



Lifelong Learning Programme  
Leonardo da Vinci, Development of Innovation

## QualiMoVET

### Preliminary Study Austria

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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## Imprint

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Vienna, March 2009

# 1. Overview national education system Austria<sup>1</sup>

## a) Preschool activities

Upon reaching the age of three children may attend a **kindergarten**. Day care delivery is in the hands of the Federal states (Länder) or of private providers. Kindergarten in Austria is not part of the school system, attendance is therefore voluntary, with no legal claim yet. In practice there can be waiting periods from the registration to the admission up to one year in some areas.

Sharings of costs are different, depending on the parents income and on the Federal state the familiy lives.

Actually a lot of changes around "Kindergarten" take place in 2009:

- A comprehensive set of measures to promote language skills was prepared by the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture (BMUKK). These policies should help children acquire a sufficient level of German language skills when entering primary school. The language tutorial programme has started in the 2008/09 kindergarten term.
- Starting from autumn 2009 the kindergarten becomes at least obligation for five to six-year children
- There is also an actual political discussion in the Federal states about the costs, which will be changing in autumn 2009. For example in Vienna kindergarten will be free for all ages.

## b) School system

In the field of education, lawmaking and law enforcement powers are shared by the Federal Government and the Federal states (Länder). The Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (BMUKK) is the supreme supervisory authority for primary and secondary education, while the Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BWF) is responsible for tertiary education.

There are private and state schools; the number of private schools is fairly low. In state schools, no tuition fees are charged.

In Austria compulsory education lasts for nine years, from age six to age fifteen.

It comprises

- primary school (age six to age ten),
- lower secondary school or the lower level of a secondary academic school (age ten to age fourteen)
- and one pre-vocational year or the first year of upper secondary education (age fourteen to age fifteen).

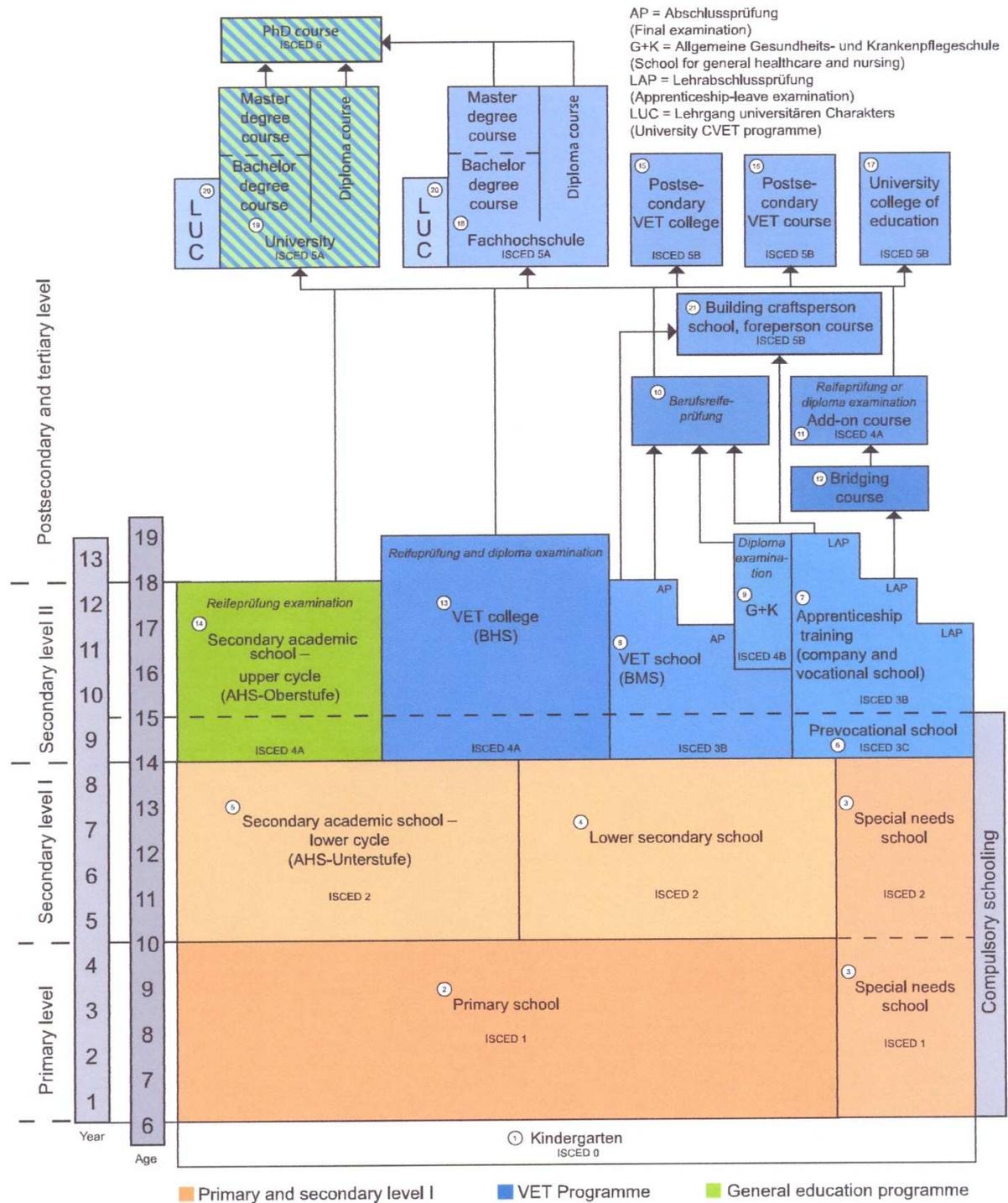
Starting with the ninth year of schooling, young people may attend either a secondary academic school (AHS) or any of the various secondary technical and vocational (business) schools or colleges.

Tertiary education comprises universities and universities of applied sciences, as well as academies and post-secondary courses or colleges.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.bic.at/downloads/en/brftipps/0\\_1\\_bildungssystem\\_en.pdf](http://www.bic.at/downloads/en/brftipps/0_1_bildungssystem_en.pdf)

**Figure: The Austrian education system**



## 1) Primary school (ages 6 to 10)

Every child's education in Austria starts with four years at **primary school** (Volksschule) [ISCED 1].

**Pre-primary education** is foreseen for children who have reached compulsory school age (i.e. the age of six) but are not yet mature enough for school (e.g. because they have difficulties following instruction). Primary schools impart comprehensive general education to all pupils with the objective of fostering their social, emotional, intellectual and physical skills and abilities.

Children with special educational needs can attend either a **special needs school** (Sonderschule) [ISCED 1] that is tailored to their needs or primary school classes that are run in an integrative (inclusive) scheme.

## 2) Secondary Level I (ages 10 to 14)

After primary education, pupils have a choice between two types of school that last for four years each [both ISCED 2]. These are the:

- lower secondary school (Hauptschule) and the
- lower level of secondary academic school (allgemein bildende höhere Schule or AHS - Unterstufe)

**General secondary schools** (Hauptschule) provide pupils with basic general education, preparing them for transfer to the upper secondary level and for working life. It is incorporated in a community and is relatively flexible in meeting the different needs of pupils (depending on region, individual interests, talents, etc.).

- In German, mathematics and modern languages, the children are streamed according to their ability such that the individual needs can be met. In these classes instruction is mainly given in small groups. The top stream must meet the requirements of the allgemeinbildende höhere Schule (academic secondary school).
- Additional tutoring is offered in all required subjects, and students frequently take advantage of this possibility for subjects in which they are grouped by ability.
- Within certain limits, each school can adjust the courses it offers to suit its specific situation. It may even be entitled to issue autonomous curricula. In this way a school may develop its own special profile or priorities (e.g. languages, music, art and design, sports, science, ecology, computer science, etc.).
- In the third and fourth forms, particular attention is paid to preparing pupils for working life. This is accomplished by means of required "career orientation" classes, through job-sampling days, and on excursions and field trips.
- If a student has reached a certain level of achievement at general secondary school he or she may be transferred directly to academic secondary school or to medium and higher-level secondary technical and vocational college.

