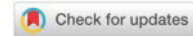


SCHOOL SYSTEMS OF BAVARIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA – SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

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Abstract: Education is a requirement for the development and existence of every modern state. This paper will discuss the structure of school systems in the German province of Bavaria and the Republic of Srpska for the level of primary and secondary education. What possible options are available to students aged six to nineteen can be seen in the schematic representations of the Bavarian school system and the same in the Republic of Srpska (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Knowing that the economic progress of the country is also reflected in the education of the young generation, the organization of education should be one of the key issues of the government of each country. Comparing the similarities and differences of our school system with the system of other countries, we encourage those in charge to constantly revise the existing system, thereby contributing to reducing its deficiencies and improving teaching practice, and thus the quality of education. In this regard, it is always good to follow trends in the development of school systems in economically developed countries. The teaching organization system is similar, but at the same time different in each country. This can also be seen in the conclusions of this paper. The Western countries school models, especially SR Germany, attract the public attention due to the outflow of the population of the Republic of Srpska to those countries. If we want to prevent or reduce this phenomenon, we must become attractive to our own population and be competitive on the market. This paper points to the need for constant monitoring and modification of the existing school system, as well as its adaptation to global trends. Given that the Balkan countries are ranked far worse than the Western Europe countries in international tests, it would be interesting to deal with the school systems of the Scandinavian countries in some future work.

Keywords: school system, similarities, differences, Bavaria, The Republic of Srpska

Field: Humanities

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an important segment of every individual, but also of society as a whole. Because of its importance, education itself, as well as the organization of school systems, are often the subject of heated debates. In order to see the shortcomings in our own school system, we must deal with its analysis, both breadth and depth. We have to be open to accepting novelty as a matter of course even in large structures such as the school system. If we want to catch up with the developed countries of Europe, it is necessary to notice the existing differences in the education system and organization of schools, and harmonize them with the systems of other countries. Only in this way can we hope to become competitive on the market with knowledge and skills and at least try to prevent the outflow of the working-age population and children to other countries. An analysis of the school systems of neighboring and economically developed countries can certainly be useful in this regard.

2. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper presents an overview of the primary and secondary school systems in the German province of Bavaria and the Republic of Srpska. The aim of the paper is to point out the similarities and differences in these two school systems, and based on that, draw conclusions and give recommendations for the possible improvement of the school system in the Republic of Srpska. The paper is of a theoretical nature and deals with the analysis of the available content on the structure of the school systems in the mentioned countries, as well as their advantages and disadvantages. Based on the schematic representation of both systems and pointing out the observed similarities and differences in them, the aim of the paper is to point out the need for continuous monitoring of the trends of developed European countries in the field of education.

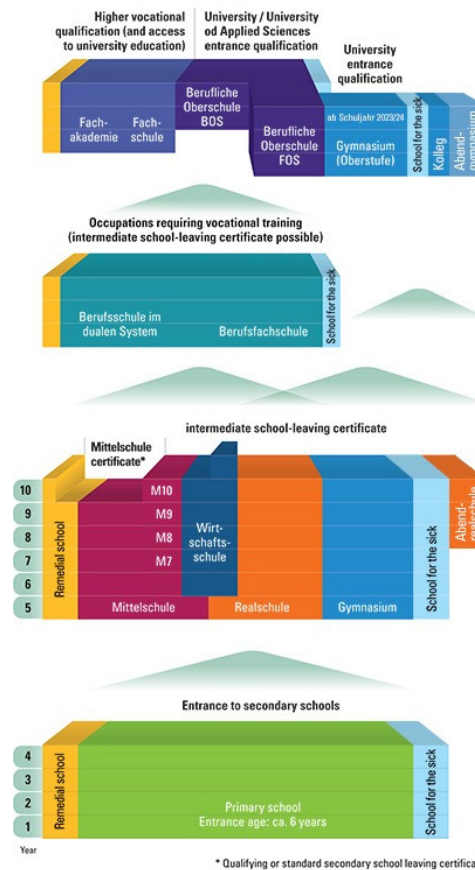
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3. STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS OF BAVARIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA

The school system in Bayern is organized in three parts. The three-tier system refers to three different types of schools, according to the age of the students. The first type of school is a four-year primary school, so-called lower elementary school attended by all students class 1-4. After that, they move on to the next education level schools. Schools in the next education level are so-called Upper Elementary School (Mittelschule), Real School (Realschule) and Gymnasium (Gymnasium).

