

Austria Thematic Overview 2008

(background material for the preparation of the 2009 Thematic overview)

THEMATIC OVERVIEWS



01 - GENERAL POLICY CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

0101 - POLITICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL/ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Austria is a parliamentary democratic republic comprising nine provinces (cf. [Figure 1](#)). Vienna is the federal capital.

The head of state is the President. S/he appoints the Federal Chancellor (*Bundeskanzler*) who is head of the Federal Government. The Austrian Parliament has two chambers – the National Council (*Nationalrat*) and the Federal Council (*Bundesrat*). The members of the National Council are directly elected by the people every four years. The Federal Council represents the interests of the federal provinces. Its members are delegated by the provincial parliaments (*Landtage*).

Legislative and executive responsibilities are divided between the national and provincial levels. The same applies to responsibilities for vocational education and training (VET) (cf. 0301).

0102 - POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Austria covers an area of 83 858 km² and counted 8 032 926 people at the 2001 census. According to population projections, the share of inhabitants over 60 years is expected to increase steadily until 2025 (cf. Table 1).

Table 1: Population projection, 2005, 2007, 2015 and 2025

POPULATION PROJECTION (IN %)				
AGE GROUP	2005	2007	2015	2025
0 – 24 YEARS	28.3	27.8	25.8	2.2
25 – 59 YEARS	49.7	50	50	46.9
60+	22.0	22.2	24.2	28.9
SUM TOTAL (IN 1,000)	8 233	8 315	8 551	8 827

Source: Statistics Austria, 2008

The number of people with obligatory schooling has dropped significantly within the last 16 years whereas the share of graduates from secondary and tertiary education has risen from 9.8% to 13.9% or, respectively, from 5.2% to 9.6% (cf. Table 2).

Table 2: Resident population by highest level of education attained, 1991,

2001, 2005 and 2007				
RESIDENT POPULATION	1991	2001	2005	2007
RESIDENT POPULATION (15+), IN 1,000	6 439.0	6 679.4	6 792.4	6905.1
OF WHOM, IN %				
OBLIGATORY SCHOOLING	41.5	35.7	28.8	28.3
APPRENTICESHIP	32.1	33.9	34.2	35.7
VET SCHOOL	11.4	11.5	13.5	12.4
VET COLLEGE AND GE SCHOOL (SENIOR CYCLE)	9.8	11.4	13.9	13.9
HIGHER EDUCATION	5.2	7.5	9.6	9.6

Source: Statistics Austria, 2008

0103 - ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Austria's economy has been marked by a structural move towards the tertiary sector since the late 1990s. This is reflected in both the distribution of GDP and in the distribution by economic sector of the total number of persons in gainful employment (cf. Table 1).

Table 1: Percentage of GDP and of the total number of persons in gainful employment for each economic sector, 2000, 2005 and 2007

ECONOMIC SECTOR	2000		2005		2007	
	% OF GDP	% OF PERSONS IN GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT	% OF GDP	% OF PERSONS IN GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT	% OF GDP	% OF PERSONS IN GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT
PRIMARY	2.0	5.8	1.6	5.5	1.8	5.7

SECTOR						
SECONDARY SECTOR	30.8	30.6	29.4	27.5	30.5	27.3
TERTIARY SECTOR	67.2	63.6	69.0	66.9	67.7	67.0

Sources: Statistics Austria, Federal Economic Chamber, 2008 and own calculations

In 2007, the overall employment rate was above the European average (cf. Table 2). Since 2005 employment rates have risen both among men and among women in Austria.

Table 2: Employment rates in Austria, EU-15, EU-25 and EU-27 with breakdown by gender, 2005 and 2007 (in %)

	AUSTRIA		EU-15		EU-25		EU-27	
	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007
FEMALE	62.0	64.4	57.8	59.7	56.6	58.6	56.3	58.3
MALE	75.4	78.4	73.0	74.2	71.4	73	70.8	72.5
TOTAL	68.6	71.4	65.4	66.9	64.0	65.8	63.5	65.4

Source: Eurostat (retrieved on 24.9.2008)

In 2007, the total unemployment rate was 4.4 %, which was below the European average. Thanks to the wide diversity of VET options for those who have completed their compulsory schooling, youth unemployment is also relatively low and has decreased since 2005. (cf. Table 3).

Table 3: Unemployment and youth unemployment rates in Austria, EU-15 and EU-25, EU-27, 2005 and 2007 (in %)

TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	

	AUSTRIA		EU-15		EU-25		EU-27	
	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007
FEMALE	5.5	5.0	8.9	7.8	9.8	7.9	9.7	7.8
MALE	4.9	3.9	7.5	6.3	8.3	6.5	8.3	6.5
TOTAL	5.2	4.4	8.1	7.0	9.0	7.2	8.9	7.1
YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE								
	AUSTRIA		EU-15		EU-25		EU-27	
	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007
FEMALE	9.9	9.1	16.8	15.2	18.7	15.7	18.7	15.8
MALE	10.7	8.3	16.4	14.6	18.3	14.9	18.5	15.2
TOTAL	10.3	8.7	16.6	14.9	18.5	15.3	18.6	15.5

Source: Eurostat (retrieved on 24.9..2008)

The public expenditures on education and training amounted to EUR 13 337.3 million in 2005. This corresponded to 5.4 % of the GDP (cf. Table 4).

Table 4: Public expenditures on education and training in million euro and in % of GDP, 1995, 2000, 2004 and 2005

YEAR	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6	PUBLIC EXPENDITURES ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING	GDP	IN % OF GDP
1995	5 574.3	2 371.7	2 423.8	10 605.8	175 526	6.0

2000	6 339.1	2 731.7	2 669.1	11 911.3	210 392	5.5
2004	6 409.4	3 084.1	3 356.7	12 850.3	236 149	5.4
2005	6 704.1	2 994.4	3 638.8	13 337.3	245 330	5.4

Note: EUR 236.0 million could not be allocated in 1995, EUR 171.4 million in 2000.

Source: Statistics Austria 2008

0104 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

The percentage of the working-age population having successfully completed upper stage of secondary education (ISCED 3-4) is very high in Austria (63%, cf. Table 1). The reason for this lies in the structure of the education system with its numerous options for VET. This can take the form of full-time VET in schools and colleges or within the dual system (apprenticeship). In addition, many courses in the senior classes of secondary school impart skills that are learned in other countries in further or higher education, such as training in general nursing leading to qualification as a registered general nurse.

Table 1: Population aged 25 to 64, by highest level of education attained, 2007¹

	PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION (ISCED LEVELS 0-2)			UPPER SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION (ISCED LEVELS 3-4)		TERTIARY EDUCATION (ISCED LEVELS 5-6)	
	TOTAL (1 000)	TOTAL (1 000)	%	TOTAL (1 000)	%	TOTAL (1 000)	%
EU-27							
2007	268 116	77 859	29	125 857	47	62 688	23
AUSTRIA							
2007	4 561	906	20	2 853	63	802	18

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey; date of extraction: 27/05/2008

¹Educational attainment level: From 1998 data onwards ISCED 3c levels of duration shorter

than 2 years do not fall any longer under the level upper secondary but under lower secondary.

The share of early school leavers dropped from 9.5% in 2002 to 8.7% in 2004, but rose again to 10.9 % in 2007 (cf. Table 2).

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
EU-27	17.1	16.6	15.9	15.5	15.2	14.8
EU-25	16.6	16.1(b)	15.4	15.1	15.0	14.5
AUSTRIA	9.5	9.3(b)	8.7(i)	9.0	9.6	10.9

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey; date of extraction: 29/05/2008

¹ ISCED 97, level 0, 1, 2, 3c short; respondents declared not having received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey

Special values:

- (:) Not available
- (e) Estimated value
- (b) Break in series
- (i) See explanatory text
- (p) Provisional value
- (u) Unreliable or uncertain data

Footnotes:

Educational attainment level:

From 1998 data onwards ISCED 3c levels of duration shorter than 2 years do not fall any longer under the level upper secondary but under lower secondary.

02 - POLICY DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVES, FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS, PRIORITIES

0201 - OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

It is imperative to keep developing training structures and course contents in order to maintain the strong appeal of VET among learners and its broad acceptance within the labour market.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF DIFFERENTIATION

At VET schools and colleges (*berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen, BMHS*, cf. 0403) differentiation is mainly achieved through curriculum autonomy, i.e. individual establishments can determine the focus of their curriculum. In the apprenticeship (*Lehrausbildung*) framework a more differentiated range of programmes has been created in recent years to take more account of the diverse levels of prior knowledge and ability of new apprentices. Integrative vocational training (*Integrative Berufsausbildung, IBA*), introduced in 2003, makes provision for apprentices to obtain partial qualifications or to extend the duration of their training. It is designed to help young people who cannot complete their apprenticeship without assistance. At the same time, there are also some four-year apprenticeships in high-tech occupations which are particularly designed for gifted young people.

ENSURING PERMEABILITY

Since young people have to take decisions about their education paths at the age of only 14 or 15 (cf. 0402), permeability between the various programmes is an important

objective of the Austrian education policy. The introduction of the *Berufsreifeprüfung* (cf. 0502) in 1997 created a new path for those who have completed an apprenticeship or a three- or four-year VET school (*berufsbildende mittlere Schule, BMS*). It enables graduates of these schools to obtain entrance qualification for higher education. Since September 2008 apprentices can take three of the four partial exams (cf. 0502) of the *Berufsreifeprüfung* already during their training period; the last exam can be taken after the final apprenticeship examination, however, not before the age of 19. The courses in preparation to the *Berufsreifeprüfung* are free of charge for apprentices since September 2008.

QUALITY IN VET SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

The main feature of VET Quality Initiative (*Qualitätsinitiative Berufsbildung, QIBB*), launched in 2005, is the integration of school and college activities into a comprehensive system of quality management with a view to safeguarding and further enhancing the quality of teaching and administration with the aid of established best practices. As an overarching framework, *QIBB* fosters the development of common strategies but leaves sufficient scope for account to be taken of the special features of the individual categories of school and college and of individual establishments. *QIBB* is aligned with nationally and internationally recognised quality-management systems for educational establishments, in particular with the Common Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (CQARF).

TRAINING STANDARDS IN VET SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Given their twofold mission of vocational training and general education, VET schools and colleges (cf. 0403) must respond rapidly to new economic and social demands and make more use of the autonomy available to institutions in shaping their course programmes. This makes it essential to ensure that they offer high-quality training and that their services are comparable. To this end, the Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, bmukk*) launched a project in 2005 for the development of quality standards for core elements of general education and vocational training. The training standards define target outcomes in the form of specialised and cross-curricular skills which trainees should have acquired by a particular year of schooling. National tests are to be used to check whether the targets have been met. After the fourth and the eighth level of education the competences of all pupils will be tested. Mathematics, German, Reading and Writing are evaluated after the fourth year, while Mathematics, German and the first modern language (usually English) will be checked after the eighth level of education.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF FACHHOCHSCHULE ACTIVITIES

The introduction of universities of applied science (*Fachhochschulen, FH*, cf. 0407) has considerably broadened the range of opportunities in the field of higher education over the past ten years, and this development process will continue throughout the period up to 2010. It is intended to extend FH activities in the fields of technology, science and technology-related services. In addition, the international aspect of *FH* activities is being reinforced, as are applied research and development. Furthermore, it is intended to introduce more courses for people in employment. A key point is assessment for the purpose of quality assurance. The external quality-assurance procedure of *FH* degree courses can be organised on the basis of the evaluation regulation enacted by the *Fachhochschule* Council (*Fachhochschulrat*), the umbrella body of the *Fachhochschulen* (cf. 0301), as well as through the Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance (AQA).

REORGANISATION OF TEACHER TRAINING

The Tertiary Colleges of Education Act (*Bundesgesetz über die Organisation der Pädagogischen Hochschulen und ihrer Studien*) 2005 incorporates teacher training at post-secondary teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Akademien*), colleges for vocational teacher training (*Berufspädagogische Akademien*) and in-service teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Institute*) into the university sector. From 2007, the new tertiary colleges of education (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*) will offer internationally comparable degrees as envisaged in the Bologna Process.

PROMOTION OF LIFELONG LEARNING

A group of experts has presented a proposal for a comprehensive and coherent lifelong-learning strategy. Detailed discussions and the creation of a lifelong-learning task force to coordinate the necessary strategies and measures are in the pipeline.

EUROPEAN INITIATIVES: TRANSPARENCY INSTRUMENTS

Austria has decided to establish a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) until 2010. After scientific research work on relevant subjects connected to the NQF-establishment (e.g. status quo of learning outcome orientation) in 2007, an Austrian-wide consultation process was launched in January 2008. Parallel to this process, three studies were commissioned in which the classification of qualifications was piloted in three sectors (construction industry, tourism and health). On the basis of the results obtained during the consultation process and the three pilot studies, an NQF-development strategy will be available as of October 2008.

Regarding the implementation of ECVET a study was commissioned by the Education Ministry with the aim of examining the 'ECVET suitability' of the legislative and organisational framework conditions in initial school-based and dual vocational education and training in Austria. On the basis of the ECVET consultation paper, the study aimed to identify favourable and inhibiting factors in the currently applicable legislative and organisational framework conditions in order to reveal where there is need for change.

03 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK - PROVISION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

0301 - LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The most important laws (as amended) concerning IVET and CVET are (NB: The abbreviation 'BGBl.' refers to the Federal Law Gazette, the *Bundesgesetzblatt*). The following presented by type of VET:

IVET IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

- School Organisation Act (*Schulorganisationsgesetz, SchOG*), BGBl. No 242/1952: defines the responsibilities and structure of Austrian schools under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*)
- School Education Act (*Schulunterrichtsgesetz, SchUG*), BGBl. No 472/1986: regulates matters such as pupil admissions, pupil assessment, repetition of school years and cooperation between teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians etc.
- Federal Act laying down the Principles governing VET Schools of Agriculture and Forestry (*Bundesgesetz betreffend die Grundsätze für land- und forstwirtschaftliche Fachschulen*) BGBl. No 320/1975: regulates training at VET schools of agriculture and forestry
- Federal Agricultural and Forestry Schools Act (*Land- und forstwirtschaftliches Bundesschulgesetz*), BGBl. No 175/1966: regulates training at colleges of agriculture and forestry and the initial and in-service training of lecturers and instructors in agriculture and forestry

IVET WITHIN THE APPRENTICESHIP FRAMEWORK

- Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz, BAG*) BGBl. No 142/1969: forms the statutory framework for enterprise-based apprenticeship training; some provisions also relate to VET schools and colleges
- Vocational Training in Agriculture and Forestry Act (*Land- und forstwirtschaftliches Berufsausbildungsgesetz*), BGBl. No 298/1990: constitutes the legal basis for the enterprise-based part of apprenticeships in agriculture and forestry

IVET IN POST-SECONDARY AND TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

- Teacher Training College Act (*Akademie-Studiengesetz*), BGBl. No 94/1994: regulates the initial and in-service training of teachers, except for teachers at upper secondary schools, pending the entry into force of the Tertiary Colleges of Education Act 2005

- *Fachhochschule Degree Courses Act (Fachhochschule-Studiengesetz, FHStG), BGBl. No 340/1993*: contains provisions on the accreditation and evaluation of degree courses at *Fachhochschulen*, on the responsibilities of the *Fachhochschule Council* and on the official designation of institutions as *Fachhochschulen*

CVET

- *Adult Education Promotion Act (Erwachsenenbildungsförderungsgesetz, EB-FG), BGBl. No 171/1973*: specifies the conditions on which adult education can be supported and the permissible support methods

Collective agreements play an important role in Austria. They are negotiated between representatives of the Federal Economic Chamber (*Wirtschaftskammer Österreich*) and the Trade Unions (*Gewerkschaften*). The majority of collective agreements refer to entire sectors and are binding for all companies. Some large companies have their own collective agreement.

Collective agreements regularly contain information on VET. Regarding IVET, they determine the minimum remuneration payable to apprentices during their education and training period. As for CVET, special arrangements are agreed upon in collective agreements, e.g. the number of hours each employee can dedicate to further education and training during working hours.

0302 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: IVET

In Austria, IVET is provided at various levels and by various institutions in Austria (for a precise description of the various institutions cf. Theme 04):

1. IVET at upper secondary level

- VET schools and colleges (*berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen, BMHS*)
- Apprenticeship training (*Lehrlingsausbildung*)

2. IVET at post-secondary and tertiary level

A wide variety of institutions at national, regional and local levels is involved in the organisation and legal administration of IVET (cf. below).

The European Union also plays an important part. Austria is very active in implementing EU activities and participating in various projects (e.g. of the lifelong learning programme).

1. IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL

VET SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

The following institutions assume various roles in the organisation and legal administration of VET schools and colleges:

Table 1: Distribution of competences for VET schools and colleges	
BODIES	ROLES
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BODIES	
Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (<i>Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK</i>)	- drafts educational legislation and framework curricula - selects and pays teaching staff

<p>Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management) (<i>Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft, BMLFUW</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsible for the establishment and maintenance of colleges of agriculture and forestry(<i>höhere Lehranstalt für Land- und Forstwirtschaft</i>) - selects and pays (together with provincial governments) teaching staff
<p>Federal Ministry for Health, Family and Youth (<i>Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Familie und Jugend, BMGFJ</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsible for creating the legal basis for the training of health professionals other than doctors (e.g. nursing profession, medial technologists etc.) - designs the curricula of these training courses - defines conditions governing practical training, examination arrangements - appoints teaching staff
<p>REGIONAL GOVERNMENT BODIES</p>	
<p>Regional Education Authority (Landesschulrat, LSR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsible for the supervision of the schools within a Land. This function is performed by the regional school inspectors, each of whom is responsible for a particular category of school.
<p>SOCIAL PARTNERS</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - submit expert opinion on draft school laws and decrees (e.g. curricula) - provide information on vocational guidance and counselling - encourage cooperation between VET institutions and the business community
<p>OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL BODIES</p>	
<p>School committees (parents' and students' committees)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - submit expert opinion on draft school laws and decrees (e.g. curricula) - assume advisory functions

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

The following institutions assume various roles in the organisation and legal administration of the apprenticeship training:

Table 2: Distribution of competences for apprenticeship training	
BODIES	ROLES
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BODIES	
Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (<i>Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit, BMWA</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsible for the enterprise-based training of apprenticeship - drafts the Vocational Training Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - draws up the official list of apprenticeships - enacts the training and examination regulations for each apprenticeship
Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (<i>Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsible for the school element of apprenticeship training, including the drafting of legislative bills and the drawing up framework curricula - shares the cost of teachers' pay with the <i>Laender</i>
Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship (<i>Bundes-Berufsausbildungsbeirat, BBAB</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presents the Ministry of Economics with proposals in the form of expert reports on matters concerning apprenticeship training (e.g. introduction of new apprenticeships etc.)
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT BODIES	
Apprenticeship offices (<i>Lehrlingsstellen</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsible for the administration of apprenticeship training, involving the assessment of the aptitude of training enterprises, the registration of apprenticeship contracts and the organisation of final apprenticeship examinations
Regional Advisory Board on Apprenticeship (<i>Landes-Berufsausbildungsbeirat, LBAB</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - draws up proposals and makes suggestions regarding apprenticeship training
Apprentice and skilled workers'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsible for the enterprise-based

training centres (<i>Lehrlings- und Fachausbildungsstellen</i>)	part of apprenticeship training in agriculture and forestry
Regional Education Authority (<i>Landesschulrat, LSR</i>)	- responsible for the supervision of the schools within a Land. This function is performed by the regional school inspectors, each of whom is responsible for a particular category of school.
<i>Laender</i>	- responsible for the establishment and maintenance part-time vocational schools for apprentices (<i>Berufsschulen</i>) - meet half of the expenditure on teaching staff for these schools
SOCIAL PARTNERS	
	- take initiative to establish new apprenticeships or redefine existing ones - determine the remuneration payable to apprentices as part of the industry-wide process of collective bargaining - submit expert opinion on draft school laws and decrees (e.g. curricula for part-time vocational schools for apprentices)

2. IVET AT POST-SECONDARY AND TERTIARY LEVEL

Various bodies are responsible for the organisation and legal administration of IVET at post-secondary and tertiary levels:

Table 3: Distribution of competences for post-secondary and tertiary VET	
BODIES	ROLES
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BODIES	
Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (<i>Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK</i>)	- responsible for post-secondary VET colleges and courses, including the drafting of legislative bills and the drawing up framework curricula - responsible for universities but since the University Law 2002 they have considerable autonomy

	- finances most of the costs of study at <i>Fachhochschulen</i>
<i>Fachhochschule Council (Fachhochschulrat, FHR)</i>	- undertakes external quality assurance (accreditation and assessment) of <i>Fachhochschulen</i>
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT BODIES	
Regional Education Authority (<i>Landesschulrat, LSR</i>)	- relevant supervising institution for post-secondary VET colleges and courses

0303 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: CVET

There are various types of CVET in Austria (for a more precise description cf. Theme 05):

1. Publicly promoted CVET for all
2. CVET as instrument of active labour market policies
3. CVET at the initiative of enterprises and social partners

1. PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL

The responsibilities for publicly promoted CVET are divided among the following bodies:

Table 1: Responsible bodies for publicly promoted CVET	
BODIES	ROLES
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BODIES	
Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (<i>Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK</i>)	- responsible for schools for people under employment, non-degree university programmes and <i>Fachhochschule</i> programmes for employed adults - responsible for the Federal Institute for Adult Education in St. Wolfgang
Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (<i>Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft</i>)	- in charge of CVET for agriculture and forestry professionals

Federal Ministry for Health, Family and Youth (<i>Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Familie und Jugend, BMGFJ</i>)	- responsible for CVET for health-care professionals
Federal Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (<i>Bundesministerium für Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, BMSK</i>)	- in charge of elderly and/or disabled people
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT BODIES	- provide funds for individual CVET activities
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES	- make resources available to CVET establishments
SOCIAL PARTNERS	- key providers of CVET via their own CVET provider institutions - act as lobby in support of adult education
OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL BODIES	
Representations of interest and religious communities	- co-design the adult learning landscape

2. CVET AS INSTRUMENT OF ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES

The training of the unemployed is a core task of the Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*). The *AMS* does not, however, conduct any education and training measures itself but finances them. It receives the financial means from the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit, BMWA*). The social partners are involved in the supervisory boards of *AMS* at national, regional and local levels.

3. CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES AND SOCIAL PARTNERS

CVET is strongly influenced by the social partners. They all have established their own institutions for CVET:

- The *Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut (WIFI)* is operated by the Federal Economic Chamber (*Wirtschaftskammer Österreich, WKÖ*) on the employers' side.
- The *Berufsförderungsinstitut (bfi)* is the CVET institution of the Chambers of Labour (*Kammern für Arbeiter und Angestellte*) and the Austrian Trade Union Federation (*Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, ÖGB*) on the employees' side.
- The *Ländliche Fortbildungsinstitut (LFI)* is the training enterprise of the Chambers of Agriculture (*Landwirtschaftskammern*).

All these institutions are organised as non-profit education institutions and are open to all interested persons and for all topics that are of economic relevance.

04 - INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

0401 - BACKGROUND TO THE IVET SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM

School attendance is compulsory for all children permanently resident in Austria. Pupils are free to choose whether to attend a state or a private school. The attendance of a state school is free of charge.

General compulsory schooling begins at the age of six and lasts for nine years (cf. [Figure 1](#)). Children with special educational needs can either attend special schools or be integrated into mainstream classes at other types of school.

1. PRE-PRIMARY (3-6 YEARS) AND PRIMARY LEVEL (6-10 YEARS)

Nursery school (Kindergarten) is the traditional form of pre-primary education. It is not part of the school system, however, and attendance is voluntary. Some 90% of five-year-olds attend a public or private nursery.

Children's actual 'educational career' begins with four years at primary school (cf. [Figure 1](#)), where they receive a comprehensive elementary education. A pre-school year is provided for children who have difficulty following lessons, and its content can be integrated into the first two years of primary school.

2. LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL (10-14 YEARS)

At the age of ten comes the first sifting process into two types of school (cf. [Figure 1](#)). 70% of all pupils move on to lower general education school (*Hauptschule, HS*) and the remaining 30% enter the junior cycle of a higher general education school, junior school (*Allgemein bildende höhere Schule, AHS Unterstufe*). In urban areas the distribution is different. In Vienna, for example, fewer than half of all children attend a *Hauptschule*.

To move from primary to secondary education, a pupil needs a favourable report at the end of primary four. Additional performance criteria, such as certain grades in the main school subjects, are required for entry to *AHS Unterstufe*.

2.1 LOWER GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOL (*HAUPTSCHULE, HS*)

In four years at *Hauptschule*, pupils obtain a basic general education, which qualifies them to move on to stage two of secondary schooling as well as preparing them for working life. In German, mathematics and a modern language, classes are streamed so that pupils' diverse learning needs can be taken into account. Several days of career studies in the third and fourth year (year seven and eight of compulsory schooling) provide furthermore the opportunity to gain more insights of business activities. *Hauptschulen* also have the autonomy to specialise in particular subjects, such as modern languages, sport or computing.

2.2 HIGHER GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOL – JUNIOR CYCLE (*ALLGEMEIN BILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE – UNTERSTUFE, AHS UNTERSTUFE*)

Allgemein bildende höhere Schule comprises a lower stage of four years and an upper stage of equal duration. Pupils obtain a comprehensive general education. In the first two years (years five and six of compulsory schooling), higher general education schools follow a curriculum identical to that of lower general education schools. From year seven, the differences between the categories of higher general education school begin to emerge. These are:

- the *Gymnasium*, where pupils receive a traditional academic education, including classes in Latin,
- the *Realgymnasium*, which specialises in mathematics, science and subjects such as geometric design, and
- the *wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*, specialising in economics, chemistry and technical and textile crafts.

The curriculum for the third and fourth years (years seven and eight of compulsory schooling) also prescribes the inclusion of career studies in the timeTable.

3. UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL (14-18/19 YEARS)

The last year of compulsory schooling corresponds to the first year of the upper stage of secondary education. It also coincides with more extensive differentiation within the school system (cf. [Figure 1](#) and Table 1 below). Besides the higher general education school – senior cycle (*Allgemein bildende höhere Schule – Oberstufe*) and the pre-vocational school (*Polytechnische Schule*), there is now a wide choice of VET paths leading to diverse levels of qualification (cf. 0403 and 0404).

Table 1: Training opportunities at upper secondary level			
SCHOOL TYPE	SCHOOL YEARS	AGE OF STUDENTS	ISCED LEVEL AND QUALIFICATION
GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOL			
higher general education school – senior cycle (<i>Allgemein bildende höhere Schule – Oberstufe, AHS Oberstufe</i>)	9 to 12	14 to 18	ISCED 3A <i>Reifeprüfung</i>
PRE-VOCATIONAL SCHOOL			
pre-vocational school (<i>Polytechnische Schule, PTS</i>)	9	14 to 15	ISCED 3C Certificate
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN VET			
VET school (<i>Berufsbildende mittlere Schule, BMS</i>)	9 to 12	14 to 17	ISCED 3B final examination
VET college (<i>berufsbildende höhere Schule, BHS</i>)	9 to 13	14 to 19	ISCED 3A/4A <i>Reifeprüfung</i> and VET diploma
part-time vocational school for apprentices (<i>Berufsschule, BS</i>)	10 to 13	15 to 19	ISCED 3B final apprenticeship examination

Source: Higher general education school – senior cycle (*Allgemein bildende höhere Schule – Oberstufe, AHS Oberstufe*)

In the upper years of higher general education schools comprehensive general education in the mainstream subjects continues. Students generally start a second modern language, and schools have a degree of autonomy to specialise in particular subject areas. The upper stage of higher general education schools culminates in the *Reifeprüfung*, also known as Matura, and those who pass this examination are qualified to follow a course of study at the post-secondary (cf. 0406) and tertiary (cf. 0407) levels.

3.1 PRE-VOCATIONAL SCHOOL (*POLYTECHNISCHE SCHULE, PTS*)

Pre-vocational school begins after year eight of compulsory schooling, lasts for one year and provides a general introduction to vocational training. Each student chooses one of the following subjects: metalwork, electrics, building, woodwork, commercial and secretarial studies, services and tourism. In accordance with the principle of school autonomy, other subjects may be offered, such as information technology and mechatronics. The curriculum is designed in the light of career opportunities in the surrounding region and students' fields of interest.

0402 - IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

There are no IVET elements at the lower secondary level in Austria.

0403 - IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

If all forms of VET are considered together, almost three-fourths of all young people in upper secondary education are in post-compulsory VET (cf. Table 1), over 6% attend a pre-vocational programme and over 21% attend a general programme.. Thus, the VET participation rates in Austria are way above the EU-25 and EU-27 averages. This high share is due to the wide range of VET pathways students can choose from after graduating from lower secondary level. Around 55% of all VET students choose a school-based VET option, while 45% take part in apprenticeship training.

Table 1: Students in upper secondary education by programme orientation, 2005

COUNTRIES	TOTAL ISCED 3	VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ISCED 3		
		VOCATIONAL (%)	PRE-VOCATIONAL (%)	VOCATIONAL AND PREVOCATIONAL (%)
EU-27	26 036 676	55.9	4.6	60.5
EU-25	24 597 064	55.5	4.9	60.4
AUSTRIA	382 082	72.3	6.2	78.5

Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection; date of data extraction 26/05/2008

1. VET SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (*BERUFSBILDENDE MITTLERE UND HÖHERE SCHULEN, BMHS*)

Vocational qualifications and a sound general education is at the heart of the training provided in VET schools and colleges. Successful completion opens the door to immediate employment and lays the foundations for a wide range of more advanced training and higher qualifications.

Entry into a VET school or college depends on successful completion of year 8 of compulsory schooling. Depending on the pupil's education history and on the applicant's choice of institution and the availability of places, the pupil's record of achievement or an entrance examination may serve to determine his/her eligibility. For artistic or educational and social subjects an aptitude test and/or interview are also required.

Important characteristics of VET schools and colleges include:

- **Differentiation:** Students can choose from numerous paths and areas of special training focus. Schools and colleges have a degree of autonomy to alter the number of hours devoted to individual subjects with certain limits, offer new subjects or focus more sharply on particular specialised areas. Within these areas, the curricula of most courses in the first two years of training have a common core, and specialisation does not begin until the third year of training.
- **Combination of general education and intensive theoretical and practical specialised training:** Greater weight is assigned to practical aspects of training at VET schools. Activity-based learning is a fundamental principle at both VET schools and colleges; session in workshops, laboratories, kitchens, practice firms etc. and compulsory periods of work experience in business and industry are integral parts of the training programme.
- **Core skills:** Business competence or entrepreneurship is both a cross-curricular principle and an area of special training focus on many courses. Depending on the type of school, up to three foreign languages may be compulsory, and one is always compulsory. A foreign language is increasingly being used as the working language in non-language classes too. Computer literacy is a sine qua non in all types of VET, and numerous training courses and areas of special focus are specifically designed to train learners for the information and communication technology (IT) sector.
- **Business projects:** Working on projects and diploma assignments based on specific business- or technology-related tasks, which are also part of the final examinations, enables learners to gather basic technical experience and to master project-management methods.
- **Teachers with business experience:** In many subjects, teaching staff must provide evidence of relevant experience in industry or commerce.

1.1 VET SCHOOLS (*BERUFSBILDENDE MITTLERE SCHULEN, BMS* OR, ALTERNATIVELY, *FACHSCHULEN*)

Courses at VET schools (ISCED 3B), which normally last for three or four years, combine general education with complete vocational training for certain occupations. Courses at a VET school culminate in a final examination (*Abschlussprüfung*). Those who pass the examination are qualified to go straight into employment and have access to certain regulated occupations. Moreover, they lay the foundations for a subsequent business start-up.

VET schools cover the following major areas:

- agriculture and forestry,
- industry and trade,
- business

- industrial, technical, arts and crafts sectors,
- social work,
- health care.

After passing further exams, such as the *Berufsreifeprüfung* (cf. 0502), or attending add-on courses (*Aufbaulehrgänge*, cf. 0502), young people are eligible to move on to post-secondary (cf. 0406) or tertiary (cf. 0407) education.

VET school courses of one or two years' duration, particularly in the field of social work, combine general education with preparatory vocational training. They generally serve as a 'bridge' to courses in health care or social work, for which the minimum starting age is 17.

1.2 VET COLLEGE (*BERUFSBILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE, BHS*)

The five-year VET college (ISCED 3A/4A) provides a more thorough general education and high-quality specialised training. It concludes with a *Reifeprüfung* and VET diploma (*Reife- und Diplomprüfung*), a double qualification giving successful candidates access to higher education as well as to regulated occupations.

The following forms of schooling are available:

- technical colleges (branches: mechanical engineering, *EDP* and organisation, civil engineering and construction, chemistry, textile and engineering, business engineering, information and communication technologies etc.),
- colleges for tourism,
- colleges for fashion and textile technology,
- business colleges,
- colleges for industry and trade,
- colleges for agriculture and forestry (branches: agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, fruit-farming, forestry, dairy farming etc.).

VET colleges also provide the basis for subsequent self-employment, in other words business start-ups. The high level of training at VET colleges is also reflected in the recognition accorded to in the EU framework. The inclusion of VET Colleges in Annex III to Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications testifies to the fact that VET college students obtain vocational qualifications equivalent to those for which post-secondary training is required in most other Member States. For those who go on to study at a *Fachhochschule* (cf. 0407), the skills they have acquired at VET college can shorten the duration of their degree course.

2. PART-TIME VOCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR APPRENTICES (*BERUFSSCHULE, BS*)

For part-time vocational schools see 0404.

0404 - APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Approximately 40% of all young people aged 15 to 18 are prepared for their future occupation within the apprenticeship training system.

No specific school certificate is required for access to an apprenticeship. The training is open to all young people who have completed their nine years of compulsory schooling.

Depending on the apprenticeship chosen, the duration of training is between two and four years. The majority lasts three years. The apprenticeship period is reduced for people who have already completed job-specific training periods in related apprenticeships or acquired relevant school qualifications.

Apprenticeship training takes place in two different learning sites: in training enterprises (*Lehrbetrieben*) and part-time vocational schools (*Berufsschulen*) While

apprenticeship is based on an apprenticeship contract (*Lehrvertrag*) under labour law, apprentices are still considered to be in compulsory education because they must enrol in a part-time vocational school.

Around 40 000 enterprises take part in the apprenticeship training scheme, in particular small- and medium-sized enterprises in the fields of commerce, crafts, trade and services, as well as tourism and leisure. They train approximately 85% of all apprentices. Industrial enterprises, companies in the information and consulting sector and firms not affiliated to a chamber (cf. 0303) also make a significant contribution to the training of young people.