The **lower level of AHS (secondary academic school)** aims to impart a broad and advanced secondary general education.

In the fifth and sixth years, curricula for lower secondary school and the lower level of AHS are identical. As of the seventh year, AHS programmes are divided into three branches with different focuses:

- Classical secondary academic school with Latin,
- secondary academic school specialising in mathematics and geometry,
- secondary academic school specialising in economics.

In the school year 2008/2009 the **New Middle School** [ISCED 2], was provided to all 10 to 14-year-olds in addition to lower secondary school and lower level of secondary academic school in five of the nine federal states in Austria. This kind of school was before piloted in Vienna for several years. In the school year 2009/2010 the New Middle School will be exten-

dend to all federal states. Avoiding the early selection at the age of 9 or 10 is one of the core elements of the New Middle School.

Schoolchildren with special educational needs can continue attending **special needs school** [ISCED 2] or if they are able to change into one of the other schools described above.

### **3) Secondary level II**

The final year of compulsory schooling corresponds to the first year of the upper secondary level. At this point, the school system's differentiation increases. Students have the choice between

- 3.1. vocational education and training (VET) programmes or
- 3.2. general education programmes.

#### **3.1. Vocational Education and Training (VET Programmes)**

VET programmes are provided within the framework of apprenticeship training (dual system), at VET schools (BMSs) and VET colleges (BHSs). General education is imparted in the upper level of AHS.

Pupils who want to attend a VET programme in the dual system are obliged to complete their ninth year of compulsory schooling first. This is in most cases done at a one-year **prevocational school** (Polytechnische Schule) [ISCED 3C] (ages 14 to 15)

Prevocational schools can be attended after the eighth school grade and comprise only one grade. In the ninth, or a voluntary tenth school year, students are offered tailored guidance for their future career decision. An orientation period at the beginning and career orientation as the basic goal of all courses offer numerous opportunities to become familiar with working life. Company visits and job-sampling days at companies help to select the right vocation. Basic vocational training is offered in various trades (elective subjects). These correspond to a wide variety of careers in trade and industry, and enable students to acquire basic abilities, skills and knowledge (key qualifications). Depending on his or her vocational interests and inclinations, each student chooses one of the following subjects: metalwork, electrics, building woodwork, commercial and secretarial studies, services and tourism.

Autonomous curricula make it possible for each school to offer new subjects such as information technology or mechatronics with special consideration for regional career opportunities and the interests of its students. There are also general education subjects. Students acquire the basic vocational knowledge and skills to be well prepared for entering into apprenticeships or transferring to more advanced schools. Students who pass the final examination at a prevocational school are also entitled to transfer to the second grade of a medium-level secondary vocational college or to the first grade of a higher-level vocational college without taking an entrance examination. For children with special educational needs school trials in integrative instruction may be held at polytechnic schools.

One VET form of upper secondary level is **VET school (berufsbildende mittlere Schule or BMS)** [ISCED 3B]. VET schools aim to impart to students the subject-specific fundamental skills that enable graduates to exercise their occupation immediately upon completion. In addition, it aims to extend and deepen general education. VET schools mostly last between three and four years, but there are also one-year and two-year forms.

Such schools are for example: medium-level industrial, trade and craft colleges, medium level secondary commercial colleges, fashion schools, medium-level secondary colleges for hotel management, tourism, catering or medium-level secondary agricultural and forestry colleges.

**Schools for general healthcare and nursing** (Schulen für allgemeine Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege) [ISCED 4B] hold a special position. They cannot be started before successful completion of the tenth year. Training is provided within the dual system, with practical training at a hospital and theoretical education at school.

Students who have completed lower secondary level have also access to a **VET college** (berufsbildende höhere Schule or BHS) [ISCED 4A], which provides higher vocational qualifications in different specialisations (e.g. tourism, mechanical engineering, electronic engineering, etc.) and well-founded general education. VET colleges last for five years and are completed with the Reifeprüfung and diploma examination. Students thus acquire professional qualifications and the general higher education entrance qualification (double qualification).

Such schools are for example: higher-level secondary college for tourism, higher-level secondary industrial and trade colleges, higher-level commercial colleges, higher-level secondary colleges for fashion, artistic design, productmanagement and presentation, fashion design and product design or higher-level secondary college for agriculture and forestry.

### **3.2. General education programme**

A general education is provided to students by the **upper level of secondary academic school** (allgemein bildende höhere Schule or AHS – Oberstufe) [ISCED 4A] (ages 15 to 18). These schools mainly prepare students for university-based education programmes. They last for four years and are completed with the Reifeprüfung examination. Graduates acquire the general higher education entrance qualification.

#### **c) Vocational education and training (in special consideration of the target group)**

Beside the vocational schools and colleges the **dual apprenticeship system** provides a solid base for young people's successful career entry. They receive practice-oriented training in over 250 apprenticeship trades.

With the introduction of a vocational matriculation examination (Berufsmaturität – described later on) in 1997 as an alternative to standard school leaving examinations, young people with apprenticeship qualifications may now also move on to tertiary education. This pathway to higher education is advertised under the slogan "apprenticeship + matriculation" (Lehre+ Matura).

Subsequent apprenticeship training is provided at the **training enterprise** (practical training, which makes up some 80% of the training period) and at the **parttime vocational school** (Berufsschule) [ISCED 3B]. It is the task of these vocational schools to expand the trainees' general education and complement the specialist knowledge and skills they are taught in the training enterprises. Depending on the apprenticeship, training lasts between two and four years, mostly three years. At the end of the training, every apprentice can take an apprenticeship-leave examination (Lehrabschlussprüfung).

Young people with special educational needs, disabilities or reduced mobility have the possibility to attend an **integrative VET programme** (integrative Berufsausbildung – for more details read chapter 4c).

#### **d) Tertiary and postsecondary education**

Successful completion of AHS or BHS provides students with higher education entrance qualifications and hence access to postsecondary and tertiary level.

Since 1997, graduates of apprenticeship training, of three- and four-year BMSs and of schools of healthcare and nursing have had the possibility to take the so-called Berufsmaturität examination. It comprises four partial exams (German, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Language, and occupation related specialist area) and entitles students to transfer to any postsecondary or tertiary establishment (higher education entrance qualification).

Another way to obtain the higher education entrance qualification is via the acquisition of the Studienberechtigungsprüfung certificate. It qualifies holders to study one specific specialist area.

Another option of obtaining access requirements for the postsecondary and tertiary sector is the completion of an add-on course (Aufbaulehrgang) [ISCED 4A]. Particular groups of people have to attend a bridging course (Vorbereitungslehrgang) before entering this educational track. Graduates of add-on courses are awarded a Reifeprüfung or diploma certificate.

In the postsecondary and tertiary level you can find the following educational paths:

- **Postsecondary VET colleges (Akademien) [ISCED 5B]**, which qualify graduates to exercise specific activities in the social services and healthcare sector,
- **postsecondary VET courses (Kollegs) [ISCED 5B]**, which are mainly oriented towards AHS graduates who want to obtain BHS qualifications, and
- **university colleges of education (pädagogische Hochschulen) [ISCED 5B]**, where compulsory schoolteachers are trained.

At a higher level are **Fachhochschulen** [ISCED 5A] and **Universities** [ISCED 5A]. Both, according to a new legislation, provide three-year Bachelor degree courses, on which basis Masters courses of at least two years may be attended. At both institutions, students may also enrol in diploma studies. Graduates of a Masters course or a diploma study are entitled to enrol in doctoral studies at universities [ISCED 6].

Universities and Fachhochschule offer **university CVET programmes** (Lehrgänge universitären Charakters) and **short-term university programmes** (Universitätslehrgänge) [ISCED 5A] as forms of university-based continuing education schemes. The required access qualification is either the general higher education entrance qualification or many years of professional experience.

People over the age of 18 who have successfully passed the apprenticeship-leave exam as well as BMS graduates can deepen their theoretical specialist education at **building crafts-person schools** (Bauhandwerkerschulen) and **foreperson courses** (Werkmeisterschulen) [ISCED 5B]. They last for one to two years and are completed with a final examination.

