



# Empirical study of the factors of career motivation underlying the interest in a career of public administration

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## Abstract

**Aim:** The aim of the study is to reveal the reasons behind the declining interest in the public administration career. The data of the Graduate Career Tracking System shows that a considerable part of the students graduating in relevant fields do not start a career in public administration, or leave the career in a short time. In this study I examine how the career motivation of the concerned young adults affect their intention to find a job in the public administration.

**Methodology:** I conducted the questionnaire interviews in 2021 during the project of KÖFOP-2.1.5–VEKOP-16-2016-0000 ‘*Strategical support for the personal supplies of the competitive public services*’. By completing the questionnaire, the participants had to rate it on a four-point Likert scale the carrier motivation factors, their interest in the public service career, the impact of university education and professional practice on interest in public service carrier. 114 students of the Faculty of Public Governance and International Studies of the University of Public Services participated in the study. 65 percent of the participants were female, 35 percent were male. 71 percent of the sample were full-time student, 29 percent were studying in correspondence courses.

**Findings:** In accordance with my hypothesis the outcomes of the study confirmed that the participating students have an external rather than an internal career motivation, which has a negative impact on their interest in the career. The interest of the participants in the public services as a career showed a decreasing trend through their years spent in the university. This effect was most easily captured in the answers of the youngest, full time students. During the research I could identify three ways of motivation: strong, identified and extrinsic. In line with the expectations, the interest for the career of those having

extrinsic motivation was the smallest and of those having strong motivation was the greatest.

**Value:** The results of the research contribute to the understanding of the factors that determine the career choice of young employees. However further research is needed to discover why the external motivation of the participants is getting stronger during the years of university studies and how this tendency can be turned.

**Keywords:** career change, career motivation, career choice, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation

## The problem statement and the objectives of the research

The organizations of the Hungarian public administration have been facing the problem of generational renewal for years (Hazafi, 2014). The university applications show that the interest of the young adults in the career in public administration has a decreasing trend, and furthermore, early career change is significant among those who graduate in the relevant fields (Szakács, 2015). This is confirmed by the data of the Graduate Career Tracking System for the recent years, which shows that out of the students of Administration, who were graduating in 2011-2012 at the Faculty of Public Governance and International Studies of the University of Public Services (Nemzeti Közszerológálati Egyetem Államtudományi és Nemzetközi Tanulmányok Kar, hereinafter: NKE ÁNTK) 60.49% still works in public administration until this days, meanwhile only 39.74% of the Public Administrator class of 2017-2018 works in this sector (Graduate Career Tracking System, 2022). The situation is a bit more positive in the case of the Master's degree holders, since 67.57% of those who obtained MA in Public Administration and 57.14% of those who obtained MA in International Relations in 2017-2018 found a job in the field of public services, and these figures were very similar in the previous years. However, it is important to mention that the majority of the Master's students already work in one of the fields of public services when they start their studies, so it is natural that in proportion more of them remain in this sector comparing to the BA students, who typically acquire their first degree.

The career entrant BA graduates' 'turning away' from the public administration can cause difficulties already in medium term (in the distance of 5-10 years), especially in the administration of the communes. The big picture is further nuanced by the fact that the members of the young generation who choose

a public administration career find a job mostly in the ministries (Hazafi, 2016). In other words, the dangers of ‘ageing’ is not yet detectable in the entire field of the public administration, as it is referred by the data reported in the Good State and Governance Report 2019, but the supply of adequately prepared successors is getting more and more a concrete problem, especially at the organizations in the communes, in the countryside (Kaiser, 2015).

The previously reported statistical data shows unambiguously the problem, but is not adapt to reveal the underlying reasons. In this study I am aiming to answer these questions by introducing the factors for career changes of the university students, who are in preparation for a career in public administration. In accordance with this, in my work I examine the following questions:

- What do the students at NKE ÁNTK, in other words the potential career entrants in the public administration think about their future career?
- How the external (extrinsic) and internal (intrinsic) factors of career motivation influence their choice of career?
- How does their interest in the career of public services change from the start of their studies until the start of the job?

## **The principles of the Self-Determination Theory**

I made my research about the questions above in the frame of the Self-Determination Theory that determined the focus of the research of motivation in the recent decades. According to the model based on the research results of Harlow (1958) and White (1959), people are motivated by fulfilling three psychological basic needs: competence, connection (or relatedness) and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000). According to this theory all three needs are equally important, therefore you cannot say that some are motivated by the need for autonomy, while others are more motivated by connection or competence. The theory was proven among others by Reis and colleagues (2000), who conducted ‘activity logging’ research found that the psychical wellbeing of the participants is determined equally and independently by the fulfilment of all three needs.

The Self-Determination Theory says that the basic psychological needs can be fulfilled in the state of the internal (intrinsic) motivation, that is, when the person is conducting an action he/she loves. At the same time needs can be more or less supported by external (extrinsic) motivational factors. In accordance with this the theory captures the external (extrinsic) and internal (intrinsic) motivations as continuum, and not as absolute categories (Deci, Connell & Ryan, 1989). That is to say that the motivation demonstrated by a particular person in

a particular situation is at one point of the extrinsic-intrinsic motivation scale. The two endpoints of the continuum are the total absence of motivation (amotivation) and the internal (intrinsic) motivation. There are four different ways of extrinsic motivation on the motivational spectrum stretching between these two endpoints.

