

ERO National Research Report 2006/07 (EN)

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mit Unterstützung durch



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

bm:uk Bundesministerium für
Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur



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European Centre for the
Development of Vocational Training



ERO National Research Report 2006/07*

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Date of submission:	September 2007

* The main data-basis of the report is – consistently with the previous reports – 2006 for quantitative data analysis, and some additional consideration of recent developments in 2007 for qualitative information.

1. LINKS BETWEEN NATIONAL VET/HRD RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND VET/HRD POLICIES (IN PARTICULAR RECENT REFORMS/INNOVATIONS).

FOLLOW UP

Several issues from the last period (2005/06) have been followed up through 2006/07 (a summary of Austrian education and training policy initiatives can be found in:

http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/15321/abb2010_zwb07_en.pdf):

- one issue has been the emphasis on **quality development and quality assurance** (QD/QA) which is further developed at several strands. A key initiative is a broad process for QD/QA in the Austrian VET system (<http://www.qibb.at/>) and in the other parts of education and training also.¹

- another issue has been the participation in the **EQF consultation process and the development of a research based strategy for an Austrian NQF** (see http://www.bmwf.gv.at/uploads/tx_bmwfcontent/NQR_Konsultationspapier.pdf). In a first step an expertise has been commissioned to produce a feasibility study for an NQF based on the statements of the various stakeholders to the consultation process. In a second step a research and development project has been commissioned which provided some basic material for the NQF (a consultation document, and deeper analyses of international experience, outcome orientation, experience with the inclusion of informal and non formal competences in the NQF)

- since 2003 several steps have been taken to develop a **strategy for Lifelong Guidance**, which has been continued by several initiatives in 2006. Cornerstones have been published in October 2006 (see p.43-50 in http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/15321/abb2010_zwb07_en.pdf)

- the Expert **proposal for a LLL-Strategy** has been consulted and prepared for a consultation process, which will take place in 2008 (see p.43 in http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/15321/abb2010_zwb07_en.pdf)

NEW PRIORITIES

New priorities have been set by the new government since 2007 which has split the Ministry of education² responsible for school and the Ministry of science³ responsible for higher education again. In education and training policies the following new priorities have been set:

- **Tracking in lower secondary school** should be reduced; a high level expert commission has been established, and pilots among schools should find new ways of dealing with different achievement levels without tracking; however, the initiative is strongly contested at the political level

- a new structure of **educational research and development** has been developed by a relaunch of the state agency for educational R&D (Bundesinstitut für Bildungsforschung, Innovation und Entwicklung des Bildungswesens – bifie: <http://www.bifie.at/>); the new institute will coordinate the large scale assessments, contribute to the development of educational monitoring, and work for implementation of reform initiatives (e.g., the performance standards); it should also serve as a focus point for commissioning educational R&D and networking the research community

- educational R&D for the support of evidence based policy is planned to be concentrated by a regular **research based reporting process**, the structure of the first piloting report (“Bildungsbericht”) has been created by a research team; the report about the main aspects of schooling will be worked out through 2008, chapters about main aspects of VET will be included

- an **Austrian conference for VET research** has been prepared by abf Austria, the Ministry for education (BMUKK) and the Public Employment Service (AMS), which will take place in July 2008 (<http://www.berufsbildungsforschung-konferenz.at/>). For the first time, a reviewed overview about VET research in Austria will be communicated in such a conference.

¹ See, e.g., the initiatives in general and academic education: <http://www.gis.at/english/>; higher education: <http://www.aqa.ac.at/>); adult and continuing education: http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at/services/publikationen/materialien_zur_eb/nr1_2007_insiqueb.pdf

² The full name is Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur (BMUKK: <http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/index.xml>; Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture)

2. LINKS BETWEEN EU SPONSORED VET/HRD RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND VET/HRD POLICIES (IN PARTICULAR RECENT REFORMS/INNOVATIONS).

The project about “**Peer Review** as an Instrument for Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement in Initial VET in Europe – Exchange of Experience and Development of a European Manual” has been finished and will be also probably utilised in the activities of the ENQA VET (see http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects_Networks/Ero/prj_view.asp?theID=416). This project also fits into the activities of the Austrian initiative for QD/QA in VET (QIBB)

Still, the ESF programmes provides a linkage of European programmes to Austrian VET policies, by supporting several activities of the Ministry of education, in particular in the areas of adult education and training, and programmes for early school leavers, who are supported to complete basic compulsory education. The programme for 2007-2013 has been submitted to the EU (see http://www.esf.at/downloads/publikationen/ESF-OP_Februar-2007.pdf).

Other European projects coordinated by Austrian institutions also fit into the main issues of national policies (see ANNEX, Figure 3c ERO projects 2006):

- projects about lifelong learning and continuing education
- projects about the outcome oriented definition of competences, and
- a set of projects about guidance.

The EU supported projects have been clearly linked to some main topics of Austrian VET policy making, in particular to

- quality development and quality assessment,
- transition from school to work and combating early school leaving
- development of a lifelong learning strategy
- development of a lifelong guidance strategy..

³The full name is Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Forschung (BMWF: <http://www.bmwf.gv.at/submenue/english/> Federal Ministry of Science and Research)

3. OVERVIEW OF IMPORTANT ISSUES AND THEMES ADDRESSED IN CURRENT VET/HRD RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

OVERVIEW BASED ON MAIN BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

The number of publications in the REFER publication report is oscillating between 150-200, the number of (transnational) projects operational in one year in the ERO base is around 30. The distribution of research topics by ERO descriptors based on the REFER publication reports 2003-2006 (Table1, Figure 1) shows little systematic development. Clearly the topic of *economic/labour market/social partner* issues holds the biggest share in every year at an average of 20%, with some fluctuation also (ranging between 14% in 2005 and 30% in 2003). The research about target groups (*students/trainees/adult learners*) is clearly on the rise from only 2% in 2003 to 16% in 2006. *IT* issues have been at a share of 14% in 2003, and substantially lower in 2004-2006 (4% to 8%), also the research about *academic education* declined from 16% to 5%. The remaining research fields are either small or have fluctuated quite strongly.