#### e) Further training activities

People who have completed an initial vocational training (IVET) pathway at the upper secondary, postsecondary or tertiary level and start another stage in their education are usually in **continuing vocational education and training (CVET)** programmes. The Austrian CVET landscape is characterised by a high degree of institutional diversity (schools, educational institutions of the social partners, non-profit CVET institutions, private providers, etc.).

Two most important providers for CVET are the educational institutions of the social partners:

- The Institutes for Economic Promotion (**WIFI** Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitute), owned by the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. The WIFIs provide educational products in demand on the market in several areas. They also offer in-house training programmes.
- The **bfi** (Vocational Training Institute) is owned by the Chambers of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Federation. Courses of bfi cover both vocational and personal subjects and tailored programmes for companies.

Academic and vocational courses and programmes are offered by institutes of adult education sponsored by the Ministry of Education, such as colleges of further education, vocational colleges and a number of other regional non-profit institutions for adult education.

One of the main purposes of adult education is to allow students to gain qualifications not obtained earlier by taking adult classes in the form of “second-chance education”. Institutions offering adult education give interested students the opportunity of attending courses in preparation for the matriculation examination, the school-leaving certificate, the university entrance examination or the vocational matriculation examination (in some instances examinations may be taken in stages).

An important institution of Adult Education is the Adult Education Centre (**VHS**). Courses on offer are for example languages, health, arts and leisure, but also vocational trainings (key competences, job re-entry), exam preparations for Matura and University entrance or basic educational courses.

## 2. Relevant Indicators

### a) Structural data (demographic figures, labour market, traditional industries etc.) and structural development in the near future in your country

Austria has some 8.2 million inhabitants. Nearly 15% have not been born in Austria. Some 1.7 million live in Vienna (this corresponds to about 20% of the entire population).

**Table: Population by age and country of birth (annual average 2007)<sup>2</sup>**

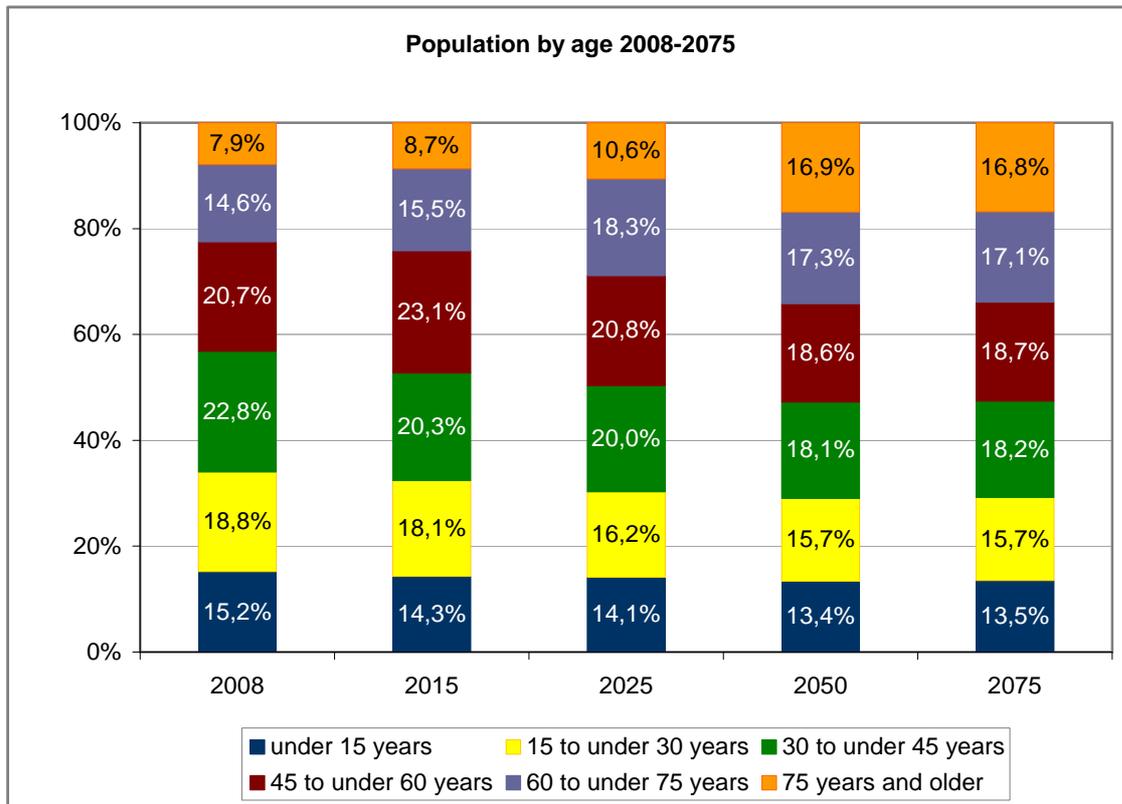
		Country of birth		"Non-Austria" as percentage of this age group	Subgroup by age as percent- age of whole population
		Austria	Non- Austria		
<b>Total Population</b>	8 190 800	7 014 700	1 176 100	14,4 %	
<b>age subgroups</b>					
<b>15 to 19 years</b>	483 000	428 700	54 200	11,2 %	5,9 %
<b>20 to 24 years</b>	507 200	424 700	82 500	16,3 %	6,2 %
<b>25 to 29 years</b>	529 300	415 200	114 000	21,5 %	6,5 %
<b>Total population male</b>	3 984 800	3 432 900	551 900	13,8 %	-
<b>age subgroups</b>					
<b>15 to 19 years</b>	241 200	213 300	27 900	11,6 %	6,1 %
<b>20 to 24 years</b>	250 500	212 500	38 000	15,2 %	6,3 %
<b>25 to 29 years</b>	266 000	215 200	50 700	19,1 %	6,7 %
<b>Total population female</b>	4 206 000	3 581 800	624 200	14,8	-
<b>age subgroups</b>					
<b>15 to 19 years</b>	241 800	215 500	26 300	10,9	5,7
<b>20 to 24 years</b>	256 700	212 200	44 500	17,3	6,1
<b>25 to 29 years</b>	263 300	200 000	63 300	24	6,3

Source: Statistics Austria

By 2075 the figure should reach 9.7 million. The share of inhabitants over 60 years is expected to increase steadily from 22.5% in 2008 to 33.9% in 2075, whereas the share of younger inhabitants under 30 years will decline from 34% in 2008 to 29.2% until 2075.

<sup>2</sup> Arbeitskräfteerhebung 2007. Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus, hrsg. v. Statistik Austria, S. 36

**Table: Population by age 2008 - 2075<sup>3</sup>**



Source: Statistics Austria

Austrian economy<sup>4</sup> has been marked by a structural move towards the tertiary sector since the late 1990s. Today the economy is dominated by services: Around two thirds of the gross value added (GVA) comes from the tertiary sector. The tertiary sector has grown by an annual average of 5% in the last 20 years. The agricultural and forestry (primary) sector and the production (secondary) sector declined.

In the year 2007 5.7% of all employees (ILO-concept) are employed in the primary sector, 27.3% in the secondary sector and 67% in the tertiary sector. In the third quarter 2008 the rates changed to 5.5% for the primary sector, 26.5% for the secondary sector and 68% for the tertiary sector – so the trend is continuing.<sup>5</sup>

Most of the employees in secondary sector work in manufacturing/industries and construction. Typical for Austrian economy are small-sized enterprises: Over three quarters of enterprises (about 43.200) operate with fewer than 10 employees. In contrast only 1% of the enterprises (about 540) employ more than 250 people. The annual increase in production (4.7%) in Austria was above the EU (EU27) average of 3.4% in 2007. The top earners in this sector were the Austrian automobile industry as well as the manufacture of basic metals and fabricated metal products. Turnover in these industries have doubled since 2000. But with the actual global development this situation also changes in Austria.

In the service sector (tertiary sector) people are mostly employed in sales, public services and in health and education. Austria can be called a service society. This sector provides two thirds of the jobs: 55.3% of all employed men and 81.2% of all employed women are working in services.