As the external motivation is made gradually more and more internal, i.e. is internalized, the following motivational modes are created (Deci, Connell & Ryan, 1989):

- 1.) Deregulation – the first mode is deregulation, behind which underlies the total lack of motivation. As in this mode there is no motivation at all, neither external nor internal, we cannot talk about the level of internalizing either. What does it mean in practice? It means that the person in the mode of deregulation does not see any benefit or value at all in completing the particular activity, nor can their interest be risen by using external tools. In this case there is no point in offering a reward or threaten with punishment, we can not make an impact on them with these either, the ultimate result is that they do not complete the requested activity.
- 2.) External regulation – a person in external regulation is under the effect of external (extrinsic) motivation factors, the integration of motivation does not happen. This means that the concerned person does not feel any internal motivation for the particular activity, yet is willing to do it because external forces force the person to do so. The tools of external pressure are: rewarding and punishing. The external regulation maintains the activity only as long as the reward is available, or as long as the person would like to avoid punishment. It follows that the tools of the external motivation – whether it is a reward or a punishment – has to be available continuously, and as the relevant researches find, they have to be continuously risen to maintain the effect (Deci, 1972). So, the maintenance of the external regulation requires quite an amount of time and resources from an organization (e.g., designing and applying the bonus systems, continuous leader control, the handling of disciplinary cases etc.), and what is more, it offers quite a low result. That is because in the mode of the external regulation the basic psychological needs of a person are only very limitedly satisfied, so their performance is very unbalanced (Gagné & Deci, 2005).
- 3.) Introjection – in the process of the introjection the internalization of the external motivation starts, but internalization is still only realized at a low level in this mode. The person in introjection will not complete their job only because they expect a reward or they are threatened with a punishment, but also because a sort of internal anxiety forces them to do so. This

feeling can originate from social pressure ('I do it because everyone else is doing it, too'), from guilt ('If I do not do it, that will put others at a disadvantage'), from the urge to maintain the self-image ('I am a diligent, competent person, so I have to do it'), or from the practice of self-control ('once I undertook it I have to do it'). In this mode the performance of the person becomes more predictable comparing to the external regulation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). At the same time the level of performance will be between low and satisfactory, because the colleague always only does enough to neutralize their negative feelings.

- 4.) Identification – in this mode the internalization of the external motivation is getting stronger, which means that the person no longer acts under an external force or an internal anxiety, but because completing the task is in harmony with their values and current objectives. In identification the basic psychological needs are satisfied more than in any of the earlier, as completing the activity comes together with the positive feeling of development and growth. The mental status of the person in this mode is balanced and stable, so not only their mental and physical health is improving, but also their performance becomes more reliable (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Identification contributes to the strengthening of the loyalty towards the organization and the creation of the positive workplace atmosphere.
- 5.) Integration – in the process of integration the internalization of the external motivation becomes complete. When in this mode, the person feels that the activity contributes not only to their current objectives and development, but it is in harmony with their life goals, too. In this mode the psychological needs of the person are satisfied on a high level, so he feels the competence, the autonomy and the social support. And if this happens in an organizational environment, the performance of the employee will rise in a balanced and continuous way (Gagné & Deci, 2005).
- 6.) Internal regulation – the internal regulation happens when a person has a natural inner motivation for a particular activity and performs it with passion, love and total dedication. So, in this case it is not the internalizing of the external motivation what happens, but the fulfilment of the person's pre-existing internal (intrinsic) motivation. Every activity that I perform because I enjoy performing it and there is no other interest connecting to it belongs to the circle of the internal regulation. During the internal regulation the basic psychological needs of a person are satisfied on the highest level, so they can make the most out of themselves in this case. Their abilities unfold, their creative energies unleash, and all is accompanied by the sense of completeness. All this follows that the outcomes of the internal

regulation are the most positive. In this mode the performance of the person rises, their capacity to solve problems develops, and their loyalty to the organization strengthens. I have to point out here that certain sources call the modes of identification, integration and internal regulation together as autonomous regulation or autonomous motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). At the same time, it is important to underline that the internal regulation in the world of work typically exists only for shorter periods. Of course, we can feel internal regulation while completing a task, but because of other factors in the work environment this state rarely becomes the basic motivation mode of activity, therefore from an organizational point of view it is more rational to strive for the strengthening of the identification and integration that bring similar consequences but are much more applicable in the world of work.

The international outcomes of the motivational modes are confirmed by Hungarian studies, too (Fényszárosi, Sallay, Matuszka & Martos, 2018).

## Research hypotheses

In the research that I am presenting in this study, I examined how the motivational modes described above influence the interest of the students of NKE ÁNTK in a career in public administration, and in this respect how do they affect their retention on the career path. In the reflect of the outcomes of Hungarian and international researches in connection with the Self-Determination Theory:

- I assume that the basis of the successful career choice of public administration is the development of an autonomous motivation (identification, integration and intrinsic motivation) for the career (1. hypothesis).
- I assume that the interest and career choice in public administration of the students of NKE ÁNTK, that is to say, of the potential supplement of graduate labour force, are basically determined by controlled motivation modes (external and introjected motivation), and autonomous motivation (identification, integration and internal motivation) has a lesser role in the career motivation of the persons concerned (2. hypothesis).
- I also assume that because of the domination of the controlled motivation, the interest of the students of NKE ÁNTK in the public administration career demonstrates a decreasing tendency already during the university years, and this negative effect is strengthened by the work experience (meaning: internship) gained in the organizations of public administration (3. hypothesis).

## The circumstances of the research and the questionnaire

I conducted the questionnaire interviews targeting the verification of the hypotheses during the project of KÖFOP-2.1.5– VEKOP-16-2016-0000 ‘Strategical support for the personal supplies of the competitive public services’. The online data collection through NKE’s internal questionnaire management system, NKE Survey, took place in July 2021. Participation was voluntary and anonymous.

