



Press release

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Career choice: the child decides, the parent only gives an opinion – says Generation Z

According to UniCredit Bank research, parents prioritise the profession, children the degree

Choosing a career is an extremely important stage in life, but people differ in their perception of their role in this. One in two parents say that they and their child decide together on their child's further education, although only 15% of teenagers surveyed agree. Six out of ten young people say they were largely responsible for the decision, while one in three said they were completely alone in deciding their future, according to representative research by UniCredit Bank on the background to the decisions of 15-19 year youngsters and their parents about further education and career choices.

As far as the direction of career choices is concerned, 95 percent of Generation Z and 95 percent of their Generation X parents agree that nowadays, a certificate and language skills are equally necessary for success. The same proportion of parents think that it is important for their children to acquire a profession, but slightly fewer (89%) agree. As for higher education, teenagers attach more importance to getting a degree (70%) than their parents (63%).

What will you be when you grow up? Not every parent asks their child this question

The research shows that the social status of parents is a major determinant of their decision making mechanisms regarding further education. Parents with a lower level of education (primary, secondary or vocational school) are less likely to make decisions about their child's future (42%) than those with a high school or college/university degree (55%).

Especially for children attending vocational or technical schools, parents reported a higher than average proportion (14%) of parents who decided on further education without consulting the child. The situation is similar for parents with financial difficulties, where a tenth of parents decide (completely or mostly) on their child's future alone and only 41% with their child, compared with 5% and 49% respectively for those in better financial circumstances.

It is interesting to note that one in five parents and children agree that it is advisable to continue in their parents' occupation and choose the same career as their parents did. The same number of parents also want their child to fulfil their unfulfilled professional dreams. Only 14% of Generation Z can identify with this, and 85% insist on following their own path.

Even graduates think that a degree has lost its value

The survey found that while 80 percent of graduate parents think that a higher education qualification is important, only one in three respondents think it is very important. On the other side of the spectrum are adults with a vocational school degree, half of whom (41%) think their child may need a degree.

Higher education is more important for middle-aged parents than for younger and older age groups. Fewer than average respondents (55% and 56%) of parents aged 39 and under and 60+ think a degree is necessary to get by, with a further 45% saying not at all. Parents in their 40s and 50s are the most positive about the importance of a degree (61% vs. 68%).

The wealthier a parent is, the more important it is for their child to go to college or university: 56% of those in poor financial circumstances and 61% of those in average circumstances, while 74% of those in affluent circumstances consider a degree for their child to be a goal.

A-levels and language skills are important: everyone agrees

Generations X and Z fully agree that a school leaving certificate is necessary (94% / 93%) and that foreign language skills are important (95% / 92%). A school leaving certificate is considered more important by parents

who have a school leaving certificate (77%) or a degree (78%); and by those who are in average (69%) or good (77%) financial circumstances; but it is also true that 61% of parents in poor financial circumstances also consider a school leaving certificate important.

A similar distribution is found for foreign language skills: the younger the parent, the less important they consider foreign language skills to be (a tenth of respondents aged under 39, compared to 5% of respondents in their 40s and 2% of those in their 50s).

In terms of place of residence, parents in Budapest (77%) think it is most necessary to know a foreign language, compared to 56% of respondents in rural areas. Furthermore, while 83% of parents with a degree think it is necessary to know foreign languages nowadays, only 43% of those who have completed primary school think it is necessary.

Vocational training: another key to a secure life

A representative survey carried out as part of UniCredit Bank's „Re-Power Your Future” education programme reveals that **all parents in Hungary**, regardless of their level of education, **believe that it is of paramount importance to give their children a profession**. This is the view of 94% of primary and vocational school graduates, 97% of vocational and secondary school graduates and nine tenths of parents with a degree.

Regardless of their family's financial situation, the overwhelming majority of Hungarian parents think it is important for their children to have a profession: this was agreed by parents living in difficult financial circumstances (95%), but also by 86% and 91% of parents with average and good financial circumstances respectively.

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Further information:

The research was commissioned by UniCredit Bank and conducted by Micra Market Research in August 2024. The survey included 1,000 parents whose children are in the 15-19 age group and 300 young people in the 15-19 age group. The sample of both parents and children is representative of the population by gender, age, type of municipality and region.

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