Currently (July 2008), there are 246 apprenticeships. They are laid down in the list of recognised apprenticeships (*Lehrberufsliste*), which also specifies the apprenticeship periods and relationships to other apprenticeships including credits awarded for already completed apprenticeship periods.

For each individual apprenticeship, the Economics Minister issues a training regulation (*Ausbildungsordnung*, cf. 0302) which is binding for the training provided in the training enterprises all over Austria. Training regulations stipulate the job profile (*Berufsbild*) of the respective apprenticeship. In a catalogue broken down by apprenticeship years, the job profile lists the basic skills and knowledge to be taught in the course of enterprise-based training. Since recently, not only job profiles but also competence profiles (*Berufsprofile*) for newly regulated apprenticeships have been formulated, which lay down the requirements the trained apprentice must be able to meet.

1. ENTERPRISE-BASED PART OF TRAINING

Approximately 80% of the apprenticeship period is spent in the training companies. Vocational training is held under real-life conditions. The apprentice acquires the required knowledge and skills as stipulated in the job profile on state-of-the-art machinery and equipment. Immediately upon completion of the training, he or she is able to take up a job as a skilled worker.

The apprenticeship contract is entered into between the authorised apprenticeship trainer (*Lehrberechtigte*) and the apprentice and forms the basis of vocational training in the dual system. It must be concluded in writing. Standardised forms containing the name of the apprenticeship, the beginning and end of the apprenticeship period, the address of the working place(s), reference to the company type and its products/services etc., can be obtained from the apprenticeship office (*Lehrlingsstelle*, cf. 0301).

The final apprenticeship examination (*Lehrabschlussprüfung*) is to establish whether the candidate has acquired the skills and competences required and is able to carry out the activities particular to the apprenticeship without further supervision in an appropriate manner. The exam consists of a practical and a theoretical part. The latter is waived under certain conditions, i.e. if the candidate can prove successful completion of the part-time vocational school.

2. SCHOOL-BASED PART OF TRAINING

The focus of education at part-time vocational schools is on job-oriented tuition (about 75%), general subjects (politics, German and communication, an occupation-related foreign language and other business studies subjects) make up one quarter of the curriculum. Specific-job curricula also include practical training in workshops or laboratories.

Part-time vocational schools are special schools set up for selected apprenticeships. Classes are grouped according to the individual apprenticeship or, in some cases, groups of related apprenticeships.

Classes are held either:

- in full-time blocks, where the enterprise-based training is interrupted for some weeks (usually between eight and twelve),
- every week on one or two days.

The precise number of hours of vocational timetables is laid down in the curriculum for the respective apprenticeship. The curriculum is closely linked with the work description and job profile of the training regulation.

0405 - OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

Other youth programmes include so-called vocational pre-apprenticeship training courses (*Berufslehrgänge*) and the integrative vocational education and training, integrative VET (integrative *Berufsausbildung*).

On the basis of the Youth Training Provision Act (*Jugendausbildungssicherungsgesetz, JASG*, cf. 0302) additional training in the form of ten-month vocational pre-apprenticeship training courses is offered as a labour market support measure for young people who find themselves at a disadvantage in the labour market and for those who cannot find an apprenticeship.

These training courses may not start before mid-November of any given year, so as not to compete with 'traditional' apprenticeships. The conditions for participation are that the young person in question must have completed compulsory education and be registered with the Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*) as looking for an apprenticeship, the Public Employment Service sees no likelihood of finding an appropriate apprenticeship or the young person has already made at least five independent applications and been unsuccessful. The Public Employment Service allocates the young people to training courses.

These courses are held over ten months and are organised and implemented by parties who are not official employers of apprentices. The aim is to teach the skills and knowledge of the first year of an apprenticeship so that the young person can then switch to a 'proper' apprenticeship in the second year. For any subsequent apprenticeship in the same trade, the initial training period is counted in full. In all other cases, a justifiable proportion is counted. Participants receive a special allowance of € 150 net per month.

The main purpose of the 2003 amendment to the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz*, cf. 0302) was the creation of integrative VET. On the basis of comprehensive preparatory work by the social partners, the legislator created a flexible model for people at a disadvantage in the labour market.

Integrative IVET is open to persons:

- with special educational needs in compulsory schooling and who were, at least in part, educated according to the curriculum of a special needs school (*Sonderschule*);
- who did not finish or negatively complete a general education school (*Hauptschule*);
- with disabilities;
- of whom it must be assumed, within the framework of career guidance support or after an unsuccessful placement attempt in an apprenticeship, that it will not be possible to find any apprenticeship vacancy for them for reasons exclusively related to the person himself or herself.

Possible integrative vocational training measures include the acquisition of apprenticeship qualifications in an apprenticeship period prolonged by one year, in exceptional cases by two years, or the acquisition of partial qualifications in one or several trades which are relevant for the economy.

Integrative vocational training is facilitated and supported by the vocational training assistance (*Berufsausbildungsassistenz*).

0406 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL

For upper secondary school and college graduates there are a number of post-secondary, non-university education pathways in Austria:

1. Post-secondary VET colleges

- Colleges for paramedical staff (*Akademien für den gehobenen medizinisch-technischen Dienst*)
- Colleges for midwifery (*Hebammenakademie*)
- Colleges for social work (*Sozialakademie*)

2. Post-secondary VET courses

- Post-secondary VET courses for commercial professions (*Kollegs für wirtschaftliche Berufe*)
- Post-secondary VET courses for technical and crafts professions (*Kollegs für technische und gewerbliche Berufe*)
- Post-secondary VET courses for tourism professions (*Kollegs für Tourismusberufe*)
- Post-secondary VET courses for nursery school teachers and social pedagogy (*Kollegs für Kindergartenpädagogik und Sozialpädagogik*)

1. POST-SECONDARY VET COLLEGES

Post-secondary VET colleges cover a period of four to six semesters and target people (18+) who have successfully passed a:

- *Reifeprüfung* (at the end of the senior cycle of higher general education schools),
- *Reifeprüfung* and VET diploma (at the end of VET colleges),
- *Berufsreifeprüfung* (examination providing access to higher education for skilled workers and graduates of three- to four-year full-time VET schools) or
- Higher education entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung*).

Training in post-secondary VET colleges leads to a diploma examination (*Diplomprüfung*). Graduates have access to specific vocational qualifications.

Post-secondary colleges for health-care professions are organisationally and by location joined to a hospital, at which practical work experience is performed. The educational content consists of a predominantly theory-based medical training and a specialised applied education with a large proportion of practical exercises.

Post-secondary colleges for social work focus on qualifying people to assume elevated positions in the area of social work. Currently, these colleges are being converted into *Fachhochschulen*.

2. POST-SECONDARY VET COURSES

Two-year post-secondary VET courses are designed to provide VET qualifications for graduates of upper secondary schools. VET college graduates have the opportunity to acquire an additional vocational qualification. Graduates of higher *GE* schools can receive vocational training in the commercial, technical, crafts and tourism sector.

Training at post-secondary VET courses leads to a diploma examination. Graduates of these courses have access to specific vocational qualifications.

0407 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

After having taken the university-entrance examination, graduates may continue their vocational education and training at tertiary level in three institutions:

1. Universities of applied science (*Fachhochschulen*)
2. Bachelor programmes
3. Tertiary colleges of education (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*)

1. UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCE (*FACHHOCHSCHULEN*)

Until the 1990s, most university degree courses were academic or research-based and lasted at least four years (eight semesters), after which students could embark on

postgraduate study leading to a doctorate. A marked change in the tertiary sector came about in 1994 when *Fachhochschulen* were introduced in response to an international trend towards a more vocationally oriented, non-university tertiary sector. The *Fachhochschule Degree Courses Act (Bundesgesetz über Fachhochschul-Studiengänge, FHStG, cf. 0302)* made it possible to establish practice-oriented courses at the tertiary level. *Fachhochschulen* are not developed by the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*) but by provider bodies, most of which are from the private sector; once they have been licensed by the *Fachhochschule Council (Fachhochschulrat, FHR)*, the supervisory council for Austria's *Fachhochschulen*, they are run by the provider. They are subject to a prescribed accreditation and evaluation procedure, which is overseen by the *Fachhochschulrat*. In contrast to universities, *Fachhochschulen* provide scientifically underpinned technical and vocational training. A period of practical work experience is a compulsory part of the curriculum. Up to the present time, *Fachhochschule* degree courses have been established in the fields of economics and business management, tourism, engineering sciences, computer science and information technology, media and design. There are also interdisciplinary degree courses as well as courses in the fields of health and welfare, journalism and military science.

As a rule, the requirement for admission to courses at a *Fachhochschule* is the entrance qualification for general higher education or a relevant vocational qualification. Courses of shorter duration (six semesters) have also been created expressly for students who have attended engineering colleges (*Höhere technische Lehranstalten, HTL*) and have enough occupational experience to have earned the title *Ingenieur* or *Ingenieurin* (usually three years after graduation). Since the number of students in any year of a given course is limited, applicants must undergo a selection procedure conducted by the provider in cases where the number of applicants for a course exceeds the number of places on the course.

2. BACHELOR PROGRAMMES

Another important change in the tertiary sector was caused by the Bologna Process. With the amendment of the University Studies Act (*Universitätsstudienengesetz*) in 1999, the introduction of the Universities Act (*Universitätsgesetz*) and the *Fachhochschul-Studies Act (Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz)* in 2002 Austria created the legal basis for introducing bachelor and master programmes. The bachelor programme covers six to eight semesters and leads to a first professional qualification. Graduates can enter the labour market or continue with the master programme.

3. TERTIARY COLLEGES OF EDUCATION (PÄDAGOGISCHE HOCHSCHULEN)

The Tertiary Colleges of Education Act (*Bundesgesetz über die Organisation der Pädagogischen Hochschulen und ihrer Studien*) 2005 incorporates teacher training at post-secondary teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Akademien*), colleges for vocational teacher training (*Berufspädagogische Akademien*) and in-service teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Institute*) into the university sector. Since September 1st, 2007, the new tertiary colleges of education (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*) offers internationally comparable degrees as envisaged in the Bologna Process. There are altogether 14 tertiary colleges of education in Austria. They put great emphasis not only on pedagogic-didactic tuition and specialist subjects, but also on the application of these elements in school environment. The students are able to visit select schools of the relevant type in order to gain teaching experience. The colleges for compulsory teachers run their own training schools, where the students can develop a basic level of teaching experience.

05 - CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

0501 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The main differences between initial vocational education and training (IVET) and continuing vocational education and training (CVET) lie in the ages of the learners and their previous educational attainments. Anyone who has completed IVET by serving an apprenticeship (*Lehre, cf. 0404*), successfully finishing a course at a VET school or

college (*Berufsbildende mittlere oder höhere Schule*, cf. 0403) or by obtaining a degree from a *Fachhochschule* (cf. 0407) and who then begins another stage in the education process is generally said to be embarking on CVET.

There are various types of CVET in Austria:

1. Publicly promoted CVET for all (cf. 0502)

- acquisition of general education school (*Hauptschule*) qualifications by adults
- acquisition of qualifications providing access to higher education
- schools and colleges for employed people
- University of applied science (*Fachhochschule*) and university courses for employed people
- CVET in non-profit providers which are institutionally linked with public bodies

2. CVET as instrument of active labour market policies (cf. 0503)

3. CVET at the initiative of enterprises and social partners (cf. 0504)

- CVET at the employer's, parent/associate company, equipment suppliers'
 - informal learning at the workplace
 - CVET at the provider institutions of the social partners, i.e. of the federal and regional Economic Chambers (*Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI*), of the federal and regional Chambers of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Federation (*Berufsförderungsinstitut, bfi*) and of the Chambers of Agriculture (*Ländliches Fortbildungsinstitut, LFI*)
 - CVET in profit-provider institutions
4. CVET at the initiative of the individuals (cf. 0505)
- CVET in profit-provider institutions
 - CVET in non-profit provider institutions

Due to the federal and multi-faceted structure of adult learning establishments in Austria no uniform planning procedure can be found.

The CVET market reacts strongly to demands and demand trends. The two main mechanisms of CVET providers to identify demands are the training behaviour of individuals and companies as well as the expertise of training managers in CVET institutions. For instance, the *WIFI*, one of the largest CVET providers with a network of institutions in all provinces, conducts comprehensive participant surveys every two years. Also the *LFI* repeatedly attempts to collect data on training behaviour and demand in agriculture and forestry by conducting working groups, events and empirical surveys.

Another tool to be mentioned is the so-called "Qualification Barometer" of the Public Employment Service (*AMS-Qualifikations-Barometer*), an Internet platform which presents research findings in a user-friendly way and may be used by all groups involved in conducting counselling and planning of training and CVET measures.

As regards policy developments, within the last 25 years a number of supportive measures have been introduced to enable people to take up learning:

INTRODUCING CVET PROVIDERS/CVET PROGRAMMES

- In 1994 the Danube University of Krems (*Donau Universität Krems*) was established. It is a centre for CVET in the tertiary sector, whose tasks are limited to offers of postgraduate CVET in the form of courses and short university programmes. To increase accessibility, courses take into consideration the needs of employed people

and of persons with care obligations. They are either organised in the evening or at weekends or are supplemented by online offers.

- Since 1999 programmes for employed people have been created to attend university through the availability of the university graduation grant (*Studienabschlussstipendium*).

FACILITATING ACCESS TO CVET INSTITUTIONS

- Since 1994 employed people have been allowed to attend CVET programmes in *Fachhochschulen* (cf. 0407).
- Since 1997 skilled workers and three- and four-year VET school graduates can take the *Berufsreifeprüfung*, which provides access to post-secondary and tertiary educational programmes (cf. 0502).
- In 1998 the educational leave (*Bildungskarenz*) was introduced for employees to further their education and training. Employer and employee can agree upon periods of a minimum of three and a maximum of twelve months educational leave. During this time, the Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*) pays a personal CVET benefit (*Weiterbildungsgeld*) to the employee. The scheme prioritises the acquisition of school and university-level qualifications or foreign language training and a general improvement of skills levels.

USING OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN LEARNING

- In 1991, a distance learning centre (*Zentrum für Fernstudien, ZF*) was established at Linz University who co-operates with the *Fernuniversität Hagen*. Distance studies for students of law and for candidates of the higher education entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung, SBP*, cf. 0502) are provided. The ZF is a member in the umbrella organisation of the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities and co-operates with the Open University (UK). Austrians therefore have the possibility to enrol in a study programme of the *Fernuniversität Hagen* and of other European distance universities and the Open University.

PROMOTING COOPERATION

- In 2000, the *AUCEN* (Austrian Universities Continuing Education Network) was introduced serving as platform for university-based CVET. Since then a working group of CVET and HR development officers at Austrian universities co-operate in the following measures with the aim of promoting university-based CVET and HR development: experience exchanges on university-based CVET and HR development; preparation of recommendations and commentaries in the field of university and CVET policies; PR (CVET database, publications, education fairs); encouragement and implementation of joint (research) projects; networking at the European and international levels; development of new perspectives in the field of university-based CVET and HR development.

0502 - PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL

The responsibilities for publicly promoted CVET are divided among the federal government, the *Laender* and municipalities:

The federal government's responsibilities are split between a number of ministries.

- The Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*) is responsible for school- and university-based CVET.
- The Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (*Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft, BMLFUW*) is in charge of CVET for agriculture and forestry professionals.
- The Federal Ministry for Health, Family and Youth (*Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Familie und Jugend, BMGFJ*) is responsible for health-care professionals.

- The Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protections (*Bundesministerium für Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, BMSK*) is in charge of older and disabled people.
- Fiscal matters (e.g. the education premium, the tax allowance for education) fall within the remit of the Federal Ministry of Finances (*Bundesministerium für Finanzen, BMF*).

Länder and municipalities meet their responsibilities for CVET in a number of different ways, ranging from making resources available to CVET establishments or their umbrella organisations, to departments in the regional governments (*Landesregierungen*).

Depending on the type of CVET, various groups of people are targeted at:

1. SECOND-CHANCE ROUTE TO LOWER SECONDARY QUALIFICATION

Several adult training and CVET institutions offer bridge courses for people who have completed their period of compulsory schooling without acquiring a final certificate. In these courses they are prepared for the qualifying exam to be taken before an examination board for external students at a school.

2. SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES FOR PEOPLE IN EMPLOYMENT

The Austrian schools and colleges for people in employment provide full programmes with a duration of several years. These institutions are set up as part-time evening schools. Their curricula essentially correspond to the structure of the full-time school form. The VET forms of these institutions (i.e. VET schools and colleges [*Berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen, BMHS*, cf. 0403]) are more varied and are attended more frequently by employed people than the higher general education school (*Allgemein bildende höhere Schule, AHS*).

There are various VET colleges for working people:

- VET college for persons in employment (*Berufsbildende höhere Schule für Berufstätige*): enrolment is subject to successful completion of compulsory schooling. Courses last four to five years and conclude with the *Reifeprüfung* and VET diploma.
- Post-secondary VET courses (*Kollegs*): are intended primarily for those who have successfully completed higher general education schools (*Allgemein bildende höhere Schulen*, cf. 0402). A pass in the *Reifeprüfung* is the entrance requirement. Kolleg courses are modular in form and entail two years of day classes or, in most cases, three years of evening classes. They conclude with a diploma examination.
- Add-on courses (*Aufbaulehrgänge*): generally take three years and take those who have successfully completed VET school (*Berufsbildende mittlere Schule, BMS*, cf. 0403) to the *Reifeprüfung* and VET diploma of the corresponding VET college (cf. 0403). They are also open to those who have served their apprenticeship (*Lehre*, cf. 0404) and who have attended a one- or two-semester preparatory course (*Vorbereitungslehrgang*). Add-on courses are modular in structure, with general educational and advance specialised modules and are frequently offered in conjunction with *Kollege* courses.