<sup>3</sup> [www.statistik.at](http://www.statistik.at), Prognosis of Population, asked at 5th of March 2009

<sup>4</sup> Figures are from 2007. Source: Austria. Data-figures-facts. Edited by Statistics Austria, 2008

<sup>5</sup> Arbeitsmarktergebnisse 2007. Schnellbericht. Hrsg. v. Statistik Austria, p. 24

In 2007 just over half of the entire Austrian population are employed.<sup>6</sup> 4.213.500 persons were employed and 185.600 unemployed, as measured by international definitions.<sup>7</sup> According to the database of the Austrian Labour Market Service (AMS) the number of employed persons in 2007 is lower (3.855.300) and of unemployed persons is higher (247.500).<sup>8</sup>

The prognosis (based on 2006) shows a decline in employment, in 2050 only 3.963.473 people will be employed (that means a reduction of about 250.00 persons).

The employment rate in Austria in 2007 is 74.7% (male 81.7%, female: 67.8%). The following table shows that in Austria the employment rate for people over 55 is very low, because many of this age are already retired.

**Table: Employment rate 2007 by age groups<sup>9</sup>**

Age group	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65+ years
Employment rate 2007	55.5%	82.1%	87%	82.3%	38.6%	4.8%

Source: Statistics Austria

The employment rate also depends on the level of education. In the year 2007 the employment rate of people with ISCED-level 0-2 has been 51.9%, with ISCED-level 3-4 it has been 75.9% and with ISCED level 5-6 it was the highest with 86.5%.

At present Austria is undergoing an economic downturn. In the years 2009 and 2010 economic growth rates are expected to be slightly above zero. Companies are facing unfavourable prospects. In the wake of the global economic slump, the situation of many companies has deteriorated drastically. Numerous enterprises are confronted with considerably reduced demand, an inadequate number of orders and insufficient capacity utilisation.

This difficult framework in which enterprises currently have to operate partly requires substantial adjustments of staffing levels. Although in the years 2008 to 2012 a total of 105,100 additional jobs will be created, three quarters of these additional jobs have been filled in the year 2008. In the following years the number of jobs will grow more moderately. In 2010 a decline in employment is to be expected.

Two thirds (+69,700) out of 105,100 additional jobs will be filled by women in the period 2008 to 2012. The majority of jobs will be created in the service sector up to 2012. Moreover, trade (+13,300) and the health sector (+33,700) will offer new opportunities for employment. In manufacturing and construction – two industries benefiting from the economic upswing in the previous years – a significant reduction in jobs is probable.<sup>10</sup>

### **b) Percentage of young people under the age of 27 reaching ISCED levels 2-6**

28% of the Austrian population had only compulsory schooling (including people still in education), which corresponds to position 0-2 and 3C short of the international classification ISCED 97. 56.4% of the Austrian 15 years or older finished education on level ISCED 3-4 (without 3C short) and 13.8% on level ISCED 5-6. In the age group of 25 to 64 the percentage of ISCED 5-6 was 17.6%.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> [www.statistik.at](http://www.statistik.at) asked at 6th of March

<sup>7</sup> Labour Force concept: An „employed person“ ist defined as one who has worked at least one hour for a fee or had a workplace (including self-employed persons and family workers). „Unemployed persons“ are defined as those who are not in employment, actively looking for work and available for work within two weeks. Persons in military and civilian services and in public institutions are excluded.

<sup>8</sup> In the database for the national calculation of employed and unemployed persons a „dependent employed“ is one, who has an employment with obligatory social insurance (health insurance) above the so-called „low income limit“. The „unemployed persons“ are the registered unemployed from the Labour Market Service Austria.

<sup>9</sup> Arbeitsmarktergebnisse 2007. Schnellbericht. Hrsg. v. Statistik Austria, p. 18

<sup>10</sup> Prognosis about employment and unemployment in Austria until 2012. Edited by AMS, 2008, p. 6

<sup>11</sup> Statistik Austria Arbeitskräfteerhebung. Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus 2007, 257

**Table: Population 15 years and over by educational attainment (ISCED-97)<sup>12</sup>**

Population by educational level	Percentage Total (in 1.000)	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3B	ISCED 3A	ISCED 4B	ISCED 4A	ISCED 5B	ISCED 5A/6
<b>Total</b>	100 % 6.905,1	30% 2.055,2	42% 2.893,7	6% 419,1	1% 78,3	7% 504,5	6% 412,3	8% 541,9
<b>Age subgroups</b>								
<b>20-24</b>	100 507,2	16%	43%	17,7%	0,7%	19%	1,4%	2,1%
<b>25-29</b>	100 529,3	13,5%	45%	9,7%	1,3%	13,7%	4,8%	11,7%

Source: Statistics Austria

**c) Percentage of young people under the age of 27 finishing vocational education (ISCED level 3 and 4)**

As you see in the table above more than 60% in the age group 20 to 24 have ISCED level 3 and 4. In the age group 25 to 29 this rate is lower, because in this age group people finish tertiary education levels.

Another table shows that for example in the year 2006/2007 over 93.000 pupils finished on ISCED level 3 or 4.

**Table: Pupils in Austrian by school leaving certificates**

	Leaving certificates 2006/2007	
	Total	Percentage of female
<b>Total leaving certificates</b>	103.168	48,9%
<b>selected certificates</b>		
<b>Apprenticeship (ISCED 3B)</b>	43.511	37,6%
<b>VET schools (ISCED 3B)</b>	12.069	58,8%
<b>Secondary academic school (ISCED 4A)</b>	17.095	59,7%
<b>VET colleges (ISCED 4A)</b>	20.336	52,7%

Source: Statistics Austria

**d) Current unemployment rate overall and under the age of 27 or which other age limit is normally used in your country (please add figures for the group of the 25 to 30 year old if they can be found and if possible, distinguish between people with and without professional qualification)**

In 2007 according to EUROSTAT 8,7% of people aged 15 to 24 were unemployed, the rate is higher with lower qualification.

**Table: Unemployment rate by age and education level 2007**

	total	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6
<b>Total age 15 to 74</b>	<b>4,4 %</b>	<b>9,2 %</b>	<b>4,0 %</b>	<b>2,6 %</b>
<b>subgroups</b>				
age 15 to 24	8,7 %	12,4 %	6,2 %	
age 25 to 39	4,4 %	10,5 %	3,6 %	2,9 %

Source: special Analysis of Statistik Austria on the base of Labour Force survey 2007

In 2008 concerning AMS 34.069 people under age 25 were registered as unemployed (15.045 female and 19.045 female) in annual average. These were 16% of all people registered as unemployed (212.253 people). Concerning EUROSTAT the overall unemployment rate for 2008 was 3,8%. There is no EU rate available for single age groups or qualification levels for the year 2008.

In 2008 47% of the registered unemployed people in Austria had maximum compulsory schooling.

<sup>12</sup> Statistik Austria Arbeitskräfteerhebung. Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus 2007, p.97

The actual situation of the economy caused a considerable rise in unemployment. By the end of February 2009 the number of job seekers increased up to 23,7% in comparison to February 2008, in the group of people under the age of 25 it was even 35,9%.

**e) Rate of long term unemployment overall and under the age of 25 (if possible, distinguish between people with and without professional qualification)**

Concerning AMS in the year 2007 6.144 people were registered as long term unemployed, these are 2,8% of all people registered as unemployed in the annual average. It has to be considered that for example a training / qualification measure lasting more than 28 days interrupts the length of unemployment. Therefore a alternative concept has been introduced, namely long term non-employed, where also people in training / qualification measure are included. In 2007 40.949 people were long term non-employed, these are 18,4% of all people registered as unemployed in the annual average.

The calculation based on the Labour Force Survey shows a long term unemployment rate (percentage of long term unemployment as part of whole unemployment) of 26,8% (age 15 to 74) and 12,9% for the age group 15 to 24.<sup>13</sup>

The overall long term unemployment rate for 2007 based on LFS was 1, 2%<sup>14</sup>. There is no EU rate available for single age groups or qualification levels.