The comparison of the different sources Austrian BIFODOC, REFER publication report, and ERO base in 2005/06 (average) shows still strong selection effects, and – presumably – underreporting (Figure 2). In the Austrian BIFODOC Source *teacher education, certification/qualification/guidance/occupation, and economy/labour market/social partners* hold the biggest shares, in the ERO project base of transnational projects *certification/qualification/guidance/occupation* and rather *curriculum/learning/competence and skill development* and more *general topics of VET* are the most important fields. In particular, *teacher education, and economy/labour market/social partners* are to a less degree included in transnational projects (If we compare the different sources for single years the fluctuation is even stronger; Figure 3d). The thematic distribution of the Austrian applications to the conference for VET research seem rather representative as compared to the different sources in 2006; only the category of *curriculum/learning/competence and skill development* is much more strongly represented among the conference applications than in both of the comparative sources.

OTHER SOURCES

A special issue of *bwp@online* about VET in Austria (<http://www.bwpat.de/ATspezial/>) has been published in 2007/08, which provides overviews about research in VET (SCHLÖGL 2007, LASSNIGG 2007, SCHWENDENWEIN 2007), adult education (GRUBER 2007) and separately business education (Wirtschaftspädagogik; AFF et al. 2008, STARK 2007), and several topical issues. This publication is an important instrument for the reflection and networking of Austrian VET research, and also a step towards the 1st conference for VET research. The contributions indicate a very marked topical division of labour between higher education and non-university research. The contributions from university researchers mainly cover the topic of teaching and learning, whereas the non-university contributions cover the topics of occupations, governance, and policy making.

Contributions to the *bwp@special* issue by institutions and ERO descriptors

	University contributions	Non-university contributions
Information technology	-	-
Politics/society/population	-	2
Economy/labour market/social partners	-	-
Administration/finance of educ & training	-	2
Educational institution/enterprise	2	1
General/academic education	-	-
Vocational education & training	-	-
Human resource development	-	-
Curriculum/learning/comp&skill developm.	6	-
Certific/qualific/guidance/career/occupation	1	4
Student/trainee/adult learner	1	-
Teacher/trainer/professional	1	-
Total*	11	9

* 9 contributions about the status of research have been omitted from this table

Source: <http://www.bwpat.de/ATspezial/>

The publications presented at the homepage of the Ministry of education include 26 items in 2006 and 43 items in 2007, in total 69 items. Among them 7 were in the area of VET and 5 in the area of adult education (together 17%). Main topics have been information and practice handouts for reading, mathematics and IT education,

cross-cultural learning, legal issues, gender, participation, information about schools and aspects of schooling, learning methods, problems with drugs, abuse and violence, information for migrants, etc. A smaller number of publications are research reports about individualised teaching, instruction at home, standards, etc (http://www.wapp.bmbwk.gv.at/publikationen_shop.asp?BenutzerUID=2952690&MENUEID=Auswahl&SMENUEID=Suche).

In the documentation about publications in the area of adult education research (<http://www.adulteducation.at/de/literatur/universitaereforschungsarbeiten/>) we can identify the academic items by years. From 2000 to 2006 about 900 academic publications are registered (125 per year), since 2002 the number has declined. In 2006 90 items are registered, thereof 75 diploma theses and 14 doctoral theses. The academic adult education research shows a very different distribution of topics as compared to the other sources: The target groups (*students/trainees/adult learners*; 24%) are the main category, followed by IT (15%) and aspects of *general education* (13%) – in particular, the overall main topic of *economic/labour market/social partner* issues is very small (2%), and issues of *certification/qualification/guidance/occupation* are also markedly below the share in overall VET research (5%).

SPECIFIC ISSUES AND THEMES

More specifically, the following issues and themes have been addressed with a higher intensity and impact during the observed period of 2006/07:

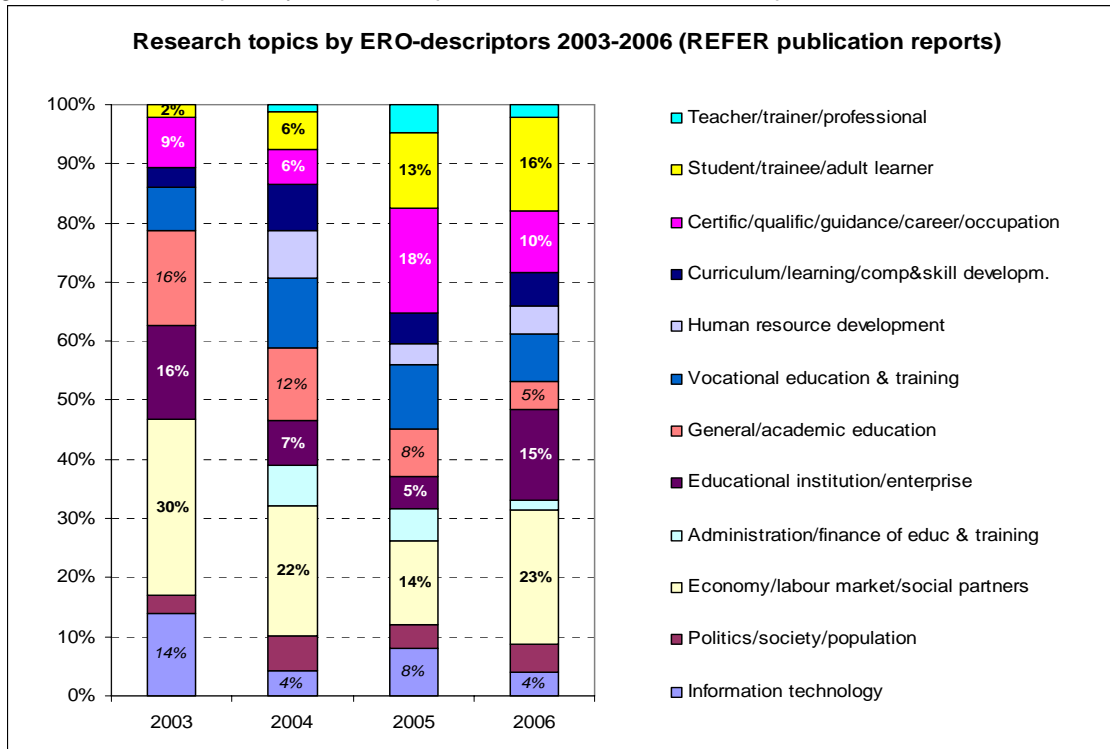
- Several studies and development activities have taken place in the area of quality assurance and quality development (QA/QD). At the core the development of a comprehensive system in the VET-school sector has to be mentioned (qibb), which is mainly a professional development initiative with some support of research. At least two transnational projects (VQTS and peer review in VET) have contributed to these activities.
- Research has been a part of the establishment of an Austrian strategy for the development of a national qualification framework (NQF). The contributions to the consultation process have been analysed in a feasibility study, a study has been commissioned to work out the potentials in higher education which was followed up by the application for a transnational project, and the Austrian consultation document has been prepared with research assistance.
- Several research and development activities have taken place in the area of the development of a lifelong learning strategy: A basic strategy paper has been provided in 2005, which has been a focal point of a broader debate, including conferences, issues of the MAGAZIN Erwachsenenbildung, studies commissioned by the social partners, who have published also a basic strategy document.
- A systematic follow-up has been carried on in the area of anticipation of future skills needs
- In-depth studies have been provided about the economic returns of initial and continuing education, and a broader study about the administrative efficiency of the Austrian educational governance has been commissioned.
- A series of studies has been carried out about dropping out and early school leaving, finally providing proposals for a policy strategy in this area.

Table 1: Research topics by ERO-descriptors 2003-2006

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
Information technology	13	8	12	8	14%	4%	8%	4%
Politics/society/population	3	11	6	9	3%	6%	4%	5%
Economy/labour market/social partners	28	41	21	44	30%	22%	14%	23%
Administration/finance of educ & training	0	13	8	3	0%	7%	5%	2%
Educational institution/enterprise	15	14	8	30	16%	7%	5%	15%
General/academic education	15	23	12	9	16%	12%	8%	5%
Vocational education & training	7	22	16	16	7%	12%	11%	8%
Human resource development	0	15	5	9	0%	8%	3%	5%
Curriculum/learning/comp&skill developm.	3	15	8	11	3%	8%	5%	6%
Certific/qualific/guidance/career/occupation	8	11	26	20	9%	6%	18%	10%
Student/trainee/adult learner	2	12	19	31	2%	6%	13%	16%
Teacher/trainer/professional	0	2	7	4	0%	1%	5%	2%
TOTAL	94	187	148	194	100%	100%	100%	100%