There are special forms of VET school courses at business administration schools and especially at schools specialising in technical trades. The following courses are also offered at *WIFI* and *bfi* establishments (cf. 0504):

- Courses for people in employment (*Werkmeisterschule für Berufstätige*): enable working trades people who have served an apprenticeship or successfully completed a VET school to upgrade their vocational qualifications. These courses last for two years and culminate in an examination before a board. Successful candidates are qualified to train apprentices and, after four years of practical work, to become self-employed in a relevant trade.
- Courses for building workers (*Bauhandwerkerschule*): similar to forepersons' schools but are specifically intended for people who have completed their vocational training in a building trade such as bricklaying or carpentry.

- Master craftsperson courses (*Meisterschulen*): provide specialised CVET. Their courses last from one to two years; applicants for admission must be at least 18 years of age and are expected, as a rule, to have completed their IVET and/or to have a certain amount of practical experience in their trade.

3. ACQUISITION OF QUALIFICATION PROVIDING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Besides the *Reifeprüfung* at the end of the senior stage of secondary school, the following paths also provide access to post-secondary and tertiary courses:

- The higher education entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung, SBP*) provides access to a particular field of study in post-secondary and tertiary institutions. Applicants to sit the exam must furnish evidence of prior education, training or occupational experience in the chosen subject. In the absence of such evidence, additional examinations may be taken to make up the deficit.
- The *Berufsreifeprüfung, BRP* is equivalent to the *Matura* certificate at the upper secondary level. It qualifies for studying at post-secondary and tertiary education institutions. It is targeted at apprenticeship graduates, graduates from VET schools (*Berufsbildenden mittleren Schulen, BMS*) of at least three years' duration, graduates from nursing courses and specialist paramedical courses of at least 30 months' duration, and for graduates of the skilled workers' examination in agriculture and forestry. The content of the *BRP* is based on the secondary-school curriculum. It consists of four partial exams: German, mathematics, one modern foreign language, and a specialisation from vocational practice. The *BRP* Act (cf. 0302) provides that relevant examinations can be taken also upon completion of specific courses recognised by the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur*), which are offered by adult learning institutions and are therefore not part of the public education system.

4. FACHHOCHSCHULE AND UNIVERSITY COURSES

Universities offer CVET mostly within the framework of short-term university courses for post-graduates and non-academics who satisfy other admission criteria (*Universitätslehrgänge*). These courses lead to a master's degree or to the awarding of the prefix '*Akademischer...*' before the graduate's existing professional title, provided that the curriculum has a value of at least 60 ECTS credits. Participants are required to pay a tuition fee, which is set in the light of the actual cost of the course. Most classes take place in the evenings or at weekends in order to suit people in employment.

A centre for continuing tertiary education was created in 1994 with the founding of the Danube University of Krems. Its role is defined to the provision of courses at the postgraduate level.

Fachhochschule providers have scope to offer special degree courses for people in employment, comprising evening and weekend classes. Distance-learning components are also included, and the obligation to attend practical sessions may be waived for participants with relevant occupational experience. At the present time, about a third of all *Fachhochschule* courses are also offered as part-time courses for working people.

5. CVET IN NON-PROFIT PROVIDERS

In Austria, there is a great variety of non-profit providers which rely on public subsidies and on course fees in various distributions. Traditionally, the non-profit providers are most important for general and external CVET in Austria. The ten largest providers (among others, the CVET provider of the federal and regional Chambers of Commerce [*Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI*] and the CVET provider of the federal and regional Chambers of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Federation [*Berufsförderungsinstitut, bfi*]; cf. 0504) have joined forces and set up the Conference of Adult Education in Austria (*Konferenz der Erwachsenenbildung Österreichs, KEBÖ*). *KEBÖ* is not a special-interest group in the conventional sense but rather a think tank. It does not provide any continuing education itself. The sessions organised by the individual member institutions of *KEBÖ* differ widely in form and duration, ranging from single lectures to courses based on structured curricula. As well as initiating and implementing qualifying examination for higher education, these institutions also

provide advisory services, thereby creating an important interface between supply and demand in the field of CVET.

As regards participation rates Table 1 (based on a survey conducted in 2002) shows that *WIFI* is the most frequented CVET provider institution, followed by the Adult Education Centre (*Volkshochschule, VHS*) and the *bfi*. This ranking applies to both, the resident population aged 15 and above and the employed persons (cf. Table 1).

Table 1: Respondents who "have already made use of" the following possibilities of CVET in 2002 (in %)

CVET OPTION	RESIDENT POPULATION 15+	EMPLOYED PERSONS
Institute for Economic Promotion (<i>Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI</i>)	28	37
Adult Education Centre (<i>Volkshochschule, VHS</i>)	26	28
Vocational Training Institute (<i>Berufsförderungsinstitut, bfi</i>)	14	19
Other options, especially public schools for employed persons	11	16
University	13	15
Private providers	11	15
Catholic and Protestant Educational Associations (<i>Bildungswerke</i>)	11	11
Adult learning institution for the rural area (<i>Ländliches Fortbildungsinstitut, LFI</i>)	5	7
<i>Fachhochschule, FH</i>	4	5
Economic Society Austria (<i>Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft Österreich, VG-Ö</i>)	2	2

Source: Fessel-GfK, Lifestyle-Study 2002

The attempt to find a consensus between the social partners, education and training institutions and the persons involved in adult learning measures is one of the quality assurance procedures most frequently applied in Austria. In addition, quality assurance of Austria's vocational adult learning is characterised by pronounced input evaluations rather than by related output controls. Any education and training measure leading to the acquisition of the knowledge and skills required for the occupation is regarded as successful and of relevance for the education policies.

The large non-profit providers in the adult learning sector carry out individual or periodical internal surveys among their course participants to obtain relevant feedback on the acceptance and assessment of offers by the participants from a content-related, time-related and didactic viewpoint.

VET colleges conduct regular evaluation projects. The *Fachhochschule* institutions have established a well-developed and compulsory system of permanent evaluation mechanism on a legal basis partly using external research expertise. Regular quality controls in the form of evaluations are also conducted in the case of the short-term university programmes (*Universitätslehrgänge*).

0503 - TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHERS VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

In Austria, training for unemployed people is the core task of the Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*), an autonomous government funded body. It is not a training provider but responsible for funding training programmes for unemployed people. It also funds some skills needs research to develop appropriate measures which achieve labour market requirements.

Other roles of the *AMS* include the administration of the educational leave scheme (*Bildungskarenz*), introduced in 1998. Employer and employee can agree upon periods of a minimum of three and a maximum of twelve months educational leave. During this time, the *AMS* pays a personal CVET benefit (*Weiterbildungsgeld*) to the employee. The scheme prioritises the acquisition of school and university-level qualifications or foreign language training and a general improvement of skills levels. The *AMS* arranges for substitute workers who are currently unemployed to replace people on leave.

The *AMS* is also entrusted with the skills training promotion for employed people within the framework of the ESF: With this fund it subsidises the costs of employees' skills training measures. The aim is to facilitate CVET activities for employers. The following persons are eligible for promotion upon submission of a training scheme:

- women;
- men over the age of 45;
- unskilled men below the age of 45 who are in an employment relationship under full compulsory insurance or in a special parental leave.

Two thirds of the course fees are promoted. The maximum amount of recognisable course fees is EUR 10 000 per participant and application. Half of the financing comes from *AMS* and ESF funds each.

In accordance with the stated goals of the National Plan of Action for Employment, the *AMS* offers qualification possibilities particularly to the physically or mentally disabled, long-term unemployed, older people and young people looking for work. The forms of CVET opportunities are diverse; three of them should be mentioned here:

Since the mid-1980s, the work foundation (*Arbeitsstiftung*) is one of the tools used in Austria to promote CVET for specific economic sectors. Currently three different types of work foundations may be distinguished: business foundations, sectoral foundations,

and regional insolvency foundations. The following groups of unemployed people are entitled to take part in one of these work foundations:

- business foundations: former employees of a specific enterprise where many jobs have been shed
- sectoral foundations: former employees of a specific economic branch; participation is open to all dismissed persons employed in the respective sector across Austria
- regional insolvency foundation: former employees of insolvent enterprises

Participants can stay in the work foundation for three to five years. This allows them to take part in comprehensive CVET measures or combine different measures. During this period they are entitled to draw vocational training unemployment benefit (*Ausbildungsarbeitslosengeld*) and a scholarship. Work foundations are offered across the country.

Foundation-similar measures (*Stiftungsähnliche Maßnahmen*) are related to work foundations. They are designed for a particular target group, such as women, unemployed people, etc. In contrast to work foundations, however, there exists no legal entitlement to admission. Foundation-like measures have a maximum duration of two to three years. Participants are entitled to a subsistence benefit. In general it can be noted that work foundations and foundation-like measures have similar features as regards content (the only differences concern the target groups addressed by the measures):

- First of all, participants attend a vocational guidance course;
- this is followed by VET or CVET activities; these can consist also of a combination of various measures and include work placements; at the same time, they are assisted by the provider of the foundation;
- finally, there follows the phase of active job hunt: participants take part in an intensive job application training programme and are provided support in the job hunt.

Another tool to promote CVET is the composite skills training model (*Qualifizierungsverbund*), which consists of at least three independent enterprises that develop a tailored skills training scheme for their staff and co-ordinate its implementation. The measures are conducted by external providers, with one enterprise taking over the central project co-ordination. For setting up and implementing such composite skills training models, the AMS provides intensive process support and, in addition, financial assistance. The main support criterion is that the persons taking part in the skilling programme are employees in employment. Persons on childcare leave (*Karenz*) and apprentices are also eligible.

As regards participation rates, the average number of recipients of AMS funds amounted to more than 304 000 in 2007. Slightly more than 45% or nearly 140 000 of them were women (cf. Table 1).

Table 1: Average number of recipients of AMS funds 2005 and 2007						
	2005			2007		
	TOTAL	WOMEN	MEN	TOTAL	WOMEN	MEN

Unemployment benefits	129 402	52 389	76 563	114 468	48 863	65 605
Unemployment assistance	96 512	39 430	57 082	85 181	35 045	50 137
Social pension insurance	2 311	2 082	229	2 591	2 344	247
Transition benefits	5 169	3 976	1 193	7 432	5 915	1 517
FURTHER TRAINING BENEFITS:						
for paid educational leave	1 317	900	417	1.054	652	402
for unpaid leave scheme	41	31	10	55	13	42
Old-age part-time scheme	34 904	16 453	18 451	27 784	12 791	14 992
Advance on pension benefits	21 502	7 845	13 657	19 447	7 016	12 430
Continued payment of unemployment benefits for duration of programme	11 602	6 064	5 538	12 592	7 157	5 436
Continued payment of unemployment assistance	14 206	6 598	7 608	14 286	6 945	7 341
Others, i.e. family hospice leave, labour foundations	19 323	11 306	8 018	19 651	12 607	7 044
SUM TOTAL	336 289	147 524	188 766	304 541	139 348	165 193

Source: AMS 2008

The AMS training activities are under special public legitimisation due to the public-law regulated character of the procurement of funds. Some non-university research institutes with a high degree of specialisation conduct surveys on the demand for skills and evaluation studies. They evaluate:

- large-scale labour market policy projects including training measures

- regional composite skills training models with a sectoral focus
- specific types of courses, such as commercially oriented courses in a region
- general problems connected with skills training measures and the labour market integration of women in the growing ICT sector
- selected foundation-like measures to integrate long-term unemployed people
- a comprehensive analysis, comparison and evaluation of training measures aiming at labour market integration

Within the framework of the nation-wide quality assurance management the introduction of a professional complaint management at the AMS was set up under the name of *ams.help*. Under this quality assurance project, the post of an ombudsman was established in every Land to define binding response and handling periods and conduct ongoing quality assurance.

Providers conducting training measures commissioned by the AMS are expected to have implemented a quality assurance scheme to support the needs-oriented progress of the measure. The AMS itself is obliged to examine the realisation of the measure and monitor it in order to be able to react to any untoward developments.

0504 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES OR SOCIAL PARTNERS

In Austria enterprise learning is generally split into two areas: initial vocational education and training, i.e. apprenticeship training (*Lehre*) and enterprise CVET (*betriebliche Weiterbildung*). While the apprenticeship training system is regulated by law to a great degree, this applies only to a segment of enterprise CVET: Traditionally, the latter includes CVET measures within the framework of master craftsperson or certified welders courses, most recently also ICT certificates under this category. However, the majority of enterprise CVET programmes is not regulated by law – neither in structure not in terms of outcomes.

The term “enterprise CVET” is not used uniformly either: In the majority of cases, it is understood as the entire range of internal measures financed and organised by the company as well as the external courses where employees take part. Different surveys show that enterprise CVET constitutes the most frequent form of organised learning of the workforce. In a late 2000 survey, more than 30% stated that they participated “frequently” in enterprise CVET; similar values were obtained in the company survey within the framework of CVTS-2.

All relevant surveys show correlations of CVET to structural variables of the enterprises (size, sector).

The breakdown by sectors reveals that participation in CVET courses differs greatly in the manufacturing and services sectors. This underlines the heterogeneous character of the growth of services in terms of knowledge intensity and skills needs. The enterprises in the financial sector indicated that more than 50% of people in employment took part in course-form events during working hours in 1999. This course-form CVET rate is at more than 40% also in the energy supply sector, in companies trading with motor vehicles, and in transport/telecommunication engineering. In manufacturing, vehicle construction achieved the highest CVET rate.

The company size – independent of sector – has a separate effect in terms of enterprise CVET. Pronounced differences can be found between large enterprises, which as a rule carry out internal training programmes as HR development tools. On average 81% of all Austrian enterprises provided any type of CVET to their employees in 2005. Not only 99% of the large companies (more than 250 employees) are active in CVET courses, but also four-fifths of the small companies are training enterprises (cf. Table 1).

Table 1: Training enterprises as % of all enterprises, by size class (1999 and

2005)								
	SIZE CLASS (NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES)							
	TOTAL (%)		10 TO 49 (%)		50 TO 249 (%)		250+ (%)	
	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2
EU-27	60	-	55	-	78	-	91	-
EU-25	61	61	56	56	80	80	92	95
AUSTRIA	81	72	79	68	91	91	99	96

Note: 'Training enterprise' are enterprises that did provide any type of continuing vocational training to their employees;

Source: Eurostat; Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS2, 1999 and CVTS3, 2005); date of extraction: 23/06/2008

All Austrian social partners have established their own CVET institutions. They are organised as non-profit education and training establishments and are open to all interested persons and for all topics that are of economic relevance. The social partners co-operate in labour market policies also with the Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*). Moreover, the activities of the social partners include measures in the field of *Fachhochschule* programmes. They run *Fachhochschule* programmes either alone or in co-operation with other establishments. The social partners were also active in the introduction of the *Berufsreifeprüfung, BRP*, which aims to facilitate access to higher education for skilled workers and graduates of three- and four-year VET schools (*berufbildenden mittleren Schulen*).

1. CVET AT THE EMPLOYER'S, PARENT/ASSOCIATE COMPANY, EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS'

Companies are frequent venues of adult learning: courses within the enterprise, at supplier firms, and at the parent company are an increasingly important type of vocational qualification.

In terms of organisation, enterprise CVET ranges from learning in the workplace to specialised educational measures implemented by the company. A characteristic feature of enterprise CVET is the division of the costs between employers and employees. Course fees are usually covered by the employer, the time for the training is provided by the employee.

2. CVET AT THE PROVIDER INSTITUTIONS OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

The *Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI*, operated by the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (*Wirtschaftskammer Österreich*), on the employers' side, targets its education effort at apprentices, skilled workers and executives. The courses it offers range from management and business administration to self-development and languages as well as courses for particular industries. Since the second half of the 1990s, the *WIFIs* have run *Fachhochschule* programmes focussing on technology and business. The *WIFIs'* offer is rounded off by the *WIFI* specialist colleges (*WIFI-*

Fachakademien), foreperson courses (*Werkmeisterschulen*), bridge courses (*Vorbereitungslehrgänge*) and preparatory courses for exams e.g. *Berufsreifeprüfung*, tailor-made in-company CVET as well as educational counselling.

The *Berufsförderungsinstitut, bfi* is the CVET institution of the Chambers of Labour (*Kammern für Arbeiter und Angestellte*) and the Austrian Trade Union Federation (*Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund*) on the employees' side. The programmes on offer cover self-development and management, data processing, secretarial and business studies, languages, courses in health and welfare occupations, preparatory courses for officially recognised examinations, such as the higher education entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung*) and the *Berufsreifeprüfung*, and educational and training measures for people who are unemployed or who face the threat of unemployment. The bfi also runs post-secondary VET courses (*Kollegs*) and provides *Fachhochschule* courses.

The *Ländliche Fortbildungsinstitut, LFI* is the training enterprise of the Chambers of Agriculture (*Landwirtschaftskammern*). The training programme offered by the *LFI*, as well as covering all the traditional farming and forestry specialisation, also includes protection of the natural environment, self-development, health and nutrition, data processing, building, energy and agricultural engineering, service provision and income diversification. The range of educational services extends from practical training courses, educational courses and seminars to lectures and public discussions, study groups and visits to farms and other businesses. The *LFI* likewise provides preparatory courses for the *Berufsreifeprüfung*.