When replying to the questionnaires, the participants had to value on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4:

- the scale of the motivation before starting the university studies, before the internship and currently;
- the intention of finding a job in the public administration;
- the variants of the career motivation of the public administration;
- the impact of the internship on the scale of the motivation.

In the course of the research, I captured each motivational mode with the help of the dependent variables presented in the table below and the statements that describe them.

**Table 1:** *Dependent variables connecting with each motivational mode in the questionnaire survey conducted among the students of NKE ANTK*

Motivational modes	Dependent variables assigned to motivational modes	The statements describing the dependent variables
External motivation	Salaries and other entitlements	‘I find the salaries and other entitlements favourable.’
	Career security	‘I consider it a secure career.’
	Career of forced choice	‘With my degree I can only find a job in public administration.’
Introjection	Pressure from the family	‘Several members of my family chose a career in public administration, I am following their example.’
	Worktime schedule	‘I consider favourable the working schedule’
	Working environment	‘I consider favourable the working environment’
Identification	Social prestige	‘The prestige and social valuation of the organizations of public administration are appealing to me.’
	Opportunity for career building	‘I see good opportunities for career building in the public administration.’
	Opportunity for networking	‘I see good opportunities for networking in the public administration.’
Integration	Opportunity for development	‘I see a potential to professional development.’
	Appealing function	‘I started to like the job during the internship.’
Internal regulation	Internal commitment	‘I feel an inward commitment for the public administration.’
	Interesting, challenging function	‘I find the nature of work interesting.’

*Source:* The author’s own editing.

The table demonstrates that I operationalized each motivational mode by 2-3 variables and their descriptive statements. To determine the variables, I considered the results of my previous research conducted in project KÖFOP 2.1.5, during which we asked leaders and HR-experts of public administration organizations to define which factors of career motivation they considered as the most important (Krauss, Magasvári & Szakács, 2018).

## **The participants of the research**

In the course of the online questionnaire interviews I applied the theoretical sampling method. In accordance with the object of the research I wanted to address explicitly the target audience of graduated career entrants, starting their career in the public administration, but at the same time I considered it important that those surveyed should already have some vision of the particular field. So, it seemed an obvious solution to involve the students of NKE ÁNTK, who already received some vision of the system of the organizations, the culture and the system of expectations of public administration, through which, comparing to other career entrants, they can form a more complex and exact opinion about the subjects examined. During the inclusion the use of the internal questionnaire system of the NKE made sure that only the persons really belonging to the target group participated in the filling of the questionnaires.

171 students started to fill the questionnaires (n=171) and a total of 114 of them finished it (n=114). 65 percent of the participants were female, and 35 percent were male, which represents well the real gender ratio of NKE ÁNTK. 75 percent of the respondents were from the age group under 25 years. This is in line with the expectations towards the target group, at the same time the validity and reliability of the research is weakened by the fact that 25 percent of the respondents belonged to the older age group. It can be assumed that they are not career entrants, not in the original meaning of the word. The respondents representing the older age group were without exception studying in correspondence courses (n=33). Therefore, to strengthen the validity and reliability, during the statistical analysis, I always separated the results of the full-time students (n=81) from the results of those who were studying in correspondence courses. Altogether 71 percent of the sample were full-time student and 29 percent were studying in correspondence courses. 68 percent of the participants had a middle grade degree, 20 percent of them had BA degree. The division by major of the participants is in line with the characteristics of the total target group. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about the division by the classes. In this aspect the first year (n=44)

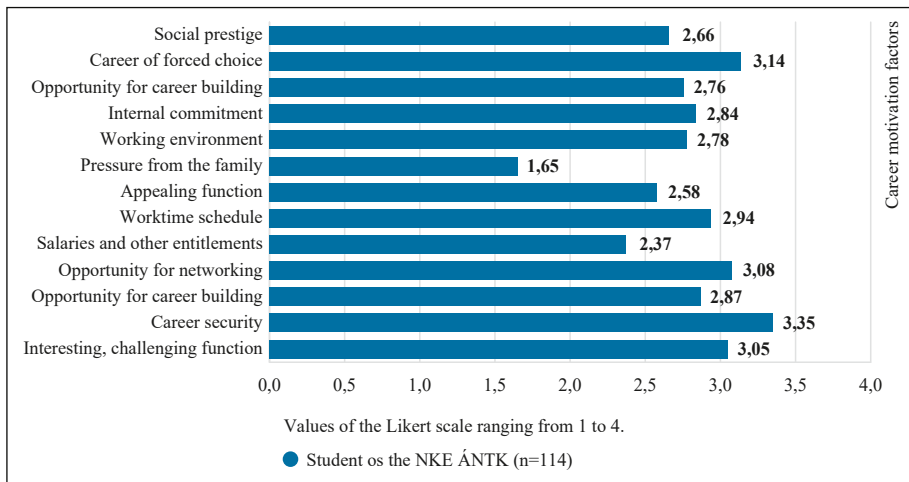


and second year (m=38) were highly overrepresented, which does not serve the validity of the research, because the students of the lower years have less experience about the operation of the organizations of public services. At the same time the fact that more than a third (n=35) of the total of 82 respondents from the first and second years were studying in one of the MA courses, gives another nuance to the big picture, as they can be assumed to have some knowledge about the organizations, on which knowledge their opinion is credibly based.

