

The mechanisms of selection to the teacher profession. Evidence and policy solutions

The main cognitive goal of the project is to better understand the selection to the teacher profession. The notion of selection refers here to both the process of individual choice (why individuals decide to become teachers), and the outcome of regulations, formal requirements, selection done by educational institutions, and school principals. The accompanying, more policy oriented goal is to propose policy measures promoting positive selection to the teacher profession.

For many years the question whether selection to the teacher profession is positive or negative was rather more a subject of political debate, than that of analysis based on hard data. However, according to recent OECD data from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, Polish teachers performed very low on the tests as compared to both teachers in other countries, and to compatriots working in other professions. Inspired by this finding, a group of researchers at the University of Warsaw initiated a pilot project to research selection to the teaching profession among students (while they are still at the university). The research is based on data from the student information and admission systems (IRK and USOS). The preliminary results show that weak students are much more likely to become teachers as compared to the top performing ones. The proposed project will build up on this pilot analysis, yet extending its scope to include the analysis of the data on labour market careers of university graduates, and the self-designed survey of school teachers.