0505 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Individual adults have different motivations to engage in CVET activities. Both job-related and non-job-related reasons are of relevance and often hard to distinguish. A number of surveys on CVET have been conducted but there is still a lack of data on general motivations for participating. Statistical data show that participation in CVET depends greatly on age and educational attainment.

Table 1: Participation in CVET in the last four weeks – average 2007, 09/04/2008 (in 1 000)

CRITERIA	POPULATION 15+	VISITED COURSES	ACCORDING TO PURPOSE	
			JOB- RELATED	PRIVATE
TOTAL	6,905.1	621.3	334.9	286.5
AGE				
15-19	483.0	66.4	17.6	48.8
20-24	507.2	59.0	33.2	25.8

25-29	529.3	64.1	38.3	25.7
30-34	549.6	68.0	42.1	26.0
35-39	664.6	76.9	49.9	27.0
40-44	712.5	80.1	51.2	28.9
45-49	644.4	71.8	46.5	25.4
50-54	537.7	52.8	34.2	18.5
55-59	494.1	31.9	16.8	15.1
60-64	428.6	21.7	3.8	18.0
65+	1,354.0	28.7	1.3	27.2
HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
COMPULSORY SCHOOL (PFLICHTSCHULE)	1,954.4	99.6	34.9	64.7
APPRENTICESHIP (LEHRE)	2,464.4	164.0	100.4	63.5
VET SCHOOL (BERUFSBILDENDE MITTLERE SCHULE, BMS)	857.2	94.5	52.3	42.2
GENERAL HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOOL (ALLGEMEIN BILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE, AHS)	423.1	49.7	21.5	28.2

VET COLLEGE (BERUFSBILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE, BHS)	540.2	75.9	42.1	33.8
FACHHOCHSCHULE	123.9	33.4	20.7	12.7
UNIVERSITY	541.9	104.2	62.9	41.3

Source: Statistic Austria, microcensus-labour census (*Arbeitskräfteerhebung*), issued at: 09/04/2008

06 - TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

0601 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN VET

Within the area of IVET, instructors at schools and universities (cf. Theme 4, IVET) are referred to as teachers (*Lehrer*), while instructors within the framework of the company-based segment of apprenticeship training (*Lehre*) are called IVET trainers (*Ausbilder*). In CVET, instructors in school-based and university-based CVET are likewise called teachers. In non-school-based and non-university-based CVET (cf. Theme 5, CVET) instructors are commonly referred to as CVET trainers (Trainer) or course instructors (*Kursleiter*).

The main difference between teachers (in IVET and CVET) and IVET trainers is that teachers must complete a teacher training course at university or a university college of education (*Pädagogische Hochschule, PH*). IVET trainers are required to have certain professional qualifications and have to pass an oral examination in front of a commission or attend a 40-hour trainer course. No specific training is required for CVET trainers.

Teacher and trainer arrangements (curriculum development, examination regulations, quality monitoring etc.) in IVET and in school- and university-based CVET are regulated by the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*) and the university or, respectively, university college of education. Non-school- and –university-based CVET is not regulated by law. Hence, teacher and trainer arrangements are determined by the individual CVET provider.

Table 1: Recognised teaching and training occupations in VET: upper secondary levels

VET PROVIDER	TYPES OF INSTRUCTORS	FORMAL QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	ROLES
INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING – UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL			
VET schools and	teachers of	teacher training	- selection of

colleges (<i>berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen, BMHS, cf. 0403</i>)	general education subjects	course at a university in the respective subject and a one-year teaching internship at a school	exact contents of lessons and pedagogical-didactic approach - involvement in curriculum development - assessment
	teachers of craft-specific theoretical subjects	craft-specific university diploma course; for some subjects two years of practical experience in industry	
	teachers of craft-specific practical subjects	university college of education	
Part-time vocational schools for apprentices (<i>Berufsschulen, BS, cf. 0404</i>)	teachers of general education subjects	university college of education	- selection of exact contents of lessons and pedagogical-didactic approach - involvement in curriculum development - assessment
	teachers of craft-specific theoretical subjects		
	teachers of craft-specific practical subjects		

Table 2: Recognised teaching and training occupations in IVET: post secondary and tertiary levels

VET PROVIDER	TYPES OF INSTRUCTORS	FORMAL QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	ROLES
Companies – company-based part of apprenticeship	IVET trainers	professional qualification in an apprenticeship (<i>Lehrberuf</i>), IVET trainer	- selection of training methods - involvement

(cf. 0404)		examination (<i>Ausbilderprüfung</i>) or IVET trainer course (<i>Ausbilderkurs</i>)	in reforms of training regulations
INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING – POST-SECONDARY LEVEL			
VET colleges (<i>Akademien</i> , cf. 0406)	teachers	Vocationally- specific university diploma course or vocationally- specific post- secondary VET college	- selection of exact contents of lessons and pedagogical- didactic approach - involvement in curriculum development - assessment
VET courses (<i>Kollegs</i> , cf. 0406)	teachers of general education subjects	teacher training course at a university in the respective subject and a one-year teaching internship at a school	- selection of exact contents of lessons and pedagogical- didactic approach - involvement in curriculum development - assessment
	teachers of craft- specific theoretical subjects	craft-specific university diploma course; for some subjects two years of practical experience in industry	
	teachers of craft- specific practical subjects	university college of education	
INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING – TERTIARY LEVEL			
University (cf. 0407)	university professor (<i>Universitätsprofessor</i>) University lecturer	university diploma course, PhD and	- selection of exact contents of

	(<i>Universitätslektor</i>) university assistant (<i>Universitätsassistent</i>), scientific staff at university (<i>wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter</i>)	professorial thesis	lessons and pedagogical- didactic approach - involvement in curriculum development - assessment
<i>Fachhochschule</i> (cf. 0407)	<i>Fachhochschule</i> professor <i>Fachhochschule</i> lecturer		

Table 3: Recognised teaching and training occupations CVET

VET PROVIDER	TYPES OF INSTRUCTORS	FORMAL QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	ROLES
CONTINUOUS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING			
School- and university-based CVET (cf. Theme 5)	cf. teacher types at IVET	cf. teacher types at IVET	- selection of exact contents of lessons and pedagogical-didactic approach - involvement in curriculum development - assessment
Non-school and – university-based CVET (cf. Theme 5)	not regulated	not regulated	- selection of contents and pedagogical-didactic approach - assessment

The passing of the University Colleges of Education Act (*Bundesgesetz über die Organisation der Pädagogischen Hochschulen und ihre Studien*) in 2005 marked the most comprehensive reform in the area of VET teacher and trainer training within the past five years. On the basis of this act the existing 51 institutions involved in the pre- and in-service training of teachers had to be merged to 14 university colleges of education until October 2007. At these new institutes the accreditation programme for secondary school teachers is completed after six semesters (180 ECTS-Credits) with the Bachelor of Education degree, and there are various in-service training paths leading to academic credential (including Master study programmes in pertinent professional areas).

0602 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET

Table 1 gives an overview of the types of teachers, trainers and training facilitators in IVET and their place of work:

Table 1: Types of teachers, trainers and training facilitators in IVET: upper secondary and post secondary levels	
VET PROVIDER – PLACE OF WORK	TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS
INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING – UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL	
VET schools and colleges (<i>berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen, BMHS</i> , cf. 0403)	teachers of general education subjects
	teachers of craft-specific theoretical subjects
	teachers of craft-specific practical subjects
Part-time vocational schools for apprentices (<i>Berufsschulen, BS</i> , cf. 0404)	teachers of general education subjects
	teachers of craft-specific theoretical subjects
	teachers of craft-specific practical subjects
Companies – company-based part of apprenticeship (cf. 0404)	IVET trainers
INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING – POST-SECONDARY LEVEL	
Post-secondary VET colleges (<i>Akademien</i> , cf. 0406)	teachers
Post-secondary VET courses (<i>Kollegs</i> ,	teachers of general education

cf. 0406)	subjects
	teachers of craft-specific theoretical subjects
	teachers of craft-specific practical subjects

Table 2: Types of teachers, trainers and training facilitators in IVET: tertiary level

VET PROVIDER – PLACE OF WORK	TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINER AND TRAINING FACILITATORS
INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING – TERTIARY LEVEL	
University (cf. 0407)	university professor (<i>Universitätsprofessor</i>) University lecturer (<i>Universitätslektor</i>) university assistant (<i>Universitätsassistent</i>), scientific staff at university (<i>wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter</i>)
<i>Fachhochschule</i> (cf. 0407)	<i>Fachhochschule</i> professor <i>Fachhochschule</i> lecturer

1. PRE-SERVICE (INITIAL) TRAINING

TEACHERS AT VET SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Teachers at VET schools and colleges are subject area specialists. The nature of training courses and admission requirements depend on the subjects to be taught. Pre-service training of teachers of general education subjects takes place at university. Study programmes consist of two subject areas, pedagogical training and a period of practical training. In addition, teachers of general subjects must undergo one year of teaching practice before being entitled to join a school. Teachers of some craft-specific theoretical subjects at VET schools and colleges have to have professional experience in the relevant area in addition to university training. Special training is provided for teachers of practical subjects and teachers of some theoretical subjects in VET schools in university colleges of education. At the end of training a thesis must be written. The training is completed by taking a diploma examination, which leads to a Master's degree at university and a Bachelor degree at university colleges of education.

TEACHERS AT PART-TIME VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS FOR APPRENTICES

Part-time vocational school teachers are trained at university colleges of education. Teachers of general, business studies and theoretical subjects have to have the *Reifeprüfung* certificate (school leaver's examination of higher general education schools [*allgemein bildenden höheren Schulen*]) or the *Reifeprüfung* certificate and VET diploma (school leaver's examination of VET colleges [*berufsbildenden höheren*

Schulen]) and two years of professional experience. Teachers teaching practical subjects must have a master craftsman certificate (*Meisterprüfung*) as a professional qualification or an equivalent certificate and six years of relevant professional experience.

IVET TRAINERS FOR THE COMPANY-BASED SEGMENT OF APPRENTICESHIP

The pre-service training of IVET trainers is regulated by the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz*, cf. 0301), which stipulates that enterprises providing apprenticeship training must employ at least one responsible trainer. The first prerequisite for training apprentices is proof of specialist knowledge and skills in the relevant apprenticeship. Evidence of these is a successful final apprenticeship examination (*Lehrabschlussprüfung*) or the successful completion of a VET school or college. Proof of at least two years of professional experience following certification is also required. The second prerequisite is the successful completion of the trainer examination (*Ausbilderprüfung*). This exam takes place orally and establishes whether the required level of knowledge and skills for apprenticeship training are present and whether they can be applied in practice. This comprises the specification of training objectives, the planning of the apprenticeship training provided by the business, as well as the preparation, implementation and monitoring of training, behaviour towards the apprentice and questions pertaining to legal groundwork. Since 1997, successful completion of a forty-hour trainer course (*Ausbilderkurs*) completed with a conversation of a vocation-specific nature about pedagogic, legal and methodical issues has been equivalent to completion of the trainer examination.

TEACHERS AT POST-SECONDARY VET COURSES AND COLLEGES

The teaching staff at post-secondary VET courses possesses the same qualifications profiles as teachers in VET schools and colleges. The basic requirement for teaching as a post-secondary VET college is generally either a completed craft-specific *Fachhochschule* course or university course or a completed course at a craft-specific post-secondary VET college. The exact admission requirements vary depending on the type of post-secondary VET college as well as on the subject.

TEACHERS AT *FACHHOCHSCHULE* AND UNIVERSITY COURSES

Instructors at *Fachhochschule* and university courses possess a craft-specific university or *Fachhochschule* degree as well as a PhD degree. For teaching at universities and *Fachhochschule* courses, the pedagogic-didactic experience and suitability of instructors must be determined. Within the framework of working as a contractual teacher (*Lehrbeauftragter*) or scientific staff (*wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter*) personal suitability for teaching can be determined and experience can be gathered.

2. CONTINUING, IN-SERVICE TRAINING

TEACHERS AT VET SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Teachers at VET schools and colleges are legally bound to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. How they obtain the requisite knowledge is their own choice. The in-service training of teachers takes place primarily at university colleges of education. The content and teaching methods are continuously updated to reflect the latest developments in education theory and in industry and commerce.

TEACHERS AT PART-TIME VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS FOR APPRENTICES

Teachers at these schools are required by law to attend a total of at least 15 hours of organised in-service training every year. The in-service training of teachers takes place primarily at university colleges of education. The content and teaching methods are continuously updated to reflect the latest developments in education theory and in industry and commerce.

IVET TRAINERS FOR THE COMPANY-BASED SEGMENT OF APPRENTICESHIP

There are no legal regulations concerning the professional and pedagogic further training of IVET trainers. It occurs on a voluntary basis and depends on the size of the business and the company culture.

TEACHERS AT POST-SECONDARY VET COURSES AND COLLEGES

As regards CVET, the situation is the same as for VET school and college teachers.

TEACHERS AT *FACHHOCHSCHULE* AND UNIVERSITY COURSES

CVET for teachers at university and *Fachhochschule* courses is focussed mainly on professional content. New findings in the respective fields are either self-studied continuously or taken from subject literature, conferences and conventions.

0603 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

Table 1 gives an overview of the types of teachers, trainers and training facilitators in CVET and their place of work:

Table 1: Teachers, trainers and training facilitators in CVET	
VET PROVIDER – PLACE OF WORK	TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS
SCHOOL-BASED CVET	
VET schools for employed people (<i>berufsbildende mittlere Schulen für Berufstätige</i>); special forms of VET schools: Foreman courses (<i>Werkmeisterschulen</i>), Master Craftsman Courses (<i>Meisterschulen und Meisterklassen</i>), Construction Craft Schools (<i>Bauhandwerkschulen</i>)	teachers of general education subjects
	teachers of craft-specific theoretical subjects
	teachers of craft-specific practical subjects
VET colleges for employed people (<i>berufsbildende höhere Schulen für Berufstätige</i>); special forms of VET colleges: Post-Secondary VET courses (<i>Kollgs</i>), add-On courses (<i>Aufbaulehrgänge</i>), specialised further training courses (<i>Speziallehrgänge</i>)	teachers of general education subjects
	teachers of craft-specific theoretical subjects
	teachers of craft-specific practical subjects
UNIVERSITY-BASED CVET (CVET AT UNIVERSITIES OR IN CO-OPERATION WITH UNIVERSITIES)	

CVET university courses (<i>Universitätslehrgänge</i>)	teachers
NON-SCHOOL-BASED AND NON-UNIVERSITY-BASED CVET	
Instructors in non-school-based and non-university-based CVET in non-profit and profit-oriented CVET institutions as well as in companies	trainers, course instructors

1. PRE-SERVICE (INITIAL) TRAINING

SCHOOL-BASED CVET

The pre-service training of CVET teachers in schools for employed people corresponds to those of IVET teachers in VET schools and colleges (cf. 0602). For teaching in the special forms of VET schools, the attendance of a university college of education (*Pädagogische Hochschule, PH*) is required. For teaching in the special forms of VET colleges, the completion of a subject-relevant university course or (for specific subjects) the attendance of a university college of education is required.

UNIVERSITY-BASED CVET

Teachers at CVET university courses usually have a Master's degree in the subject they teach or, additionally, a PhD degree. However, some teachers do not have a university degree but have attended a subject-specific school (e.g. a VET college or post-secondary VET college) and have also gained work experience. They are often entrepreneurs or in a leading position within the respective field. Scientific heads of CVET university courses (university professors) have a university degree and a PhD degree in the respective discipline.

NON-SCHOOL AND NON-UNIVERSITY-BASED CVET

There are no explicit rules governing the training in CVET provider institutions or in companies. Applicants are primarily expected to possess specialised know-how. Languages, for example, are often taught by teachers of modern languages with university or post-secondary college training, while data-processing classes are frequently given by specialists with occupational experience. There are opportunities for teachers of adult-education classes to attend induction courses in education theory and teaching methods, but there is no obligation to undergo such training. There are no standard admission requirements neither. The basic requirement always includes widespread expertise in the subject which is taught.

2. CONTINUING, IN-SERVICE TRAINING

SCHOOL-BASED CVET

The further training of school-based CVET teachers corresponds to the further training of IVET teachers at VET schools and colleges. It takes place at university colleges of education, which have specific departments for VET teachers.

UNIVERSITY-BASED CVET

There are not specific CVET offers for teachers at CVET university courses. They can benefit from the same training programmes that are offered to non-school based and non-university based CVET instructors.

NON-SCHOOL AND NON-UNIVERSITY-BASED CVET

In-service training is unregulated, but CVET institutions usually offer seminars for their teaching staff. The Adult Education Act (*Erwachsenenbildungs-Förderungsgesetz*) of 1973 (cf. 0301) established the legal basis for the creation of an in-service training establishment for teaching staff in the field of adult education, namely the Federal Institute for Adult Education (*Bundesinstitut für Erwachsenenbildung, bifeb*), which is under the authority of the Federal Ministry of Education.