Scheme 1. Overview of the Bavarian School System



Source: <https://www.km.bayern.de/ministerium/institutionen/schulberatung/das-bayerische-schulsystem.html>

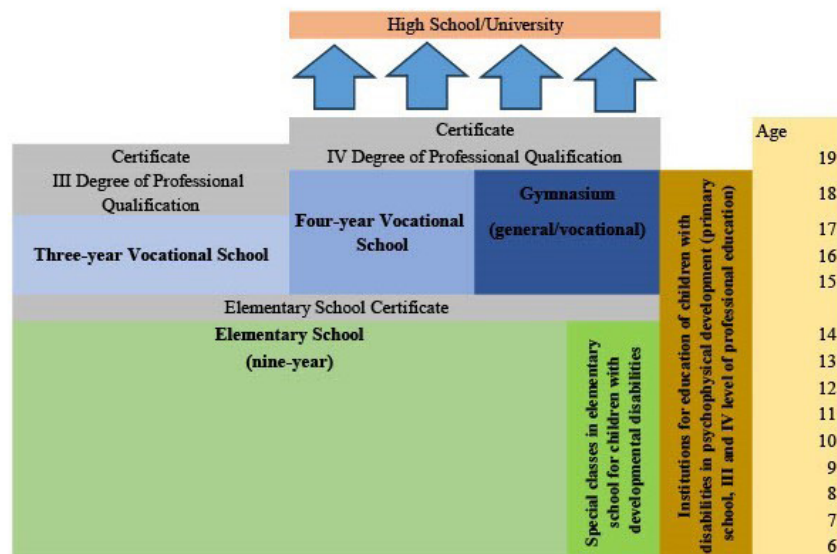
Which type of school the student will attend after completing the four-year primary school depends on the average grade of learning success in the fourth grade in the subjects German Language, Mathematics and Nature and Society, and on the recommendation of the class teacher. Pupils whose average learning grade in the mentioned subjects is 3.00 or lower are sent to higher grades of elementary school. Students with an average grade of 2.66 or higher can enroll in the real school, while Gymnasium can only be attended by the students who achieved an average grade of at least 2.33 in the mentioned subjects in the fourth grade of elementary school.

The duration of individual schools of the next level is also different. Upper elementary school is attended from 5th to 9th grade. At the end of the 9th grade, it is possible to take a qualifying exam. In addition to higher primary schools, there are also so-called M-classes (after the completion of the 6th or 7th grade) which enable students to attend an economic or real school until the 10th grade. The student attends real school from 5th to 10th, and Gymnasium from 5th to 13th grade. After successfully completing the 10th grade of the real school, students take the high school diploma exam, while gymnasium students get the same automatically. The Gymnasium has several majors - linguistics, humanities, natural sciences and technology, music and economics. It is important to note that after each successfully completed level of education, there is the possibility of attending the next higher level (Pädagogisches Institut, 2021, pp.

2-3).

The grading system is from 1 to 6, where 1 is the best grade, while a final grade of 6 makes it impossible to move to the next grade.

Scheme 2. Education System in the Republic of Srpska



Source: Maja Trifunovic (Author)

Unlike the Bavarian one, the school system of the Republic of Srpska is based on two pillars - primary school and three- or four-year high school.

Primary school in the Republic of Srpska lasts for nine years and consists of two organizational units - the first cycle of primary education - classroom teaching (grades 1-5) and the second cycle of primary education - subject teaching (grades 6-9) (wikipedia), i.e. divided into triads. The first triad includes students from grades 1-3, the second from 4th-6th, and the third triad is performed with students from 7th-9th class. After successfully completing the ninth grade, the students receive the Elementary School Certificate, with which they apply to one of the secondary schools.

Secondary education can be three-year (vocational) and four-year - professional schools and gymnasium - general, natural-mathematical or socio-linguistic orientation. By obtaining a diploma of the IV professional level, students are given the opportunity for further education at vocational colleges and/or universities. In the Republic of Srpska, the average learning score affects enrollment in secondary schools, but it is not as restrictive as in schools in Bayern.

The grading system in schools in the Republic of Srpska is from 1 to 5, with five being the best grade, and a final grade of 1 at the end of the school year prevents the student from moving to the next grade.