**f) Current percentage of school dropouts, early school leavers and VET drop outs**

In 2007 in Austria 10,9% of people 18 to 24 can be defined as early school leavers

**Table: Share of early school leavers in 2007<sup>15</sup>**

percentage of early school leavers in the age group 18 to 24	Male	Female
10.9	11.6	10.2

Source: Eurostat

14% of apprentices quit their apprenticeship before ending regularly.

**Table: Drop-outs apprentices 2007<sup>16</sup>**

	Total apprentices	Percentage of apprentices who quit
<b>Male</b>	82.350	11
<b>Female</b>	44.770	20
<b>Total</b>	127.110	14

Source: Synthesis

<sup>13</sup> Source: special analysis of Statistik Austria on the base of Labour Force Survey 2007

<sup>14</sup> Source: special analysis of Statistik Austria on the base of Labour Force Survey 2007

<sup>15</sup> See definition of early school-Leavers by Eurostat: Early school leavers refers to persons aged 18 to 24 in the following two conditions: the highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3C short and respondents declared not having received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey.

<sup>16</sup> Lehrlingsausbildung: Angebot und Nachfrage. Entwicklung und Prognosen 2007 bis 2012. Hrsg. von Synthesis. 2008, S. 46

### 3. State of implementation of NQF<sup>17</sup>, EQF<sup>18</sup> and ECVET<sup>19</sup>

Following the publication of the European Commission's consultation paper on an EQF,<sup>20</sup> a wide-ranging national EQF consultation process was launched in Austria in the summer of 2005. All the relevant stakeholders in the field of education and training were asked to give their views on the document. In addition, numerous informational meetings and workshops were organized in order to make the objectives of an EQF more widely known and to invite active participation in the consultation. This democratic process of opinion-forming led to a national statement reflecting the range of opinions on the EQF proposal, expectations of it and suggestions for improving it. Apart from formulating some open questions, the Austrian response<sup>21</sup> contained the following central positions:

- It approves the purposes and functions of the EQF.
- It views transparency and comparability of qualifications as a top priority but opposes a regulatory instrument.
- It is in broad agreement with the proposed reference levels.
- It stresses the claim to parity of esteem between vocational and general education.
- It pinpoints a marked need for adequate methods and systems to be developed for the validation of non-formal and informal learning.
- It recognizes the necessity of a trial period involving all stakeholders.

At the end of 2006 stakeholders were asked for their opinion on the ECVET consultation paper.<sup>22</sup> In principle, it met with approval – on condition that ECVET be implemented on a voluntary basis. Its orientation to learning outcomes has been welcomed as a sensible and innovative approach; however, all key terms on which the allocation of credit points is based (i. e. terms employed to describe qualifications and units of qualifications), should be considerably more specific. Furthermore, compatibility with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) in higher education seems difficult. In Austria the consensus is that ECVET may indeed be a useful instrument for the description and transfer of learning outcomes but under no circumstances must it be an integral part of the EQF.

Due to the general approval for an EQF, the Austrian authorities determined an NQF covering the whole national education and training system and integrating formal, non-formal and informal learning should in turn be set up.<sup>23</sup> In a first fact-finding phase in 2007 the main focus was on identifying relevant research questions and suggesting feasible structures that would facilitate the implementation of an NQF. These suggestions were discussed in an extensive national consultation process in the first half of 2008.<sup>24</sup> Based on the responses to the consultation a specially-formed project group (strategic planning) and the national steering group (ministries, federal provinces, social partners) are currently preparing a political recommendation on an Austrian NQF for the two leading ministries.<sup>25</sup> The implementation of an Austrian NQF is stipulated in the programme of the current federal government.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>17</sup> National Qualification Framework

<sup>18</sup> European Qualification Framework

<sup>19</sup> European Credit System for VET

<sup>20</sup> Commission of the European Communities, Commission Staff Working Document "Towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning", SEC(2005) 957 (Brussels, 8 July 2005); [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/consultation\\_eqf\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/consultation_eqf_en.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> January 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Commission of the European Communities, Commission Staff Working Document "European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET): A System for the Transfer, Accumulation and Recognition of Learning Outcomes in Europe", SEC(2006) 1431 (Brussels, 31 Oct. 2006); [http://ec.europa.eu/education/ecvt/work\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/ecvt/work_en.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur and Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Forschung, "Konsultationspapier – Nationaler Qualifikationsrahmen für Österreich" (Vienna, without date); [http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/15830/nqr\\_konpap\\_08.pdf](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/15830/nqr_konpap_08.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.bmukk.gv.at/europa/nqr/nqr\\_sn.xml](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/europa/nqr/nqr_sn.xml).

<sup>25</sup> I. e. the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, and the Federal Ministry of Science and Research.

<sup>26</sup> Federal Chancellery, "Programme of the Austrian Federal Government for the 24th Legislative Period", (Vienna, 2 Dec. 2008), p. 210; <http://www.bka.gv.at/DocView.axd?Cobld=33566>.

## 4. Target group

### a) Based on the definition of the target group of the QualiMoVET project attached with this matrix, which subgroups (figures 1-8) would you define as most relevant for your country and for this project? Why?

For Austria low qualified young people could be defined as the most relevant target group (5), in this group there is a high percentage of young people with migration background (6), especially from Turkey and former Yugoslavia.

Low qualified people have decreasing job opportunities: Firstly all job requirements are rising and low qualified workers are more and more replaced by those with higher formal qualification. Secondly jobs in productive sectors are shrinking and this at the expense of the workforce with maximum compulsory schooling.

Austrian labour participation rate of low qualified people is about 60%, in the year 2004 it was the third lowest within EU 15. More than 40% of low qualified people between age 25 and 64 have therefore withdrawn from labour process what implies risk of pauperisation and exclusion<sup>27</sup>

One reason for low qualification is the early dropout. The risk of dropouts (ISCED 0-2) to get only unskilled labour in their first job is five times higher as for those young people with higher qualification. Also dropouts have a 2,1 fold risk of unemployment in Austria, in the EU it is only 1,4%. The situation of dropouts is even more serious in countries where the dropout-rate is lower because the risk of stigmatisation is higher.<sup>28</sup> And as is illustrated in 5b. the percentage of drop-outs is higher in the group of young people with migration background.

Austria has in comparison a low rate of youth unemployment because of the dual VET system, but in reverse those without vocational education bear a higher risk of enduring exclusion. Low education is becoming a stigma in the knowledge society. For people with migration background a good position in education and profession is a key for integration.

Another alarming signal is the very high rate of unemployment beneath young people with migration-background.<sup>29</sup>

### b) How many young people would you relate to each relevant group? Please give actual figures and a forecast to future developments, if possible.

There has been a study by the Austrian research institute Synthesis about young people with urgent need for qualification. They analysed the age cohort of years 15 to 24 in 2007 with maximum compulsory education who are entering working life. The number is 148.000 (49 % female and 51% male) or 14,5% of the total age group. There are three subgroups (24.920 who directly took up employment after compulsory schooling time, 92.730 dropouts from further education, who took up an employment afterwards and 30.950 who are neither on the labour market nor in education)<sup>30</sup>

According to the Microcensus 2007 the Austrian population between 20 and 24 with ISCED level 0-2 (including 3C short) are 80.800 (54% male and 46% female), which is 16% of this age group. In the age group 25-29 71.500 have reached this level (44% male and 56% female), which is 13,5% of this age group.<sup>31</sup>

In 2008 34.069 people under age 25 were unemployed, of which 16.010 with maximum compulsory education.

<sup>27</sup> Julia Bock Schappelwein, Geringqualifizierte Arbeitskräfte auf dem österreichischen Arbeitsmarkt, Wifo Vorträge 102/2008, Seite 8

<sup>28</sup> Mario Steiner, Elfriede Wagner (IHS), Dropoutstrategie. Grundlagen zur Prävention und Reintegration von Dropouts in Ausbildung und Beschäftigung, November 2007, 12ff.