07 - SKILLS AND COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGY

0701 - MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS

The Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*) is the foremost promoter of instruments and methods designed to assist in the assessment of skill requirements. These instruments and methods include:

- skills need analyses for particular economic sectors, target groups, etc.
- the qualification barometer (*Qualifikations-Barometer*) created by the AMS in 2002 (cf. <http://www.ams.at/qualifikationsbarometer>), in which information on the skills deemed most desirable by businesses at the present time and in the foreseeable future is collected, structured and made accessible to the general public through the Internet,
- the AMS research network, which enables numerous Austrian research institutes to exchange information and services to harness the synergy generated by their interaction, and
- an annual colloquium on future skills requirements, at which specific issues such as skills shortages in health and welfare, the training needs of young people and of older employees etc. are discussed with representatives of the national business and labour organisations.

0702 - BRIDGING PATHWAYS AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Bridging different types and levels of education is realised in various ways in Austria:

1. Vocational education and training (VET) and higher education (HE)

- *Berufsreifepfung, BRP* (an examination through which individuals who already have an initial vocational qualification, such as those who have successfully completed an apprenticeship [*Lehre*] or a course at a VET school [*berufsbildende mittlere Schule*], obtain an entrance qualification for higher education by passing certain tests)
- higher education entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung, SBP*)
- recognition of professional qualifications

2. General education (GE)/VET and HE:

- *Studienberechtigungsprüfung, SBP*

3. Education – economy/labour market

- Training firms (*Übungsfirmen*)
- JUNIOR companies

1. VET AND HE

BERUFSREIFEPRÜFUNG, BRP

Introduced in 1997, the BRP represents a significant development in increasing the permeability of the educational system, giving graduates of apprenticeships, VET schools or nursing and health-care schools the opportunity to gain access to higher education. Formally, it can be categorised as a school leaver's examination (*Reifeprüfung*) at an upper secondary school. Partial examinations may also be taken in recognised preparatory courses at adult education establishments. However, at least one of the four partial examinations must be completed at an upper level secondary school or college. Preparatory courses for the BRP have different durations; depending on the provider and the subject, they may take up to four semesters. The costs for the participation in preparatory courses are the responsibility of the participants. Subsidies are available from regional governments and the social partners in various forms, and can cover up to half of the participation costs for the course.

STUDIENBERECHTIGUNGSPRÜFUNG, SBP

For more information cf. point 2 "GE/VET and HE".

RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Professional qualifications replace the required proof of the general university entrance qualification for accessing *Fachhochschule* programmes (university-level programmes of at least three years' duration with technical-vocational orientation). Whenever the educational goal of the programme in question so requires, entrants with professional qualifications must furnish evidence of additional examinations.

2. GE/VET AND HE

STUDIENBERECHTIGUNGSPRÜFUNG, SBP

Another possibility of gaining limited-access qualifications for higher education is the higher education entrance examination (SBP). This exam consists of five parts (compulsory and elective subjects); the former are specified for the study course in question. As a preparation for the different exams, bridge courses are offered against payment by adult learning institutions and universities.

3. EDUCATION – ECONOMY/LABOUR MARKET

TRAINING FIRMS (ÜBUNGSFIRMEN)

Training firms are mock-ups of real enterprises which are designed to provide students with an insight into the complex structure and operational procedures of real companies. They have to be established and used for teaching purposes at all schools and colleges of business administration (*Handelsschulen and Handelsakademien*). In training firms students are presented with the various trade-specific business situations ranging from the procurement over the rendering of a service up to sales. The necessary commercial and administrative steps have to be taken with regard to the respective commercial customs and in compliance with legal regulations. Goods and services just as money are merely virtual, though. Interdisciplinary, action-, problem- as well as practice-oriented education in training firms aims at providing students with an insight into intra- and inter-operational procedures. The acquisition of key qualifications (e.g. the ability to work in teams, interdisciplinary thinking, language skills) enhances the graduates' mobility and flexibility in the world of work.

JUNIOR COMPANIES

"Junior" companies are founded within the framework of the project "Junior – pupils found companies" set up by the Austrian Economics Society (*Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft Österreich*). In contrast to the training firms, the founding and running of a company is not simulated, but actually takes place. Real goods or services are made available, requiring the use of real capital. The "Junior" companies are not fixed as part of school curricula and are voluntary, but are declared as a school-related activity in higher general education schools (*allgemein bildenden höheren Schulen*, cf. 0402) and pre-vocational schools (*Polytechnischen Schulen*, cf. 0402).

0703 - RENEWAL OF CURRICULA

VET SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (BERUFSBILDENDE MITTLERE UND HÖHERE SCHULEN, BMHS)

Training objectives and course content at VET schools and colleges are prescribed in framework curricula. These are enacted by the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*). Moves to reform the curricula, introduce new subjects, specialisations or new elements (e.g. e-learning elements) are initiated by the educational institutions themselves or by the Ministry. In the framework of bodies known as *Lehrplankommissionen*, teachers and experts from the Ministry and from the business community design curricula for the various teaching subjects. Like numerous other institutions, the social partners receive the drafts and are asked for their opinion. When they implement the framework curricula, schools and colleges have a degree of autonomy, which they can exercise by adjusting the number of hours assigned to individual subjects or by developing their own areas of special focus in order to meet the needs of the regional economy.

APPRENTICESHIP (LEHRE)

Training profiles (*Berufsbilder*) are enacted by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit, BMWA*) in the framework of the relevant training regulation (*Ausbildungsordnung*, cf. 0301). Moves to adapt existing

profiles or introduce new sets of descriptors are often initiated by companies or by the representative bodies of employers and employees. The Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship (*Bundes-Berufsausbildungsbeirat, BBAB*, cf. 0302) also makes proposals or compiles expert reports on proposed reforms. The actual formulation of the occupational descriptors is generally done by subcommittees of the Federal Advisory Board or by the educational research institutes of the employers' and employees' bodies, namely the *ibw*, the Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the Austrian Economy, and the *öibf*, the Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Education and Training.

08 - ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATING LEARNING

0801 - ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING FORMAL LEARNING

Regulated occupations play an important role in the Austrian labour market and are associated with entitlements and salary schemes. Access occurs through training in a dual system, in a vocational or academic secondary school or in the tertiary area. Degrees granting permission to perform regulated occupations and trades are nationally recognised.

The main legal bases concerning the objectives and contents of education, final examinations and entitlements are the School Organisation Act (*Schulorganisationsgesetz, SchOG*) and the School Education Act (*Schulunterrichtsgesetz, SchUG*) containing regulations for VET schools and colleges (*berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen, BMHS*) and for part-time schools for apprentices (*Berufsschulen*) as well as the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz, BAG*), which regulates apprenticeship training. The Trade, Commerce and Industry Regulation Act (*Gewerbeordnung*) plays also a very important role concerning the Austrian qualification system.

The principle of mobility and progression ("permeability") between vocational and general education and also between different types of vocational education and training plays an important role in Austria. The recognition of acquired skills and knowledge is seen as a "central principle of life-long learning" by the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*). Mobility and progression between the formally system should be increased. Therefore numerous measures provide mobility within education and training at a horizontal as well as vertical level.

HORIZONTAL TRANSFER BETWEEN GENERAL EDUCATION AND VET

The Vocational Training Act allows graduates of academic secondary schools (*allgemein bildende höhere Schulen, AHS*), of intermediate technical and vocational school, higher technical and vocational school or an apprenticeship in a dual system to complete a shortened apprenticeship in a different sector.

Responsible institution: Federal Ministry for Economics and Labour (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit, BMWA*)

On the basis of the School Organisation Act graduates of one-year pre-vocational schools (*Polytechnische Schule*) have the opportunity to transfer to the second class of an intermediate technical and vocational school in the same or similar vocational field.

Responsible institution: Education Ministry

HORIZONTAL TRANSFER OF QUALIFICATIONS BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF IVET

The School Education Act regulates the transfer from an intermediate technical and vocational school to the next level of a higher technical vocational school in the same vocational field. It requires adequate scholastic achievement.

Responsible institution: Education Ministry

In accordance with the Vocational Training Act graduates of higher technical and vocational school, intermediate technical and vocational school or an apprenticeship can complete a further apprenticeship, which will be shortened by one year. Skilled

workers have also the opportunity to take another final apprenticeship examination in an apprenticeship related to their first one.

Responsible institution: Economics Ministry

VERTICAL TRANSFER FROM IVET TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The *Fachhochschule* Studies Act (*Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz, FHStG*) recognises proven skills and knowledge and shortens the duration of the course of study. These skills can be credited to individual subjects or parts of a course of study. Likewise it is possible to begin the *Fachhochschule* without a *Reifeprüfung*, but with a record of a “relevant vocational qualification”, such as a degree from an apprenticeship etc.

Responsible institution: Education Ministry

The special university entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung*) gives permission to enter a specific field of study.

Responsible institution: Education Ministry

The *Berufsreifeprüfung* enables several groups of people to obtain the right to study in all fields of study at universities and *Fachhochschulen*.

Responsible institution: Education Ministry

VERTICAL TRANSFER FROM IVET TO CVET

The School Education Act for the Employed (*Schulunterrichtsgesetz für Berufstätige, SchUG-B*) grants people in employment who attend a vocational or general school the right to shorten the duration of their education by receiving credit for parts of a previously completed education.

Responsible institution: Education Ministry

The 2002 amendment to the Trade, Commerce and Industry Regulation Act introduced the modular system which credits skills and knowledge gained in school and in dual system education to the individual modules.

Responsible institution: Economics Ministry

The entrance to CVET university courses is regulated in the University Studies Act (*Universitätsgesetz*) 2002. Access is granted to people who do not have a *Reifeprüfung* but relevant vocational training.

Responsible institution: Education Ministry

VERTICAL TRANSFER FROM CVET TO HIGHER EDUCATION

According to the *Fachhochschule* Studies Act accreditation is possible if a course content of a completed continuing education course is identical with that of an academic course.

The distribution of competences among the various ministries presents a possible barrier to the development of initiatives concerning accumulating, accrediting and validating learning. The separation of vocational and general education continues in the competences of the ministries, although there are overlaps here:

- General adult education is located in the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur*).
- Educational schemes for adults are also financially supported by other ministries (Federal Ministry for Economics and Labour [*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit*], Federal Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection [*Bundesministerium für Soziales und Konsumentenschutz*], Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management [*Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft*] and by the Federal Ministry for Health, Family and Youth [*Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Familie und Jugend*]).

Other possible barriers are the lack of a uniform strategy and of a higher-level coordinating institution.

0802 - ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL LEARNING

As compared with other countries, the recognition of non-formal and informal learning has a subordinate status; the vocational education system is heavily oriented on initial education and training (IVET). Nonetheless, various ministries and institutions have a number of measures and initiatives for identifying and formally recognising competences that have been acquired through non-formal and informal learning.

Greater inclusion of competences acquired in informal learning processes has been discussed across sectors in connection with the modularisation of apprenticeship training in the dual system. In 2004, the health-care and social service sector achieved an agreement between the federal state and the provinces with regard to occupations in the social service field. The recognition of skills and knowledge acquired in the non-formal and informal contexts is a medium- to long-term goal of the health-care and social service sector.

Responsible for increasing mobility and progression towards validation of non-formal and informal learning are the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*) as well as the Federal Ministry for Economics and Labour (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit, BMWA*) in cooperation with the lobbies of the social partners at an informal level.

Possibilities for the recognition of vocational experience are provided primarily by access to examinations within the formal educational system and the attainment of certificates of competence.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

According to the School Education Act for the Employed (*Schulunterrichtsgesetz für Berufstätige, SchUG-B*) people in employment can enter at a higher level of an academic secondary school or higher technical and vocational school by completing an entry examination.

The *Fachhochschule* Studies Act enables those with relevant vocational qualifications to begin a course of study at a university of applied sciences even without a *Reifeprüfung*.

According to the University Studies Act (*Universitätsgesetz*) in addition to people with an academic degree also those without are able to participate if they can render a “proof of the requirements present in a CVET university course curriculum”.

Exceptional access to the final apprenticeship examination (*Lehrabschlussprüfung*).

The Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz, BAG*) enables access to the final apprenticeship examination for people without formal training (apprenticeship or school), and thus gives the possibility to acquire a formal vocational qualification. People must be over 18 years of age and furnish evidence that they have acquired the knowledge and skills required for the respective apprenticeship, e.g. by exercising a relevant semi-skilled or other practical activity of appropriate length or by attending relevant tuition at school.

BERUFSREIFEPRÜFUNG, BRP

The BRP is equivalent to the Matura certificate (school leaver’s certificate) at the upper secondary level. It qualifies for studying at post-secondary and tertiary educational institutions. In principle, the BRP can be taken without prior attendance of upper secondary schools. The BRP Act provides that relevant examinations can be taken also upon completion of specific courses recognised by the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, which are offered by adult learning institutions and are therefore not part of the public education system.

INSTRUCTOR/TRAINER EXAM (AUSBILDERPRÜFUNG)

According to the Vocational Training Act the only formal requirement for admission is proof of “legal capacity”.

Higher education entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung, SBP*)

Another possibility of gaining limited-access qualifications for entering post-secondary and tertiary education and training is the SBP (higher education entrance examination). As a preparation for the different exams, bridge courses are offered against payment by adult learning institutions and universities, but are not compulsory.

ACCESS TO FACHHOCHSCHULE PROGRAMMES

Professional qualifications may replace the required proof of the general university entrance qualification into *Fachhochschule* programmes (university-level programmes of at least three years' duration with technical-vocational orientation). Whenever the educational goal of the degree programme in question requires, entrants with professional qualifications must furnish evidence of additional examinations.

ACCESS TO OTHERS FORMS OF TRANSFER OF LEARNING IN ORDER TO OBTAIN FORMAL QUALIFICATION

According to the Trade, Commerce and Regulation Act (*Gewerbeordnung*) an individual qualifying examination can be attained through presentation of job references, confirmation of course attendance or similar documents.

Counselling and guidance on the validation and transfer of learning is offered by institutions active in the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences. Included among these institutions are the Apprenticeship Centres of the Chambers of Commerce for the apprenticeship examination as an external candidate and the organizing institutions of the individual pilot projects.

0803 - IMPACT OF EU POLICY COOPERATION

Austrian VET policy vigorously supports the creation of a European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) and of a European qualifications framework for lifelong learning (EQF).

In order to meet the EU aims there are several pilot projects carrying out the identification of non-formally and informally acquired competences. Some of them have contemplated possibilities for transferring records of competences into formally recognized degrees.

INSTITUTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Centre for the recognition of competences at the <i>Volkshochschule Linz (Kompetenzanerkennungszentrum der Volkshochschule Linz, KOMPAZ)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Carried out an EU project for identifying, recognizing and certifying social and communicative competences since 2001- Offers workshops for identifying non-formally and informally acquired competences.
Competence statement of competences at the <i>Zukunftszentrum Tirol (Kompetenzbilanz des Zukunftszentrum Tirol)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Surveys non-formally and informally acquired competences
Austrian <i>Volksbildungswerke</i> competence portfolio (<i>Kompetenzportfolio der Österreichischen Volksbildungswerke</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Identifies competences gained through voluntary work- A competence record is put together that is oriented toward applications for concrete job

	offers
EQUAL project “qualification strengthens” (EQUAL project “qualification stärkt”)	- Development of a language and qualification portfolio for immigrants through the project “House of Integration” (<i>Verein Projekt Integrationshaus</i>) and through <i>abz.austria</i> to support immigrants with degrees that are not recognized in Austria
EQUAL project “Job profiles and training programmes in health care and social services” (<i>Berufsbilder und Ausbildungen in den Gesundheits- und sozialen Diensten</i>)	- Dedicated to testing out an instrument for creating a competence statement in cooperation with <i>KOMPAZ</i> and <i>Kompetenzbilanz Tirol, Familien-kompetenzen</i>
Leonardo Project VQTS – Vocational Qualification Transfer System	- Facilitate international transfer of vocational qualifications through the development of a competence matrix, which allows identification of acquired competences and a competence profile in a specific qualifications area
“Pro Mobility”: Project of the Austrian Economic Chamber (<i>Österreichische Wirtschaftskammer, WKO</i>)	- To promote qualifying mobility according to ECVET within quantitative and qualitative aspects

0804 - FACILITATING EU MOBILITY

Numerous bilateral and multilateral initiatives have been launched to give young people the necessary grounding for life in the age of globalisation.

In the context of projects coordinated by Austrian institutes, innovative methods and models have and will be developed, i.e. a certification model with standards for CVET in the area of media (Your Future – Your Profit) and a European “skills Card” for trained Innovation Managers.

For those who have completed an apprenticeship in Germany, Hungary or South Tyrol many vocational degrees are considered equivalent, which means that the examination certificates are automatically recognized. For the remaining trades and occupations, it is necessary to apply for a grant of equivalence of the apprenticeship examination (*Lehrabschlussprüfung*).

The recognition of a foreign degree as completion of a regular Austrian course of study is called “*Nostrifikation*” (validation). In the university area, the Austrian Information Centre is responsible for validation. In addition credit can also be given for individual parts of an apprenticeship, job-related training or university study.

The School Instruction Act provides the opportunity for pupils to attend a school abroad for up to one year and subsequently continue the school year in Austria without having to sit an examination.

At the tertiary level mobility is even more promoted. The introduction of ECTS has facilitated the mechanisms for credit transfer in this area. Numerous students make also use of the Erasmus programme.

Since the online publication of www.europass.at, the awareness of the programme of the Europass documents has risen steadily. To obtain the Europass Mobility the applicant must register online at www.europass-mobilitaet.at. Sending and host organizations and interns can enter their data. Until June 2006 1 350 registrations were recorded. Certificate supplements have been developed in the context of the Europass initiative in order to increase the transparency of vocational qualifications.

