

New skilled labour radar underlines the great importance of VET

A recent company survey of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ) among 4,500 companies provides sound evidence that there is major demand for, and increasing lack of, skilled labour in the Austrian economy. This impressively confirms the importance of VET.

The new [skilled labour radar](#) provides well-founded instruments to analyse the skilled labour shortage in Austria. The radar builds on comprehensive secondary statistical evaluations and a nationwide **survey among around 4,500 companies**. The analyses are conducted by ibw Austria – Research & Development in VET on behalf of WKÖ.

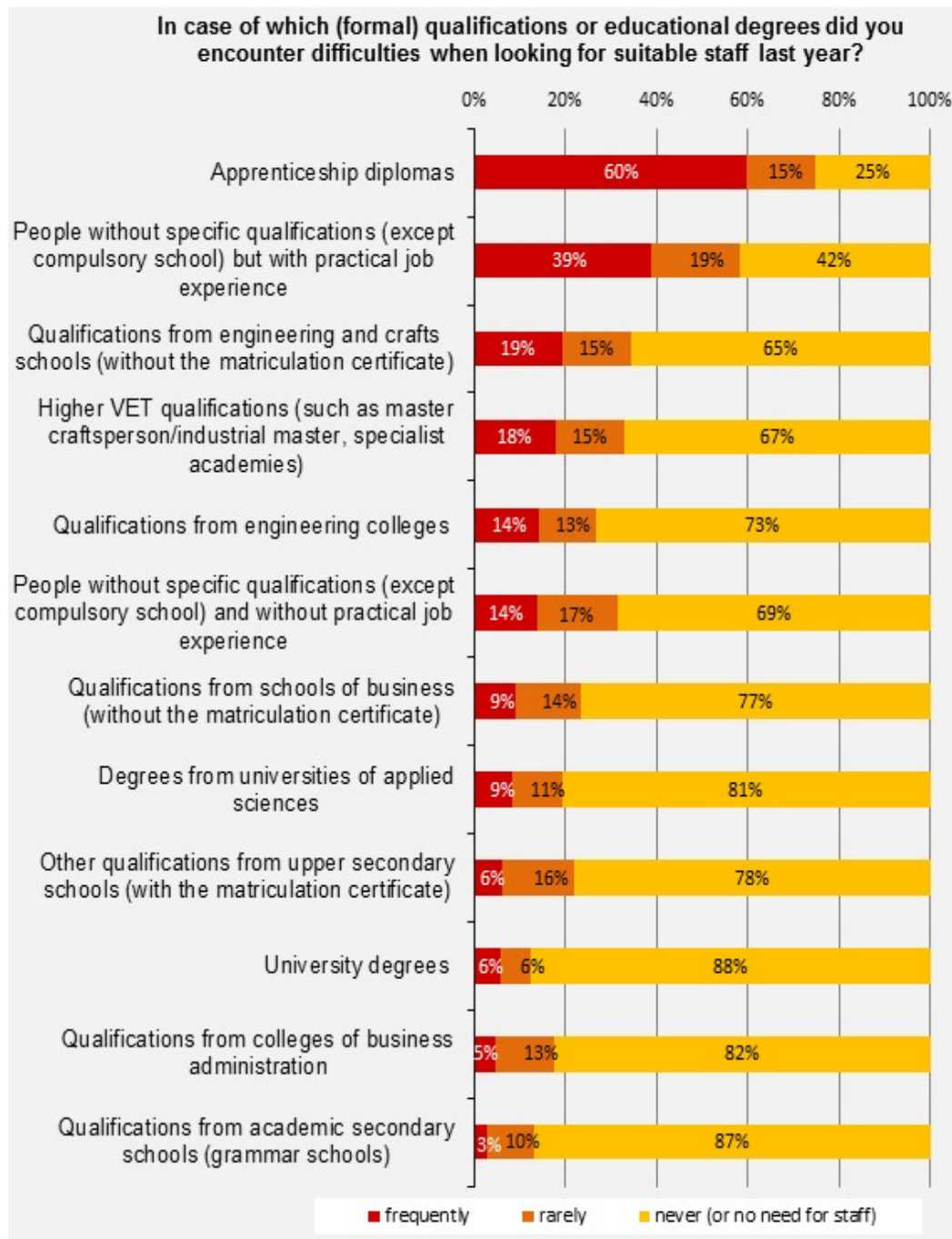
The results show that the skilled labour shortage is already being felt by almost all Austrian companies (87%) in the spring/early summer of 2018. It increases the workload on entrepreneurs and current staff, compromises the quality of service provision and the satisfaction of customers, and additionally leads to a clear decline in the economic success of Austrian companies (drops in sales and higher costs). The skilled labour shortage is experienced particularly intensely in **medium-sized companies**, in tourism, in artisanal/technical fields and regionally in the **west of Austria**.

59% of current vacancies for skilled labour have not been filled for already more than 6 months. Last year there was also already a clear decrease in the number and quality of job applications whereas the duration and money required to search for staff increased significantly. Extrapolated to Austria it can be assumed that there is an **estimated demand for skilled labour** of around **162,000 people** (among all member companies of WKÖ) at the time of survey April 2018.

Apprenticeship diplomas are **especially in demand** (cf. Diagram 1). 60% of the companies with a noticeable skilled labour shortage frequently encountered difficulties last year in their search for staff with apprenticeship diplomas (only 9% when searching for graduates from universities of applied sciences and 6% in case of university graduates). The situation has additionally become worse in recent years because of the decline in the number of apprentices (which is mainly due to demographic reasons). This is by no means the result of a lack of willingness to provide training on the part of Austrian companies. On the contrary: **around half of the companies** (38% clearly, another 22% perhaps) **would train a greater number of apprentices** if they found sufficiently qualified and interested young people for their jobs (cf. Diagram 5). Among those companies which, in principle, train apprentices, as many as 46% definitely wanted to train more apprentices and 27% perhaps.

Diagram 1: Qualifications or educational degrees where companies encountered difficulties finding suitable candidates last year

(of those n = 3,873 companies which stated they at least weakly felt a shortage of skilled labour last year)



Source: ibw Company Survey on Demand for/Lack of Skilled Labour (n = 4,462 companies; April 2018)

Sources and further information:

- **WKÖ-Fachkräfte radar** (in German): <https://www.wko.at/fachkraefte>
- **Research results** (only in German): ibw research report No 191/192: <https://www.ibw.at/bibliothek/id/475/>
- **Short version:** ibw research brief Nr. 101 [EN](#) / [DE](#)