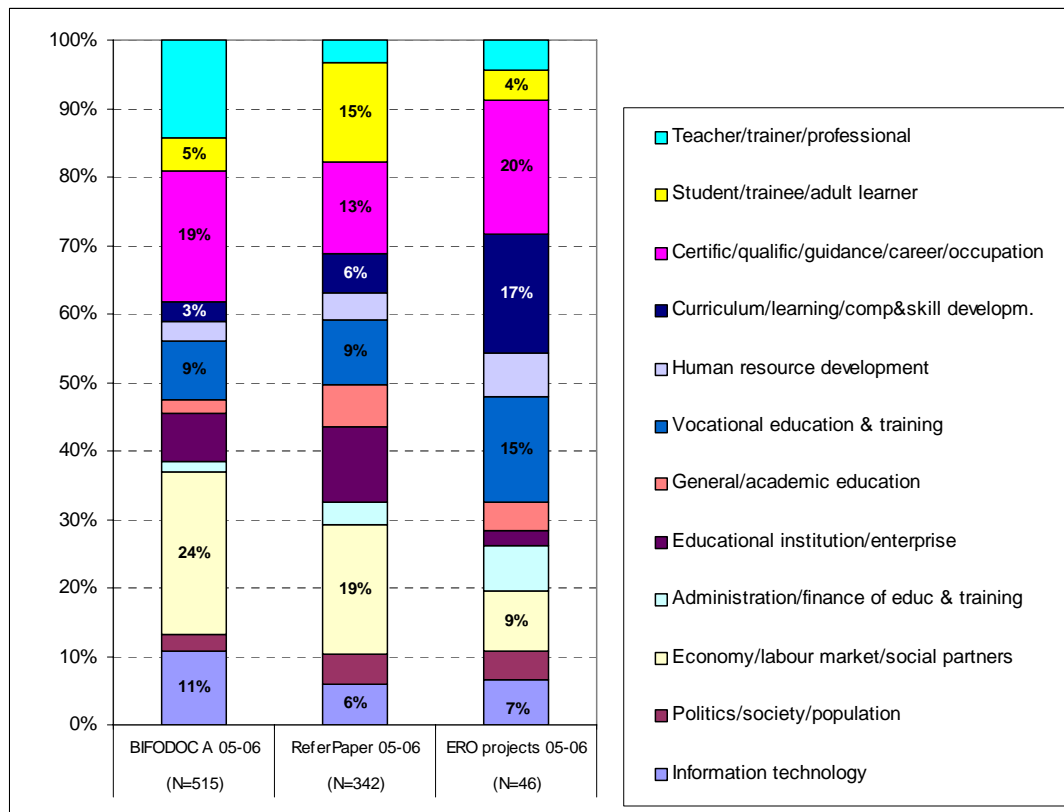
Source: REFER publication reports

Figure 1: Research topics by ERO-descriptors 2003-2006 from REFER publications



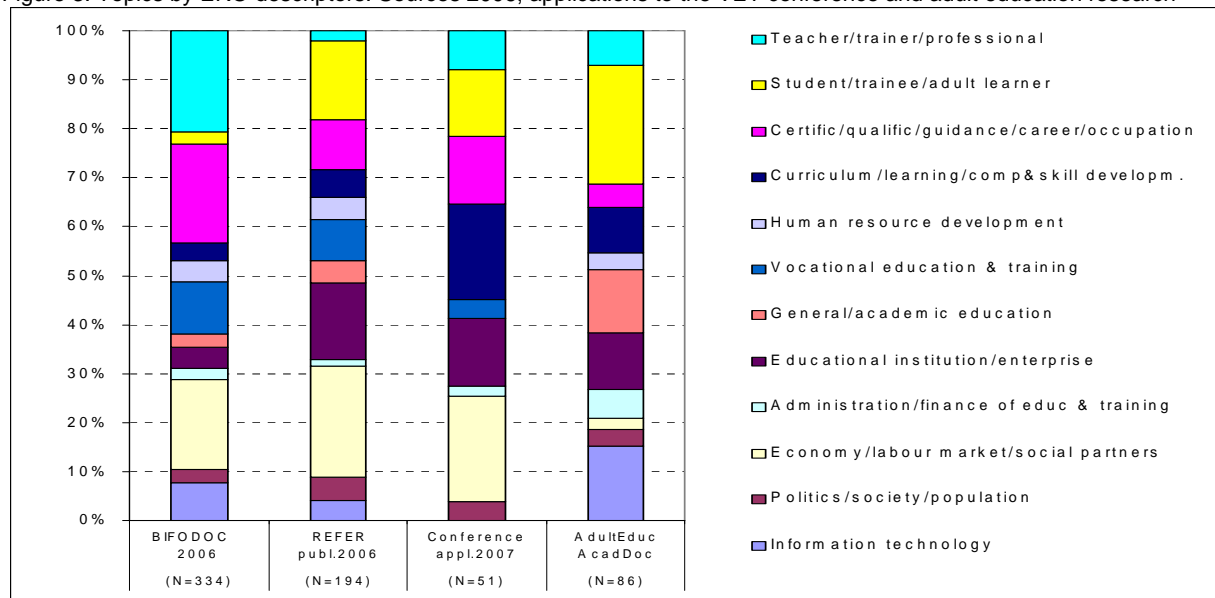
Source: REFER publication reports

Figure 2: Research topics in 2005/2006 (average) from different sources



Source: Austrian documentation BIFODOC, REFER report, and ERO base

Figure 3: Topics by ERO descriptors: Sources 2006, applications to the VET conference and adult education research



ANNEX: SELECTION OF ERO BASE PROJECTS.

Figure 4 a: ERO Project base, descriptor Austria (status Sept 2007)

	2004	2005	Change 04-05	2006	Change 05-06
Total number of projects, beginning in 2002	51	73	+ 22	90	+17
Operational (in year)	24	32	+ 8	35	+3
Austrian coordinator	5	6	+ 1	8	+2
National Austrian project	4	2	- 2	1	-1
Austrian partners	15	24	+ 9	26	+2

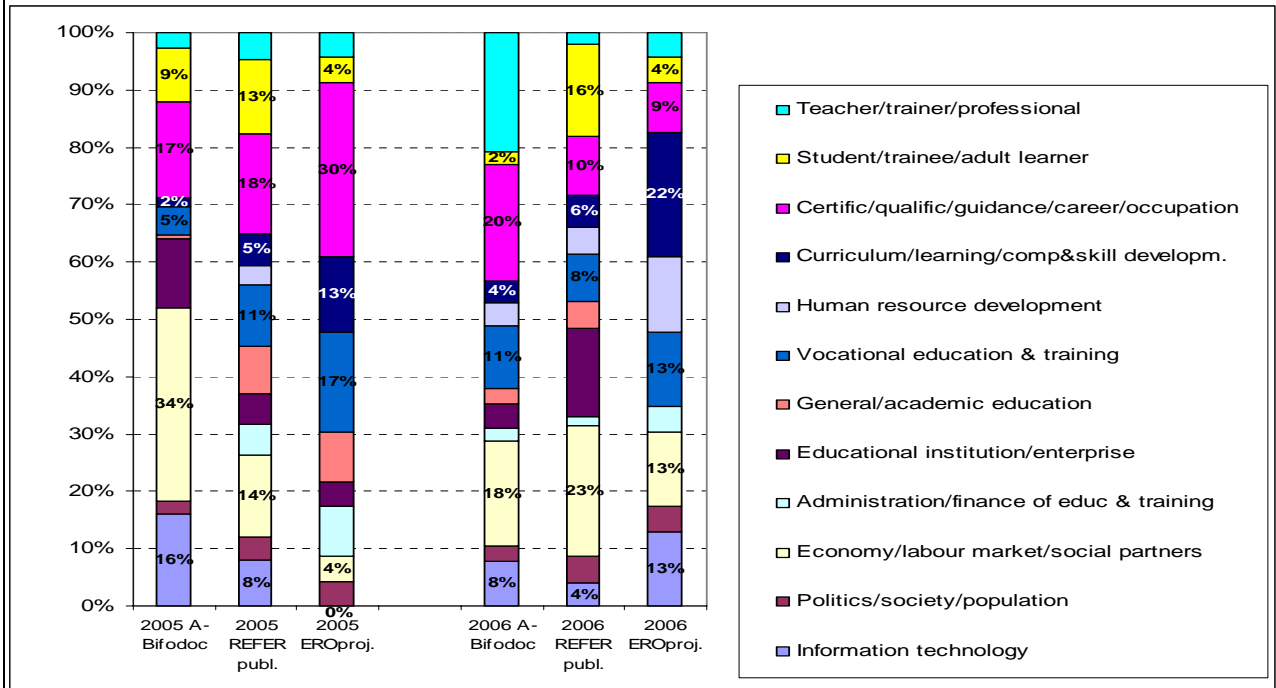
Figure 4 b: Items in ERO paper base 2006