In order to standardise quality assurance in personnel certification across Europe, the norm EN 45013 has been introduced at the European level. The certificate confirms that its holder has adequate qualifications in a clearly defined vocational area. For an institute to be allowed to certify the required conformity, it must receive accreditation from the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit, BMWA*) according to the Austrian Accreditation Act (*Akkreditierungsgesetz*). Accredited certification institutions currently provide certification primarily for personnel working in the areas of quality and environment management and specific technical areas. Certificates are valid for a time period of three to five years.

09 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR LEARNING, CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT

0901 - STRATEGY AND PROVISION

There is a wide variety of facilities and providers for information and counselling about VET possibilities in Austria:

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

Educational and vocational counselling in the school sector is primarily the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur*). From grade 5 onwards, pupils and parents have access to educational counsellors in all schools, i.e. higher general education schools (*allgemein bildenden höheren Schulen*), general education schools (*Hauptschulen*) and special needs schools (*Sonderschulen*). These counsellors are responsible for informing them about the range of educational paths, the relevant entry requirements and the final qualifications gained by means of information materials and various media. Additionally, they are responsible for providing them with an all-encompassing overview of possibilities in CVET. The counselling is performed by teaching staff with relevant training, as a supplementary service to normal teaching duties. Depending on the type of school, these teachers are known as guidance counsellors (*Schülerberater*) or educational consultants (*Bildungsberater*).

In grades 7 and 8 the subject vocational guidance (*Berufsorientierung*) with 32 hours per year is mandatory. It can be taught as a separate subject or be integrated into several subjects. It supports the students in reflecting their interests and aptitudes, their ideas about shaping their future personal and career lives. It also provides for actual contact to real working life, e.g. through practical training sessions in companies, meetings with people from the world of work, etc.

Students' counselling at pre-vocational schools (*Polytechnischen Schulen*, cf. 0402) is of special interest, as this school type is at the transition between compulsory school and further educational pathways. Thus, school students and parents are informed about the local apprenticeship situation. In careers guidance lessons they are informed on and prepared for relevant information events, practical training sessions in companies, career fairs, information days at the CVET provider institute of the Economic Chamber (*Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI*, cf. 0504) and at the CVET provider of the Chamber of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Federation (*Berufsförderungsinstitut, bfi*, cf. 0504).

At the VET schools and colleges (*berufsbildenden mittleren und höheren Schulen*, cf. 0403) there are also specially trained teachers working as guidance counsellors. These counsellors play a special role, as on the one hand, at VET schools and colleges students have already made a first decision about their vocational career. On the other hand, these schools also provide for a good, general education, which leaves the whole spectrum of further careers open to the students. Therefore, careers counselling and guidance at these schools always integrate more intensive reflections on the preliminary career decision made.

TERTIARY SECTOR

In the tertiary sector most universities have psychological counselling centres for students (*Psychologische Beratungsstellen für Studierende*), which offer support to students as regards the choice of programme and life at university, as well as career planning centres (*Berufsplanungszentren*) that help students enter the labour market. Both organisations fall into the province of the Education Ministry.

The Ministry also maintains a university information service which publishes various information brochures to be downloaded on <http://www.bmukk.gv.at>. Moreover, it provides CD-ROMs, telephone information and legal aids for students and organises career fairs. The biggest career fair is the fair on jobs, education and further training (*Messe für Beruf, Studium und Weiterbildung - BeSt*). Hundreds of exhibitors from all educational spheres contribute to this fair, which is organised in cooperation with the Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*).

ADULT EDUCATION

In the area of adult education, career information, guidance and counselling are increasingly considered an important educational task. This has become obvious in the establishment of comprehensive educational databases (<http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at>, <http://www.eduvista.com>), in the formation of a national platform for educational counselling, and the arrangement of inter-institutional information and counselling services acting independently of the service providers.

Moreover, especially bigger adult education establishments often provide their own counselling services, e.g. the *WIFI*, the *bfi*, the Adult Education Centres (*Volkshochschulen, VHS*) etc.

COUNSELLING BY THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

The counselling service of the AMS is provided by the vocational information centres (*Berufsinformationszentren, BIZ*). Currently, there are 56 located throughout Austria, providing comprehensive information about jobs, their contents and requirements, IVET possibilities, the job market situation and CVET offers.

Besides comprehensive information materials such as brochures, information sheets, videos, etc., the *AMS* has introduced job information programmes for a variety of target groups and developed education and training databases, which are accessible on <http://www.ams.at/berufsinfo>.

EURES counsellors, supported by the EURES database, are also in place within the *AMS* to provide information about jobs and working conditions in other European countries.

COUNSELLING BY THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

The Chamber of Labour and the trade unions primarily offer counselling through their adult education establishment, the CVET provider institution (*Berufsförderungsinstitut, bfi*). Additionally, they produce information materials and organise information events.

The Economic Chambers, which also host the apprenticeship offices (*Lehrlingsstellen*) and the CVET provider institution *Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI*, focus on job-related CVET counselling. There are many vocational information centres (*Berufsinformationszentren, BIZ*) not only in the capital of each Land, but also in district towns. Moreover, the Economic Chambers set up the *Berufsinformationscomputer (BIC)*, which can be accessed on <http://www.bic.at>. This service includes job descriptions, IVET and CVET opportunities, relevant addresses and links.

FURTHER COUNSELLING OPPORTUNITIES

A number of other counselling facilities offer a variety of services to specific target groups. For instance, each Land has its own women's counselling service, which provides information on gender-specific educational and vocational issues, alongside a wide range of other services. Similar institutions exist to provide information and counselling to the disabled, as well as to immigrants.

There is also a rise in the level of private, non-profit or commercial counselling services that offer a range of services, such as educational counselling, vocational information and careers guidance. These are often performed in connection with other services such as job exchanges, application training and related schemes and programmes.

0902 - TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

The counselling opportunities in the school sector are primarily directed at pupils and parents. Consultation is offered individually to pupils and their parents, but also to whole classes, parent-teacher meetings, etc. Moreover, information materials are distributed, excursions and school trips to relevant events are organised.

The service of the school psychology – education counselling (*Schulpsychologie – Bildungsberatung*) is available to pupils, teachers and parents seeking advice and expert opinions in questions concerning the avoidance, reduction and solving of potential problems. Responsibilities range from psychological (or psychotherapeutic) care to the creation of information materials and lecturing. Additionally, the counsellors assist and participate in the CVET of school and educational counsellors.

Since the school year 1998/99 vocational guidance (*Beruforientierung*) has been a compulsory exercise in the 3rd and 4th forms of general education schools (*Hauptschulen*) and in junior cycles of higher general education schools (*allgemein bildenden höheren Schulen, AHS*). The curriculum gives schools two organisational possibilities in this respect: Vocational guidance may be conducted as a separate subject or integrated in the compulsory subjects. The purpose of these exercises includes strengthening the decisiveness, social competence, ambition and perseverance of the pupils. Conversation in classes, role-playing games and group tasks are implemented, information fairs and businesses are visited, and work-experience days and weeks are organised. The pupils are also encouraged to make use of external counselling opportunities.

TERTIARY SECTOR

The target groups of the psychological counselling centres for students (*Psychologische Beratungsstellen für Studierende*) are school leavers and students of third-level educational establishments. General student's advice, psychological counselling, psychotherapy, aptitude diagnoses, training and group sessions are provided by these centres.

The career planning centres (*Berufsplanungszentren*) offer students and graduates individual counselling sessions and information events on the writing of letters of application, curriculum vitae as well as on personal career planning. Seminars on presentation, rhetoric, IT etc. and events such as career fairs and company presentations are also organised.

COUNSELLING BY THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE (ARBEITSMARKTSERVICE, AMS)

Counselling and orientation measures of the AMS are available to all people registered as unemployed. The many and varied forms of information materials and online tools in the vocational information centres (*Berufsinformationszentren, BIZ*) are available to all interested parties free of charge. These centres are primarily designed for self-service. Information materials and access to databases are provided; members of staff are available for individual orientation discussions.

COUNSELLING BY THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

The counselling services of the worker's special-interest groups are targeted at young people and adults. As well as individual counselling with psychological tests, courses on vocational orientation, information events and materials are available.

The target groups of counselling services provided by the Economic Chambers include young people, adults, parents, teachers and business people. The vocational information centres of the Economic Chambers offer a wide range of self-service information materials, as well as vocation-related events, such as industry presentations, schooling and information events and application trainings. The education counsellors of the CVET provider institution of the federal and regional Economic Chambers (*Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI*) offer individual counselling services, which include psychological tests.

FURTHER COUNSELLING OPPORTUNITIES

Further counselling services are available for specific target groups such as women, the disabled, older workers, workers with placement difficulties, immigrants, etc. Among other services, these institutions offer counselling relating to educational and vocational questions according to different methods.

0903 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL

There is no general legal regulation governing the qualifications and aptitudes of vocational and educational counsellors. Only the CVET of counsellors responsible to the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur*) is regulated by decree.

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

Guidance counsellors and educational consultants (*Schüler- und Bildungsberater*) are teaching personnel with a teaching diploma and several years of teaching experience. Headmasters are responsible for selecting teachers to take on the role as pupil and education counsellor. CVET takes place within the framework of a training programme comprising basic training seminars as well as in-depth courses. Teacher workgroups are responsible for the constant refreshing of relevant knowledge.

The qualifications required of vocational guidance teachers (*Berufsorientierungslehrer, BO-Lehrer*) are not regulated by law. There are differences in the contents and organisation of training. On the one hand, it is possible to take relevant courses within the framework of the teaching training course. On the other hand, teachers who are in employment may participate in relevant training courses. The Education Ministry is currently working on the establishment of a curriculum for the training of vocational guidance teachers to ensure a unified way of qualification.

TERTIARY SECTOR

The psychologists employed in the school psychology – education counselling (*Schulpsychologie – Bildungsberatung*) system are university graduates and are required to begin training for higher psychological services in schools when they enter employment. The training must be completed within four years. Designed to introduce the counsellors to the required basic knowledge, skills and experience necessary for successful performance in the service of school psychology, the training comprises three parts: in-service training, self-education in the development of specific subjects relevant in school psychology, and the participation in a training course. The training concludes with an obligatory examination.

COUNSELLING BY THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE (ARBEITSMARKTSERVICE, AMS)

The training of employees in the AMS is regulated internally. Staff working in the area of counselling must have achieved at least *Reifeprüfung* level (school leaver's examination granting access to higher education). During initial training, staff move between training courses which they may attend in person or participate in by e-learning and weeks of on-the-job training. Training and specialist coaches are nominated to oversee the entire training period, to assure the adherence to the regulations governing duration of practical training and monitor the level of training. Initial training lasts 40 weeks; the training is completed with an examination. CVET for staff of AMS centres are offered at district and regional level. The educational contents is decided according to inquires into training requirements which take place every two or three years.

COUNSELLING BY THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

The educational and vocational counsellors of the social partners and in their CVET provider institutions are trained internally, often in cooperation with other institutions. Counselling is conducted primarily by psychologists, social education teachers or staff with similar qualifications.

The educational and vocational counsellors of the Economic Chambers and the *Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI* (its CVET provider) meet at least twice a year to exchange experiences and receive further training in specific areas. The situation is similar for counsellors of the Chamber of Labour and its CVET provider institution, the *Berufsförderungsinstitut, bfi*, who meet regularly for workshops.

FURTHER COUNSELLING OPPORTUNITIES

The following CVET opportunity is open to all educational and vocational counsellors: Federal Institute for Adult Education in St. Wolfgang (*Bundesinstitut für Erwachsenenbildung St. Wolfgang*) offers an in-service training course for all people employed in the sector of educational and vocational counselling or vocational orientation. The following subjects are included: client-centred counselling, information management, tools of educational counselling, subsidies, systematic counselling, teaching counselling, etc.

10 - FINANCING - INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

1001 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING

Within the last few years, a number of steps have been taken that have changed the administrative structure governing the funding of VET:

INCREASE OF UNIVERSITY- AND SCHOOL-AUTONOMY

On 1 January 2004, universities obtained full legal status and are therefore responsible for their own budget, most of which is provided by the state. Austrian schools have relatively few funds of their own to administer. However, reforms are under way to increase their financial autonomy.

SUPPORT FOR APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING COMPANIES

All apprenticeships which started as from June 28, 2008 are awarded with a basic funding (*Basisförderung*), which replaces the former apprenticeship premium (*Lehrlingsausbildungsprämie*). Several additional fundings are possible. For more information cf. 1002.

CVET MEASURES

Federal and regional authorities have funded a number of measures to promote CVET for all:

- acquisition of secondary level 1 qualifications (completion of general education schools = *Hauptschulabschluss*) by adults;
- introduction of the *Berufsreifeprüfung*, an examination with which apprenticeship and three- and four-year VET school graduates gain access to higher education;
- establishment of schools and colleges for employed people;
- setting up of *Fachhochschule* courses (university level study programmes of at least three years' duration with vocational-technical orientation) and *Universitätslehrgänge* (i.e. short-term university courses for post-graduates as well as for persons without HE graduation) for employed people;
- permission to apply the training tax allowance (*Bildungsfreibetrag*) also to internal CVET measures (cf. 1003).

1002 - FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The following bodies are responsible for funding the various types of IVET:

Table 1: Funding of IVET

TYPES OF IVET	BODIES
IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL	
Pre-vocational schools (<i>Polytechnische Schulen, PS</i>)	<i>Laender, municipalities, federation</i>
VET schools (<i>berufsbildende mittlere Schulen, BMS</i>)	federation
VET colleges (<i>berufsbildende höhere Schulen, BHS</i>)	federation
IVET IN COMPANIES – APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING	
enterprise-based part of training	companies, state subsidies
Part-time vocational schools for apprentices (<i>Berufsschulen</i>): school-based part of training	<i>Laender, federation</i>
OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS	
Vocational pre-apprenticeship training courses (<i>Berufslehrgänge</i>)	federation
Integrative vocational training (<i>integrative Berufsausbildung</i>)	companies, state subsidies
VET AT POST-SECONDARY (NON-TERTIARY) LEVEL	
Post-secondary VET colleges (<i>Akademien</i>)	Federation
Post-secondary VET courses	Federation

(Kollegs)	
VET AT TERTIARY LEVEL	
universities	federation, students (until March 2009)
<i>Fachhochschulen</i> (university level study programmes of at least three years' duration with vocational-technical orientation)	federation, students

IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL

In the financing of IVET at upper secondary level a differentiation must be made between direct financing (from public funds) and indirect financing (benefits, free travel, schoolbook initiatives, etc.).

As regards the direct funding of pre-vocational schools, they are maintained by the *Laender* or municipalities. Maintaining and operating a school includes the establishment, maintenance and repair of the school buildings, payment of overheads, purchase of equipment and teaching aids, provisions for the school doctor, and the employment of the necessary auxiliary staff (caretakers, maintenance staff, etc.). The employment of teachers at this school type is the responsibility of the *Laender*. However, the *Laender* are fully compensated for the cost of teachers' salaries by the Bund (federation) in the process of fiscal adjustment. *Prevocational* schools are not allowed to charge tuition fees. Transport to and from school as well as textbooks are provided to pupils almost free of charge. Only a small contribution of 10% has to be paid.

VET schools and colleges are established and maintained by the federation, which bears the full cost, including teachers' salaries. Teachers do not enter into an employment contract with the school, but with the federation. With respect to the absence of tuition fees, free transport and textbooks the situation is the same as in pre-vocational schools.

The 'dual' in the dual apprenticeship system also describes the financing. The school-based part is financed by public funds. The regional education boards (*Landesschulräte*, cf. 0302) bear the costs of equipping part-time vocational schools (machines, equipment and teaching materials). The federation and each Land bear half of the personnel costs. The enterprise-based part is financed by the company itself, with the possibility of state subsidies. The following subsidies are available:

- Since January 2002, training companies have been able to claim an annual apprenticeship premium (*Lehrlingausbildungsprämie*) of EUR 1 000 for each apprentice through their tax return. This type of funding is still valid for apprenticeships that started before 28 June 2008.
- Since the last amendment to the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz*) that went into force on 28 June 2008 a new funding system has been in place. This system foresees a basic funding for all apprenticeships that started after 27 June 2008. It replaces the annual apprenticeship premium. It amounts to three apprenticeship remunerations in the first training year, to two in the second and to one in the third and fourth year. Furthermore, several other fundings are also available, some of which are geared towards quality aspects.

- In the first and second year of an apprenticeship, both the employer's and the apprentice's health-insurance contributions are waived.
- The contribution to accident insurance is waived in respect of apprentices throughout the entire apprenticeship.
- As a rule, contributions to unemployment insurance are only payable in the last year of the apprenticeship.

Additionally, there is a variety of funding measures available within the framework of apprentice training, of which the most important is the funding for apprenticeship places. This is conducted by the Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*) as part of the active job market policies. The following groups are eligible for this type of funding:

- girls in apprenticeships in which women are considerably under-represented (i.e. in which the percentage of female apprentices amounted to less than 40% of the total number of apprentices in the previous training year);
- particularly disadvantaged apprenticeship applicants, such as young people who have physical disabilities, mental or emotional deficiencies or learning difficulties or who are socially maladjusted;
- adults (over 19 years old), whose employment problem is due to a lack of qualification which can be solved by an apprenticeship
- apprentices, if they acquire additional qualifications beyond the job requirements

OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

On the basis of the Youth Training Provision Act (*Jugendausbildungs-Sicherungsgesetz 1998, JASG*, cf. 0302) additional training in the form of ten-month vocational pre-apprenticeship training courses is offered as a labour market support measure for young people who find themselves at a disadvantage in the labour market and for those who cannot find an apprenticeship. The Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS*) allocates young people to these training courses, during which they receive a special allowance of € 150 net per month.