<sup>29</sup> KMU Forschung Austria, Analyse der KundInnengruppe Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund am AMS Jugendliche, Juni 2007, Seite 4

<sup>30</sup> Jugendliche mit akutem Qualifikationsbedarf, Daniel Kamleitner, Synthesis Fokusbericht 2008/12 sowie Präsentation Werkstattgespräch 14. Oktober 2008 Jugendliche mit akutem Qualifikationsbedarf Eine Monitoring Analyse von Jugendlichen in Österreich

<sup>31</sup> Statistik Austria Arbeitskräfteerhebung. Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus 2007, 97

**c) Are in your country any legal regulations concerning the target group to assure social inclusion?**

The Integrated **Vocational Training Scheme (Integrative Berufsausbildung)** introduced under the 2003 amendment to the Vocational Training Act (BAG – Berufsausbildungsgesetz) has provided a strong impetus for the labour market integration of individuals who are placed at a disadvantage. For those who could not be placed in a regular apprenticeship by Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) and who either

- ▶ had special educational needs at the end of compulsory schooling and who were, at least in part, taught according to the curriculum of a special needs school; or
- ▶ have no, or only a negative, final certificate from lower secondary school or
- ▶ have “disabilities” within the meaning of the Act on the Employment of People with Disabilities; or
- ▶ of whom it has to be assumed – within the framework of career guidance measures or due to an unsuccessful placement attempt in a regular apprenticeship relationship – that it will, in the foreseeable future, not be possible to find any regular apprenticeship vacancy for them for reasons exclusively related to the person himself/herself.

two novel approaches to vocational training are offered:

- ▶ Under the "extended apprenticeship" programme the duration of vocational training may be extended by up to one year, in exceptional cases by two years, and at the end of such an integrated vocational training programme participants may take exams to receive regular apprenticeship certificates.
- ▶ Apprenticeship programmes for the acquisition of some goal-oriented partial skills rather than all the skills related to the job profile of one or several apprenticed trades are also available and last for one to three years. Having passed the final examination, participants will receive a certificate.
- ▶ Training assistance programme: training companies, as well as the young people to be trained, will receive ongoing socio-educational, psychological and didactic support during integrated vocational training.<sup>32</sup>

By end of December 2008 a total of 3.920 young people had a training place under the integrated vocational training scheme, this is about 3% of all apprentices (2.800 of whom in companies and 1.120 in special training centres).<sup>33</sup>

Important is also the **Youth Training Guarantee Act (Jugendausbildungssicherungsgesetz JASG)**, which underwent several amendments since 1998. This Act states that every young person who looks for work for more than three months is entitled to be offered either a workplace or the option of acquiring additional qualifications (pursuant to the "Guarantee of education up to the age of 18"). Training is then held within the framework of the so-called "supra-company apprenticeship system" and organised by the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS). The aim is to enable all young people to obtain a full apprenticeship diploma. In addition, the measure aims to place participating youth into a regular training place in the course of the programme<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Sabine Tritscher-Archan, Thomas Mayr (eds.) VET Policy Report Austria (EN) , 1/04-2008, 22

<sup>33</sup> Lehrlingsstatistik der WKÖ 2008

<sup>34</sup> Sabine Tritscher-Archan et al. (IBW),. Pro Dual Improving through Benchmark, December 2008, 16

## 5. VET system with focus on the target group

### a) What is the situation and perspective of the target group in regard to vocational education?

The Austrian VET system is characterised by the VET schools and VET colleges as well as apprenticeship training (dual system). On average, some 80 % of young people in their tenth year sign up to a VET programme. Of these, about 40 % take up an apprenticeship, 15 % attend a VET school, and about 27 % a VET college.<sup>35</sup>

Immigrants are clearly underrepresented at VET schools and colleges as well as at secondary schools, whereas they are overrepresented at special-needs schools.

**Table: Share of pupils with non-German mother tongue at chosen school-types in school-year 2007/08**<sup>36</sup>

	Pupils total	Percentage of pupils with non-German mother tongue
<b>All schools</b>	<b>1.163.978</b>	<b>16 %</b>
<b>Selected school-types</b>		
Primary schools	337.934	21 %
Lower secondary schools	249.703	20 %
Special-needs schools	13.148	27 %
Pre-vocational schools	21.338	21%
Secondary schools	205.442	12 %
Vocational schools for apprentices	135.356	8 %
VET schools	52.003	16 %
VET colleges	135.658	10 %

Source: BMUKK

**Table: Apprentices by citizenship 2008**

Citizenship	Apprentices			Percentage
	male	female	total	
Austria	81.391	41.596	122.987	93%
Germany	1.222	950	2.172	1,6%
Turkey	829	301	1.130	0,9%
Serbia/Montenegro	765	432	1.197	0,9%
Bosnia	1.054	493	1.547	1,2%
Croatia	675	293	968	0,7%
Others non Austria	1160	719	1.879	1,4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>87.096</b>	<b>44.784</b>	<b>131.880</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Statistics of Austrian Federal Economic Chamber about apprentices

### b) What are the reasons which prevent access to education and employment?

Limited access to VET and therefore to adequate employment has multiple reasons. First of all the family background has to be mentioned, for example the educational level of the parents, support by parents, living conditions.

Another important factor is the Austrian school system which can be characterised as early selective. OECD findings indicate that achievement levels in countries with comprehensive school models for 10- to 14-year-olds are markedly better than those in countries like Austria children are separated into either lower secondary school or lower grades of secondary academic schools. This reinforces the problems and weaknesses of children from socially disadvantaged groups and of children from migrant backgrounds.

<sup>35</sup> [www.bic.at/downloads/en/brftipps/0\\_1\\_bildungssystem\\_en.p](http://www.bic.at/downloads/en/brftipps/0_1_bildungssystem_en.p)

<sup>36</sup> Statistical Guide 2008. Key facts and figures about schools and adult education in Austria. Edited by Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (BMUKK), p.17

Above that in Austria pupils have to repeat a form when they fail and this enhances dropout. Dropouts often associate school with negative experience and this results to educational barriers.

The following table illustrates the risk for dropout according to different socio-demographic criteria. The risk is unequally distributed.

**Table: Dropout Rate according to socio-demographic criteria 2004/05<sup>37</sup>**

	CRITERIA	DROPOUT RATE
Region	Rural	5,4%
	Urban	11,8%
Origin	Austrian	7,2%
	2./3. Generation	15,6%
	Non-EU-Citizen	29,8%
Labour Market Status of Parents	Employed	6,4%
	Unemployed	21,1%
Educational Background of the parents	High qualified	3,1%
	Medium educational level	6,4%
	Educationally deprived	16,8%

Quelle: Statistics Austria, Calculation: IHS

It is also possible to leave school after nine years compulsory education without final certification from lower secondary school and this handicaps further education.

Some studies analysed the motives of young people not to continue their education after compulsory schooling time. Important motives are money, bad school experience and no clear ideas about a professional career.

A further reason is that not everybody who is looking for an apprenticeship is getting one. In 2008 there was an apprenticeship gap (=difference between the number of persons seeking apprenticeships and the number of available apprenticeships) of 1.57.<sup>38</sup>

### **c) Are there any special programmes existing in your country for the (re-)integration of the target group in the national VET system?**

In order to increase the specified target group's participation in education, several political measures have been launched since 2002:

Measures to reduce the number of **early school leavers** essentially aim at two areas: at increasing the share of schoolchildren with a qualification from secondary level II and at strengthening key and basic competences (reading, writing, arithmetic) before they undergo a VET programme. Major measures in this connection include:

- higher degree of professionalisation of the teaching staff in the direction of peer mediation and support of learning successes
- reduction of the number of schoolchildren in classes to 25 to intensify pedagogical support
- initiatives in the field of measures to promote reading skills (e.g. "Lesefit")
- setting up a pedagogical support structure for schoolchildren with learning deficits (e.g. target group oriented teaching material)
- literacy and basic education measures

Measures for schoolchildren and people with a **migration background** include:

- language support classes; German courses for parents of schoolchildren and kindergarten children
- mother-tongue curricula and intercultural teaching staff at secondary schools and business-oriented VET schools and colleges; literacy and basic education measures
- support for preschool education;
- vocationally oriented support courses;
- or educational provision within the framework of CVET<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Mario Steiner, Elfriede Wagner (IHS) Dropoutstrategie. Grundlagen zur Prävention und Reintegration von Dropouts in Ausbildung und Beschäftigung, November 2007, 8

<sup>38</sup> [www.ams.at](http://www.ams.at)

<sup>39</sup> Sabine Tritscher-Archan et al. (IBW), Pro Dual Improving through Benchmark, December 2008, 21

**“Give youth a chance”:** This is a job coaching and placement programme run by the Austrian Labour Market Service (AMS) and the Austrian Economic Chamber (WKÖ) to eliminate long-term youth unemployment. It targets young people aged 15 to 25 years who have been out of work for more than six months. Each of them will have a personal coach and placement officer at his/her side. The programme starts with a two-month employability module, teaching social skills and basic cultural techniques, and addressing education gaps. The coaches’ main work consists in ensuring they are in constant contact with their charges, while they also need to canvass jobs for these young people, accompany them throughout assessment and job application procedures, and ensure lasting integration once they have taken up a job or entered a training scheme.