	ERO descriptors
Lassnigg Lorenz, Anticipation of future skills needs - Do formalised systems improve matching of qualification supply and demand?	3,9

Figure 4 c: ERO Projects 2006, Austrian coordinator

	ERO descriptors
Austrian coordinator	
Donau-Universität Krems, Lifelong Learning in University Context (2006-2007)	2,3,4,8,9,11,12
Schlögl Peter, Basic skills for young people without vocational education (2003-2006)	2,3,4,7
Zdrahal-Urbaneck Julia, MEVOC – Quality manual for educational and vocational counselling (2003-2006)	4,6,9,10,12
Messerer Karin, Markowitsch Jörg, Vocational Qualification Transfer System (2003-2006)	7,9,10
Berufspädagogische Akademie Innsbruck, Vocational Teacher Trainees in Practice (2004-2006)	7,11
Zdrahal-Urbaneck Julia / Thum-Kraft Monika., DYNOT – Dynamic online tool for guidance (2005-2007)	7,10
Markowitsch Jörg, Country specific thematic analysis of continuous vocational training on the basis of CVTS II and modelling of CVT-structures (2004-2007)	2,3,4,9,10
Gutknecht-Gmeiner Maria, Lassnigg Lorenz, Peer Review as an Instrument for Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement in Initial VET in Europe – Exchange of Experience and Development of a European Manual (2004-2007)	2,3,5,8,11
Austrian projects	
Kanelutti Erika, National Information-Network for Educational Guidance and Counselling (2000-2006)	10

Figure 4 d: Descriptors in ERO-projects 2005-2006 as compared to REFER-publications 2005-2006, and A-Bifodoc 2005



Source: Bifodoc, REFER Publication Reports, ERO Project Base

4. MAJOR INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN VET/HRD R&D IN YOUR COUNTRY.

Table 2: Major institutions involved in VET research

		¹	²
3s Unternehmensberatung GmbH; http://www.3s.co.at	Vienna	5	7
Institut für Höhere Studien (IHS) – equi group (employment–qualification–innovation); http://www.equi.at/en/welcome/	Vienna	5	7
Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (IBW); http://www.ibw.at/	Vienna	5	7
Österreichisches Institut für Berufsbildungsforschung (ÖIBF); http://www.oeibf.at	Vienna	5	7
Zentrum für Bildung und Wirtschaft (ZBW); http://www.zbw.at	Graz	4	4
Donau-Universität Krems (DUK); http://www.donau-uni.ac.at/	Krems	3	4
Universität Klagenfurt - Institut für Erziehungswissenschaft und Bildungsforschung (IFEB); http://www.uni-klu.ac.at/ifeb/	Klagenfurt	2	4
AMS Österreich – Arbeitsmarktforschung; http://www.ams.or.at/neu/bgl/4586.htm	Vienna	2	3,5
Universität Graz - Institut für Erziehungs- und Bildungswissenschaften http://www.gewi.uni-graz.at/edu/	Graz	2	3,5
Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (WIFO); http://www.wifo.ac.at/	Vienna	2	3,5
Sozialökonomische Forschungsstelle (SFS); http://www.sfs-research.at/	Vienna	3	3,2
Synthesis Forschung GesmbH; http://www.synthesis.co.at/	Vienna	3	3
Institut für Berufs- und Erwachsenenbildungsforschung an der Universität Linz (IBE); http://www.ibe.co.at/	Linz	3	3
KMU Forschung Austria http://www.kmuforschung.ac.at/	Vienna	2	3
L&R – Sozialforschung; http://www.lrsocialresearch.at/	Vienna	2	3
Universität Klagenfurt - Institut für interdisziplinäre Forschung und Fortbildung (IFF); http://www.uni-klu.ac.at/iff/	Klagenfurt	2	3
Pädagogische Hochschule Steiermark; http://www.phst.at/	Graz	2	3
Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in Tirol; http://www.ph-tirol.ac.at/typo3/	Innsbruck	2	3
Pädagogische Hochschule Wien; http://www.phwien.ac.at/	Vienna	2	3
Universität Wien - Institut für Bildungswissenschaft; http://institut.erp.univie.ac.at/	Vienna	2	3
abif – Analyse, Beratung und Interdisziplinäre Forschung; http://www.abif.at	Vienna	2	2,5
Prospect Unternehmensberatung GesmbH, Vienna, Graz; http://www.pro-spect.at/	Vienna, Graz	2	2,5
Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule Wien, Akademienverbund; http://www.kphvie.at/?id=66	Vienna	2	2,5
SORA - Institute for Social Research and Analysis; http://www.sora.at/	Vienna	2	2,2
Institut für Arbeitsmarktbetreuung und –forschung Graz (IFA); http://www.ifa-steiermark.at/	Graz	2	2
Zukunftszentrum - Kompetenzzentrum für Arbeit- und Lebenswelten der Zukunft; http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/	Innsbruck	2	2
Zentrum für Soziale Innovation (ZSI); http://www.zsi.at/	Vienna	2	2
Pädagogische Hochschule Niederösterreich; http://www.ph-noe.ac.at/	Baden	2	2
Universität Innsbruck - Institut für Erziehungswissenschaft; http://www.uibk.ac.at/ezwi/	Innsbruck		1,5
Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien – Institut für Wirtschaftspädagogik; http://www.wu-wien.ac.at/wipaed	Vienna		1,5
Universität Graz - Wirtschaftspädagogik; http://domino.uni-graz.at/IWIP-Extern/main.nsf	Graz		1,5
Universität Linz - Institut für Soziologie; http://www.soz.jku.at/content/e279/index_ger.html	Linz		1
Universität Salzburg - Fachbereich Erziehungswissenschaft; http://www.uni-salzburg.at/portal/page?_pageid=181.92406&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL	Salzburg		1
FH Joanneum; http://www.fh-joanneum.at/aw/~a/home/?lan=de	Graz		1
FH Salzburg; http://www.fh-salzburg.ac.at/	Salzburg		1
Universität Linz - Abteilung für Wirtschaftspädagogik; http://www.wipaed.jku.at/b	Linz		1
Universität Salzburg - Wissenschaftsagentur; http://www.uni-salzburg.at/portal/page?_pageid=1587.1&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL	Salzburg		0,5
Österreichisches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung; http://www.oieb.at/	St.Pölten		0,5
Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien – Institut für Bildungswissenschaft und Philosophie; http://www.wu-wien.ac.at/bildungswissenschaft/apaed	Vienna		0,5
Management Center Innsbruck; http://www.mci.edu/com/index.html	Innsbruck		0,5
Innovative Sozialprojekte ISOP; http://www.isop.at/isop_Beschreibung/info_englisch.pdf	Graz		0,5
Volkshochschule Floridsdorf; http://www.vhs21.ac.at/cms/index.asp?id=230	Vienna		0,5
Kunsthochschule Linz - Institut für Kunst und Gestaltung; http://www.ufg.ac.at/orientierung_451.0.html	Linz		0,5
Universität Innsbruck – Wirtschaftspädagogik und Evaluationsforschung; http://www.uibk.ac.at/iol/	Innsbruck		0,5
Pädagogische Hochschule Oberösterreich; http://www.ph-ooe.at/	Linz		0,5
Steirische Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft; http://www.stvg.com/stvg/index.html	Graz		0,5

