. This decision is a personal one and it brings about the way and individual will make a living in future. At first, this issue seems simple, but making a right decision regarding one's profession depends on solving numerous dilemmas. The opinion that this issue is not just a private matter is supported by the fact that its solution is the subject of interest of science and social practice (Dimov & Šećibović, 1998, p. 9-17).

This issue is the subject of study of career guidance as a specific psychological discipline. It explores the interdisciplinary character of the relation between a man

and work. The decision regarding the choice of profession/job does not only imply what an individual will learn through secondary (or higher) education and what he/she will do, but it affects his/her quality of life from material and social aspect. This statement can be supported by numerous facts: e.g. a baker bakes bread and patry, thus he/she has a personal value/price at labour market which is the basis for his/her material and social status.

For that very reason, in order to choose the right job, a person should first get to know the world of work. It actually means that a person needs to learn thoroughly about structure and character of available occupations (productive ones and services) and accompanying educational profile structures/opportunities which will further enable the individual to make an informed choice of a particular profile in line with his/her abilities, knowledge and interests. However, the matter of learning about the world of work and one's own abilities is a very complex one (Jacbusnas, 1982) and requires society to provide clear and simple information regarding the structure and features of possible future occupation as well as to organize adequate career guidance.

The second step in choosing profession/occupation is recognition of personal profession-related interests which should be prioritized in order to make a selection and narrow down the alternatives. The alternatives are necessary in order to overcome obstacles which may appear at the time of enrollment into secondary education because it may happen that a student does not satisfy the conditions required to enter particular school of his/her choice. Therefore, career guidance service is supposed to enable student to realize what are his/her personal interests and create the list of alternatives/alternative occupations when choosing future profession.

The third step in the process is learning/getting to know requirements for chosen alternatives, which actually means realizing what are the special abilities, skills and knowledge necessary for successful performance regarding chosen professions/occupations. Naturally, in order to make the above possible, current career guidance uses comparative view/approach regarding abilities, skills and knowledge needed for particular occupation/job.

The fourth step in selecting profession refers to understanding of personal abilities and qualities that should be assessed in relation to the requirements of selected occupations. Since there may be certain aberrations, it is necessary to eliminate those job alternatives whose demands an individual cannot meet. That is how a contemporary career guidance helps an individual – by using specific methods it

is capable of asserting an individual's abilities and qualities and it recommends which are the jobs/occupations which the individual can successfully perform

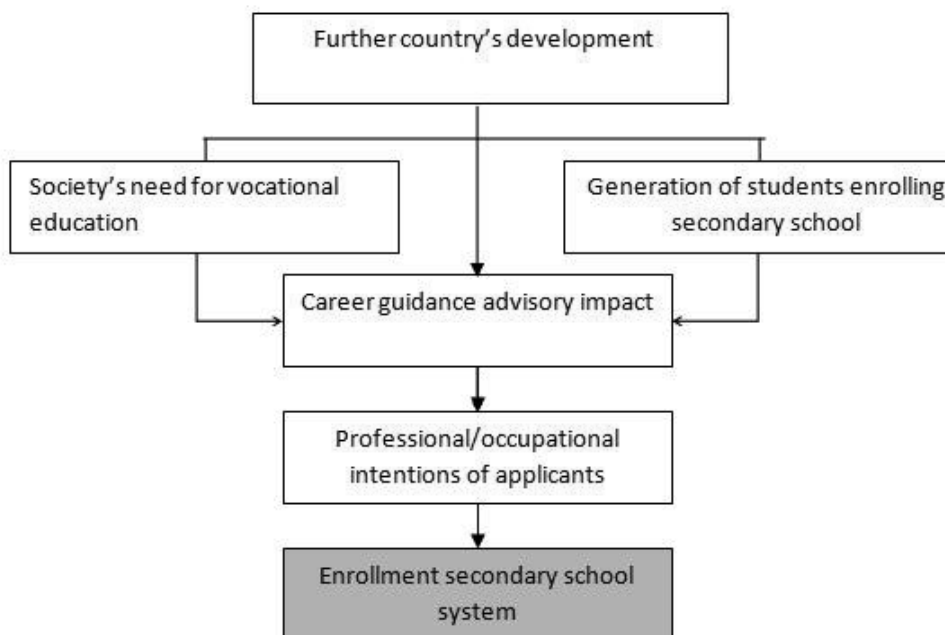
Eventually, the fifth or last step presents the selection of those jobs which combine an individual's interest as well as his/her abilities necessary for the job and therefore the choice of right secondary school which a student will enroll is the personal one.