## Research outcomes

I started the evaluation of the research outcomes by identifying the average value of the modes of motivation. According to this mainly the career security (average: 3.35) motivates the respondents to choose a career in public administration. Along with this the career of forced choice also has an important role (average 3.14), in other words, many of the participants are interested in public services because they feel that they would not be able to find a job in another field. The career motivations of the respondents were the least affected by the family pressure (average: 1.65) and the salaries and entitlements (average: 2.34). The basic statistic outcomes regarding the motivation factors are summarized in the figure below.

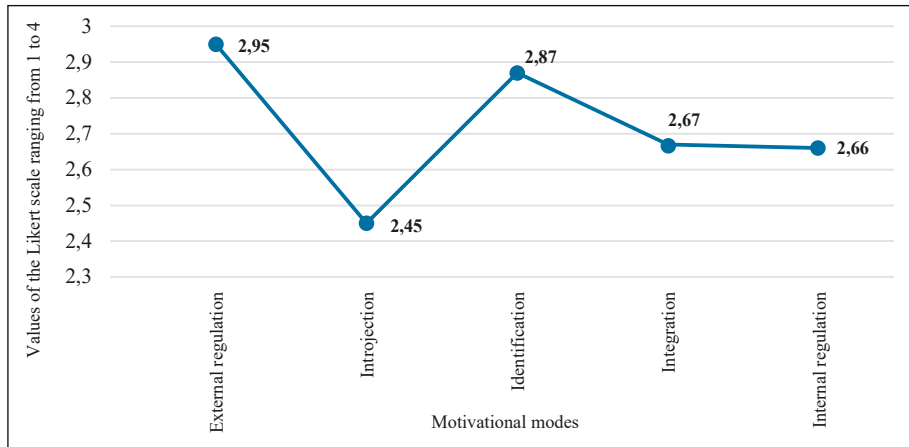
**Figure 1:** *The average values of the examined career motivation factors valued by the students of NKE ÁNTK*



Source: The author's own editing.

For a more accurate assessment of the results, I also calculated the averages of the motivational modes according to the ordering of the career motivation variables and the motivational modes as shown in Table 1. This is shown on the chart below.

**Figure 2:** *The average values of the motivational modes valued by the students of NKE ÁNTK*

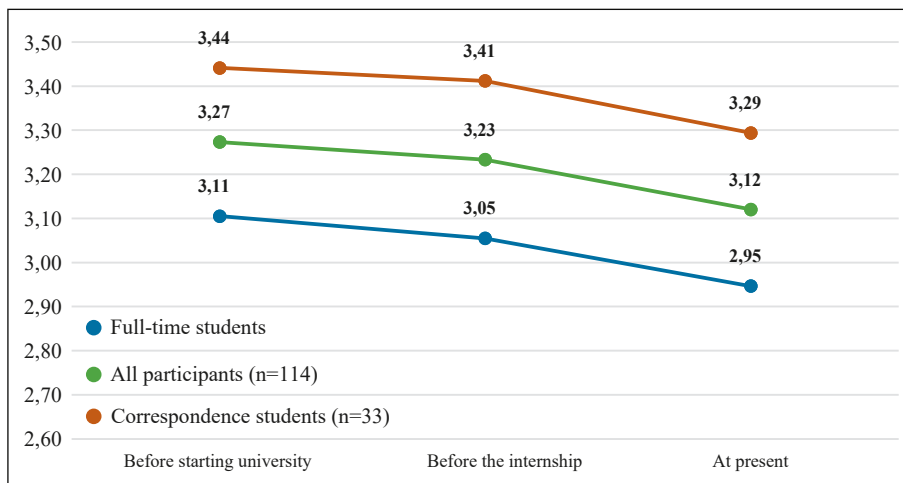


*Source:* The author’s own editing.

It is obvious by the mean values of the motivational modes that the most dominant regulatorily mode of the examined group is the extrinsic motivation (average: 2.95 and 2.48). The students placed identification (average: 2.87) at the second rank, and integration (average: 2.67) at the third. The valuation of the intrinsic motivation only stayed behind this with one hundredth point (average: 2.66). The weakest motivational mode was considered to be introjection (average: 2.45 and 2.27). It is also important to point out that the respondents consider the extrinsic motivation to be the strongest regulator mode despite the fact that the relatively lowly valued salaries and entitlements factor belongs there, too. This underlines the dominant, extrinsic motivational role of ‘career security’ and ‘career of forced choice’ even more.

After the evaluation of the motivational factors, let’s see how attractive the students consider a career in public administration based on the received results, and how their interest in the career changed in the recent years. The students estimated the answers for this question for three periods (before starting to study at the university, before starting the internship and currently) in the course of the research. The results expressed on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4 are summarized in the chart below.

**Figure 3:** Perception of interest in a career in public administration among students of the NKE ANTK - average of responses for the whole research group and for full-time and part-time students

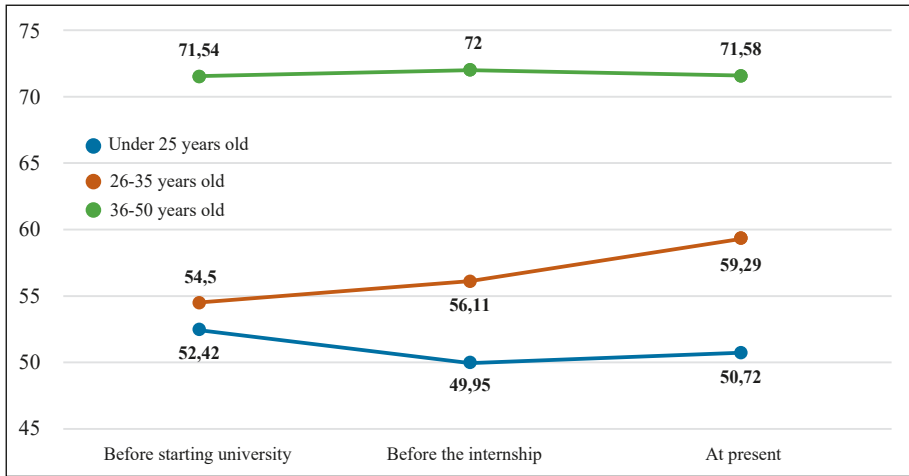


Source: The author's own editing.