**“Practical” occupations:** Young people with reduced capability and more practical talent are the target group for this scheme. “Practical” occupations are apprenticed trades requiring three years of training and focusing on practical skills rather than theoretical education. The "practical" metalworker (Praktikerberuf Metallbearbeitung) was implemented in 2005.<sup>40</sup>

The Austrian Labour Market Service (AMS) finances several employment and qualification projects for unemployed young people (e.g. occupational orientation, German courses, lower secondary school certification courses, social and basic skills) and the JASG training courses (content: first year of apprenticeship meant as preparation for a company based apprenticeship) and the JASG apprenticeship training in the so called supra-company system (means in training companies).

Another strategy particularly in Vienna is to enhance apprenticeship trainings in companies run by migrants.

For young people with handicaps **Clearing and Job Assistance** is provided. Those who left some type of qualification programme (such as vocational education, or some programme of the labour administration, or work-projects) get assistance concerning job-acquisition. During the first year of employment they get assistance for making a smooth entry into it, or in case of trouble. The employer can also call the assistant in case of difficulties or problems.

Given the current situation on the labour market the Austrian Federal Minister for Social Affairs has decided to develop a package of measures against youth unemployment till April 2009, for example retraining or the possibility to enhancing end-of-apprenticeship for drop outs<sup>41</sup>.

In Vienna a so called youth package was agreed in February 2009 including more apprenticeship training in training companies and more possibilities to catch up on educational achievements. Also a transition management concept should be worked out for school drop-outs

#### **d) Do modules play a significant role in vocational education and training in your country?**

Since mid of 2008 the first apprentices are trained in modularised apprenticeships. The 2006 BAG amendment is the legal basis for modularisation of apprenticeship training aiming to flexibilise the VET system.

Solid basic training should provide a jumping-off point for setting priorities and going into greater detail to meet the requirements of special production methods and service delivery in any given industry.

Initial training should use basic modules that are the same for several related occupations. They will be followed by main and special modules that address the need for growing specialisation in vocational training. Within a total period of four years training may encompass an appropriate mix of basic, main and special modules.

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<sup>40</sup> BMWA, Youth and Work in Austria, September 2008, 23 ff.

<sup>41</sup> Der Standard, 4. März 2009, Seite 19

The first apprenticeship trades have already been modularised and the related ordinances adopted by the Federal Minister of Economics and Labour (ordinances on crafts and trades in “installations and technical equipment” and “materials engineering”)<sup>42</sup> But it has to be added that the already modularised apprenticeships are high level ones.

There is also a second-chance provision for semi-skilled persons and persons who have not completed apprenticeship. Compact modularised programmes preparing for end-of-apprenticeship examinations (“FacharbeiterInnen-Intensivausbildungen”) are designed to allow disadvantaged persons to obtain VET qualifications. These intensive courses have been pioneered by Berufsförderungsinstitut Wien.<sup>43</sup> Introduced in the mid-1990s, they have been serving as an international best practice model.

### **e) Are there any options for the recognition of informally and non-formally acquired knowledge?**

In Austria the recognition of informally and non-formally acquired knowledge is in the fledgling stages. There is no overall system. The acceptance of validation methods is questionable and there is no equivalent to formal education. The most known methods or procedures are:

Skills Balance Sheet or Competence Balance (Kompetenzenbilanz) of the Tyrol Centre of the Future (Zukunftszentrum Tirol). The Competence Balance is a coaching procedure developed by the Department for Work Psychology at Munich University and Perform; it had been commissioned by the Tyrol Centre of the Future, an institution of the Tyrol Chamber of Labour within the framework of an EQUAL project ([www.zukunftszentrum.at](http://www.zukunftszentrum.at)). This service is also provided by the Vienna Employment Promotion Funds.

Competence Profile (KOMPAZ) of the Linz Adult Education Center (VHS Linz) in cooperation with CH-Q is a modular programme (workshops, self-work, assessment) to diagnose, recognise and certificate informal competences ([www.kompetenzprofil.at](http://www.kompetenzprofil.at))

Competence–Portfolio and Competence Workshop for Voluntary Work (Kompetenz-Portfolio für Ehrenamt und Freiwillige) provided by the Verband Österreichischer Volksbildungswerke. The instrument intends to identify and evaluate the skills and qualifications acquired through volunteering in order to recognize and validate informal learning with a view towards later use in the labour market ([www.kompetenz-portfolio.at](http://www.kompetenz-portfolio.at)).

Others examples are the Qualibox of the Bifo (Berufs- und Bildungsinformation Vorarlberg) or the Competence Profile for Migrants, based on the CH-Q competence management model.

One of the most recent projects, currently under way in Upper Austria, aims at vocational qualifications to be obtained through the recognition of informally and non-formally acquired competences.<sup>44</sup>

Finally it has to be mentioned that an exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave examination is possible: Within the framework of this measure, non-formally and informally acquired competences are recognised in the admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> BMWA, Youth and Work in Austria, September 2008, 25f.

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.baz.at/allgemeines>.

<sup>44</sup> For more details about the “Du kannst was!” project cf. <http://www.favoee.at/initiativen/hauptsache-arbeit-du-kannst-was/>.

<sup>45</sup> Sabine Tritscher-Archan et al. (IBW), Pro Dual Improving through Benchmark, December 2008, 17

**f) Do you see needs for a reform in VET system (or parts of it) for the target group in your country and if yes, which?**

The VET sector plays a major role in the Austrian education landscape. A large number of measures have been launched to keep the attractiveness of VET and to develop the system. These measures include, above all, initiatives to increase flexibilisation and enhance permeability, intensify educational counselling and career guidance and improve quality. In addition, measures have been taken to facilitate and simplify access for all, e.g. via Integrative VET.<sup>46</sup>

A reform has to intervene not only in the VET system. Preventive activities in the general education system are necessary, like more individualised education, promotion of German literacy, fewer pupils in a class, case management for dropouts, further training for teachers. The educational system is mainly orientated on shortfalls like lack of German language skills or basic skills and not on the resources of young people. Informal knowledge should be more focussed.

There is a need for services with low barriers using the know-how of the open youth work (like street work). Measures similar to school are not adequate for this target group, training must be very practical and not theoretical. There is also more need for support structures: clearing, career counselling, peer-counselling etc.

Helpful would be preparation modules to strengthen self-confidence and reflect negative experiences (with the family, with the school) before starting VET.

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<sup>46</sup> Sabine Tritscher-Archan, Thomas Mayr (Hrsg.), VET Policy Report Austria (EN), 1/04-2008

## 6. Quality assurance in VET

### a) Please describe methods or systems used for quality assurance in VET in your country.

The main quality assurance systems or methods have been used in educational institutions or in organisations for further training were those of the industry as DIN EN ISO 9000:2000, EFQM, TQM, balanced scorecard, benchmarking-procedures, methods of self evaluation with or without external appraisal.