The current career guidance encourages students to create a list of future jobs/occupations according to their interests leading them make a choice concerning the secondary school they will enroll. Naturally, it is important to bear in mind prospects of employment and accordingly to advise students which is the task of career guidance services.

ENROLLMENT PLANNING METHODS

The diagram shows that the contemporary secondary school enrollment system depends on numerous important factors among which further development of a country is the starting point while the final one is selected professional intentions of enrollment applicants.

Figure 1. Factors of secondary school enrollment system



Looking at the diagram, it can be concluded that a contemporary secondary school enrollment system comprises a certain number of factors which are causally connected/related, among which country's further development is a relatively independent variable, while the other factors are dependent variables. European countries tend to take all these factors into consideration though there are certain deviations which are reflected in above mentioned differences occurring in some segments of secondary education of different countries. But, with time, these countries try to reduce existing differences and make effort to develop their secondary education enrollment systems in line with factors that significantly affect the enrollment of students into secondary schools.

The key elements appears to be public/state school enrollment planning methods derived through specialization of scientific-based general planning methods. That is the reason why it is important to set forth the theory of enrollment planning method and show its application in practice abroad.

Regarding the secondary school enrollment planning method of youth, it should be stressed that the planning refers to education of fresh generations ready to start secondary school. Following contemporary theories on human resources planning and education, the most eminent scientists/experts offer various structures of planning methods.

Jovo Brekić believes that following are among the most well-known methods for human resources planning and education: expert method, correlation method, index method, standardization method, comparative method, extrapolation method, regression method, interpolation method and linear programming method (Brekić, 1984, p. 31-35).

Vladimira Polić thinks that following are among the most well-known methods for human resources planning and education: trend method, international comparison method, direct estimation method, delfi method, analytical method, correlation method, standardization method, model method, regression method and index method (Polić, 1990, p. 251-274).

Dragoljub Kavran claims that following are among the most well-known methods for human resources planning and education: index method, human resources structure method, model method, poll method, standardization method, expert estimation method, elaboration study method, induction method, international comparison method and saturation method (Kavran, Množina, Florjančić, 1980, p. 284-296).

Finally, Tihomir Radovanić thinks that basic methods for human resources planning and education: international comparison method, expert method, index method, occupational interest method, role model method. According to this author, the above mentioned methods are primarily used for human resources planning, but modified, they are also used for planning in the field of education (Radovanović, 1992, p. 35-42).

Though the methods are not identical regarding their structure, all of the above mentioned ones are basically stated by foreign authors as well. Besides, majority of renowned domestic and foreign authors alike, actually connect /establish connection/ observe the connection between planning needed workforce with their previous education (McBeth, 1988, Bennson & Casson, 1989).

The mentioned methods, however, are set forth in a rather general way, therefore they are not representative of secondary school enrollment in a given country, which actually belongs to macro-planning, including shifting planned solutions for the period of duration of secondary education. In other words, secondary school enrollment planning has to be envisaged years ahead, thus having features of long-term planning.

Accordingly, taking also the analysis of developed countries' practice into consideration, it can be concluded that planning enrollment of youth into state/public schools as a specific macro-planning is actually based on the following scientific methods: expert method – based on the classic method with the same name, comparative method – derived from the method of comparison, administrative method – based on planning on state/national level, partner(ship) method – which reflects democratic processes when it comes to decision-making and combined method – as a cluster of features/combinations of previously mentioned methods.

The expert method regarding secondary education enrollment planning for state/public schools means that authorized state office appoints experts who will make a draft of a plan to be adopted. In all classification processes, the expert method occupies the central position in long-term planning regarding human resources and education as well as secondary school students' enrollment planning. It is understood that experts participating in creation of a plan, besides knowing the particular field of work, are also familiar with demographic features of the given country in order to predict relevant future changes which are in turn the basis for proposal regarding secondary school enrollment of students.

The process of planning by using expert method consists of the following stages:

- planning of distribution of students' generation/class entering secondary education according to the occupational areas;
- planning of distribution of students' generation/class entering secondary education according to the occupational areas and levels of secondary education ;
- planning of distribution of students' generation/class entering secondary education according to the occupational areas and levels of secondary education as well as educational profiles within certain secondary schools.

The procedure is as follows: at each of the mentioned stages, the experts engaged first express their opinions, then each becomes familiar with the opinions of other experts. This exchange of opinions can be repeated several times until the opinions of different expert are not harmonized. The whole procedure is led and coordinated by authorised head of planning. The expert method in secondary school enrollment planning is extremely important since it involves carefully selected scientists with highly developed skills and knowledge necessary to foresee situation at the labour market which affects the secondary education requirements in the years to come in the given country.