As you can read from the chart, the interest in public administration of the full surveyed group is quite high in every surveyed period (average: 3.27, 3.23, 3.12). At the same time, it is visible that this interest is decreasing as the years pass. Based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test taken, the decreasing tendency is significant ( $p=0.00$ ) in the full survey group, therefore the null hypothesis, according to which the level of interest of the surveyed group in a career in public administration does not change over the course of education, does not hold. The declining interest in career is especially noticeable in the case of the full-time students, which is of particular importance from the point of view of my research, since the biggest part of the real career entrants belong to this target group. Based on the Kruskal-Wallis test, between the interest of the full time and the correspondence course students in the first two periods there is a significance ( $p=0.02$ ;  $p=0.01$ ), and in the last period there is a tendency-like ( $p=0.06$ ) difference.

Knowing the values of the full-time students, I found it necessary to compare the surveyed age groups from the point of view of the interest in the career. I made this comparison with the Kruskal-Wallis test, and the received results are shown on the next chart.

**Figure 4:** Perception of interest in a career in public administration among the surveyed students' age groups - rank average of the answers



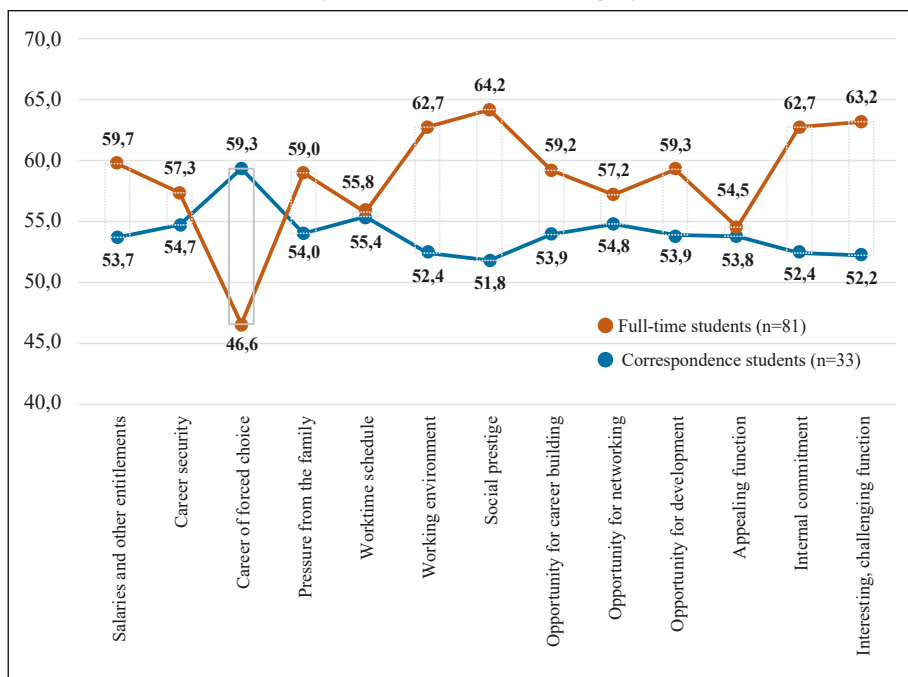
*Source:* The author's own editing.

In this case, too, the decrease or stagnation of the interest can be observed in the age group of under 25, that is to say, among the real career entrants. It is also to be seen that in the case of the next, slightly older age group (26-35 years) the interest in the career in public administration shows a slightly upward trend, meanwhile in the eldest group (36-50 years) it is stable and strong. It is true that the difference between the age groups is not significant in any of the periods ( $p=0.19$ ;  $p=0.06$ ;  $p=0.09$ ).

Overall, the results show that the surveyed students are basically interested in a career in public administration, but their interest is decreasing already through the university years. This trend can be observed especially among the youngest full-time student respondents, who can be considered the real career entrants. I assume that there are the motivational factors and the motivational modes designed by them behind the loss of interest, so now I will present in more details the results in connection with the relational modes of the students.

First, I compared the evaluation of the motivational factors based on the responses of the full-time students and those who follow the correspondence courses. I used the Kruskal-Wallis test again, the results are on the diagram below.