But it was critically discussed if those concepts are adequate for the educational sector. For this reason adapted QM models have been developed as:

- QIBB (VET Quality Initiative)
- LQW (Learner Orientated Quality Certification in Further Training)
- LQS (Learner Orientated Quality Certification in Schools)
- EDUQUA (Suisse Quality Certificate for Organisations for Further Training)
- ISO for educational institutions

Furthermore communities (consortium of providers of further training) have been formed, who are committed to voluntary minimum standards or – criteria, for example

- Quality Signet of the Upper Austrian Institutions for Adult Education – EB QS
- Quality Signet of the Lower Austrian Institutions for Education and Further Training - CERT<sup>NÖ</sup>
- The VET Quality Initiative (*Qualitätsinitiative Berufsbildung*, QIBB) was launched in 2005/2006 as a comprehensive quality management system. It aims at safeguarding and further developing the quality of VET schools and colleges. QIBB sees itself explicitly as a strategy for implementing the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF) at European level.

The central elements of QIBB are the following:

- the mission statement,
- the Q-matrix (processes/quality areas, indicators),
- evaluation (internal evaluation),
- the quality reports,
- the management & performance reviews,
- external evaluation.

Other activities are the development of a so-called “Quality Academy” to recognise competences in the field of quality management and evaluation by Danube University Krems (this measure is also embodied in the QIBB) and the establishment of an Austrian Reference Point for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training – ARQA-VET) in October 2007.<sup>47</sup>

### b) Which methods or systems are most relevant and why?

The QM systems most relevant to VET in Austria are ISO, EFQM, LQW and EDUQUA. These are independent, standardized external systems and generally recognized by public authorities (federal and provincial authorities, public employment service, etc.).

### c) Are there possibilities of certification and accreditation of vocational training and education courses and/or educational providers? Which organisation/institution is making these licences available?

CERT<sup>NÖ</sup> is a body founded in 2007, integrated in the Danube University Krems, offering domestic and foreign further education organisations the possibility of being certificated in a

<sup>47</sup> Sabine Tritscher-Archan, Thomas Mayr (Hrsg.), VET Policy Report Austria (EN), 1/04-2008, 35 f und [www.qibb.at](http://www.qibb.at)

quite rapid procedure at low costs. By now other quality assurance procedures according to ISO, EFQM, LQW and EDUQUA are approved and the institution can be listed.

EB QS is the Signet of Quality for adult education institutions of the Forum for Adult Education in Upper Austria. The Institut for Vocational Training and Adult Education at the Johannes Kepler University in Linz (IBE) is doing the auditing for the acquisition and is also involved in the further development of that tool.

In Austria social integration enterprises (organisations that define the social and professional integration of people as their purpose) have the possibility to be awarded by an accepted label, the "Social Label for Social Integration Enterprises". The quality criteria for this label have been developed and tested in an EQUAL-Project of the ESF. The umbrella organisation for social enterprise is responsible for the application and coordination of the following procedure. There is an independent jury (e.g. with social partners) reviewing and taking the final decision.

**d) Are there standards (legal or other) for VET in your country as measuring instruments for standardization, reliability and comparability?**

In Austria VET can take two forms: Vocational qualifications may be acquired at medium-level and advanced-level vocational schools ("Berufsbildende mittlere Schulen (BMS)" and "Berufsbildende höhere Schulen (BHS)" respectively) or within the so-called dual system, i. e. combining company-based training and education in part-time vocational schools for apprentices.<sup>48</sup> School-based VET is governed by a number of federal laws and the respective curricula.<sup>49</sup> Apprenticeship training within the dual system additionally rests on the Vocational Training Act ("Berufsausbildungsgesetz (BAG)") and on training regulations for the respective apprenticeship trades. School-leaving certificates gained upon successful completion of a medium-level vocational school (minimum three years) are recognized as the equivalent of an end-of-apprenticeship examination ("Lehrabschlussprüfung").<sup>50</sup> Moreover, exceptional admittance to an end-of-apprenticeship examination ("Ausnahmsweise Zulassung zur Lehrabschlussprüfung") may be sought as a second-chance option of acquiring vocational qualifications.<sup>51</sup> All these qualifications are state-recognized standards regulating access to trades and crafts. They also make higher education accessible: Following medium-level vocational school or an apprenticeship, preparatory or add-on courses leading to the "Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP)" examination may be attended. A BRP certificate opens up further education and training possibilities, including higher education ones.<sup>52</sup>

**e) Please describe the existing methods and instruments used for the documentation of VET and further training activities.**

The Austrian education documentation system provides for statistical data on VET students and apprentices to be regularly collected. Legally, these annual statistics are based on the Education Documentation Act ("Bildungsdokumentationsgesetz").<sup>53</sup> Basic data is published by both the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture in statistical guides,<sup>54</sup> and by Statistics Austria.<sup>55</sup> In addition, apprentice-related data is documented in apprenticeship statistics ("Lehrlingsstatistik") by the Economic Chamber.<sup>56</sup> In this way, a complete survey of VET in Austria is ensured. The European Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS3) is carried out and documented by Statistics Austria.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Cf. above, 1. c) and [http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/secon/Secondary\\_Technical\\_and\\_4706.xml](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/secon/Secondary_Technical_and_4706.xml).

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/educ/brief.htm4589.xml>.

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/secon/app.xml> and [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/ressources/eurydice/pdf/041DN/041\\_AT\\_EN.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/ressources/eurydice/pdf/041DN/041_AT_EN.pdf).

<sup>51</sup> [http://www.ausbilder.at/ausbilder/hm/pdf/dielehre\\_en\\_0806.pdf](http://www.ausbilder.at/ausbilder/hm/pdf/dielehre_en_0806.pdf), p. 25.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 22f.

<sup>53</sup> BGBI. I 12/2002.

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.bmukk.gv.at/schulen/bw/ueberblick/grunddaten.xml>, with English download for 2008:

[http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/17605/zahlenspiegel\\_2008\\_e.pdf](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/17605/zahlenspiegel_2008_e.pdf).

<sup>55</sup> [http://www.statistik.at/web\\_en/statistics/education\\_culture/index.html](http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/education_culture/index.html).

<sup>56</sup> <http://wko.at/statistik/jahrbuch/Lehrling1.pdf>.

<sup>57</sup> [http://www.statistik.at/web\\_de/wcmsprod/groups/gd/documents/stdok/035093.pdf](http://www.statistik.at/web_de/wcmsprod/groups/gd/documents/stdok/035093.pdf).

**f) Which requirements (legal or other) exist concerning the qualification of trainers and other educational staff in the field of VET?**

There are instructors at school based VET called teachers and instructors within the framework of the company based segment of apprenticeship training called trainers. The main difference between teachers and trainers is that teachers must complete a teacher training course at university or an university college of education. 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. Teacher and trainer arrangements (curriculum development, examination regulations, quality monitoring etc.) are regulated by the Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture. The pre-service training of trainers is regulated by the Vocational Training Act, 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 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. 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. Since 1997, successful completion of a forty-hour trainer course has been equivalent to completion of the trainer examination.<sup>58</sup>

**g) Are in your country any procedures/standards for further training of staff in the field of VET?**

In the last few years so called academies for trainers of apprentices (Ausbilderakademie) have been established, which provide tailor-made further training. Beside offering broad qualification by gradual programmes of certification they promote exchange of experience and networking of trainer. There are several regional and supra-regional networking or CVET activities for trainers, such as:

- ▶ <http://www.ausbilder.at>
- ▶ Tyrol Trainers' Forum (<http://www.ausbilderforum.at/>), which was founded in 2000 in a cooperation of the province of Tyrol and the social partners
- ▶ Trainers' Forum of bfi Vocational Training Institute Vienna, which has been offering free-of-charge information evenings about current topics several times a year since 2006 with funds of the Chamber of Labour Vienna

There are some special training courses which support the work with the target group disadvantaged young people like:

- ▶ "Apprentices Coach" provided by bfi Carinthia
- ▶ "What to do with difficult apprentices" provided by the education center of the Chamber of Labour in Vorarlberg

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<sup>58</sup> ReferNet, Austria Thematic Overview 2008, 37 ff.