¹ Original index based on five indicators; ² Original index plus index of applications for conference, contributions to bwp@online and to the online magazine of adult education: applications to the 1st conference: (1)= more than 1 application; (0,5) = 1 application; 0,2 = partner in thematic forum; 0,5 contribution in bwp@online; 0,5 = contribution in MAGAZIN Erwachsenenbildung.at

There have been some changes in the institutional framework of VET research during the observed period:

1. The institutions of teacher training have been relaunched to “Pädagogische Hochschule” and should more strongly be involved in research in the future. The former institutions called “Pädagogische Akademie” have come under a process of reorganisation in 2007.
2. The research network in adult and continuing education has taken further steps of organisation (Mission

Statement: http://www.oieb.at/download/Mission_Statement_EB-Forschungsnetz.pdf).

In 2004 we have identified about 75 Institutions that fulfilled at least one of the five descriptors for the selection of VET research institutions: (1) member of abf-Austria⁴ core group, (2) member of the AMS⁵ research network, (3) representation in at least one of the three research documentations, (4) member of the adult education⁶ research network, (5) representation in VET-INSTIT database. For this report we have updated the list by the analysis of the applications to the first Austrian conference for VET research and contribution to bwp@online and MAGAZIN Erwachsenenbildung. From the 29 research institutions of the original list 2004 21 have reacted to the call for papers (72%) and/or 10 have contributed to the journals, 8 additional institutions have provided applications to the conference and/or 10 additional institutions have contributed to the Journals. All those we have included in the list, which now shows a total of 46 institutions. So the list has been added substantially (18 institutions have been added to the original 28).

The extension of the list shows also that the newcomers are mainly higher education institutions or institutions that do not have their main activities in research. Out of the 46 institutions included in the list that have carried at least two of the five indicators in 2004 and/or have applied to the 1st conference in 2008 and/or have contributed to the journals, 14 are private or semi-public research institutes, 16 are university institutes or affiliated to universities, 6 are teacher education institutions, 3 are polytechnics (Fachhochschule), and 7 are non-research institutions. However, if we look at the indicators as a measure of intensity of inclusion in VET research activities still the private or semi-public research institutes are ranking in the upper half of the list, and some of the university institutes have increased their ranks. So competition might be increasing, and to some part also cooperation.

5. FUNDING FRAMEWORKS AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES.

Austrian VET research is mainly done by non-university institutions, which often focus on applied research and development. A strong base in the university system does not exist so far, however, there are signs for an increasing activity in the academic system. Some steps have been taken in the university sector to strengthen adult education research by the establishment of a specialised department for research in continuing education and educational management at the Donau Universität Krems (<http://www.donau-uni.ac.at/de/studium/departement/wbbm/index.php>), and by the further development of the department for adult education and vocational education at the University of Klagenfurt (<http://www.uni-klu.ac.at/ifeb/eb/>).

The main financial sources are still invested by the labour market authorities, and therefore there is no clear separation between VET research, research about occupational development and labour market research. Main players are the research branch of the public employment service (AMS), and the administration of the VET system based in the Federal Ministry of Education. The AMS has set up a research branch, and is hosting a research network. The ministry supports abf- Austria, and has set up a series of edited books about "Innovation in VET" (<http://www.studienverlag.at/index.php3>). The weight of the different areas and topics is shifting not in a systematic manner.

The main funding resources are provided via commissioned research projects, and by European sources. Funding institutions are the AMS (public employment service), the Federal Ministries of Education and of Ministry for Economics and Labour, and the institutions of social partnership. The LEONARDO DA VINCI Nationalagentur (<http://www.leonardodavinci.at/>) provides a support structure for the participation in European projects.