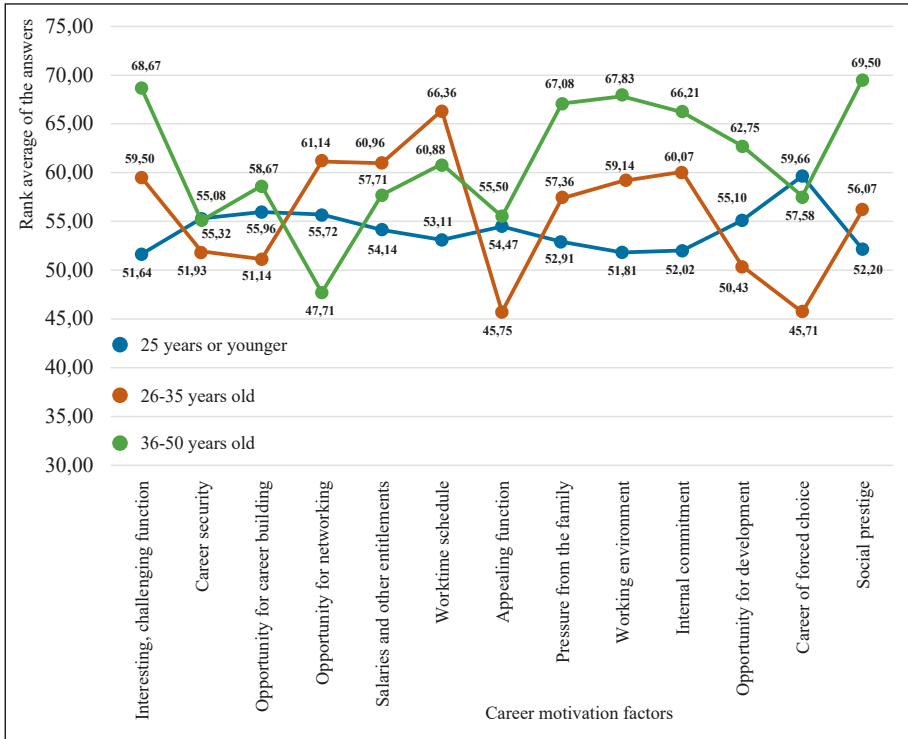
**Figure 5:** Perception of career motivation factors among the full time and correspondence course students of NKE ANTK – a rank average of the answers



Source: The author's own editing.

Based on the rank average of the two surveyed groups, the students of correspondence course valued every motivational factor higher than the full-time students apart from one, namely the 'career under pressure'. In four cases the differences are either tendential or significant. The variables called 'interesting and challenging function' ( $p=0.07$ ), 'working environment' ( $p=0.022$ ) and 'social prestige' ( $0.05$ ) are characterizing the motivation of the correspondence students tendentially or significantly stronger, while the 'career of forced choice' was valued significantly higher by the full-time students. This means that in the case of these variables the null hypothesis, according to which the motivation of the two groups is equally determined by the examined factors, does not hold. It is important that on the basis of the results not only the intensity of motivation is higher among the correspondence students, but also the quality of the motivation is more positive in their case, since the only factor that was valued higher by the full-time students (career of forced choice) is connected to extrinsic motivation. In order to be able to value more credibly the motivation of the real career entrants, I made the comparison of the age group in this case, too.

**Figure 6:** Perception of career motivation factors among the age group of the students of NKE ANTK – a rank average of the answers



Source: The author's own editing.

As it can be seen on the figure, the perception of the motivational factors by age groups shows a more variable picture. One of the reasons for this is possibly because in the middle age group both the full time and the correspondence students are represented in a mix, so the real career entrants and those who already have some work experience are equally present in this group. It can be observed that the answers of the youngest are the most homogeneous. The only outlier in their case is connected to the variable of the 'career of forced choice', which they valued higher than the other age groups did, this motivational factor is significantly ( $p=0.01$ ) more characteristic of them than of the age group of 26-35 years. The results of the other two age groups show a more nuanced picture and are more synchronized with each other. Both target audience assessed similarly the variables of the 'interesting, challenging function', the 'career security', the 'salaries and entitlements', the 'worktime schedule', the 'appealing function', the 'pressure from the family', the 'working environment', the 'internal

commitment’, and the ‘social prestige’. At the same time the 26-35 years old are more motivated by the ‘networking possibilities’ than the older ones, who, on the other hand, similarly to the youngest age group, sees the public administration more a ‘career of forced choice’ than the medium age group.

The evaluation of the motivational factors gives a good starting point to understand the motivation of the students, but since in line with the Self-Determination Theory (Deci et al., 1994; Gagné & Deci, 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2000) I consider the quality of the motivation more important than the intensity of it. I felt it necessary to investigate also the motivational modes behind the factors. Therefore, I performed a factor analysis with the inclusion of the motivational factors, the result of which is to be seen in the table below.

**Table 2:** Factor analysis based on the motivational factors valued by NKE ÁNTK students

Rotated FactorMatrix <sup>a</sup> – students of NKE ÁNTK (N=114)			
	Factor		
	Strongly motivated	Identificated	Extrinsically motivated
Interesting, challenging function	0.46	0.41	
Career security			0.72
Opportunity for career building		0.88	0.39
Opportunity for networking	0.37	0.61	
Salaries and entitlements	0.35	0.65	
Worktime schedule	0.49		
Appealing function	0.51		
Pressure from the family	0.44		
Working environment	0.56		
Internal commitment	0.65		
Opportunity for development	0.51	0.50	
Social prestige	0.72	0.42	
Career of forced choice			0.56

ExtractionMethod: Maximum Likelihood.

RotationMethod: Varimaxwith Kaiser Normalization.

