

Abstract

The diploma thesis "From Self-Selection to System Selection: Czech Vocational Education in Captivity of the Labor Market" responds to current efforts to divert some students from graduation due to the unification of entrance and final examinations and stricter admission conditions, in a system that is characterized by a high relationship between social background and education, which also tends to strengthen. The thesis aims to identify and describe the main selective mechanisms and institutional barriers of the Czech education system through secondary data analysis, as a result of which students are systematically allocated to secondary vocational schools and subsequently to specific positions in the labour market, which are associated with economic and social instability. The main mechanisms identified by this paper are the distribution of educational opportunities through the differentiation of educational paths accompanied by young age selection of pupils, the associated emphasis on personal responsibility in choosing an educational path, which is highly determined due to conditionality by social origin, and the concept of entrance and final exams as high-stakes of standardized testing, which represents an insurmountable mental and factual barrier for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The presupposition of an educational society and the concept of equal access to education, enshrined in the official documents of Czech educational policy thus comes into confrontation with measures which are intended to strengthen the demand of applicants for fields of study by denying educational opportunities. The allocation of pupils to the labour market then acts as the main latent function of the school, which contributes to the reproduction of educational inequalities and strengthens the selectivity of the Czech education system.