The amount of resources is not known because of the scattered structure of financing mechanisms.

In the field of adult and continuing education a new online publication magazine has been started in February 2007 (<http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at/magazin/>). This source is funded by the Ministry of education and the European Social Fund as an integration source for the debate and the creation of knowledge in the key area of adult and continuing education. The Bundesinstitut für Erwachsenenbildung (Bifeb: <http://www.bifeb.at/>) has been relaunched as a national competence centre for the development and professionalisation in Austrian adult education, which is also an institutional base for the new magazine.

⁴ abf-Austria has been built by 5 research institutes as partners of the REFER-net as a core group of VET research in Austria

⁵ The AMS research network provides a platform for labour market and VET research

⁶ From the adult education research network only the research institutions have been included in the list, there also 8 provider institutions or regional governments or other networking institutions in the network

6. PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATIONS AND NETWORKS.

The key associations to facilitate the collaboration are abf-Austria and the AMS research network. Those initiatives have further consolidated, and the development of a network for adult education research has taken a new step of development.

- **abf-Austria** (<http://www.abf-austria.at/>) provides the contributions to the REFER-net, and holds contact to a wider community of institutions related to VET research. A yearly national meeting is organised, and the first national conference will take place in July 2008. Its main objective is the further professionalisation of Austrian VET research. This initiative certainly will improve the infrastructure of VET research in Austria, and is planned as a regular series. It has been organised by abf-Austria and the Ministry of Education and the Public Employment Service AMS (http://www.berufsbildungsforschung-konferenz.at/netautor/napro4/appl/na_professional/parse.php?id=2500%2C%2C10085%2C). The 1st conference has "Öffnung von Arbeitsmärkten und Bildungssystemen – Migration, Mobilität, Integration" (Opening up of Labour Markets and Educational Systems – Migration, Mobility, Integration) as its general topic, and about 50 papers and 6 thematic forums including about 70 researchers have been selected for presentation.

- The **AMS research network** (http://www.ams.or.at/neu/1212_1805.htm) organises workshops to specific topics, and provides a web page for information about projects and events.

- The **network for adult and continuing education research and development** aims at the development of a common research agenda, which should contribute to the development and implementation of an Austrian lifelong learning strategy. The network has taken steps towards its institutionalisation by deciding about its mission and organisational structure⁷ in March 2007, and by establishing a web page (<http://www.oieb.at/master.htm?http://www.oieb.at/themen/Forschungsnetzwerk.htm>). There are also further sources about adult education in Austria available at the knowledge base Erwachsenenbildung (<http://adulteducation.at/de/forschungsnetzwerk/>). In addition to the more general documentation sources the knowledge base also includes a separate literature documentation about this field.

- The **Austrian society of R&D in education** (Österreichische Gesellschaft für Forschung und Entwicklung im Bildungswesen – OEFEB; <http://www.oefeb.at/>) which exists since 2000 has organised the researchers and academics in educational research from the university and teacher education sectors, however, does not include VET research so far. The units are empirical pedagogy research, teacher education and research, media pedagogy, school research and development, social pedagogy. To some extent this organisational separation reflects the separation in research and development practice.

⁷ See also the Mission Statement of the new network: http://www.oieb.at/download/Mission_Statement_EB-Forschungsnetz.pdf; an overview about the development of adult education research: <http://www.donau-uni.ac.at/de/departement/wbbm/forschung/lifelonglearning/projekte/05859/index.php>; an overview about the research organisations in that field: <http://www.eb-portal.at/grundlagen/organisation/forschungseinrichtungen.php>; http://www.oeibf.at/TCgi/Images/oeibf/20060927093701_Erwachsenenbildungsforschung_in_sterreich.pdf

7. BRIEF REVIEW/ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT R&D ACTIVITIES AND INDICATION OF FUTURE ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED. THIS SECTION SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY A RESEARCH EXPERT.

7.1

Firstly, comment briefly on the status, effectiveness and impact of current VET/HRD R&D activities in your country.

(One third of a page)

Status

During the observed period VET R&D activities in Austria have improved their status by some important steps: (a) by taking stock of the state of the art and of reflection on it by publishing an issue of bwp@online, (b) by preparing a reviewed conference for VET research; (c) by the formal creation of the network of adult and continuing education R&D; (d) by the start of the online journal of adult education as a source of communication of results and as a focused basis for professional debate.

A more comprehensive picture of players and results has been gained by those activities. Still the distribution of topics is rather unstable and unbalanced, e.g. the topics of *HRD*, *politics/society/population* and *administration/finance* are tackled to a very low degree. To some extent the different research sectors have been brought together in common activities, and university research has become more visible, however, might have increased competition for scarce resources in a field of many small scale institutions. VET and HRD is still strongly separated.

Effectiveness and impact

In the competitive structure resources for the public good of documentation and coordination are lacking to a high degree. The European programmes have given some support for internationalisation of research, however, it is still low as compared to other small countries. Research and policy seems to have been brought together more closely by increased use of research in key policy activities (lifelong learning strategy, early school leaving and drop out, economics and governance, development of the NQF, QA/QD, etc.). However, the relationship to practitioners is still weak, and many research projects are still under resourced. So R&D might be efficient in economic terms (relatively much value for too little money), however, it hardly can be effective under these conditions.

7.2

Secondly, briefly outline and comment on those issues that need to be addressed by R&D in the future.

(One third of a page)

The following issues might be underlined for the future:

Overview and coordination has been improved, however, there is room for further improvement, e.g. in the direction of more continuity and follow-up, and more basic research. We have to follow-up, how the new institutions (R&D agency Bifie, and reporting process Bildungsbericht) will work for VET.