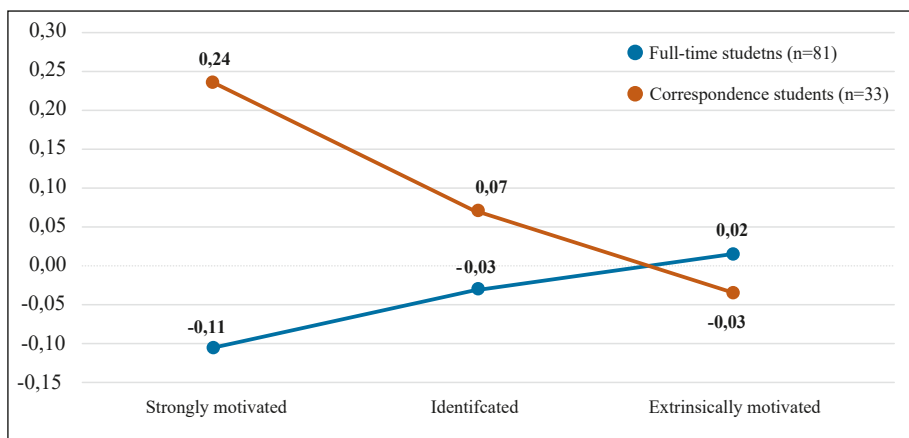
*Source:* The author’s own editing.

As it can be seen in the rotated factor matrix, the first factor included almost all the variables, so following Fényszárosi et al. (2018) I have given the name ‘strongly motivated’ to this factor. The variance of the strongly motivated type was 45.1 percent, which means that the explanatory power of this factor is the strongest of all three of them. It is also important that even though it is a mixed

profile type, that is to say that there are several motivational modes mixed in it, the two strongest extrinsic motivational factors of the study group, i.e. the career of forced choice and the career security, are not included in this factor. This suggests that the high ‘strong motivation’ means intensive, colourful and more autonomous motivation. In the second factor the variables of identification (see: opportunity for networking, opportunity for career building, social prestige) are dominant. Along with these, the ‘interesting work’ (intrinsic motivation), the ‘salaries and entitlements’ (extrinsic motivation) and the ‘opportunity for development’ (integration) were also included in the factor, but in total I saw that this factor captures a strongly career focused employee type wanting to implement their objectives, which I can best describe with the concept of identification. This is why I gave the name ‘identification’ to this group. This is the factor where the characteristics of autonomous motivation appear the most clearly. The variance of the second factor was 8.8 percent. The third factor is constructed of the two most determinant extrinsic motivational factors, i.e. the security of the career and the career of forced choice along with the opportunity of career building, so I named this type the ‘externally motivated’. Belonging to the externally motivated type unambiguously means rather a controlled, than an autonomous motivation. The explanatory power of this factor was 7.3 percent.

I saved the three factors as new variables, and I used them for further research. First, I compared the motivational types of the full-time students to that of the correspondence course students by single factor analysis of variance. Figure 8. shows the outcome of this comparison.

**Figure 7:** Motivational types among the full time and correspondence course students of NKE ÁNTK



Source: The author’s own editing.



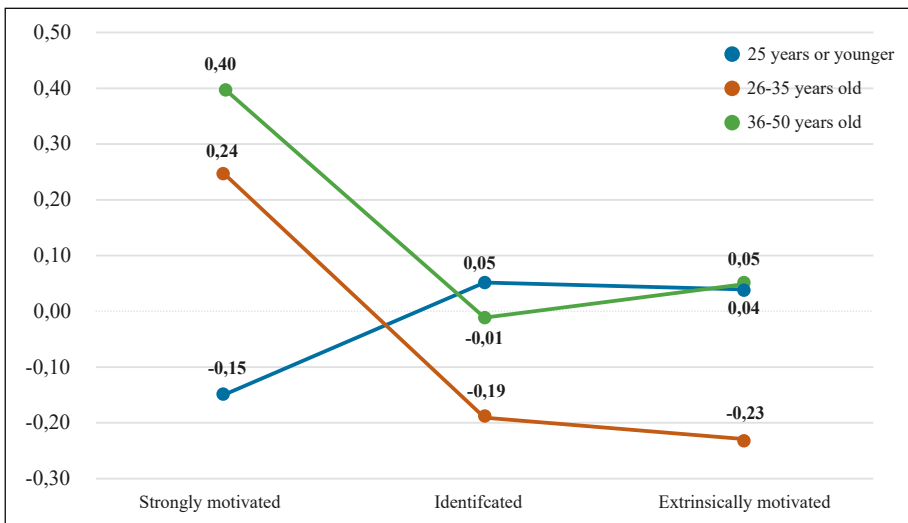
The diagram clearly shows that the ‘strongly motivated’ and ‘identification’ types that are closer to the autonomous motivation are more characteristic of the correspondence students, meanwhile in the ‘extrinsically motivated’ type which is closer to the controlled motivation the values of the full-time students are higher. The difference between the groups is tendential ( $p=0.06$ ) in the case of the ‘strongly motivated’ type. To understand better the motivational type of the real career entrants, I used single factor analysis of variance and compared also the age groups with each other. The outcome of this survey is demonstrated by the next figure.

**Table 3:** The outcome of this survey

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Strongly motivated	1			
2. Identified	0.042	1		
3. Extrinsically motivated	0.079	,206*	1	
4. Currently finds a career in public administration appealing	,623**	,409**	,364**	1
	*The correlation is significant from $p=0.05$ **The correlation is significant from $p=0.01$			

Source: The author’s own editing.

**Figure 8:** Motivational types among the full time and correspondence course students of NKE ANTK



Source: The author’s own editing.

Similar to the distribution of the motivational factors by the age groups, we can see also in the types of motivation that the values of the 26-35-year old and 36-50-year old converge, but the outcome of both groups differs from that of the youngest age group. The later are significantly less ( $p=0.07$ ) characterized by the ‘strong motivation’, at the same time they reached higher values in both identification and extrinsic motivation. This follows that in the group of the real career entrants extrinsic motivation and the motivational factors in connection with the career building have major roles.

Another important question is the connection between the motivational types and the interest in the career in public administration. To map this subject, first I conducted a correlation study, the outcome of which is summarized in the following table.