The comparative method applied on state/public secondary school enrollment is based on the principle that planners use as model realized enrollment plans from the countries more developed than their own, estimating that their countries will follow the path of the chosen more developed country. However, the fact that current conditions bring more and more intensive economic and social changes, not allowing less developed countries to follow the same path as developed countries, presents a significant drawback of this method. Hence, the comparative method should not be the central one when planning secondary school enrollment, but secondary one.

The administrative method of secondary school enrollment comes down to the following: the officials of authorized government office overtake the role of planners and create the actual enrollment plan. This method is considered completely unacceptable nowadays since the planners taken as education planning experts usually do not have necessary competence. Their plans are, because of that, basically slightly corrected previously made and carried out enrollment plans. Therefore, the application of this method is not recommendable when planning enrollment, though the officials of authorized government office should have the role of organizers during the process of enrollment plan making.

The partnership method in secondary school students' enrollment is more recent and reflects democratization of society. It is based on inclusion of important, so-called social partners into preparation of enrollment plans. The social partners include, besides the government departments which have the leading role, associations of employers and unions. It should be pointed out that the role of the latter ones is not to design enrollment plans, since that is beyond their competences, but to express their opinion on the enrollment plan created by experts. Because of that precisely, the partnership method cannot be used as the main method when planning enrollment, but as a very important auxiliary/assistant one.

Finally, the combined method in enrollment planning comprises elements of previously described methods combined to different extents. It would not be logical to combine the expert and administrative methods since according to their features they mutually exclude each other. The same can be said for the combination of the comparative and administrative methods. For these reasons in contemporary planning practice following combined methods are mostly used: the expert-partnership method in developed countries and the administrative-partnership method in less developed countries.

The expert-partnership method seems to be the most efficient nowadays, while the administrative-partnership one has still to be applied in less developed countries in order to speed up their progress and enhance possibility to catch up with more developed ones. Unfortunately, the administrative-partnership method, as it has already been said, has same shortcomings, because the state officials take the role of enrollment planners and eventually do not always take into consideration the opinion of social partners.

It could be added that the administrative-partnership method has had a dominant role over the recent decades in the first place as the consequence of insufficiently developed education planning theory and absence of democratic principles. However, in recent years administrative-partnership method has started to yield to expert-partnership one in the most developed European countries. This is confirmed by the practice of a large number of European countries which involve expert teams in processes of designing and adoption of state/public secondary school enrollment planning. Social partners are asked to express their opinion on the proposed plans before their adoption.

All these enrollment plans have the form of an official state document, not necessarily compulsory one, whose application in practice is quite flexible nowa-

days, starting from recommendations to firm enrollment orders to secondary schools. Enrollment plans in the form of recommendation are largely used in the most developed countries (the USA in the first place), where career guidance is well-established and students, as a rule, choose and enroll secondary schools according to their wishes. Today obligatory enrollment plans are generally used in countries undergoing transition because they do not have career guidance service fully developed. The combination of these approaches is used in the EU countries.

CONCLUSION

Bearing in mind all previously said, it could be concluded that within current course of more and more intensive activities related to Serbia's process of integration into the EU, the accelerated development of a modern secondary education enrollment system must be one of priorities because it will be prerequisite for continual and work-oriented education system development as well as efficient participation of Serbia at the international labour market.

The enrollment system should be based on application of scientifically derived planning methods, the expert-partnership one being the most suitable. Its application will affect meeting demands of labour market and rationalisation of secondary school network in the most adequate way.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bennson, M. & Casson, J. (1989). *The Manpower Planning, Handbooks, Mac Graw Hill*, London
- Brekić, J. (1984). *Manual on uniuqemethodology regarding human resources planning*, The Institute of Human Resources, Serbia, Belgrade p.
- Dimov, J. & Šećibović, R. (1998). *Education to Work*, Economics Institute, Belgrade (1998) Belgrade, 1998.
- Jakubusnas, P. (1982). *Manpower Economics*, Adison Wessley, London
- Kavran, D., Možina. S., Florijančić, J. (1980) *Human resources planning*, Privredna štampa, Belgrade
- McBeath. G. (1988). *Manpower Planning and control*, Business Boox, London
- Polić, V. (1990). *Economy and education planning*, Privredna štampa, Belgrade
- Radovanović, T. (1992). *Human Resources in market-oriented economy*, IEN, Belgrade, The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia (1998). *Secondary education in the world*, Belgrade