A more systematic and transparent programming and funding of VET research would be feasible. To give VET research more resources in the university system would be another strategy for more sustainability.

In certain areas more cooperation between the funding institutions might be feasible, e.g., in the area of anticipation of futures skill needs, or in the area of development of lifelong learning.

There are still particularly two areas where more research should be done:

- The first is *economics of education*. Some steps have been done in this area, however, there is still too little known about internal and external efficiency of education and training. In this area the further improvement of data and monitoring is still a main demand.

- The second area where more research should be done is *adult and continuing education*. The attempts to establish a research network, and to identify an agenda among the researchers might be a first step. To establish an informative and regular data base would be another critical step.

8. VET/HRD CONTACT PEOPLE.

Full name	E-mail address	Function	Particular expertise related to VET/HRD research
Lassnigg, Lorenz	lassnigg@ihs.ac.at	Institution: equi - Employment-Qualification-Innovation, Institut für Höhere Studien (IHS); Senior researcher, head of research unit, Personal web site: http://www.equi.at/	Vocational education and training (initial / continuing) Curriculum / learning / competence and skill development Teacher / trainer / professional
Markowitsch, Jörg	markowitsch@3s.co.at	Institution: 3s Unternehmensberatung GmbH, Managing Director, Personal web site: http://www.3s.co.at/	Politics / society / population Economy / labour market / social partners Administration / finance of education and training General / academic education Vocational education and training (initial / continuing) Curriculum / learning / competence and skill development Certification / qualification / guidance / career / occupation
Mayr, Thomas	mayr@ibw.at	Institution: Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (IBW), Director, Personal web site: http://www.ibw.at/	Economy, labour market, social partners Vocational education and training (initial/continuing) Administration / finance of education and training
Paier, Dietmar	dietmar.paier@zbw.at	Institution: Zentrum für Bildung und Wirtschaft, Forschungs- und Beratungsges GmbH, Manager, Personal web site: http://www.zbw.at	Information Technology Economy / labour market / social partners Educational Institution / enterprise Vocational education and training (initial / continuing) Human resources development
Schlögl Peter	peter.schloegl@oeibf.at	Institution: Österreichisches Institut für Berufsbildungsforschung, Managing Director, Personal web site: http://www.oeibf.at	Politics / society / population Economy / labour market / social partners Administration / finance of education and training Vocational education and training (initial / continuing) Certification / qualification / guidance / career / occupation

9. REFERENCES TO VET/HRD RESEARCH RESOURCES.

Publications:

Gramlinger F. / Schögl P / Stock M, eds (2007, 2008) Berufs- und Wirtschaftspädagogik in Österreich. Oder: Wer „macht“ die berufliche Bildung in AT? In: bwp@online spezial 3 Österreich spezial (Berufs- und Wirtschaftspädagogik online) <http://www.bwpat.de/ATspezial/>

Magazin erwachsenenbildung.at. Das Fachmedium für Forschung, Praxis und Diskurs. Online magazine, since February 2007, internet: <http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at/magazin/?arch=true>

European Social Funds - ESF (2007) Ziel 2 Österreich 2007-2013. Operationelles Programm Beschäftigung. Vienna http://www.esf.at/downloads/publikationen/ESF-OP_Februar-2007.pdf

BIFODOC 2006: Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur (2007) BILDUNGSFORSCHUNG IN ÖSTERREICH 2006. Vienna http://www.wapp.bmbwk.gv.at/medien/11507_PDFzuPubID73.pdf?

Neubauer B / Miljevic K (2007) Berufsbildung und Lebenslanges Lernen. Einschlägige Veröffentlichungen aus Österreich im Jahr 2006. Vorläufige Bibliografie 2006. Vienna: ÖIBF

Internet sources:

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Berufsbildungsforschung Austria (abf-Austria) <http://www.abf-austria.at/>

AMS-Forschungsnetzwerk (AMS research network) <http://www.ams.at/buw/14128.html>

Berufsbildungsforschungskonferenz (Austrian VET research conference) <http://www.berufsbildungsforschung-konferenz.at/>

Österreichisches Forschungs- und Entwicklungsnetzwerk für Erwachsenenbildung und Weiterbildung (Research and development network adult and continuing education)
<http://www.oieb.at/master.htm?http://www.oieb.at/themen/Forschungsnetzwerk.htm>

Information Base of the European Research Overview (ERO Base):
http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/projects_networks/ero/base.asp

Cedefop-Datenbank Ausbildungsinstitutionen (VET-INSTIT):
http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Information_resources/Library/Vetinstit/simple.asp

10. ABSTRACT.

The report covers the period of 2006 and part of 2007. It is based on the analysis of quantitative material (REFER publication report, ERO project base, Austrian BIFODOC) for 2006, and the analysis of qualitative Material for 2006 and 2007. The closing date for the main material is September 2007.

There have been changes in Austrian VET research with respect to the following aspects:

first, activities of stock taking of VET research have been performed by publishing a special issue of *bwp@online*, and by organising a reviewed research conference which will take place in July 2008;

second, further steps have been taken by the formal creation of a research and development network in adult and continuing education, and by the start of an online journal in this area;

third, the use of research has been strengthened in several key policy areas (lifelong learning strategy, early school leaving and drop out, economics and governance, development of the NQF, QA/QD, etc.);

fourth, major steps have been taken for the institutionalisation of educational R&D in Austria by the relaunch of the state agency for research and development, and by starting a project of national report about education in the school sector.

Room for further improvement is seen in many areas, particularly with the following:

-more continuity and follow-up, and more basic research;

- more systematic and transparent programming and funding of VET research

-more cooperation between the funding institutions in certain areas.

- there are particularly two areas where more research should be done: the first is *economics of education*, including further improvement of data and monitoring, the second area is *adult and continuing education*, including establishment of an informative and regular data base.