4. DISCUSSION

The three-tier school system of Bayern has its advantages and disadvantages, which is highlighted in the discussions of philologists in Germany. The advantages of this organization of the school system are reflected in the following: different types of schools reflect the basic types of different learning styles, talents, strengths and weaknesses of each student, students feel better in a school that matches their preferences/talents and can better develop their potential in it, and special support for gifted students is also mentioned - graduation in Bayern is a special and highly valued school level that many foreign countries do not offer in their educational system. In addition to the advantages, the disadvantages of this kind of school organization are highlighted: it does not fit into a modern democratic and diverse society and reflects an old-fashioned class-divided society, it leads to early selection instead of equal opportunities through individual support (because there are not only three or four "types" of children), the individual development of the individual is not taken into account (some start faster, some need more time), children of different talents learn from each other, and on the whole they learn more, early selection minimizes the significance of children's real talents and gives priority to the influence of social background, teachers

and school grades, which leaves the potential of many children unused (Wissenschaftliches Dienst des Bundestages, 2006, pp. 6-8).

The school system in the Republic of Srpska is a source of constant research, both in the final papers of students and in the professional papers of pedagogical scientists, as well as state institutions. As one of the 17 goals of sustainable development of the Republic of Srpska from 2022, quality education stands out as the fourth and thus an important goal in the development of this entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of the subgoals of quality education refer to the period until 2030 and the availability of quality early education and literacy in general (Sustainable Development Indicator of the Republic of Srpska, 2022, p. 36).

The two-tier education system of the Republic of Srpska also has its advantages and disadvantages. Some of the advantages are the continuous monitoring of the child's development over a longer period of time by the same professional team, the organization of classes at three levels of complexity within the same department (in terms of the division of tasks), which enables the individual development of each individual, the cooperation between the family and the school strengthens during the nine-year education, making a decision about the choice of profession is more mature at the age of 15. In addition to the advantages, there are also disadvantages of this type of school organization. In this system, the rules and regulations for financing both levels of education are based on the principle of public financing. The Ministry of Education and Culture, together with the Pedagogical and Education Institute, is responsible for deciding on the budget, programs, textbooks, teaching materials, control of standards and the number of teachers (Uremević and Tatarević, 2020). The biggest shortcoming of the Republic of Srpska school system is reflected in the inconsistency of the Curriculum with the practices of European countries, and outdated school equipment (Branković and Arapović, 2010, pp. 21-22).

When citing both the shortcomings and the good sides of a school system, it must be kept in mind that the creation of a new school system or the revision and modernization of the existing one is influenced by several factors. Some of them certainly have a political character, while others contribute to preservation of cultural heritage and traditions of a given nation and state.

5. CONCLUSION

From the schematic representations of the school systems and the mentioned structure, the following similarities and differences can be observed: both countries insist on compulsory education for students aged 6 to 15, in both systems there is a separate primary school, but with different duration, the organization of secondary schools implies, both in Bayern and in the Republic of Srpska, vocational education and separates it from education that allows students access to high schools and universities.

The Bavarian school system implies dual vocational training, which means that a student attends theoretical classes at school for one week per month, and acquires practical knowledge and skills by working in a company for three weeks. In the Republic of Srpska, practice is provided in the school institution itself, and in higher grades also by staying in a company, but with a smaller number of hours than is the case in the German province. Access to colleges and universities in the Republic of Srpska is only available to students who have completed a four-year high school, while in Bayern it is possible for everyone to, through continuous further education in a profession, reach a vocational college. In their school system, it is also possible to attend evening schools and apply for any diploma from the next level of education.

Another similarity in both school systems can be seen in the education of students with developmental disabilities, which is available to all students during their education. In both countries, these students can be educated in special institutions and/or in regular schools through inclusive education and the support of teaching assistants. In the Republic of Srpska, in addition to the inclusion of children in regular classes, special classes can also be formed at regular elementary schools, while this is not the case in Bayern.

From all of the above, it can be concluded that there are not only the expected differences, but also certain similarities in the structure of the school systems of Bayern and the Republic of Srpska. In order to overcome the deficiencies in the existing school system, it would be advisable to adapt the structure of our own school system to the school systems of European countries. The limitation of this paper is reflected in the comparative analysis of only two school systems. It would be very interesting to study the school systems of other economically developed countries, e.g. Scandinavian countries. This would give a better insight into the structures of the school systems of the countries, whose students achieve significantly better results on PISA tests than the students of the Balkan countries.

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