The integrative vocational training (integrative *Berufsausbildung*) is targeted at people who are at a disadvantage in the labour market and includes the acquisition of apprenticeship qualifications in an apprenticeship period prolonged by one year, in exceptional cases by two years, or the acquisition of partial qualifications in one or several trades which are relevant for the economy. This system is funded by the *AMS* and the companies employing people from the target group.

VET AT POST-SECONDARY (NON-TERTIARY) LEVEL

Post-secondary VET courses and colleges are established and maintained by the federation, which bears the full cost, including teachers' salaries.

VET AT TERTIARY LEVEL

The University Act (*Universitätsgesetz, UG 2002*) has given the universities complete autonomy. This has also led to a new funding system. This new system stipulates that the responsible Education Minister enters into a performance agreement (*Leistungsvertrag*) with every university for a term of three years. The university provides the draft of the performance agreement, which is subject to negotiation.

The university budget of the federal authorities – just like the total federal budget – is decided by parliament. 20% of the total budget is allocated in line with a formula, based on performance indicators and indicators for the objectives of society. 80% of the total budget is distributed among the different universities on the basis of negotiations of their performance agreement. The following criteria are applied: requirements, demand, performance and objectives of society. As of 2007, the three-year global budget of the individual universities will thus comprise a formula-based

budget and a negotiated budget. The universities submit their proposals for the performance agreements, which are based on the substance laid down by law.

In addition to state funding, the universities have additional funding sources. Since they have become fully fledged legal entities, they may acquire property, conduct research on a commission basis, etc., and they can use this income for meeting their tasks as universities. Moreover, a large part of the money available to the fund for the promotion of scientific research (*Forschungsförderungsfonds, FFF*), which is fed from the federal budget, is allocated to the universities.

Furthermore, the tuition fees (*Studiengebühren*), which amount to EUR 363.36 per semester (September 2008), remain with the respective university. However, they will be abolished as of March 2009.

Students are also entitled to financial support, which comprises direct and indirect support measures funded from public money for the most part. Indirect support measures are independent of any social need; as far as their financial volume is concerned, they constitute the overwhelmingly largest part of the state's support measures. They comprise family allowances, sharing the insurance coverage of parents or self-insurance schemes, statutory accident insurance, as well as fiscal benefits whenever children are enrolled as students. Direct support measures, which are granted pursuant to the Student Support Act (*Studienförderungsgesetz*), depend upon the social needs and the academic success of students. The income of the student and/or the person with maintenance obligations is decisive for the definition of social need. In this connection, there are also special support measures such as study grants (paying the entire or part of the tuition fee), commuter travelling grants, benefits for studying abroad, etc. In addition, the universities receive funds from the Education Ministry to grant performance-based or research scholarships in order to support students who achieve especially good results.

One characteristic feature of the *Fachhochschule* sector is the system of mixed funding based on the standard cost system. The federal government bears the costs per study place; the costs for buildings, investments and a part of the running costs are borne by the provider of the *Fachhochschule* programme (usually the governments of the *Laender*, regional or supra-regional authorities, the social partners, etc.).

For some *Fachhochschule* programmes students are required to pay tuition fees. It is up to the respective *Fachhochschule* sustainer to decide whether or not to charge tuition fees as of March 2009.

1003 - FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

The funding of CVET is either publicly provided or made available by companies.

PUBLICLY PROVIDED CVET

As CVET is largely provided by independent providers, the federal government's primary role lies in tasks relating to funding. With the introduction of the Public Funding of Adult Education and National Libraries Act (*Gesetz zur Förderung der Erwachsenenbildung und des Volksbüchereiwesens*) in 1973 the legal basis for public funding of CVET was created. Essentially, public funding is a commitment of the federal government to support educational establishments that work on a non-profit basis. For the providers of CVET, however, there is no legal right to funding.

The public expenditure of the federal and regional governments as well as of municipalities comprise a wide range of activities, including:

- courses in second chance education
- tax deductible amounts and education premiums for businesses
- subsidies for private training costs
- schools for people in employment
- libraries etc

Financial support is organised by the adult education department of the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*), which is responsible for the federal funding departments for adult education present in seven *Laender*. Most educational institutions funded by the Education Ministry are represented within the Conference of Adult Education in Austria (*Konferenz der Erwachsenenbildung Österreichs, KEBÖ*).

Since 2000, Austrian employers can claim a special training tax allowance (*Bildungsfreibetrag*) for investments in training. This training incentive is regulated by federal tax law. Initially, the training tax allowance was 9% of the expenses on external training only. From 2003 onwards, the allowance has been increased to 20% and extended to training measures organised internally. The incentive allows companies not only to deduct the actual cost of training as a business expense from their taxable income but also an additional ‘virtual expense’ of 20%. Thus, the tax base is diminished by 120% of the actual expense. Companies that do not make enough profit in a given year to benefit from this tax deduction can, as an alternative, claim a training premium (*Bildungsprämie*) of 6% of the actual expense which is deducted from the tax liability or paid out to the firm.

ENTERPRISE-BASED CVET

Enterprise-based CVET – understood as the entire range of internal measures financed and organised by the company as well as the external courses where employees take part – is not regulated by law unless specific qualifications are followed (e.g. master craftsperson certificate [*Meisterprüfung*], cf. 0502). A characteristic feature of enterprise-based CVET is the division of the costs between employers and employees. Course fees are usually covered by the employer, the time for the training is provided by the employee.

According to the Eurostat CVTS-3, costs for CVET account for 1.4% of the total costs for employees (cf. Table 1). This is only a little below the European average (EU-25: 1.6%), but seems relatively low compared to some other countries (cf. France: 2.3%, Denmark: 2.7%) However, it must be taken into account that the CVTS-3 does not include the smallest businesses, employees in the public sector, the entire agricultural sector and potentially a portion of the professional workers.

Table 1: Cost of CVT courses as % of total labour cost (all enterprises), by type of cost (1999 and 2005)

	TOTAL LABOR COSTS CVTS3	TOTAL LABOR COSTS CVTS2
EU-27	1.6	-
EU-25	1.6	2.3
AUSTRIA	1.4	1.3

Note: Total costs: direct costs, labour costs of participants and balance of contributions to national or regional training funds and receipts from national or other funding arrangements
Source: Eurostat, 2nd and 3rd continuing vocational training survey in enterprises (CVTS2 and CVTS3)

1004 - FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHER GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

Job market policy and training measures are essentially public responsibilities, and are therefore almost wholly publicly financed. The main portion of the necessary financial means is provided by the Federal Ministry for Economics and Labour (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit, BMWA). Financial input from regional and local governments or private initiatives (predominantly religious initiatives) for the training of the unemployed represents a significantly smaller portion.

The Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS) receives the financial means from the Economics Ministry, but is solely responsible for developing funding guidelines for active job market policies. Besides defining targets for job market policies and maintaining a supervisory role, the Economics Minister has no influence on the funding guidelines developed by the AMS.

Since Austria's entrance into the EU in 1995, it has had access to financial means from the European Social Fund (ESF) for education initiatives based on job market policies. Modern and innovative CVET activities and employment initiatives are at the centre of the ESF-objective-3. Funding is particularly intended for people at risk of not finding employment.

Seven focus points specified which target groups and measures were to be funded in Austria from 2000 to 2006:

- combating unemployment
- equal opportunities for the disabled
- education
- company-based qualifications
- equal opportunities for men and women
- territorial employment packets
- information and networking

The following measures (selection) were implemented until 2005:

Table 1: ESF measures implemented in Austria	
FOCUS POINTS	MEASURES (SELECTION)
Combating unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Federal Ministry for Economics and Labour realised two big projects in order to increase professional qualification according to the needs of the labour market. - The Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS) financed two major projects for further employment possibilities : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social economics companies (Sozialökonomische Betriebe, SÖB): offer transit working places - non-profit employment projects (Gemeinnützige Beschäftigungsprojekte, GBP): reintegrate long unemployed people back into the labour market
Equal opportunities for the disabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration aid (Integrationsbeihilfen): companies recruiting disabled people get financial incentives and support from the government - Outplacement measures: push the integration of "qualification and employment actions" - Integrative vocational training (cf. 0201, 0405) - Training projects: special measures to learn social competences and work ethic attitudes
Education	<p style="text-align: center;">In schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - qualification measures for disadvantages pupils, early school leavers, for people without certificate of compulsory education or vocational training - Foreign language offensive at all different types of schools <p style="text-align: center;">Adult education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - courses in order to get a certificate of compulsory education - basic education for disadvantaged people and education measures for more equality in the information society
Company-based qualifications	Preventive labour market policy of the Economics Ministry: further development of the cooperation between companies
Equal opportunities for men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender Mainstreaming strategy: the Economics Ministry set up a coordination office for all gender mainstreaming related topics: responsible for information material (website, newsletter), information transfer (events, round tables) as well as consultancy and development (seminars for evaluation, gender roles

	and disability, etc.)
Territorial employment packets	- improvement of the labour market situation in the different regions - respect of the gender mainstreaming principles in their structure, working programme and projects: workshops for more gender equality etc. - Implementation of European programmes, i.e. INTERREG
Information and networking	- Studies, evaluations, monitoring and PR measures (implementation of the communication plan) - measures for more information, publicity and improvement of monitoring

Source: www.esf.at, objective 3 Austria 2000-2006, annual report 2005

1005 - PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES: FROM FUNDING TO INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES

Future policy priorities for funding VET focus on the following aspects:

- Increasing the financial autonomy of schools and colleges: This decentralisation measure should give schools and colleges more scope in terms of investments.
- Offering more CVET opportunities for people in employment: The aim of this measure is to encourage as many employees as possible to take part in CVET and, thus, in lifelong learning.
- Reducing the number of people without secondary level 1 qualifications by promoting the acquisition of a *Hauptschulabschluss*: All students should at least complete general education school.

11 - EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS, TOWARDS AN OPEN AREA OF LIFELONG LEARNING

1101 - NATIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO POLICY PRIORITIES, PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES AT EU LEVEL

The Austrian implementation strategies to embed the concept of lifelong learning (LLL) are still in an initial stage. This is predominantly due to the fact that political discussions on the purposes and methods of LLL have only started as a result of the introduction of LLL as an objective for employment policy within the framework of the National Plans of Action.

The implementation strategies rest on the following three principles:

- development of broad consensus on the necessity of LLL by including all participants;
- positioning towards short-term effects within the area of LLL (for example, an increase in participation levels);
- no explicit differentiation between vocational and general education.

These principles should be adhered to by:

- upgrading and expanding of counselling services;
- establishing local learning centres;

- improving permeability between the different education sectors;
- promoting mobility;
- introducing tax deductions for CVET measures and funding financing models according to demand.

As a first step, an inter-ministerial work group and twelve coordination workshops were set up in 2001 to develop scenarios for specific strategies to implement LLL and improve the cooperation between the relevant protagonists. The work group included educational policy and labour-market experts as well as representatives of the social partners. The coordination workshops concentrated on the prerequisites necessary to establish LLL in Austria (creation of indicators, definition of basic qualifications, incentive systems, etc.).

Since its foundation in 2001, the centre of competence for CVET (*Kompetenzzentrum für Weiterbildung*) has monitored activities in the CVET sector and developed new initiatives, including methods to increase permeability between various fields of education and encourage innovations for the acquisition of new basic qualifications spanning all sectors. This forum consists of members of decision-making bodies from educational policy (ministries, regional and local governments, social partners) and representatives of the labour-market as well as important institutions of the adult education sector.

Table 1: Major stakeholders involved in LLL policy priorities	
STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES
NATIONAL LEVEL	
Inter-ministerial work group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> coordinates LLL according to the government programme establishes a list of existing means and methods to promote the objectives of LLL determines the priorities of workshops for LLL
Centre of competence for CVET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> professionalises CVET for adults through specialised training of CVET teachers including the development of quality standards and certificates of professional qualifications renders services linked with the educational priorities of the Education Ministry and the European Commission
Social partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote social and personal competences as well as positive attitude towards LLL among their members
REGIONAL LEVEL	

<i>Laender</i>	offer adequate training courses establish training facilities create financial incentives elaborate regional development concepts
LOCAL LEVEL	
Municipalities	support the cooperation between companies, people and training facilities
Individual companies	very important for self-regulated LLL most important financial support for LLL
Training facilities	information and consultancy for LLL

An effective and comprehensive statistical evaluation tool for the educational sector was introduced with the implementation of the Education Documentation Act of 2002 (*Bildungsdokumentationsgesetz 2002*). The results of these evaluations have helped establish the number of graduates from second chance education in a uniform way. The data can therefore be used as a foundation for further strategy development.

The importance of tools to increase transparency of acquired qualifications is being discussed as a result of increased workers' mobility within the European area. Austrian initiatives focus largely on applying the tools implemented at EU level.

1102 - IMPACT OF EUROPEANISATION/INTERNATIONALISATION ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Europeanising of the Austrian VET system is being promoted by means of four procedures:

The first procedure is the recognition of foreign certificates in Austria and of Austrian certificates in other EU member states. Until recently, common practice was to establish equivalence between foreign and similar Austrian certificates. If this equivalence was not achievable, the applicant had to make up the missing examinations. Now a range of bilateral agreements are in place which ensure mutual recognition of completed apprenticeships (including Germany, Italy and Switzerland). Currently, an agreement is being negotiated with the Czech Republic.

The second procedure focuses on adapting certification systems to common international forms of certification. An obvious example of this was the implementation of the conventional international three-tier study programme structure in the tertiary sector. Since 2002, universities and *Fachhochschulen* (university level study programmes of at least three years' duration with vocational-technical orientation) are permitted to establish baccalaureate, master and doctorate study programmes.

The third procedure concerns the adoption of standardised certificates and proof of documentation on qualifications and competences across Europe, thereby recognising the value of informally acquired qualifications. Possibilities in this area include the European Computer Driving License, the European Curriculum Vitae, the Certificate Supplement, the Diploma Supplement, the European Language Portfolio and the EUROPASS Training scheme. This procedure incorporates protagonists from the regular school system and the tertiary sector as recognising bodies as well as private education providers (e.g. the Austrian Computer Society).

In the fourth procedure attempts are being made to achieve common forms of completion in vocational education with other European countries. The difference between this procedure and the previous one is that this initiative is not exclusively political. A good example of this is the Leonardo da Vinci project EUROBAC, in which an international project partnership worked on a European diploma of completed vocational education.

1103 - AUTHORS, SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

110301 - AUTHORS

IMPRINT

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	GERMAN DENOTATION	ENGLISH DENOTATION / EXPLANATION
AHS	Allgemein bildende höhere Schule	higher general education school, junior cycle and senior cycle

AMS	Arbeitsmarktservice	Public Employment Service
AUCEN	Austrian Universities Continuing Education Network	
BAG	Berufsausbildungsgesetz	Vocational Training Act
BBAB	Bundesberufsausbildungsbeirat	Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship
BFI	Berufsförderungsinstitut	CVET provider institution of the Chamber of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Federation
BHS	Berufsbildende höhere Schule	VET college
BIC	Berufsinformationscomputer	database containing career information, job descriptions etc.
BIZ	Berufsinformationszentrum	vocational information centres
BMF	Bundesministerium für Finanzen	Federal Ministry of Finances
BMGFJ	Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Familie und Jugend	Federal Ministry of Health, Family and Youth
BMHS	Berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen	VET schools and colleges
BMLFUW	Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and

		Water Management
BMUKK	Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur	Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture
BMS	Berufsbildende mittlere Schule	VET school
BMWA	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit	Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour
BO	Berufsorientierung	vocational orientation
BRP	Berufsreifeprüfung	examination providing access to higher education for skilled workers and graduates of three- and four-year full-time VET schools
EB-FG	Erwachsenenbildungsförderungsgesetz	Adult Education Promotion Act
FFF	Forschungsförderungsfonds	fund for the promotion of scientific research
FH	Fachhochschule	university level study programmes of at least three years' duration with vocational-technical orientation
FHR	Fachhochschulrat	Fachhochschule Council
FHStG	Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz	Fachhochschule Studies Act

GewO	Gewerbeordnung	Crafts, Trade and Industry Act
JASG	Jugendausbildungs-Sicherungsgesetz	Youth Training Guarantee Act
KEBÖ	Konferenz der Erwachsenenbildung Österreichs	Conference of Adult Education in Austria
LAP	Lehrabschlussprüfung	final apprenticeship examination
LBAB	Landesberufsausbildungsbeirat	Regional Advisory Board on Apprenticeship
LFI	Ländliche Fortbildungsinstitut	institute for further education in rural areas
PTS	Polytechnische Schule	prevocational school
SBP	Studienberechtigungsprüfung	higher education entrance examination
SchOG	Schulorganisationsgesetz	School Organisation Act
SchUG	Schulunterrichtsgesetz	School Education Act
UG	Universitätsgesetz	University Act
WIFI	Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut	CVET provider institution of the Economic Chamber
ZF	Zentrum für Fernstudien	distance learning centre