**Table 4:** *The correlation of interest in a career in public services and the motivational types among the students of NKE ANTK*

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Strongly motivated	1			
2. Identified	0.042	1		
3. Extrinsically motivated	0.079	,206*	1	
4. Currently finds a career in public administration appealing	,623**	,409**	,364**	1

\*The correlation is significant from  $p=0.05$

\*\*The correlation is significant from  $p=0.01$

*Source:* The author’s own editing.

The chart shows that all three motivational types are significantly associated with the interest in a career in public administration. This follows that each and every motivational types are appealed by this career, but in line with the international literature, the level of interest is different in each type. The high level of correlation anticipates a stronger interest, therefore the interest of the ‘strongly motivated’ ( $r=0.623$ ) in the career is the most intensive, while that of the ‘extrinsically motivated’ ( $r=0.364$ ) is the least intensive.

## Evaluation

The objective of my research summarised in the previous chapters was to get to know the factors determining the choice of a career in public administration. First of all, I was looking for the answer to what role of the career motivation has in the choice of a career in public administration. Along with this I was curious how the interest in public administration as a career change depending on the nature of the motivation.

Both the relevant theoretical literature and my own survey outcomes prove that the nature of the motivation basically determines the interest in the career. My outcomes, in line with the Hungarian and international studies (Deci et al., 1994; Gagné & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci, Connell & Ryan, 1989; Fényszáros et al., 2018) demonstrate that the autonomous, i.e. intrinsic or internalised motivation anticipates the interest in the career path in a more stable way than the controlled, i.e. extrinsic or introjected motivation.

Depending on the outcomes of my research, my hypotheses were confirmed as summarised below:

1. hypothesis - The empirical research confirmed the H1 hypothesis. On the basis of the career motivational factors valued by the students of NKE ÁNTK, I identified three motivational modes: strong motivation, identification and extrinsic motivation. On the basis of the factors constructing each motivational modes the most intensive, and also the most autonomy type was represented by the strong, while the least intensive and most controlled motivational mode was represented by the extrinsic motivational mode. The identification type fell between these two extremities both in terms of intensity and autonomous nature. As it is demonstrated in table nr. 3, all three motivational modes were significantly correlated with the interest in a career of public administration, but up to the expectations, the strong motivation showed the strongest association, while the extrinsic motivation showed the weakest correlation. This follows that those career entrants who can be more characterized by the autonomous motivation find the career in public administration more appealing than those companions of them who have a basically controlled motivation. And this determines their stay in the career, too. It is important, though, that the link between the actual stay in the career and the autonomous motivation needs further examination, since currently we only have the empirical data about the interest in the career.

2. hypothesis - As it is seen in the data of figure nr. 2., the students of NKE ÁNTK valued the motivational role of career security and the career of forced choice the highest in the total of the surveyed group. Both factors capture the controlled motivation. Organizing the motivational factors by the motivational modes also showed that the strongest regulatory mode of the students were the extrinsic motivation, while intrinsic motivation proved to be the second weakest mode. When the respondents are divided by course or by age, this part of the hypothesis is even further confirmed. Since the respondents considered as real career entrants, those under 25 years studying full time, valued significantly higher the career of forced choice in connection with the career motivation, than the over 26 years old and the correspondence course students. Comparing the courses there was also a significant difference in the perception of

the ‘interesting function’, the ‘social prestige’ and the ‘working environment’. These variables can be connected more to the autonomous motivation than to the controlled motivation, and the correspondence course students valued all the factors concerned higher than the full-time students. The analyses connected to the motivational types defined by factor analysis also shows that the career choice of the group of under 25 years full time students is basically determined by the controlled motivation. Out of the three motivational types the extrinsic motivation, that carries the most controlled signs, characterized more strongly the under 25 years, full time students, than the over 26-year-old, correspondence students. Apart from this, the correspondence course students and the respondents of the 36-50 age group valued significantly higher the role of ‘strong motivation’, which includes the autonomous characteristics, than the full-time students and the students under 25 years. So, in total it can be seen that the career motivation of the students participating in the survey is characterized more by the factors belonging to the controlled motivational mode than those belonging to the autonomous motivation. Furthermore, this statement is more valid to the survey group of real career entrants, full time, under 25 years students.

3. hypothesis - The outcomes seen on the figure nr.4. confirm the theory that the interest in a career in public administration declined significantly in the years following university entry for the entire study population. The analysis of the data shows that the full-time students already, before the university entry found significantly less appealing the career in public administration, than the correspondence course students, and their interest was tendentially lower also at the responding time. There was a difference between the three groups also in the comparison by age. The eldest respondents were from the beginning significantly more positively interested in the career, than the younger ones, and their motivation did not change through the university years. As opposed to this, the interest of the youngest between the university entry and the internship first declined, then stagnated. The interest of the middle age group (26-35 years) in a career in public administration slightly grew over the years. All this follows that in line with the hypothesis, the career motivation of the responding real career entrant, full time, under 25 years students really decreases through the university years, but it seems that the experiences gained with the internship slow down this trend instead of reinforcing it. The outcomes also confirm that the decrease of the interest in a career in public services characterizes the ‘extrinsically motivated’ type, which can be described by controlled signs.

Summarizing, the outcomes confirm the hypothesis that the motivational basis of the students preparing for a career in public administration is basically extrinsic, which can be one of the reasons for early career change. To reveal the

reasons why the students' interest in the career decrease through the university years, and how this harmful process can be put to an end to ensure a sufficient supply, needs further research.

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